

STATE OF MAINE

**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE**

**JOINT RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE THE OBSERVANCE OF
JUNETEENTH ON JUNE 19, 2021**

WHEREAS, for 154 years, Juneteenth National Freedom Day, also known as Emancipation Day, Emancipation Celebration, Freedom Day, Juneteenth Independence Day and Juneteenth, has been one of the most recognized African-American holiday observances in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates the day freedom was proclaimed to all slaves in the South by Union General Gordon Granger, on June 19, 1865 in Galveston, Texas, more than 2 1/2 years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates the determination of the first people from Africa, approximately 11,500,000 of whom survived the awful voyages across the Atlantic and who were brought to this country and enslaved in chattel slavery and whose descendants served as slaves for 200 years before the horrific institution of chattel slavery was abolished; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the end of chattel slavery in the United States; and

WHEREAS, over 130 years after the Emancipation Proclamation and after years of informal annual celebration, Juneteenth was finally officially recognized in 1997 as Juneteenth Independence Day in America by the President of the United States and the United States Congress in the first session of the 105th Congress with bipartisan cooperation in Senate Joint Resolution 11 and House Joint Resolution 56; and

WHEREAS, "Until All are Free, None are Free" is an oft-repeated maxim that can be used to highlight the significance of the end of the era of chattel slavery in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the National Juneteenth Observance Foundation is working to make Juneteenth, what many people consider to be America's 2nd Independence Day Observance, a national holiday and to recognize this country's movement towards a "One America"; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth will become an official state holiday in Maine in 2022; and

WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the historical significance of Juneteenth in order to advance racial equity, human dignity and justice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Thirtieth Legislature now assembled in the First Special Session, on behalf of the people we represent, recognize the observance of Juneteenth on June 19, 2021, support the National Juneteenth Holiday Campaign and encourage people in our State to participate in Juneteenth observances.