

Senators Johnson, Gregory, Bieda, Hopgood, Hune, Hood, Brandenburg, Young, Warren, Schmidt, Emmons, Proos, Nofs, Booher, Rocca, Hildenbrand, Hertel, Smith, Knezek and Kowall offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 75.

A resolution recognizing June 19, 2015, as Juneteenth.

Whereas, The transatlantic slave trade system established both Europe and North America as world powers by and through the commoditization of Africans. Millions of Africans suffered disease and death on the eight week voyages across the Middle Passage; and

Whereas, From 1619 through 1865, millions of Africans and their descendants were enslaved in the United States, the thirteen American colonies, and eventually the United States of America; and

Whereas, Maritime, agricultural, insurance, defense, tobacco, sugar, and cotton industries were established off profits from the atrocities of slavery; and

Whereas, Slavery highlights the fundamental hypocrisy and moral contradiction of European whites in America who declared independent rights from Great Britain, while holding in bondage more than 100,000 Africans; and

Whereas, Michigan served as the major hub of the Underground Railroad and home to several white abolitionists, including U.S. Representative and U.S. Senator Jacob Merritt Howard, Guy Beckley of Ann Arbor, Erastus Hussey of Battle Creek, and Seymour Finney of Detroit; and

Whereas, Through the work of these great men of all colors, Second Baptist Church of Detroit, Friends of the Fugitives, Anti-Slavery Society, and other institutions, thousands of slaves were freed; and

Whereas, On this day in 1865, Texas was the last state to recognize that enslaved persons were free, two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed by President Lincoln. For this reason, it is celebrated as Juneteenth; and

Whereas, Slavery was abolished through the passage of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1865, after the end of the Civil War; and

Whereas, After the emancipation from 246 years of slavery, Africans in American continue to experience the vestiges of slavery from challenges to voting rights, inadequate public education systems, lack of access to capital lending institutions, and other social and economic injustices; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That the members of this legislative body commemorate June 19, 2015, as Juneteenth in the state of Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That we recognize the devastating legacy of American slavery, and encourage all citizens of Michigan to educate each other and future generations on the history of slavery to ensure that this tragedy will never be forgotten or repeated.