



HAPPY JUNETEENTH 2021!

Let's take time to commemorate a moment in history that forever set the stage for the pursuit of equality and inclusivity. This Saturday, we celebrate Juneteenth, which is "shorthand" for "June" plus "nineteenth". Known as *Emancipation Day*, *Freedom Day*, *Jubilee Day*, and *Liberation Day* – this time commemorates the end of Slavery in the United States. On June 19, 1865, a defining moment in the Civil War took place between the Union Army (North) and the Confederate Army (South). June 19th marks the day when Union Army Major General Gordon Granger issued a "military order" in Galveston, Texas, declaring "absolute equality" for all slaves. Initially, President Abraham Lincoln issued The Emancipation Proclamation on Sept. 22, 1862, to begin effective Jan. 1, 1863 with the enactment of the 13th Amendment abolishing the institution of slavery. Yet, news traveled sluggishly.



Most Confederate states refused to abide by the Emancipation Proclamation. Nearly 200,000 African American soldiers enlisted in the Union Army to assist in the fight for freedom. The month of April 1865 proved to be significant following President Lincoln's assassination on April 15, and the Union Army's capture of the Confederates capital of Richmond, Virginia, later that month. Although slavery didn't abruptly end for all slaves, June 19 is noted as the "official day" historically cited. In 1866, the institution of slavery was finally abolished.

Last year, our country experienced a shift in race relations, grappling with an unprecedented need to resolve a history marred in racism. Together, we're reimagining a diverse and inclusive future. As Veterans, we have courageously fought for the freedom of this country, and those of our allies. This Juneteenth, take time to acknowledge this difficult period in America's history and commemorate the countless contributions of African Americans.

The Veterans Caucus will not be having an official event. Instead, we encourage all members to participate at local events throughout California. Remain safe and well.

Onward and forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Ronald Cohen".

M. Ronald Cohen
Chair, California Democratic Party's Veterans Caucus
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