



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 65887, **Version:** 1

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### **Fiscal Note**

No fiscal impact.

### **Title**

Recognizing June 19, 2021, as Juneteenth in the City of Madison

### **Body**

WHEREAS, it has been over 400 years since the first Africans were enslaved and violently brought to what would become the United States, including to Florida in 1526 and to Point Comfort, Virginia, in 1619; and

WHEREAS, it was not until June 19th, 1865, that federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, finally emancipating enslaved Texans; and

WHEREAS, news of the end of slavery traveled slowly to enslaved laborers throughout Texas, with some plantation owners keeping the news from them until after the harvest of that year; and

WHEREAS, June 19th is known as Juneteenth in acknowledgement of that fact, and to commemorate this date as the end of slavery in the United States; and

WHEREAS, although slavery was formally abolished in December of 1865 with the enactment of the 13th amendment to the US constitution, the amendment contains an exception for the labor of incarcerated individuals, which has incited a rash of practices, policies and laws targeting and disproportionately disenfranchising Black people in America through criminalization, exploitation of their labor, mass incarceration and voter suppression; and

WHEREAS, in 1866, emancipated communities began celebrating Juneteenth as Jubilee Day; and

WHEREAS, 47 states, including Wisconsin, have declared Juneteenth to be a state holiday; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth celebrates the continued resilience of people of African descent in America; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, during the 105<sup>th</sup> United States Congress, House Joint Resolution 56 and Senate Joint Resolution 11 were passed, officially recognizing Juneteenth Independence Day; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates the strength and resolve of Black and African Americans throughout our history and serves as an opportunity to celebrate the rich and numerous contributions of Black and African Americans; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is also known as Emancipation Day, Emancipation Celebration, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, Juneteenth National Freedom Day, and Juneteenth Independence Day; and

WHEREAS, June 19, 2021, marks the 156<sup>th</sup> commemoration Juneteenth; and

WHEREAS, the City of Madison and Dane County representatives together raised the official Juneteenth Flag on June 1, 2021. The flag will remain raised until the end of the day on June 30th. The flag represents a new beginning: the burst surrounding the star represents the new horizon, opportunities and promises that lay ahead. The star represents the Lone Star State (Texas), a nod to where Juneteenth was first celebrated in 1865, and freedom of every Black African American in all 50 states. The colors red, white and blue stand for all Americans who cherish and stand for freedom; and

WHEREAS, according to Wallethub's recent study of 50 states, Wisconsin ranks as the state with the most economic racial inequality across eight major metrics, including median income, unemployment rate, homeownership rate, and poverty;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Madison and all Madisonians commit to promoting racial equity and social justice, bringing meaning and significance to this day as we embark on ways to eradicate systemic racism through police reforms, addressing health disparities and economic inequities.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Madison Common Council and Mayor recognize and celebrate June 19th, 2021, in commemoration of Juneteenth.

Sources: <https://wallethub.com/edu/state-economies-with-most-racial-equality/75810/>