

By Senator Bracy

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to special days of observance;  
3           creating s. 683.20, F.S.; designating "Emancipation  
4           Day" to officially commemorate the freeing of enslaved  
5           African Americans in Florida; authorizing the Governor  
6           to issue an annual proclamation honoring the  
7           significance of Emancipation Day; amending s. 683.21,  
8           F.S.; specifying that Juneteenth Day officially  
9           commemorates the freeing of all remaining enslaved  
10          African Americans in the United States; amending s.  
11          1003.4282, F.S.; requiring high school students  
12          enrolled in a United States History course to receive  
13          specified instruction on the significance of  
14          Emancipation Day and Juneteenth Day; providing an  
15          effective date.

16  
17           WHEREAS, on January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln  
18          issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which afforded free status  
19          under federal law to the millions of enslaved African Americans  
20          who resided in states that had seceded from the Union, including  
21          Florida, and

22           WHEREAS, despite the issuance of the Emancipation  
23          Proclamation, it was not fully enforced in certain regions of  
24          the United States for more than 2 years afterward, and

25           WHEREAS, emancipation in Florida was proclaimed in  
26          Tallahassee on May 20, 1865, and for this reason Floridians  
27          traditionally celebrate Emancipation Day on May 20 of each year,  
28          and

29           WHEREAS, on or about June 19, 1865, federal authorities

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30 arrived in Galveston, Texas, to enforce the Emancipation  
31 Proclamation and inform the remaining enslaved African Americans  
32 that the Civil War had ended and that they were now free, and

33 WHEREAS, thereafter, former slaves and their descendants  
34 continued to commemorate each June 19 as a celebration of  
35 freedom and the emancipation of all slaves in the United States,  
36 and

37 WHEREAS, in 1991, the Florida Legislature officially  
38 designated June 19 as "Juneteenth Day" to annually commemorate  
39 the freeing of slaves, and

40 WHEREAS, this act designates Emancipation Day as a special  
41 day of observance in this state to commemorate the announcement  
42 of the abolition of slavery and to recognize the significant  
43 contributions of African Americans to this state and our nation,  
44 NOW, THEREFORE,

45

46 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

47

48 Section 1. Section 683.20, Florida Statutes, is created to  
49 read:

50 683.20 Emancipation Day.-

51 (1) May 20 is hereby designated "Emancipation Day" to  
52 annually commemorate the traditional observance of the day that  
53 the enslaved African Americans of this state were notified of  
54 the Emancipation Proclamation.

55 (2) The Governor may issue a proclamation each year which  
56 designates May 20 as Emancipation Day and calls on public  
57 officials, schools, private organizations, and all residents to  
58 honor the significance of the day.

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59 Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 683.21, Florida  
60 Statutes, is amended to read:

61 683.21 Juneteenth Day.—

62 (1) June 19th of each year is hereby designated "Juneteenth  
63 Day" to commemorate the traditional observance of the day all  
64 remaining enslaved African Americans ~~the slaves in Florida~~ were  
65 notified of the Emancipation Proclamation.

66 Section 3. Paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section  
67 1003.4282, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

68 1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school diploma.—

69 (3) STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA; COURSE AND ASSESSMENT  
70 REQUIREMENTS.—

71 (d) *Three credits in social studies.*—A student must earn  
72 one credit in United States History, which, beginning in the  
73 2023-2024 school year, must include at least 45 minutes of  
74 instruction on the significance of Emancipation Day and  
75 Juneteenth Day as designated in ss. 683.20 and 683.21,  
76 respectively; one credit in World History; one-half credit in  
77 economics; and one-half credit in United States Government,  
78 which must include a comparative discussion of political  
79 ideologies, such as communism and totalitarianism, that conflict  
80 with the principles of freedom and democracy essential to the  
81 founding principles of the United States. The United States  
82 History EOC assessment constitutes 30 percent of the student's  
83 final course grade. Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year,  
84 students taking the United States Government course are required  
85 to take the assessment of civic literacy identified by the State  
86 Board of Education pursuant to s. 1007.25(4). Students earning a  
87 passing score on the assessment are exempt from the

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88 postsecondary civic literacy assessment required by s.

89 1007.25(4).

90 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.