



AN ACT DESIGNATING THE THIRD SATURDAY OF JUNE AS JUNETEENTH NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY IN ORDER TO COMMEMORATE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EMANCIPATION FROM SLAVERY.

WHEREAS, news of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States, and in particular the southwestern states, for more than 2 years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, and months after the conclusion of the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved were free; and

WHEREAS, African Americans who had been slaves in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as Juneteenth Independence Day, as the anniversary of their emancipation; and

WHEREAS, African Americans from the Southwest continue the tradition of Juneteenth Independence Day as inspiration and encouragement for future generations; and

WHEREAS, for more than 150 years, Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development and respect for all cultures; and

WHEREAS, although Juneteenth Independence Day is beginning to be recognized as a national and even global event, the history behind the celebration should not be forgotten; and

WHEREAS, the faith and strength of character demonstrated by former slaves remains an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race; and

WHEREAS, the character demonstrated by former slaves should inspire us in this country to give thanks for the freedom won by so many people in all nations cherishing liberty and to strive for the goals of bringing freedom and democracy to people of other countries no matter what their race or religion.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Juneteenth national freedom day. The third Saturday in June is designated as Juneteenth national freedom day to commemorate African-American emancipation from slavery, to celebrate the freedom

won by people in many countries, and to rededicate ourselves to the cause of liberty.

Section 2. Notification to tribal governments. The secretary of state shall send a copy of [this act] to each tribal government located on the seven Montana reservations and to the Little Shell Chippewa tribe.

Section 3. Codification instruction. [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 1, chapter 1, part 2, and the provisions of Title 1, chapter 1, part 2, apply to [section 1].

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
SB 0158, originated in the Senate.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2017.

Secretary of the Senate

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2017.

SENATE BILL NO. 158

INTRODUCED BY M. MACDONALD, J. ESSMANN, J. GROSS, K. KELKER, M. MCNALLY, V. RICCI

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