



WHEREAS, Our country is made up of people from every nation on earth, who are declared equal not only in freedom but also in justice, both of which are essential for a healthy human civilization; and

WHEREAS, Our nation was conceived on July 4th, 1776 with the Declaration of Independence, the classic statement being: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”; and

WHEREAS, At 2:00 p.m. on New Year’s Day, January 1, 1863, using his war powers as President, Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, providing that all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State “shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free;” and

WHEREAS, The Emancipation Proclamation made the permanent abolition of slavery a Union war aim and provided the legal framework for the emancipation of nearly all four million slaves as the Union armies advanced; and

WHEREAS, Hearing of the Proclamation, many slaves escaped to Union lines as the army units moved south; and

WHEREAS, On June 19, 1865, almost 2 ½ years later, Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced the end of both the Civil War and slavery, with this announcement:

“The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property, between former masters and slaves and the connection heretofore existing between them, becomes that between employer and hired labor. The Freedmen are advised to remain at their present homes and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts; and they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere”; and

WHEREAS, Texans began the celebration of Juneteenth in 1866, with community events such as parades, cookouts, prayer gatherings, musical performances and historical cultural readings; some communities purchased land for Juneteenth celebrations, such as Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas; and as freed families emigrated from Texas to other parts of the United States, they carried the Juneteenth celebration with them; and

WHEREAS, Al Edwards, a freshman state representative, put forward the bill, H.B. 1016, in 1979 making Texas the first state to grant this emancipation celebration; and

WHEREAS, On January 1, 1980, Juneteenth became an official Texas state holiday; and

WHEREAS, Since then, 45 other states and the District of Columbia have also declared it an official holiday; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Wil Kennedy, Mayor of the City of Iowa Colony, Texas, do hereby declare June 19, 2026, as **JUNETEENTH** in the City of Iowa Colony, Texas, and urge all citizens to become more aware of the significance of this celebration in African American History and in the heritage of our nation and City.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Iowa Colony, Texas, to be affixed this 15th day of June, 2026.

Wil Kennedy, Mayor