

Ford, Amelia Morris, Rudy Simms, Floyd Jones, Dr. Mary Chapman, Odell Jenkins, Barbara Oliver-Hall. Of course, I have mentioned Reverend Ronald Myers. I am sure I have left some out and I probably should not have gone there, but I am very proud to have worked with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE) on House Concurrent Resolution 160 recognizing Juneteenth.

History must be regarded as a means of understanding the past and solving the future. It is my hope that we will pass this resolution today. Each one of us should speak to our two Senators and press them to have quick action in the Senate and get this over to the President for his signature. This is the right thing to do, long overdue.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE).

Mr. POE. I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 160, recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth. Juneteenth is the oldest known African American celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States. This holiday actually started because of events back in my home State of Texas. On June 19, 1865, Union General Gordon Granger led Northern soldiers into Galveston, Texas, first to announce the ending of the War Between the States and to order the release of the last remaining slaves.

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President Lincoln had actually issued the Emancipation Proclamation 2 years earlier freeing the slaves. He did so on January 1, 1863, in the midst of the War between the States. This was called the peculiar institution of slavery in the South, and it continued until this historic day, June 19, 1865, in Texas.

So on that day, June 19, 1865, Major General Granger dramatically declared when he landed in Galveston, Texas, "The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with the proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves." Thus the phrase "Juneteenth" originated.

It is interesting to note that the Emancipation Proclamation only freed the slaves in the South, not the border States. It took the 13th amendment to the Constitution to free all remaining slaves in the United States.

In any event, Juneteenth has not only become a Texas holiday but a national event. This past Sunday, thousands of Americans across the Nation celebrated Juneteenth through cultural displays and various educational activities. There have been numerous African American freedom fighters throughout countless generations, and

they paid a precious price to deliver equality and freedom. We have made significant strides in assuring that this country fulfills the words of our national anthem: "The land of free and the home of the brave." But we must remain ever vigilant, and these events such as Juneteenth will help us to remember that the Declaration of Independence must be a true reality for all peoples.

As that Declaration of Independence says, written by Thomas Jefferson: "We" do "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" absolute "pursuit of Happiness."

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I will simply close. Abraham Lincoln once made the statement that our Nation could not survive half slave and half free. Perhaps, as we look at ourselves today, we might say that our Nation will never become all that it has the possibility of being as long as we continue to experience the great disparities, disparities in health care, disparities in job opportunities, disparities in educational opportunities, disparities in housing, disparities in hope that one can experience the fulfillment of their dreams.

So as we support this resolution, we reflect upon the need for equal justice and continuing the pursuit for equal opportunity to every man his chance, his golden opportunity, to become all that he or she would have the potential of being, all that their hard work, integrity, the essence of their strength, all that their history and culture will combine to make them. That is, indeed, as Thomas Wolf would say, the promise of America. So Juneteenth is a day of hope and a day of promise that America will indeed become the land of the free, home of the brave.

I thank all of those who have come to the floor to speak on this concurrent resolution, all of the co-sponsors who co-sponsored and brought it to us today. I urge all of my colleagues to agree to it so that America does become the America that has never been, but the America that we all know can be.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my support for House Concurrent Resolution 160, a resolution that honors the national significance of June 19, 1865 when slaves in Texas were finally freed. I would like to thank Congressman DAVIS for his leadership and all of the supporters of this important piece of legislation.

On June 19, 1865, General Gordon Granger rode into Galveston, Texas and announced the freedom of the last American slaves; belatedly freeing 250,000 slaves in Texas nearly two and a half years after Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. The day coined "Juneteenth" was first celebrated in the Texas state capital in 1867 under the direction of the Freedmen's Bureau. Today, Juneteenth remains the oldest known celebra-

tion of slavery's demise. It commemorates freedom while acknowledging the sacrifices and contributions made by courageous African Americans towards making our great Nation the more conscious and accepting country that it has become.

Not until 1979 when my friend State Representative Al Edwards introduced the bill did Juneteenth become a Texas state holiday. It was first celebrated as such in 1980. Now 25 years later the United States House of Representatives will pass House Concurrent Resolution 160 as our Nation celebrates Juneteenth. As the Representative of the 9th Congressional District of Texas, I am pleased to join my colleagues in acknowledging the historical significance of Juneteenth as we remain ever-vigilant in recognizing that "history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future."

Civil rights pioneer Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Freedom is never free," and African American labor leader A. Phillip Randolph often said "Freedom is never given. It is won." We should all recognize the power and the ironic truth of those statements and we should pause to remember the enormous price paid by all Americans in our country's quest to realize its promise. Juneteenth honors the end of the 400 years of suffering African Americans endured under slavery and celebrates the legacy of perseverance that has become the hallmark of the African American community and its struggle for equality.

As we celebrate the 140th anniversary of Juneteenth, I ask that all of my colleagues join me in reflecting upon its significance. Because it was only after that day in 1865 when General Granger rode into Galveston, Texas, on the heels of the most devastating conflict in our country's history, in the aftermath of a civil war that pitted brother against brother, neighbor against neighbor and threatened to tear the fabric of our union apart forever that America truly became the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 160, a resolution recognizing the importance of the Juneteenth anniversary celebrations held nationwide on June 19. On that date 140 years ago, Union forces arrived at Galveston, Texas, bringing news of the Confederate surrender and enforcing, finally, President Abraham Lincoln's two-and-a-half-year old emancipation of the slaves. The ensuing celebration quickly became an annual event, spreading west to Seattle, north to Minneapolis, and east to Portland, Maine. In my own state of New Jersey, Juneteenth is celebrated at churches, community centers, and family picnics across the state.

I strongly support H. Con. Res. 160, which recognizes the significance of the Juneteenth anniversary and proclaims the sense of Congress that history should be regarded as a means for understanding the past and solving the challenges of the future. I rise to honor the celebration, and to honor the myriad contributions that African-Americans have made to American society in the years before and since. As inventors, teachers, firemen, soldiers, doctors, and statesmen, African-Americans have honored this country with their service and dedication. The longevity of the Juneteenth celebration is an enduring testament to the virtue of celebrating diversity.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I must also rise today to recognize the struggle that still faces us. Juneteenth evokes in all of us thoughts of a dark chapter in our Nation's history, and reinforces that which we already know: the struggle for equality is far from over. The joyous celebration of the emancipation of the slaves of Galveston, Texas, serves to remind us all of the need to remain committed to the justice, and freedom.

Today, Juneteenth is the longest-running celebration of the end of slavery in the United States. Its durability alone illustrates its significance. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, and for all the reasons above, I hope that my colleagues will join me in supporting H. Con. Res. 160.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 160, which recognizes the historic significance of Juneteenth Independence Day and encourages its continued celebration so all Americans can learn more about our country's past.

The resolution also rightly expresses the sense of Congress that knowing our history helps us solve challenges we face in the future, and that the celebration of the end of slavery is an important part of the history and heritage of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, Juneteenth has long been recognized as the day to celebrate the end of slavery in the United States. Juneteenth is the traditional celebration of the day on which the last slaves in America learned they had been freed.

Although slavery was abolished officially in 1863, it took over 2 years for news of freedom to spread to slaves. On June 19th, 1865, U.S. General Gordon Granger rode into Galveston, Texas and announced that the State's 200,000 slaves were free. Vowing never to forget the date, the former slaves coined the nickname Juneteenth, a blend of the words June and 19th. This holiday originated in the Southwest, but today it is celebrated throughout the Nation.

H. Con. Res. 160 underscores that the observance of Juneteenth Independence Day is an opportunity for all Americans to learn more about our common past and to better understand the experiences that have shaped our great Nation. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support H. Con. Res. 160, legislation commemorating a monumental day in the history of liberty, Juneteenth Independence Day. Juneteenth marks the events of June 19, 1865, when slaves in Galveston, Texas learned that they were at last free men and women. The slaves of Galveston were the last group of slaves to learn of the end of slavery. Thus, Juneteenth represents the end of slavery in America.

I hope all Americans will take the time to commemorate Juneteenth. Friends of human liberty should celebrate the end of slavery in any country. The end of American slavery is particularly worthy of recognition since there are few more blatant violations of America's founding principles, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, than slavery. I am particularly pleased to join the recognition of Juneteenth because I have the privilege of representing Galveston.

I thank the gentleman from Illinois for introducing this resolution, which I am proud to co-sponsor. I thank the House leadership for bringing this resolution to the floor, and I urge all of my colleagues to honor the end of slavery by voting for H. Con. Res. 160.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support the adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 160, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 160.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SUPPORTING FIREFIGHTER LIFE SAFETY SUMMIT INITIATIVES AND MISSION OF NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION AND UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 180) to support initiatives developed by the Firefighter Life Safety Summit and the mission of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and the United States Fire Administration to reduce firefighter fatalities and injuries, to encourage implementation of the new "Everyone Goes Home" campaign to make firefighter safety a national priority, and to support the goals of the national "stand down" called by fire organizations.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 180

Whereas for over 350 years our Nation's firefighters have dedicated their lives to ensuring the safety of their fellow citizens and communities;

Whereas throughout our Nation's history too many firefighters have died in the line of duty, leaving behind family members and friends to grieve their tragic losses;

Whereas these volunteer and career firefighters served with pride and died with honor;

Whereas in 1992 Congress created the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to lead a nationwide effort to remember the Nation's fallen firefighters and assist their survivors through a variety of programs;

Whereas the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation is dedicated to preventing future firefighter deaths and injuries;

Whereas the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation convened the first ever Firefighter Life Safety Summit in March 2004 to support the United States Fire Administration's goal of reducing firefighter fatalities by 25 percent within 5 years and 50 percent within 10 years through a commitment of energy and resources;

Whereas the Life Safety Summit developed 16 initiatives to significantly reduce firefighter fatalities and injuries, including the need to—

(1) define and advocate the need for a cultural change within the fire service relating to safety, incorporating leadership, management, supervision, accountability, and personal responsibility;

(2) enhance the personal and organizational accountability for health and safety throughout the fire service;

(3) focus greater attention on the integration of risk management with incident management at all levels, including strategic, tactical, and planning responsibilities;

(4) empower all firefighters to stop unsafe practices;

(5) develop and implement national standards for training, qualifications, and certification (including regular recertification) that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform;

(6) develop and implement national medical and physical fitness standards that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform;

(7) create a national research agenda and data collection system that relates to the initiatives;

(8) utilize available technology wherever it can produce higher levels of health and safety;

(9) thoroughly investigate all firefighter fatalities, injuries, and near misses;

(10) ensure that grant programs support the implementation of safe practices and mandate safe practices as an eligibility requirement;

(11) develop and champion national standards for emergency response policies and procedures;

(12) develop and champion national protocols for response to violent incidents;

(13) provide firefighters and their families access to counseling and psychological support;

(14) provide public education more resources and champion it as a critical fire and life safety program;

(15) strengthen advocacy for the enforcement of codes and the installation of home fire sprinklers; and

(16) make safety be a primary consideration in the design of apparatus and equipment; and

Whereas the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Fire Fighters, the National Volunteer Fire Council, and the Congressional Fire Services Institute have partnered with a number of other fire service organizations to call on all fire departments across the Nation to conduct a "stand down" for firefighter safety beginning Tuesday, June 21, 2005, during which fire departments are urged to suspend all nonemergency activity and instead focus entirely on firefighter safety in order to raise the level of awareness toward firefighter safety and call attention to the unacceptable number of line-of-duty deaths and injuries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) supports initiatives developed by the Firefighter Life Safety Summit and the mission of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and the United States Fire Administration to reduce firefighter fatalities and injuries;

(2) encourages implementation of the new "Everyone Goes Home" campaign to make firefighter safety a national priority; and

(3) supports the goals of the national "stand down" called by fire organizations beginning on June 21, 2005, and encourages all career, volunteer and combination fire departments across the country to participate in this important and life saving effort.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) and the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members