



WHEREAS, enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation occurred only in Confederate states that were under Union Army control; and

WHEREAS, on January 31, 1865, Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, abolishing slavery throughout the United States and its territories; and

WHEREAS, spontaneous celebration erupted throughout the country when African Americans learned of their freedom; and

WHEREAS, for formerly enslaved African Americans, the Juneteenth celebration was a time for reassuring each other, praying, and gathering remaining family members together. Juneteenth continued to be highly revered in Texas decades later, with many former slaves and descendants making an annual pilgrimage back to Galveston on this date; and

WHEREAS, the observance of Juneteenth spread from Texas to the neighboring states of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, as well as Alabama, Florida, and California, where many African American Texans migrated; and

WHEREAS, Texas is widely considered the first state to begin Juneteenth celebrations, and informal observances have taken place there for over a century. Juneteenth has been an official state holiday in Texas since 1979, and since 2003, thirty-nine states including California and the District of Columbia, have recognized Juneteenth as either a state holiday or a state holiday observance; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is a day, a week, and in some areas, a month marked with celebrations, guest speakers, family gatherings, and community festivals. It is a time for reflection, rejoicing, assessment, self-improvement, and planning for the future; and

WHEREAS, in Nashville and throughout Tennessee, Juneteenth activities are held to celebrate and support African American culture, art, music, food, and business; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth symbolizes freedom, celebrates the abolishment of slavery, and reminds all Americans of the significant contributions of African Americans to our society; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth and the important role that African Americans have played in the history of the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as declaring June 19, 2021 as Juneteenth in Nashville and Davidson County and encourages the people of Nashville and Davidson County to observe Juneteenth Independence Day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

Section 2. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.