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113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 474

Designating June 19, 2014, as ''Juneteenth Independence Day'' in recognition of June 19, 1865, the day on which slavery legally came to an end in the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 12, 2014

Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. WARREN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. PRYOR, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. WARNER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. KAINE, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. NELSON, Mr. REID, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. PAUL, Mr. COONS, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WICKER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BEGICH, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BROWN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. LEE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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RESOLUTION

Designating June 19, 2014, as ''Juneteenth Independence Day'' in recognition of June 19, 1865, the day on which slavery legally came to an end in the United States.

Whereas news of the end of slavery did not reach the frontier areas of the United States, in particular the State of Texas and other Southwestern States, until months after the conclusion of the Civil War, more than 2½ years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was issued on January 1, 1863;

Whereas, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved were free;

Whereas African-Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as ''Juneteenth Independence Day'', as inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Whereas African-Americans from the Southwest, for nearly 150 years, have continued the tradition of observing ''Juneteenth Independence Day'';

Whereas 43 States, the District of Columbia, and other countries, have designated ''Juneteenth Independence Day'' as a special day of observance in recognition of the emancipation of all slaves in the United States;

Whereas ''Juneteenth Independence Day'' celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures;

Whereas the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves and their descendants remain an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race;

Whereas slavery was not officially abolished until the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution in January 1865;

Whereas Frederick Douglass, born in the State of Maryland in 1818, escaped from slavery and became a leading writer, orator, publisher, and one of the United States' most influential advocates for abolitionism and the equality of all people;

Whereas Frederick Douglass was recognized for his accomplishments with a statue that was unveiled during a ceremony on June 19, 2013, in Emancipation Hall of the United States Capitol;

Whereas 2014 marks the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000a et seq.), signed into law on July 2, 1964, a milestone in providing equal protections for African-Americans, including former slaves and their descendants; and

Whereas, over the course of its history, the United States has grown into a symbol of democracy and freedom around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates June 19, 2014, as ''Juneteenth Independence Day'';

(2) recognizes the historical significance of ''Juneteenth Independence Day'' to the United States;

(3) supports the continued nationwide celebration of ''Juneteenth Independence Day'' to provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(4) recognizes that the observance of the end of slavery is a part of the history and heritage of the United States.

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