

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability

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BILL: SB 1500

INTRODUCER: Senator Bracy

SUBJECT: Special Days of Observance

DATE: February 9, 2022

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Limones-Borja</u>	<u>McVaney</u>	<u>GO</u>	<u>Favorable</u>
2.	_____	_____	<u>ED</u>	_____
3.	_____	_____	<u>RC</u>	_____

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**I. Summary:**

SB 1500 designates May 20 as “Emancipation day” to commemorate the traditional observance of the day that the enslaved African Americans of the State were notified of the Emancipation Proclamation. The bill authorizes the Governor to issue annually a proclamation that designates May 20 as Emancipation Day and to call on public officials, schools, private organizations, and all residents to honor the significance of the day.

The bill amends 683.21, F.S., to clarify that Juneteenth Day commemorates the day all *remaining* enslaved African Americans were notified of the Emancipation Proclamation.

The bill amends s. 1003.4282, F.S., to require the curriculum of a high school United States History class to include, beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, at least 45 minutes of instruction on the Significance of Emancipation Day and Juneteenth Day.

The bill is not expected to impact state or local government revenues or expenditures.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.

**II. Present Situation:**

**The Emancipation Proclamation**

The Civil War in the United States began in 1861, after decades of tensions between northern and southern states over slavery, states’ rights, and westward expansion. The election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 caused seven southern states to secede and form the Confederate

States of America.<sup>1</sup> President Lincoln and most of the northern states, also known as the “Union,” refused to recognize the legitimacy of the secession, as they feared it would discredit democracy and fragment the country. On January 1, 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation declaring that “all persons held as slaves are, and henceforward shall be free.”<sup>2</sup> The Emancipation Proclamation was limited only to the states that seceded from the United States, leaving slavery untouched in the northern states. The freedom promised under the Emancipation Proclamation was dependent upon the northern states military victory. Further, the Emancipation Proclamation established the acceptance of black men into the Union military. By the end of the war, almost 200,000 black soldiers and sailors fought for the Union military.<sup>3</sup> The Civil War was the costliest and deadliest war ever fought on American soil, with approximately 620,000 soldiers killed. The Civil War ended in 1865, with the Confederate army surrendering to General Ulysses S. Grant and the Union army in North Carolina.

### **Emancipation Day in Florida**

On May 10, 1865, more than two years after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, Union Brigadier General Edward M. McCook arrived in Tallahassee to receive the surrender of Florida’s Confederate troops. On May 20, McCook formally announced President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation from the steps of the Knott House, effectively ending slavery in the state.<sup>4</sup> As a result, May 20 has been traditionally celebrated as Emancipation Day in Florida.

### **Juneteenth**

On June 19 (“Juneteenth”), 1865, General Gordon Granger of the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas, and read General Order No. 3 announcing the end of the Civil War and that all slaves were free in accordance with President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. Although the Emancipation Proclamation was issued on January 1, 1863, it had little impact in the South without Union enforcement, and many slaves were unaware of it. The first Juneteenth celebrations were used as political rallies and to teach freed African Americans about their voting rights.<sup>5</sup> During the era of Jim Crow laws, Juneteenth celebrations diminished until the civil rights movement when the Poor People’s March planned by Martin Luther King, Jr., was purposely scheduled to coincide with the date. The Poor People’s March brought Juneteenth back to the public’s attention, and the holiday was essentially reborn.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> American Battlefield Trust, *Civil War Facts*, available at <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/civil-war-facts>, (last visited January 13, 2022).

<sup>2</sup> National Archives, *The Emancipation Proclamation*, available at <https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation#:~:text=President%20Abraham%20Lincoln%20issued%20the.and%20henceforward%20shall%20be%20free.%22> (last visited on January 13, 2022).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> State Library and Archives of Florida, *Juneteenth and Emancipation Day in Florida*, <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/333282> (last visited January 13, 2022).

<sup>5</sup> See *Juneteenth*, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/lkj01>, (last visited January 13, 2022).

<sup>6</sup> See *12 Things You Might Not Know About Juneteenth*, <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/501680/12-things-you-mightnot-know-about-juneteenth> (last visited January 13, 2022).

## Legislation

Most states officially recognize Juneteenth as a day of observance, however, it is not a national holiday. In 1980, Texas became the first state to declare Juneteenth a state holiday. Since that time, forty-seven other states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation recognizing it as a holiday or day of observance. In 1991, the Florida Legislature designated June 19th of each year as “Juneteenth Day” to commemorate the traditional observance of the day the slaves in Florida were notified of the Emancipation Proclamation.<sup>7</sup> The following states have established Juneteenth Day as a paid holiday for state employees: Texas,<sup>8</sup> Virginia;<sup>9</sup> New York;<sup>10</sup> New Jersey;<sup>11</sup> Pennsylvania;<sup>12</sup> and Massachusetts.<sup>13</sup>

## Requirements for a Standard High School Diploma

Beginning with students entering grade 9, receipt of a standard high school diploma requires successful completion of 24 credits, an International Baccalaureate curriculum, or an Advanced International Certificate of Education curriculum. Of the 24 required credits, three credits must be social studies. A student must earn one credit in United States History, one-half credit in Economics, and one-half credit in United States Government.<sup>14</sup>

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

**Section 1** creates s. 683.20, F.S., to designate May 20 as “Emancipation day” to commemorate the traditional observance of the day that the enslaved African Americans of the State were notified of the Emancipation Proclamation. The bill authorizes the Governor to issue annually a proclamation that designates May 20 as Emancipation Day and to call on public officials, schools, private organizations, and all residents to honor the significance of the day.

**Section 2** amends s. 683.21, F.S., to clarify that Juneteenth Day commemorates the day all *remaining* enslaved African Americans were notified of the Emancipation Proclamation.

**Section 3** amends s. 1003.4282, F.S., to require high school United States history class to include 45 minutes of instruction on the Significance of Emancipation Day and Juneteenth Day beginning in the 2023-2024 school year.

**Section 4** provides that the bill takes effect on July 1, 2022.

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<sup>7</sup> Section 683.21, F.S.

<sup>8</sup> Texas Comptroller, *State of Texas Holiday Schedule*, available at <https://comptroller.texas.gov/about/holidays.php>, (last visited January 13, 2022).

<sup>9</sup> Commonwealth of Virginia, *2021 Pay and Holiday Leave*, available at [https://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/payandholidaycalendar2020.pdf?sfvrsn=815b0c03\\_6](https://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/payandholidaycalendar2020.pdf?sfvrsn=815b0c03_6) (last visited January 13, 2022).

<sup>10</sup> New York Department of Civil Service, *2021 Calendar of Legal Holidays for State Employees*, available at [https://www.cs.ny.gov/attendance\\_leave/2020\\_legal\\_holidays.cfm](https://www.cs.ny.gov/attendance_leave/2020_legal_holidays.cfm), (last visited January 13, 2022).

<sup>11</sup> Executive Office of the Governor, *State Holidays*, available at <https://www.state.nj.us/nj/about/facts/holidays/>, (last visited January 13, 2022).

<sup>12</sup> Pennsylvania Budget, *State Holidays for 2020*, available at <https://www.budget.pa.gov/Services/ForAgencies/Payroll/Documents/2020-calendar.pdf>, (last visited January 13, 2022).

<sup>13</sup> Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Massachusetts Legal Holidays*, available at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cishol/holidx.htm> (last visited January 13, 2022).

<sup>14</sup> Section 1003.4282, F.S.

**IV. Constitutional Issues:****A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

Not applicable. The bill does not require counties or municipalities to take action requiring the expenditure of funds, reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise revenue in the aggregate, nor reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

**B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

**C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

**D. State Tax or Fee Increases:**

None.

**E. Other Constitutional Issues:**

None identified.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

None.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends sections 683.21 and 1003.4282 of the Florida Statutes.

This bill creates section 683.20 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:**

**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

**B. Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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