

**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA**  
**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

**At Charleston**

**A PROCLAMATION**

**By the Governor**

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, is celebrated each year on June 19 in the United States to commemorate the end of slavery; and

**WHEREAS**, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on New Year's Day in 1863, which ordered the freeing of all slaves in states that were rebelling against Union forces; and

**WHEREAS**, the Emancipation Proclamation had little effect in Texas, where there were few Union troops to enforce the order; and

**WHEREAS**, the message of freedom finally reached African Americans in Texas on June 19, 1865, when Union General Gordon Granger, backed by nearly 2,000 troops, arrived in the city of Galveston and made the announcement; and

**WHEREAS**, West Virginia recognizes Juneteenth as the oldest known celebration commemorating the end of slavery; and

**WHEREAS**, on this day, June 17, 2021, President Biden will sign the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, which establishes Juneteenth as an official federal holiday; and

**WHEREAS**, section one, article two, chapter two of the Code of West Virginia, and section 143-1-14 of the West Virginia Code of State Regulations vests the Governor with the authority to proclaim and treat additional days as official holidays or days of special observance, or days for the general cessation of business; and

**WHEREAS**, in acknowledgement of the historical significance of Juneteenth, and the fact it is to be recognized as an official federal holiday, it is fitting and proper that the public employees of this State be permitted to generally cease business on Friday, the 18<sup>th</sup> day of June, Two Thousand Twenty One, to spend an extended and enjoyable holiday weekend with their loved ones.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, JIM JUSTICE**, pursuant to the foregoing and by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Governor of the State of West Virginia, do hereby **PROCLAIM** and **ORDER** that Friday, the Eighteenth day of June, Two Thousand Twenty-One shall be treated as if it were an official holiday, and the public employees of this State may be excused from their work duties on that day without charge against accrued annual leave; and do further

**PROCLAIM** that this **ORDER** shall not affect private businesses, local governments, and other entities and individuals not employed by the State of West Virginia; nor shall it affect the work requirements of those public employees who may be called upon to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of West Virginia's citizenry and compensated in accordance with the legislative rules established by the West Virginia Division of Personnel; however, in accordance with subsection (c), section one, article two, chapter two of the Code of West Virginia, county commissions may treat Friday, the Eighteenth day of June, Two Thousand Twenty-One, as if it were a legal holiday, and the courts may do the same.

*[signature as follows]*

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.



**By the Governor**

**DONE** at the Capitol in the City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this seventeenth day of June, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-one, and in the One Hundred Fifty-Eighth year of the State.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Justice".

**GOVERNOR**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mac Warner".

**SECRETARY OF STATE**