

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 184**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 25, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANNETTE QUIJANO

District 20 (Union)

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblyman HERB CONAWAY, JR.

District 7 (Burlington)

SYNOPSIS

Respectfully urges federal government and State of New Jersey designate “Juneteenth” as federal and State holiday.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/14/2021)

1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** respectfully urging the federal
2 government and State of New Jersey to designate “Juneteenth” as
3 a federal and State holiday.

4
5 **WHEREAS**, Juneteenth was first observed over 150 years ago and is the
6 oldest known celebration of the abolition of slavery in the United
7 States; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, the day General
9 Gordon Granger rode into Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil
10 War had ended and the enslaved were free; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Word of freedom finally reached the slaves in Texas, two
12 and a half years after the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation, and
13 enslaved people in the South were made aware of their freedom and
14 jubilant celebrations evolved into a general celebration of freedom;
15 and

16 **WHEREAS**, The celebration of Juneteenth symbolizes freedom,
17 celebrates the abolition of slavery, and reminds all Americans of the
18 significant contributions Black Americans have made to our society;
19 and

20 **WHEREAS**, Juneteenth serves as a reminder to all Americans of the
21 triumph of the human spirit over the cruelty of slavery, honors those
22 Black Americans who survived the inhumane institution of bondage,
23 and demonstrates pride in their legacy of resistance and
24 perseverance; and

25 **WHEREAS**, Juneteenth was first given official State recognition when,
26 in 1980, Texas made it an official state holiday, and a campaign
27 exists to establish Juneteenth as a national holiday; and

28 **WHEREAS**, Juneteenth continues to enjoy growing interest, recognition,
29 and celebration among organizations and communities throughout
30 the country, with Juneteenth-centered activities having been
31 sponsored by such institutions as the Smithsonian Museum and the
32 Henry Ford Museum; and

33 **WHEREAS**, In New Jersey, Juneteenth has been recognized since the
34 enactment of P.L.2004, c.3 (C.36:2-80), and is celebrated in
35 communities such as East Orange, Elizabeth, Camden, Jersey City,
36 Paterson, Pennington, Trenton, and Willingboro; and

37 **WHEREAS**, It is proper and fitting for the United States and the State of
38 New Jersey to designate “Juneteenth” as a federal and State holiday
39 each year to celebrate the emancipation of Black Americans; now,
40 therefore,

41
42 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New
43 Jersey (the Senate concurring):

44
45 1. The Legislature respectfully urges the United States and the
46 State of New Jersey to designate “Juneteenth” as a federal and State
47 holiday each year to celebrate the emancipation of Black Americans.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the Secretary of the Senate to the President of the United States, Vice President of the United States, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Majority Leader of the United States Senate, Governor of New Jersey, and each member of Congress elected from this State.

STATEMENT

This resolution respectfully urges the United States and the State of New Jersey to designate “Juneteenth” as a federal and State holiday each year to honor and celebrate the emancipation of Black Americans.

Juneteenth was first observed over 150 years ago and is the oldest known celebration of the abolition of slavery in the United States. Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, the day General Gordon Granger rode into Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and the enslaved were free. Word of freedom finally reached the slaves in Texas, two and a half years after the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation, and so enslaved people in the South were made aware of their freedom and jubilant celebrations evolved into a general celebration of freedom.

The celebration of Juneteenth symbolizes freedom, celebrates the abolition of slavery, and reminds all Americans of the significant contributions Black Americans have made to our society. Juneteenth serves as a reminder to all Americans of the triumph of the human spirit over the cruelty of slavery, honors those Black Americans who survived the inhumane institution of bondage, and demonstrates pride in their legacy of resistance and perseverance.

Juneteenth was first given official State recognition when, in 1980, Texas made it an official state holiday, and a campaign exists to establish Juneteenth as a national holiday. Juneteenth continues to enjoy growing interest, recognition, and celebration among organizations and communities throughout the country. With the ongoing protests concerning the “Black Lives Matter” movement, Juneteenth has experienced an even greater revival of attention both nationally and within the State. In New Jersey, Juneteenth is celebrated in communities such as East Orange, Elizabeth, Camden, Jersey City, Paterson, Pennington, Trenton, and Willingboro.