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State of Misconsin 2023 - 2024 LEGISLATURE

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2023 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 57

June 28, 2023 - Introduced by Senators L. Johnson, Bradley, Carpenter, Larson, Spreitzer, Pfaff, Roys, Hesselbein and Jacque, cosponsored by Representatives Drake, Emerson, Neubauer, Ratcliff, Ohnstad, Subeck, Vining, Bare, Ortiz-Velez, Shelton, Goyke, Doyle, C. Anderson, Shankland, Joers, Considine, Brandtjen, Andraca, Dittrich, Palmeri, Riemer, Allen, Hong, Sinicki, Cabrera, J. Anderson, Conley, Schraa, Clancy, McGuire, Baldeh, Haywood, Myers, Stubbs, Moore Omokunde and Madison. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

Relating to: recognizing June 19, 2023, as Juneteenth Day in Wisconsin.

Whereas, Juneteenth Day is a national holiday that celebrates the end of slavery in the United States, and Juneteenth Day specifically commemorates June 19, 1865, the day that Union General Gordon Granger spoke in Galveston, Texas, proclaiming free the last remaining slaves in the United States; and

Whereas, Union General Gordon Granger delivered this news to recognize the freedom of these men, and this proclamation was given nearly two and one-half years after the Emancipation Proclamation was declared; and

Whereas, slavery in the United States lasted over 250 years and enslaved millions of African Americans in horrific conditions throughout all regions in the United States, including in Wisconsin, where hundreds of slaves were held illegally; and

Whereas, Juneteenth Day is officially observed in 47 states across the country, and Juneteenth Day has come to signify a celebration of African American freedom, achievement, and history; and

Whereas, Wisconsin has one of the nation's oldest and longest running Juneteenth celebrations due to Milwaukee's first celebration in 1971, which began when then-Northcott staff member Margaret Rogers told others how much she had enjoyed a Juneteenth Day celebration in Georgia. Based on Rogers's experience, Northcott decided to begin a similar tradition in Milwaukee—spearheaded in its early days by festival executive director Marvin Hannah and coordinator Jan Kemp-Cole—and the festival soon became the unofficial opening of summer; and Whereas, Juneteenth Day brings the African American community and

Whereas, Juneteenth Day brings the African American community and persons of all races together in the fight for equality, and it is important as legislators to promote solidarity in this effort; and

Whereas, Juneteenth Day is typically celebrated in ways such as public readings of the Emancipation Proclamation, educational activities, parades, community festivals, and family gatherings; and

Whereas, Juneteenth Day provides a time for a reflection on the history of the institution of slavery in the United States and Wisconsin, provides an opportunity to educate Americans about the history of slavery and emancipation, and provides an occasion to celebrate the continuing advancement of African Americans and freedom in the United States; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That the legislature hereby proclaims June 19, 2023, as Juneteenth Day in Wisconsin.

(END)