

By: Kacal

H.R. No. 3235

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, When residents of Limestone County gather for their
2 annual observance of Juneteenth near Mexia on June 19, 2015, they
3 will be celebrating the sesquicentennial of the day in 1865 that
4 marked the official end of slavery in the State of Texas; and

5 WHEREAS, On June 19, 1865, two months after the end of the
6 Civil War, Major General Gordon Granger of the Union Army arrived in
7 Galveston and issued a general order informing the people of Texas
8 that all slaves in the state were now free, in accordance with
9 President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation; compliance
10 with the order on the part of slave owners was sometimes slow, but
11 by the end of the year, most of those held in bondage had obtained
12 their freedom; and

13 WHEREAS, In Limestone County, news of emancipation was
14 announced to some 300 slaves from the porch of the Stroud
15 Plantation; before long, African Americans in the area began
16 gathering annually at Comanche Crossing, on the Navasota River, to
17 celebrate the anniversary of Juneteenth, as June 19 had come to be
18 called; in the early years, the featured orator at the festivities
19 was Ralph Long, who had represented Limestone, Navarro, and Hill
20 Counties at the Texas Constitutional Convention of 1868-1869; the
21 Juneteenth celebration at Comanche Crossing grew to attract as many
22 as 20,000 people, and in 1898, the site was set aside by deed for the
23 purpose of the Juneteenth observance; on July 7, 1912, the 19th of
24 June Organization was chartered to administer the site, now known

1 as Booker T. Washington Park; the Juneteenth celebration there is
2 one of the oldest, on-going commemorations in the state; and

3 WHEREAS, Today, 150 years after emancipation was proclaimed
4 in Texas, Juneteenth continues to inspire gatherings that are both
5 joyful and reflective; layered with meaning, these observances pay
6 tribute to all those who endured the rigors of slavery, honor their
7 immeasurable contributions to the development of this state and
8 nation, and recognize the myriad accomplishments of the generations
9 that have followed; the occasion also serves as a powerful summons
10 to the continuing work of building a more just and inclusive
11 society; now, therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 84th Texas
13 Legislature hereby commemorate the 150th anniversary of the
14 abolition of slavery in Texas and extend to all those taking part in
15 the renowned Juneteenth celebration in Limestone County sincere
16 best wishes for a memorable and meaningful event.