

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of the United States, issued a proclamation on September 22, 1862, declaring that on the first day of January, 1863, “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, thenceforward, and forever free”;

Whereas the proclamation declared “all persons held slaves within the insurgent States”—with the exception of Tennessee, southern Louisiana, and parts of Virginia, then within Union lines—“are free”;

Whereas, for two and half years, Texas slaves were held in bondage after the Emancipation Proclamation became official and only after Major General Gordon Granger and his soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, were African-American slaves in that State set free;

Whereas slavery was a horrendous practice and trade in human trafficking that continued until the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution ending slavery on December 18, 1865;

Whereas the Emancipation Proclamation is historically significant and history is regarded as a means of under-

standing the past and solving the challenges of the future;

Whereas one hundred and forty years after President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, African Americans have integrated into various levels of society; and

Whereas commemorating the 140th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation highlights and reflects the suffering and progress of the faith and strength of character shown by slaves and their descendants as an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion, or race: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) recognizes the historical significance of the
4 140th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclama-
5 tion as an important period in the Nation’s history;
6 and

7 (2) encourages its celebration in accordance
8 with the spirit, strength, and legacy of freedom, jus-
9 tice, and equality for all people of America and to
10 provide an opportunity for all people of the United
11 States to learn more about the past and to better

1 understand the experiences that have shaped the
2 Nation.

Passed the Senate May 1, 2003.

Attest:

Secretary.

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 15

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Commemorating the 140th anniversary of the
issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation.