



# P R O C L A M A T I O N

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth represents the first day of celebrating freedom in the United States for all Americans and the last known celebration for the ending of enslavement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed enslaved peoples living in the Confederacy, was enacted and took effect on January 1, 1863; and

**WHEREAS**, over two years later, on June 19, 1865, the news of this freedom finally reached enslaved people living in Galveston, TX. As those who were formally enslaved were recognized for the first time as citizens, Black Americans came to commemorate Juneteenth with celebrations across the country, building new lives and new traditions that we honor today through storytelling, education, music, ceremonies, and celebrations; and

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth is a day of profound weight and power. A long legacy of systemic racism, inequality, and inhumanity. But it is a day that also reminds us of the incredible capacity to heal, hope, and emerge from the darkest moments with purpose and resolve; and

**WHEREAS**, the history of Kansas as a Free State emphasizes the value of justice, humanity and the rejection of bigotry and oppression; and

**WHEREAS**, ninety-nine years after the inception of Juneteenth, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and, thereafter, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to guarantee all Americans their inalienable rights; and

**WHEREAS**, in the ongoing national dialogue of the meaning of freedom, Kansans remain committed to ensuring the value and dignity of all people; and

**WHEREAS**, the struggle for freedom and justice for all people must be continuously remembered and waged.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, The Mayor of the City of Arkansas City, Kansas, does hereby proclaim June 19th as

## **JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY**

in Arkansas City, Kansas, and encourage all citizens of the City of Arkansas City to observe Juneteenth National Independence Day with the Cowley County Juneteenth Celebration and other appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused this seal to be affixed.

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CHAD D. BEESON, MAYOR  
May 20, 2025