



State of Wisconsin
2019 - 2020 LEGISLATURE

LRB-3466/1
CMH:cjs

2019 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 49

June 21, 2019 - Introduced by Senators L. TAYLOR, JOHNSON, KOOYENGA, LARSON, MILLER, SHILLING, WANGGAARD and BEWLEY, cosponsored by Representatives FIELDS, BOWEN, CROWLEY, HAYWOOD, L. MYERS, STUBBS, ALLEN, ANDERSON, BILLINGS, BROSTOFF, CABRERA, CONSIDINE, DOYLE, EMERSON, GOYKE, GRUSZYNSKI, HEBL, HINTZ, HORLACHER, KOLSTE, NEUBAUER, PETRYK, RIEMER, SARGENT, SHANKLAND, SINICKI, SKOWRONSKI, SPREITZER, C. TAYLOR, THIESFELDT, TUSLER, VINING, VRUWINK and DITTRICH. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1 **Relating to:** recognizing June 19, 2019, as the 57th celebration of Juneteenth Day
2 in the State of Wisconsin.

3 Whereas, Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the
4 ending of slavery in the United States. Dating back to 1865, it was on June 19th that
5 the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston,
6 Texas, with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free; and

7 Whereas, this was two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation
8 Proclamation—which had become official January 1, 1863. The Emancipation
9 Proclamation had little impact on the Texans due to the minimal number of Union
10 troops to enforce the new Executive Order. However, with the surrender of General
11 Lee in April of 1865, and the arrival of General Granger's regiment, the forces were
12 finally strong enough to influence and overcome the resistance; and

13 Whereas, attempts to explain this two and one-half year delay in the receipt
14 of this important news have yielded several versions that have been handed down
15 through the years. Often told is the story of a messenger who was murdered on his

1 way to Texas with the news of freedom. Another is that the news was deliberately
2 withheld by the enslavers to maintain the labor force on the plantations; and

3 Whereas, the federal troops actually waited for the slave owners to reap the
4 benefits of one last cotton harvest before going to Texas to enforce the Emancipation
5 Proclamation. All of which, or neither of these versions could be true. Certainly, for
6 some, President Lincoln's authority over the rebellious states was in question. For
7 whatever the reasons, conditions in Texas remained status quo well beyond what
8 was statutory; and

9 Whereas, Northcott Neighborhood House, Inc., has sponsored Juneteenth
10 festivities for all 57 years. Juneteenth today celebrates African American freedom
11 and achievement while encouraging continuous self-development and respect for all
12 cultures. As it takes on a more national, symbolic, and even global perspective, the
13 events of 1865 in Texas are not forgotten, for all of the roots tie back to this fertile soil
14 from which a national day of pride is growing; and

15 Whereas, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has one of the largest celebrations in the
16 United States, and in 2019 there will be a variety of festivities: Miss & Little Miss
17 Juneteenth Pageant and Juneteenth Parade and Festival that thousands
18 participate in and attend; and

19 Whereas, Northcott Neighborhood House's Executive Director MacArthur
20 Weddle and Program Director Adriane Griffin will serve as the 2019 Grand Marshals
21 of the Juneteenth Parade, they have been the leaders and trailblazers of the success
22 of Juneteenth festivities in Milwaukee and a model for other cities to replicate for
23 decades; now, therefore, be it

