

SENATE RESOLUTION 175

By Akbari

A RESOLUTION to commemorate Juneteenth in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, Juneteenth National Freedom Day is a celebration of our nation's continuous dedication to American independence from all forms of tyranny; and

WHEREAS, July 4<sup>th</sup> marks the American colonies' 1776 Declaration of Independence from Britain; the Founding Fathers, however, did not include America's enslaved people among "all men" who had been "created equal"; and

WHEREAS, although the Emancipation Proclamation, signed by President Abraham Lincoln, became official on January 1, 1863, it took two and one-half years for it to be fully actualized; and

WHEREAS, Major General Gordon Granger and Union forces arrived in Galveston, Texas, two months after the official end of the Civil War. Since Texas was isolated geographically and strategically, it was the last territory to receive news of the Emancipation Proclamation; and

WHEREAS, with Major Granger's announcement, African Americans joined this country's celebration of freedom; June 19<sup>th</sup> has been recognized in African-American communities as "Juneteenth" for more than a century; and

WHEREAS, on January 1, 1980, Texas became the first state to formally recognize Juneteenth as an official state holiday, and, today, most states recognize Juneteenth as a state holiday or a day of special observance; and

WHEREAS, institutions, including the Smithsonian and the Henry Ford Museum, have begun sponsoring Juneteenth-centered activities, and nationally, Juneteenth is observed to promote and cultivate knowledge and appreciation of the African-American contribution to our

great nation's history and culture, to celebrate African-American freedom and achievement, and to encourage continuous self-development and respect for all cultures; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby join with the good people of Tennessee in celebrating June 19, 2020, as Juneteenth, recognizing this important event in the history of our country and encouraging all Tennesseans to learn more about the past to better understand the experiences that have shaped our nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.