

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 160

Recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day, and expressing the sense of Congress that history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 19, 2005

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. OWENS, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. WATT, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, and Mr. HONDA) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Government Reform

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day, and expressing the sense of Congress that history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future.

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States, and in particular the Southwestern States, for more than 2 years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, and months after the conclusion of the Civil War;

Whereas on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved were free;

Whereas African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as Juneteenth Independence Day, as the anniversary of their emancipation;

Whereas African Americans from the Southwest continue the tradition of Juneteenth Independence Day as inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Whereas for more than 135 years, Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures;

Whereas although Juneteenth Independence Day is beginning to be recognized as a national, and even global, event, the history behind the celebration should not be forgotten; and

Whereas the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves remains an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) Congress recognizes the historical signifi-
4 cance of Juneteenth Independence Day to the Na-
5 tion;

1 (2) Congress supports the continued celebration
2 of Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an op-
3 portunity for the people of the United States to
4 learn more about the past and to better understand
5 the experiences that have shaped the Nation;

6 (3) the President is urged to issue a proclama-
7 tion calling on the people of the United States to ob-
8 serve Juneteenth Independence Day with appro-
9 priate ceremonies, activities, and programs; and

10 (4) it is the sense of Congress that—

11 (A) history should be regarded as a means
12 for understanding the past and solving the chal-
13 lenges of the future; and

14 (B) the celebration of the end of slavery is
15 an important and enriching part of the history
16 and heritage of the United States.

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