

HOUSE BILL NO. 5064

June 17, 2021, Introduced by Reps. Yancey, Scott, Whitsett, Tate, Camilleri, Steckloff, Koleszar, Brenda Carter, Anthony, Aiyash, Manoogian, Rabhi, Lasinski, Damoose, Fink, Outman and Cherry and referred to the Committee on Government Operations.

A bill to designate June 19 of each year as Juneteenth in the state of Michigan.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. (1) The legislature recognizes that slavery existed in
2 this country for more than 200 years. Millions of African-Americans
3 were brought to this country as slaves stacked in the bottom of
4 slave ships in a 5- to 12-week journey across the Atlantic Ocean
5 known as the "middle passage". Although approximately 11-1/2
6 million African-Americans survived the voyage across the ocean, the

1 number of those who died in the inhuman conditions of the passage
2 is probably even higher. Once in this country, the captives were
3 subjected to whipping, castration, branding, and rape. The
4 legislature further observes that Congress passed the Thirteenth
5 Amendment to the United States Constitution on January 31, 1865,
6 abolishing slavery throughout the United States and its
7 territories. In the following months, spontaneous celebrations
8 erupted throughout the country when African-Americans learned of
9 their freedom. News of the amendment reached the states at
10 different times, and it was not until June 19, 1865 that the
11 message of freedom reached the slaves in the western states. In
12 honor of this great moment in the history of our nation, the
13 legislature declares that June 19 of each year shall be known as
14 "Juneteenth".

15 (2) The legislature encourages each individual in this state
16 to pause on Juneteenth and reflect upon the strong survival
17 instinct of the African-American slaves and the excitement and
18 great joy with which African-Americans first celebrated the
19 abolition of slavery. It is a reminder to all Americans of the
20 status and importance of Americans of African descent as American
21 citizens.

22 Enacting section 1. This act does not take effect unless all
23 of the following bills of the 101st Legislature are enacted into
24 law:

25 (a) Senate Bill No. ____ or House Bill No. 5063 (request no.
26 01358'21).

27 (b) Senate Bill No. ____ or House Bill No. 5065 (request no.
28 01957'21).