

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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HOUSE BILL 1607

Short Title: Establish Juneteenth National Freedom Day. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Womble, Jones (Primary Sponsors); Adams, Alexander, Bell, Bordsen, Brown, Bryant, Carney, Cunningham, England, Farmer-Butterfield, Fisher, Glazier, Hall, T. Harrell, Harrison, Holliman, Jeffus, Love, Lucas, Luebke, McAllister, Mobley, Pierce, Ross, Samuelson, Wainwright, Weiss, Wray, and Wright.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House.

April 19, 2007

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT ESTABLISHING JUNETEENTH NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY IN
2 NORTH CAROLINA.
3

4 Whereas, June 19, 1865, is considered the date when the last enslaved
5 Americans were notified of their new legal status by General Gordon Granger, who
6 arrived in Galveston, Texas, and issued General Order Number Three almost two and
7 one-half years after President Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation; and

8 Whereas, former slaves in Texas began to observe June 19 as the anniversary
9 of their emancipation and coined the term "Juneteenth"; and

10 Whereas, Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the
11 ending of slavery in the United States and is also known as "Juneteenth National
12 Freedom Day," "Emancipation Day," "Emancipation Celebration," "Freedom Day,"
13 "Jun-Jun," "Juneteenth Independence Day"; and

14 Whereas, Juneteenth commemorates the survival, due to God-given strength
15 and determination, of African-Americans through extreme adversity, hardship, and
16 triumph; and

17 Whereas, Americans of all colors, creeds, cultures, religions, and countries of
18 origin share in a common love of and respect for freedom, as well as the determination
19 to protect their right to freedom through the democratic institutions by which the tenets
20 of freedom are guaranteed and protected; and

21 Whereas, the nineteenth of June, along with the fourth of July, completes the
22 cycle of freedom for Americans' Independence Day observance; and

23 Whereas, Juneteenth is recognized as a state holiday or state holiday
24 observance in many states, including Texas, Oklahoma, Florida, Delaware, Idaho,
25 Alaska, Iowa, California, Wyoming, Missouri, Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, New

1 Jersey, New York, Colorado, Arkansas, Oregon, Kentucky, Michigan, New Mexico,
2 Virginia, Washington, and Tennessee; Now, therefore,
3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 103 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a
5 new section to read:

6 **"§ 103-11. Juneteenth National Freedom Day.**

7 (a) The nineteenth day of June of each year is adopted as Juneteenth National
8 Freedom Day to commemorate the end of slavery in the United States of America and
9 to demonstrate racial reconciliation and healing from the legacy of slavery.

10 (b) The Governor shall issue a proclamation on June 19 of each year as
11 Juneteenth National Freedom Day and encourage all North Carolinians celebrating this
12 day to honor and reflect on the significant roles African-Americans have played in the
13 history of the United States."

14 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.