

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

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SENATE BILL 583

Short Title: Juneteenth Observance. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Woodard, Robinson, Lowe (Primary Sponsors); and Van Duyn.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

March 30, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT RECOGNIZING JUNETEENTH OBSERVANCE DAY IN NORTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, June 19, 1865, is considered the date when the last enslaved Americans were notified that slavery had ended by General Gordon Granger, who arrived in Galveston, Texas, and issued General Order Number Three almost two and one-half years after President Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation; and

Whereas, former slaves in Texas began to observe June 19 as the anniversary of their emancipation, and coined the term "Juneteenth"; and

Whereas, Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the end of slavery in the United States, and is also known as "Juneteenth National Freedom Day," "Emancipation Day," "Emancipation Celebration," "Freedom Day," "Jun-Jun," "Juneteenth Independence Day"; and

Whereas, Juneteenth commemorates the survival, due to God-given strength and determination, of African-Americans through extreme adversity, hardship, and triumph; and

Whereas, Americans of all colors, creeds, cultures, religions, and countries of origin share in a common love of and respect for freedom, as well as the determination to protect their right to freedom through the democratic institutions by which the tenets of freedom are guaranteed and protected; and

Whereas, the nineteenth of June, along with the fourth of July, completes the cycle of freedom for Independence Day observance by all Americans; and

Whereas, Juneteenth is recognized as a state holiday or a day of observance in at least 43 states, including Texas, Oklahoma, Florida, Delaware, Idaho, Alaska, Iowa, California, Wyoming, Missouri, Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, New Jersey, New York, Colorado, Arkansas, Oregon, Kentucky, Michigan, New Mexico, Virginia, Washington, and Tennessee; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Chapter 103 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

§ 103-14. Juneteenth Observance.

The nineteenth day of June of each year is designated as Juneteenth Observance Day in North Carolina.

SECTION 2. S.L. 2007-450 is repealed.

SECTION 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.

