

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL**

June 4, 2024

**Commemorating Juneteenth: A Commitment to Freedom and Reflection in Los Angeles County**

Juneteenth marks an essential moment in our nation's history, commemorating the day when the last enslaved African Americans in Galveston, Texas were informed of their liberation in 1865. This act came notably two years after the Emancipation Proclamation and was a precursor to the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in December 1865, which formally abolished slavery. This recognition was further solidified when President Joe Biden declared Juneteenth as a Federal holiday on June 17, 2021.

Juneteenth is more than a day of celebration. It is a symbol of the enduring struggle against racial injustice and inequality, recalling the harsh realities of over 400 years of slavery and the resilience of those who fought for emancipation. It originated from the delayed emancipation of slaves in Texas and has grown into a nationwide reflection on freedom, featuring events that range from historical reenactments to community festivals.

In Los Angeles County (County), Juneteenth is a time for vibrant community engagement and education. The County Library is curating special booklists and hosting programs<sup>1</sup> to promote historical literacy for all ages. Furthermore, the Department of Parks and Recreation is organizing a "Juneteenth Celebration<sup>2</sup>" on Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://lacountylibrary.org/celebrate-juneteenth/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://parks.lacounty.gov/los-angeles-county-parks-celebrate-juneteenth/>

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from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Mona Park, that will include photo exhibits, parades, music, food, games, stories, informational booths, and poem readings to educate and share the significance of Juneteenth.

Additionally, the Second Supervisorial District will hold its “4th Annual Juneteenth Celebration and Resource Fair<sup>3</sup>,” on Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup> from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Victoria Park, offering cultural performances as well as essential services like legal aid, record expungement, and mental health counseling, emphasizing the ongoing need for support and empowerment within our communities.

As we commemorate Juneteenth in the County, we must also reflect on the systemic challenges that persist, such as economic disparities, health inequities, and social injustices, which disproportionately affect African Americans. The observance of Juneteenth through community participation, educational programs, and family gatherings is a powerful affirmation of our commitment to true freedom and equality.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. In honor of June 19, 2024, as Juneteenth in the County, direct all County departments, and encourage cooperation from the Sheriff, District Attorney, Assessor, and Superintendent of the Los Angeles County Office of Education, to collaborate with the Library and the Department of Parks and Recreation to amplify their Juneteenth initiatives across websites and social media platforms.
2. Urge all residents of the County to participate in Juneteenth events and activities across the County, fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of this historic day and its current relevance to our community.

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(RM/CAS/SL/NR)

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<sup>3</sup> <https://mitchell.lacounty.gov/juneteenth-2024/>