

2020 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

20200576D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5004

Offered August 18, 2020

Prefiled August 17, 2020

Designating December 6, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Abolition Day in Virginia.

Patrons—Davis, Cole, J.G., Avoli, Batten, Brewer, Cole, M.L., Edmunds, Fowler, Gilbert, Head, LaRock, Robinson, Runion, Walker, Webert and Wilt

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, in the early history of the United States, numerous documents and declarations were made in support of ending the institution of slavery; and

WHEREAS, while Juneteenth is an important day in the nation's history, the original intent of the document it celebrates, the Emancipation Proclamation, was not to abolish slavery, but rather to attempt to preserve the Union at the cost of prolonging slavery; and

WHEREAS, the Emancipation Proclamation only abolished slavery in some states and specifically exempted slaves in Southeast Virginia from their freedom; and

WHEREAS, there was a subsequent bipartisan effort to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and abolish the institution of slavery nationwide; and

WHEREAS, when the United States Congress ratified the Thirteenth Amendment on December 6, 1865, it became the only action taken by the executive or legislative branches of the United States government to officially eliminate the institution of slavery; and

WHEREAS, honoring December 6 as Abolition Day will raise awareness of the historical significance of the Thirteenth Amendment and pay tribute to the legacy of those who fought for its passage; and

WHEREAS, residents, businesses, and organizations throughout the Commonwealth are encouraged to observe and celebrate this day and join in appropriate commemorative events; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate December 6, in 2020 and in each succeeding year, as Abolition Day in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates post the designation of this day on the General Assembly's website.

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