

State of Vermont

House of Representatives



Montpelier, Vermont

House Resolution

H.R. 21

House resolution commemorating the 155th anniversary of Juneteenth and recognizing our State's and nation's continuing struggle for racial equality

Offered by: Representatives Christie of Hartford, Ancel of Calais, Anthony of Barre City, Austin of Colchester, Bartholomew of Hartland, Beck of St. Johnsbury, Birong of Vergennes, Bock of Chester, Briglin of Thetford, Browning of Arlington, Brumsted of Shelburne, Burke of Brattleboro, Campbell of St. Johnsbury, Carroll of Bennington, Chase of Colchester, Chesnut-Tangerman of Middletown Springs, Christensen of Weathersfield, Cina of Burlington, Coffey of Guilford, Colburn of Burlington, Colston of Winooski, Copeland Hanzas of Bradford, Cordes of Lincoln, Demrow of Corinth, Dolan of Waitsfield, Donahue of Northfield, Durfee of Shaftsbury, Elder of Starksboro, Emmons of Springfield, Fegard of Berkshire, Gannon of Wilmington, Gardner of Richmond, Giambatista of Essex, Gonzalez of Winooski, Grad of Moretown, Haas of Rochester, Hill of Wolcott, Hooper of Montpelier, Hooper of Burlington, Houghton of Essex, James of Manchester, Jessup of Middlesex, Johnson of South Hero, Killacky of South Burlington, Kornheiser of Brattleboro, Krowinski of Burlington, LaLonde of South Burlington, Lanpher of Vergennes, Lefebvre of Newark, Leffler of Enosburgh, Lippert of Hinesburg, Long of Newfane, Macaig of Williston, McCarthy of St. Albans City, McCullough of Williston, Mrowicki of Putney, Murphy of Fairfax, Nicoll of Ludlow, Norris of Shoreham, Notte of Rutland City, Page of Newport City, Pajala of Londonderry, Partridge of Windham, Patt of Worcester, Pugh of South Burlington, Redmond of Essex, Reed of Braintree, Rogers of Waterville, Scheu of Middlebury, Seymour of Sutton, Sibilia of Dover, Squirrell of Underhill, Stevens of Waterbury, Sullivan of Dorset, Sullivan of Burlington, Till of Jericho, Toleno of Brattleboro, Toll of Danville, Townsend of South Burlington, Troiano of Stannard, Tully of Rockingham, Walz of Barre City, Webb of Shelburne, White of Hartford, Wood of Waterbury, Yacovone of Morristown, Yantachka of Charlotte, and Young of Greensboro

Whereas, on May 25, 2020, four Minneapolis police officers, including Derek Chauvin, responded to a call that George Floyd, an African American, was attempting to pay for a purchase with counterfeit currency, and

Whereas, Officer Chauvin knelt on George Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes, continuing this pressure unabated even after George Floyd protested that he could not breathe, and

Whereas, George Floyd became unconscious and died on the scene, and

Whereas, the police officers were fired; Officer Chauvin was charged with third-degree murder—a charge later upgraded to second-degree murder—and with second-degree manslaughter; and his colleagues were subsequently charged with aiding and abetting, and

Whereas, the majority of President Trump's tweeting in response to the death has been highly inflammatory and racist, and he has advocated a much-criticized militaristic response, and

Whereas, George Floyd's death again highlights the dangers and disparate treatment that persons of color confront in our nation, and

Whereas, his death followed a police officer's fatal choking of Eric Garner in New York City; the deadly police shootings of Michael Brown Jr. in Ferguson, Missouri, and of Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky; the death of Freddie Carlos Gray Jr. in Baltimore, Maryland, after transport in a police van; and the civilian killings of Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida, and Ahmaud Arbery in Satilla Shores, Georgia, and

Whereas, Vermonters of color have experienced a higher rate of COVID-19 infections than has the State's overall population, and

Whereas, Vermonters of color are subject to disparate law enforcement treatment, and

Whereas, the recent harassment of an African American family in Hartford was appalling, and

Whereas, today, Friday, June 19, 2020, marks the 155th anniversary of Union General Gordon Granger's public reading, in Galveston, Texas, of General Order No. 3, announcing the freedom of all previously enslaved persons in Texas, and

Whereas, June 19, now known as Juneteenth, is the holiday that commemorates the end of slavery in the United States, and in 2008, the General Assembly enacted 1 V.S.A. § 375, designating the third Saturday of June as Juneteenth National Freedom Day in Vermont, and

Whereas, the observance of Juneteenth serves as a powerful reminder that the promise of racial equality continues to elude us, now therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That this legislative body commemorates the 155th anniversary of Juneteenth and recognizes our State's and nation's continuing struggle for racial equality, and be it further

Resolved: That the Clerk of the House be directed to send a copy of this resolution to President Trump, the Vermont Congressional Delegation, and the Vermont Human Rights Commission.