

STATE OF ILLINOIS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

WHEREAS, United States President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1st, 1863, ordering the freedom of all enslaved African Americans in territory held by the Confederacy; and,

WHEREAS, over 250,000 enslaved Black Americans remained in bondage in the State of Texas, as the war raged on and over 150,000 enslaved African Americans were forced into Texas as slave owners attempted to hide them from the Union; and,

WHEREAS, on June 19th, 1865, in Galveston, Texas, Union Major General Gordon Granger announced to Texans the end of the Civil War and the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, legally freeing the last of the Confederacy's enslaved people; and,

WHEREAS, June 19th, or Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day or Freedom Day, commemorates the Galveston announcement and has become a celebration of the freedom of our Black brothers and sisters and the social, economic, and cultural contributions they have made to these United States of America and Illinois; and,

WHEREAS, Juneteenth takes on an even greater significance as the United States contends with immense pain and grief over the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Dominique "Rem'mie" Fells, Trayvon Martin, Laquan McDonald, Rekia Boyd, and too many others who have been tragically killed, whether at the hands of police or private citizens acting as vigilantes, in a nation that for too long has refused to contend with its racist origins or modern iterations, leading hundreds of thousands of peaceful protestors across the country to take to the streets to call for justice and change; and,

WHEREAS, in the year 2020, white supremacist and white nationalist hate groups are on the rise around the world, and this very month a sitting United States Senator blocked the renewed Emmett Till Anti-Lynching Act from passage; and,

WHEREAS, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately taken Black lives and caused economic disruption disproportionately in the Black community; and,

WHEREAS, the decades and centuries of systemic racism that have permeated every aspect of our national history must be actively dismantled – pairing protest and policy – through sustained economic investment in Black communities, genuine criminal justice reform, and a fundamentally reimagined vision of policing;

THEREFORE, I, Governor JB Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim June 19th, 2020, as Juneteenth in Illinois, this date joining the ongoing COVID-19 disaster proclamation in being honored by all flags covered by the Illinois Flag Display Act flying at half-staff, and urge all Illinois residents to reflect on our history, our future, and the actions we can take, individually and collectively, to truly build ourselves into the equitable nation of our ideals – a land of freedom and opportunity for all.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.

Done at the Capitol in the City of Springfield,
this EIGHTEENTH *day of* JUNE, *in*
the Year of Our Lord, two thousand and
TWENTY, *and of the State of Illinois,*
two hundred and SECOND.



Deese White
SECRETARY OF STATE

JB Pritzker
GOVERNOR