

By: Collier

H.R. No. 2998

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, For more than 100 years, the observance of
2 Juneteenth on June 19 has provided an opportunity to celebrate the
3 fundamental principles of liberty and equality; and

4 WHEREAS, Although President Lincoln delivered the
5 Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, freedom came gradually and at
6 different times to various states; it was on June 19, 1865, that
7 General Gordon Granger, Union commander of the Department of Texas,
8 arrived with his troops at Galveston and issued General Order
9 Number 3, which stated "The people of Texas are informed that, in
10 accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United
11 States, all slaves are free"; the long-delayed tidings traveled
12 throughout the state to reach approximately 250,000 Texans who had
13 been held in bondage; and

14 WHEREAS, Large celebrations on June 19 began the following
15 year, and early on, they typically included a prayer service,
16 inspirational speakers, a reading of the Emancipation
17 Proclamation, and such festive elements as barbecue, games, rodeos,
18 and dances; slowly, the tradition spread to neighboring states and
19 beyond, and during the 66th Texas Legislature, the passage of House
20 Bill 1016 declared June 19 to be "Emancipation Day in Texas" and
21 established an official state holiday effective January 1, 1980;
22 and

23 WHEREAS, In coming together each year to commemorate
24 Juneteenth, Texans reaffirm the ideals on which this nation was

1 founded and honor the myriad achievements and immeasurable
2 fortitude of the African American community in the Lone Star State;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Ms. Opal Lee was a driving force behind the
5 rejuvenation of Juneteenth celebrations in Fort Worth in the 1970s
6 and has tirelessly organized the Fort Worth Juneteenth Celebration
7 for the last 39 years; therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas
9 Legislature hereby commends Ms. Lee for her distinguished
10 contributions to the community and; be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commemorate
12 Juneteenth 2013 and encourage all citizens to learn more about the
13 rich history of this important event.