

MAR 10 2010

SENATE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING JUNETEENTH NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY ON JUNE 19 OF EACH YEAR.

1 WHEREAS, more than one hundred thirty years old, Juneteenth
2 National Freedom Day is the oldest and only African-American
3 holiday observance in the United States; and
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5 WHEREAS, also known as Emancipation Day, Emancipation
6 Celebration, Freedom Day, Jun-Jun, and Juneteenth, Juneteenth
7 National Freedom Day commemorates the strong survival instinct
8 of African-Americans who were first brought to this country
9 stacked in the bottom of slave ships in a month-long journey
10 across the Atlantic Ocean known as the Middle Passage; and
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12 WHEREAS, approximately eleven and one-half million African-
13 Americans survived the voyage to the New World - the number that
14 died is likely greater - only to be subjected to whipping,
15 castration, branding, and rape, and forced to submit to slavery
16 for more than two hundred years after arrival in the United
17 States; and
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19 WHEREAS, events in the history of the United States that
20 led to the Civil War of 1861 centered around sectional
21 differences between the North and South that were based on the
22 economic and social divergence caused by the existence of
23 slavery; and
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25 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as President of
26 the United States in 1861, and as President, Lincoln believed
27 and stated that the paramount object of the Civil War was to
28 save the Union rather than save or destroy slavery; and
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30 WHEREAS, yet Lincoln also stated his wish that all men
31 everywhere could be free, thus adding to a growing anticipation
32 by slaves that their ultimate liberation was at hand; and
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34 WHEREAS, in 1862, the first clear sign that the end of
35 slavery was imminent came when laws abolishing slavery in the



1 territories of Oklahoma, Nebraska, Colorado, and New Mexico were
2 passed; and

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4 WHEREAS, in September of that same year, President Lincoln
5 warned the eleven rebellious Confederate States that if they did
6 not return to the Union by January 1, 1863, he would declare
7 their slaves forever free via the celebrated Emancipated
8 Proclamation; and

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10 WHEREAS, enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation,
11 however, only occurred in Confederate States once under Union
12 Army control and Congress subsequently passed the Thirteenth
13 Amendment to the Constitution on January 31, 1865, abolishing
14 slavery throughout the United States and its territories; and

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16 WHEREAS, news of this action reached the states at
17 different times, and it was not until June 19, 1865, that the
18 message of freedom reached the slaves in Texas, Oklahoma,
19 Louisiana, Arkansas, and California; and

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21 WHEREAS, spontaneous celebrations erupted throughout the
22 country when African-Americans learned of their freedom; and

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24 WHEREAS, Juneteenth National Freedom Day celebrates the
25 abolishment of slavery with excitement and great joy and is a
26 reminder to all Americans of the status and importance of
27 Americans of African descent as American citizens; now,
28 therefore,

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30 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
31 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010,
32 that the Hawaii State Legislature recognizes Juneteenth National
33 Freedom Day on June 19 of each year; and

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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
36 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor.

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OFFERED BY: *Greg L. Auer*
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