

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration of
3 the ending of slavery; and

4 WHEREAS, It was on June 19, 1865 that the Union soldiers,
5 led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston,
6 Texas with news that the Civil War had ended and that the
7 enslaved were now free; and

8 WHEREAS, Although President Abraham Lincoln's
9 Emancipation Proclamation was made official on January 1,
10 1863, it had little effect in Texas due to the minimal number
11 of Union troops to enforce the executive order; however, with
12 the surrender of General Robert E. Lee in 1865, and the
13 arrival of Major General Granger's regiment, the forces were
14 finally strong enough to influence and overcome the
15 resistance; and

16 WHEREAS, The celebration of June 19th was coined
17 "Juneteenth" and grew with more participation from
18 descendents of slaves; the celebration is a time for
19 reassuring each other, for praying, and for gathering
20 remaining family members; it continues to be highly revered
21 in Texas, decades later, with many former slaves and
22 descendants making an annual pilgrimage back to Galveston on
23 June 19th; and

24 WHEREAS, Juneteenth today celebrates African-American
25 freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for
26 all cultures; this celebration has continued to enjoy a
27 growing and healthy interest from communities and
28 organizations across the country seeking to promote and
29 cultivate knowledge and appreciation of African-American
30 history and culture; therefore, be it

31 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

1 NINETY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
2 we designate June 19, 2002 as "Juneteenth Day" in the State
3 of Illinois in appreciation of African-American history and
4 culture.