

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 664 Session of 2015

INTRODUCED BY HELM, WATERS, KINSEY, MUSTIO, COHEN, LONGIETTI, KIM, READSHAW, REGAN, SCHREIBER, GRELL, BISHOP, THOMAS, PICKETT, MILLARD, DiGIROLAMO, HENNESSEY, V. BROWN, WHEELAND, O'NEILL, SCHWEYER, ROZZI, SONNEY, TOEPEL, YOUNGBLOOD, FREEMAN, STURLA, BROWNLEE, BOBACK, GINGRICH, DIAMOND, FARINA, DONATUCCI, ROSS, DeLUCA, CUTLER, KAUFFMAN, KIRKLAND, MARSICO, DUSH, RAPP, C. PARKER, McNEILL, MENTZER, WATSON, R. BROWN, MAJOR, MURT, MAHONEY, GROVE, WHEATLEY, KORTZ, HAHN, REED, ROEBUCK, BAKER, SAYLOR, CORBIN, PHILLIPS-HILL, KAMPF, McCARTER, TOOHL, QUINN, MOUL, FABRIZIO, GIBBONS, PASHINSKI, CALTAGIRONE, JOZWIAK, HEFFLEY AND DAVIS, FEBRUARY 27, 2015

SENATOR BROWNE, APPROPRIATIONS, IN SENATE, RE-REPORTED AS AMENDED, JUNE 22, 2016

AN ACT

1 Providing for the annual designation and holiday observance of ~~of~~ <--
2 ~~the third Saturday in June~~ JUNE 19 as "Juneteenth National <--
3 Freedom Day" in this Commonwealth.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Legislative findings.

7 The General Assembly hereby finds and declares as follows:

8 (1) Originating in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865,
9 when slaves in that state learned that they had been freed,
10 "Juneteenth National Freedom Day" is the oldest African-
11 American holiday observance in the United States.

12 (2) "Juneteenth National Freedom Day" commemorates the
13 survival instinct of Africans who endured a transatlantic

1 journey, known as the Middle Passage, on slave ships from
2 their homeland to this country.

3 (3) Approximately 11.5 million Africans survived the
4 harsh voyage to slave markets in the New World, and the slave
5 population in America grew quickly.

6 (4) "Juneteenth National Freedom Day" further
7 commemorates the impact of slavery, the abolition movement
8 and African-American emancipation in the United States and
9 has become a traditional celebration of independence, human
10 rights and African-American culture in many communities.

11 (5) Recognition of "Juneteenth National Freedom Day" in
12 this Commonwealth would encourage all governmental entities,
13 civic organizations, schools and institutions of higher
14 education in this Commonwealth to observe the day in a manner
15 that emphasizes the meaning and importance of the end of
16 slavery in the United States and to recognize and celebrate
17 the importance of this day to every person who cherishes
18 liberty and equality for all people.

19 (6) "Juneteenth National Freedom Day" is celebrated
20 annually in at least 37 states nationwide.

21 Section 2. Designation.

22 ~~The third Saturday in June~~ JUNE 19 is designated as
23 "Juneteenth National Freedom Day" in this Commonwealth.

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24 Section 3. Effective date.

25 This act shall take effect immediately.