



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

State Sen. Malcolm A. Smith Passes 'Juneteenth Day' Resolution

MALCOLM A. SMITH April 30, 2013

(Albany, NY) - The State Senate today joined Senator Malcolm A. Smith (D-Hollis) in passing his resolution calling on Gov. Cuomo to proclaim June 19, 2013 as Juneteenth Day in New York State. This year marks the 148th Anniversary of the holiday, which is the oldest-known celebration of the ending of slavery.

"In recognizing Juneteenth Day, we recognize an important part of our nation's history," Smith said. "The end of slavery marked a triumphant moment for African-Americans, who, for the first time, were able to enjoy at least some of the freedoms they had been denied for so long."

Juneteenth began on June 19, 1865, the date Union soldiers under the command of Major General George Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, with the news that the Civil War had ended and that all slaves were free.

Juneteenth has been known by a variety of names, including "Jun-Jun," "Freedom Day," "Emancipation Day" and "Emancipation Celebration."

It is an occasion to celebrate freedom as well as a time for reflection, education and self-

improvement. A wide range of activities have become traditional at Juneteenth celebrations, including barbecuing, baseball, rodeos, fishing and drinking strawberry soda.

In 1980, the State of Texas was the first state to recognize Juneteenth as an official state holiday, through the efforts of Al Edwards, an African American State Legislator.