

# JUNETEENTH PROCLAMATION FROM KING COUNTY



**Dow Constantine**  
King County Executive



**Metropolitan King County Council**

*WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates the traditional observance of the end of slavery in the United States; and*

*WHEREAS, on January 1, 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that "all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, hence forward and forever free"; and*

*WHEREAS, more than two years would pass before the news reached African Americans living in Texas, when on June 19, 1865, Union Major General Gordon Granger and his regiment arrived in Galveston, Texas, and spread the word that slavery had been abolished and they were "free"; and*

*WHEREAS, Juneteenth is currently the most popular day of commemorating the end of slavery in the United States (although there were other available options, including January 31, the date the 13th Amendment passed Congress in 1865; or December 6, the day the 13th Amendment was ratified that year); and*

*WHEREAS, on June 19, 1866, one year after Major Granger's announcement, the freed African American men and women in the state of Texas held the first official "Juneteenth" celebration, and Juneteenth celebrations have continued across the United States throughout the years; and*

*WHEREAS, the state of Texas became the first state in our nation to make Juneteenth an official holiday in 1979, followed by 41 other states that recognize Juneteenth as a state holiday or holiday observance; and*

*WHEREAS, Juneteenth is an important opportunity to honor the principles of the Declaration of Independence and to celebrate the achievements and contributions African Americans have made, and continue to make, in King County and across the nation;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Metropolitan King County Council and the King County Executive, proclaim June 19, 2021, as*

## **JUNETEENTH**

*in Martin Luther King, Jr. County, recognize its historic importance, and encourage all residents to join us in its commemoration.*

*DATED this nineteenth day of June, 2021.*

Dow Constantine, County Executive

Rod Dembowski, District One

Kathy Lambert, District Three

Dave Uptegrove, District Five

Joe McDermott, District Eight, Council Vice Chair

Claudia Balducci, District Six, Council Chair

Girmay Zühlke, District Two

Jeanne Kohl-Welles, District Four

Pete von Reichbauer, District Seven

Reagan Dunn, District Nine, Council Vice Chair