



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, on June 18, 2021, Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, S. 475, creating a federal holiday to commemorate Juneteenth was signed into law; and

WHEREAS, on May 21, 2024, the Alaska Legislature passed Senate Bill 22 recognizing Juneteenth as an official state holiday in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, this commemoration is the oldest known celebration commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, dating back to June 19, 1865, when Union Soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, arrived in Galveston, Texas with news that the civil war had ended and that all enslaved people were now free. The state of Texas held the last major remnant of slavery in the country after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation became official in 1863. Each year cities across Alaska and the nation honor the freeing of the last slaves and celebrate African American heritage; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is a day for rejoicing, but also for assessment, education, self-improvement, and planning for the future. It is a day when people from all races, nationalities, and religions join to acknowledge a period in our history that shaped and continues to influence our society today; and

WHEREAS, we must continue to acknowledge the evils of slavery, to recognize the devastating impacts of slavery on African Americans and our country as a whole, and to engage in conversation to learn from our history. We must continue to come together, young and old, to listen, to learn, and to grow, as well as to reaffirm our commitment to upholding the inalienable rights outlined in our nation's constitution – the rights of liberty, dignity, and equality for all citizens.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Dennis Fleming, Mayor of the City of Valdez, do hereby proclaim June 19, 2024, as:

Juneteenth Day

And encourage all citizens to reflect on the importance of this day marking the end of slavery and to recommit ourselves to the ongoing work of guaranteeing liberty and equal rights for all Americans.

Dated this 4th day of June, 2024.

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA

Dennis Fleming, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sheri L. Pierce, MMC, City Clerk