

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 19

WHEREAS, Ms. Opal Lee of Fort Worth joined the president at the White House on June 17, 2021, to witness the signing of legislation designating Juneteenth as a federal holiday, the culmination of her many years of advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Known as "the grandmother of Juneteenth," Ms. Lee began celebrating the June 19 holiday as a girl in Marshall; her family later moved to Fort Worth, where on June 19, 1939, a mob of 500 white supremacists burned down her family's new home; rising above oppression, she embarked on a career in education and became a tireless champion for civil rights, cultural heritage, affordable housing, and food security; in retirement, she took on leadership of a food bank, which now serves some 500 families a day and grows healthy produce at an urban farm named in her honor; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Lee has organized the Juneteenth event in Fort Worth for decades, and she dreamed of making the observance that started in Texas a national celebration of freedom and unity; in 2016, at the age of 89, she launched a campaign to heighten awareness across the country, walking for 2.5-mile stretches in different cities to symbolize the 2.5-year delay in enforcing the Emancipation Proclamation in Texas; along the way, she spoke to the media and numerous groups about the meaning of Juneteenth and gathered 1.5 million signatures on a petition that she delivered to the U.S. Congress; finally, with passage of the Juneteenth legislation commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, the nation gained its first new holiday since Martin Luther King Jr. Day was signed into law in 1983; and

WHEREAS, Long admired for her outstanding contributions to the local community, Ms. Opal Lee has now made an enduring impact at the national level, and her steadfast dedication to a vision of liberty and justice is a source of tremendous inspiration to all; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 87th Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby congratulate Ms. Opal Lee on the designation of Juneteenth as a national holiday and extend to her sincere best wishes for continued success in all her endeavors; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this Resolution be prepared for Ms. Lee as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Powell, Lucio

Alvarado	Hancock	Nichols
Bettencourt	Hinojosa	Paxton
Birdwell	Huffman	Perry
Blanco	Hughes	Schwertner
Buckingham	Johnson	Seliger
Campbell	Kolkhorst	Springer
Creighton	Menéndez	Taylor
Eckhardt	Miles	West
Gutierrez	Nelson	Whitmire
Hall		Zaffirini

Patrick, President of the Senate

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on July 22, 2021.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate

Member, Texas Senate