

Sen. Durbin Joins Introduction Of State Resolution Honoring Juneteenth

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) today joined U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) in introducing a Senate resolution in honor of Juneteenth. Juneteenth, observed on June 19, commemorates the end of slavery in the United States and is also known as “Emancipation Day,” “Jubilee Day,” and “Juneteenth Independence Day.” On June 19, 1865, in Galveston, Texas, Major General Gordon Granger issued General Order No. 3, which announced that, in accordance with the Emancipation Proclamation, “all slaves are free.”

“Juneteenth reminds us that we must continue to fight for equality, justice, and economic opportunity for every American, regardless of the color of their skin,” Durbin said. “I’m joining Senator Cornyn to introduce this resolution to ensure that we

acknowledge and never forget slavery's legacy on our nation's history while recognizing the resiliency, history, struggles, and achievements of Black Americans."

In the 117th Congress, Durbin was a cosponsor of the bipartisan [Juneteenth National Independence Day Act](#), which was signed into law by President Biden in June 2021.

The text of the resolution is available [here](#) and below:

"Commemorating June 19, 2023, as 'Juneteenth National Independence Day' in recognition of June 19, 1865, the date on which news of the end of slavery reached the slaves in the Southwestern States.

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach the frontier areas of the United States, in particular the State of Texas and the other Southwestern States, until months after the conclusion of the Civil War, more than 2 ½ years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863;

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 the enslaved were free;

Whereas African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as 'Juneteenth National Independence Day', as inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Whereas African Americans from the Southwest have continued the tradition of observing Juneteenth National Independence Day for more than 150 years;

Whereas Juneteenth National Independence Day began as a holiday in the State of Texas and is now a Federal holiday and celebrated by Americans from many walks of life as a special day of observance in recognition of the emancipation of all slaves in the United States;

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

Whereas the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves and the descendants of former slaves remain an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race;

Whereas slavery was not officially abolished until the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States in December 1865; and

Whereas, over the course of its history, the United States has grown into a symbol of democracy and freedom around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates June 19, 2023, as ‘Juneteenth National Independence Day’;

2) recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth National Independence Day to the United States;

(3) supports the continued nationwide celebration of Juneteenth National Independence Day to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(4) recognizes that the observance of the end of slavery is part of the history and heritage of the United States.”