

By the Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability;
and Senators Bracy and Stewart

585-02991-21

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to Juneteenth Day; amending s. 683.01,
3 F.S.; designating Juneteenth Day as a legal holiday;
4 repealing s. 683.21, F.S., relating to Juneteenth Day;
5 deleting provisions designating Juneteenth Day as a
6 special observance, to conform to changes made by the
7 act; providing an effective date.

8
9 WHEREAS, on January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln
10 issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which afforded free status
11 under federal law to the millions of enslaved African Americans
12 who resided in states that had seceded from the Union, including
13 Florida, and

14 WHEREAS, despite the issuance of the Emancipation
15 Proclamation, it was not fully enforced in certain regions of
16 the United States for more than 2 years afterwards, and

17 WHEREAS, on or about June 19, 1865, federal authorities
18 arrived in Galveston, Texas, to enforce the Emancipation
19 Proclamation and further inform slaves that the Civil War had
20 ended and that the enslaved were now free, and

21 WHEREAS, thereafter, former slaves and their descendants
22 continued to commemorate each June 19 to celebrate freedom and
23 the emancipation of all slaves in the United States, and

24 WHEREAS, emancipation in Florida was proclaimed in
25 Tallahassee on May 20, 1865, and for this reason Floridians
26 traditionally celebrate Emancipation Day on May 20 of each year,
27 and

28 WHEREAS, in 1991, the Florida Legislature officially
29 designated June 19 of each year as "Juneteenth Day" to

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30 commemorate the freeing of slaves, but did not designate the day
31 as an official legal holiday, and

32 WHEREAS, this act designates Juneteenth Day as a legal
33 holiday in this state to commemorate the announcement of the
34 abolition of slavery and to recognize the significant
35 contributions of African Americans to this state and our nation,
36 NOW, THEREFORE,

37

38 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

39

40 Section 1. Present paragraphs (n) through (u) of subsection
41 (1) of section 683.01, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as
42 paragraphs (o) through (v), respectively, and a new paragraph
43 (n) is added to that subsection, to read:

44 683.01 Legal holidays.—

45 (1) The legal holidays, which are also public holidays, are
46 the following:

47 (n) Juneteenth Day, June 19.

48 Section 2. Section 683.21, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

49 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.