

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 211

Observing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 16, 2011

Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. HARKIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. BEGICH, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. AKAKA, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. WICKER, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. KERRY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. COONS, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

JUNE 20 (legislative day, JUNE 16), 2011

Committee discharged; considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Observing the historical significance of Juneteenth
Independence Day.

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 2½ years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which was issued on 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 19th, commonly known as “Juneteenth Independence Day”, as the anniversary of their emancipation;

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

Whereas, for more than 145 years, Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures; 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*, That—

2 (1) the Senate—

3 (A) recognizes the historical significance of
4 Juneteenth Independence Day to the Nation;

5 (B) supports the continued celebration of
6 Juneteenth Independence Day to provide an op-
7 portunity for the people of the United States to
8 learn more about the past and to better under-
9 stand the experiences that have shaped the Na-
10 tion; and

1 (C) encourages the people of the United
2 States to observe Juneteenth Independence Day
3 with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and pro-
4 grams; and

5 (2) it is the sense of the Senate that—

6 (A) the celebration of the end of slavery is
7 an important and enriching part of the history
8 and heritage of the United States; and

9 (B) history should be regarded as a means
10 for understanding the past and solving the chal-
11 lenges of the future.

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