

WHEREAS; slavery was a legal institution that served as a tool of oppression and exploitation for nearly 250 years, with the first enslaved Africans arriving into the British colonies approximately 150 years before the nation’s founding; and

WHEREAS; while the Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, due to a lack of enforcement, slavery continued in Texas until the arrival of Major General Gordon Granger to Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, more than two years later, freeing the more than 250,000 people who had continued to be enslaved there; and

WHEREAS; since 1865, June 19 has become known as Juneteenth and is one of the oldest and most popular annual commemorations of the true end of slavery in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS; with the signing of the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act in 2021, Juneteenth became an official federal public holiday in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS; in 2009, Wisconsin became the 32nd state to formally recognize Juneteenth, although legislation to recognize the day in Wisconsin was first introduced by State Senator Spencer Coggs and State Representative Marcia Coggs in 1987; and

WHEREAS; on June 19, 2020, the Juneteenth Flag was raised over the Wisconsin State Capitol building for the first time in state history, and this year, the state will celebrate Juneteenth by raising the Juneteenth Flag over the Wisconsin State Capitol for the seventh year in a row; and

WHEREAS; the state recognizes that the struggles of our collective past cannot be separated from our modern history and that many of the injustices and inequities that Black Americans have historically endured have nevertheless remained deeply entrenched in our culture and institutions, leading to significant racial disparities in wealth, status, and capital; and

WHEREAS; on Juneteenth, the state joins communities across Wisconsin in celebrating freedom and the end of one of the country’s most shameful institutions, reflecting on the nation’s past and how it informs the systems of oppression that persist today, and reaffirming our commitment to the work that is necessary to address its lasting impact and to move forward together toward a brighter, stronger future for every kid, family, and community;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim June 19 2026 as

JUNETEENTH

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance
to all our state’s residents.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 10th day of June 2026.

TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:

SARAH GODLEWSKI, Secretary of State