

PROCLAMATION IN SUPPORT OF JUNETEENTH, MONDAY, JUNE 19, 2023

WHEREAS, The first enslaved Africans were brought as captives to what is now the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1619 where they were bought and sold as slave labor for 250 years suffering unspeakable acts of violence; and

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, declaring "that all persons held as slaves within the rebellious states are, and henceforward shall be free"; and

WHEREAS, The Emancipation Proclamation was the vehicle used to pass the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery in this nation on January 31, 1865; and

WHEREAS, On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, announcing General Order Number 3 which ended both the Civil War and slavery; and

WHEREAS, June 19th has become a symbolic date, representing the freedom of African Americans and is recognized by 47 states and the District of Columbia, with Virginia, New York and Pennsylvania recognizing it as an official paid holiday for state employees; and

WHEREAS, Our nation is facing a new reckoning as the legacy of sharecropping, Jim Crow, redlining and police violence against Black Bodies continues to pervade and permeate our society, institutions, and systems of law; and

WHEREAS, Although the 13th Amendment provided for freedom, it also laid the groundwork for mass incarceration within the African American community by stating "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction"; and

WHEREAS, If Black Lives Matter, the Democratic Party of Contra Costa Party must acknowledge the impact that this history of racism has had in shaping and continuing to shape our society, institutions, and systems of laws, fostering many of the current-day disparities in education, health care, housing, and employment.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County hereby recognizes Monday, June 19, 2023, as Juneteenth to acknowledge the historical significance of the day and commit the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County to working toward the dismantling of institutionalized racism.

Approved by the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County, May 18, 2023