

1 **RESOLUTION NO. 2021-40**

2 **A RESOLUTION OF THE ALBANY CITY COUNCIL**
3 **IN SUPPORT OF CITY JUNETEENTH HOLIDAY**
4 **COMMEMORATING END OF SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES**

5 **WHEREAS**, the first enslaved Africans were brought as captives to what is now the
6 Commonwealth of Virginia in 1619; and

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8 **WHEREAS**, Black people were bought and sold as slave labor for at least
9 245 years and suffered unspeakable acts of violence; and

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11 **WHEREAS**, President Abraham Lincoln first issued the Emancipation Proclamation
12 effective January 1, 1863, freeing the enslaved people in the Confederate states. However,
13 Southern slave owners ignored that order even as enslaved people in the South worked for
14 freedom, ran to U.S. lines, and fought for the U.S. Army; and

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16 **WHEREAS**, on June 19, 1865, U.S. soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas with the
17 orders to enforce the presidential proclamation and Black Texans used this moment to claim
18 the freedom they had long fought for in the face of white Texans' continued efforts to retain
19 slavery. This day has since come to be known as Juneteenth; and

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21 **WHEREAS**, Juneteenth is celebrated as an observance in many cities, towns, and
22 villages on June 19th but is not a federal holiday; and

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24 **WHEREAS**, other Black communities have long celebrated other dates to mark
25 emancipation, including West Indian Emancipation Day, Watch Night, Eighth of August in
26 Tennessee, Memorial Day in Charleston, and July 4 in Vicksburg but Juneteenth has emerged
27 as the most-celebrated emancipation day holiday in the United States and, particularly, in
28 California; and

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1 **WHEREAS**, the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution abolishes
2 slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime, and was ratified by the
3 required number of states on December 6, 1865; and
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5 **WHEREAS**, other systems of oppression, such as sharecropping, Jim Crow,
6 redlining, human bondage and trafficking, and mass incarceration, and the police violence
7 against Black bodies continued throughout our Country’s history and perpetuated the racist
8 legal and social systems that persist to this day; and
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10 **WHEREAS**, the National League of Cities recognizes the history of racism in our
11 country and how it has led to many present- day disparities in education and job attainment,
12 housing, and healthcare, as well as disproportionate incarceration rates for Black people in
13 cities, towns and villages across our country.
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15 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City of Albany designates June
16 19th as Juneteenth Independence Day, supports a Juneteenth celebration annually in Albany,
17 recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day to the United States,
18 designates June 19th as an annual paid municipal holiday for the employees of the City of
19 Albany, supports the continued nationwide celebration of Juneteenth Independence Day to
20 provide an opportunity for the people of the United States to learn more about the past and to
21 better understand and acknowledge the experiences that have shaped the United States, and
22 recognizes that the observance of the end of slavery is a crucial part of the history and heritage
23 of the United States.
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GE'NELL GARY, MAYOR