

# Proclamation



## CITY OF NORTHAMPTON COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

### Juneteenth Independence Day June 19, 2024

**WHEREAS,** On June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1865, two and half years after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, Union soldiers led by Mayor General Gordon Granger, landed on Galveston Island, Texas with the news that the Civil War had ended and that all enslaved people were free; and

**WHEREAS,** Mayor General Granger announced to the residents of Texas that, "...in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and the rights of property, between former masters and slaves and the connection heretofore existing between them, becomes that between employers and hired labor"; and

**WHEREAS,** the first Juneteenth celebration was held in Texas in 1866. Since then, Juneteenth has been celebrated in communities across the United States, providing an opportunity to mark the emancipation of enslaved people; and

**WHEREAS,** in the 191<sup>st</sup> Session of the Massachusetts General Court in 2020, the Legislature passed a bill to make **Juneteenth Independence Day** a state holiday allowing the citizens of the Commonwealth to join hundreds of communities across the country in recognizing this important day. Shortly thereafter, Governor Baker signed this bill into law; and

**WHEREAS,** **Juneteenth Independence Day** is a time when people of all races, nationalities, and religions can come together to recognize the painful history of slavery and lasting impact of systemic racism and racial injustice in the United States. It is also an opportunity to recommit ourselves to the goal of creating a more equal and just society; and

**WHEREAS,** the City of Northampton, with its longstanding commitment to combatting racism and social injustice is honored to join in celebrating this important holiday and continuing to work to end racism and injustice in our community; and so,

**NOW**

**THEREFORE,** I, Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra proclaim June 19, 2024 as

### **Juneteenth Independence Day**

and encourage the citizens of our community to reflect on the painful history of slavery and work to end racism and inequality in our community.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand and have imprinted the seal of the City of Northampton on this 19<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2024.**



  
Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra