

## Press Release

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Contact: Rev. Ronald V. Myers, Sr., M.D., *Chairman*  
**National Juneteenth Holiday Campaign**  
**National Juneteenth Observance Foundation (NJOF)**  
**National Juneteenth Christian Leadership Council (NJCLC)**  
662-247-3364 662-247-1471  
e-mail: [JuneteenthDOC@yahoo.com](mailto:JuneteenthDOC@yahoo.com)  
web sites: [www.NationalJuneteenth.com](http://www.NationalJuneteenth.com)

### **12th Annual WASHINGTON JUNETEENTH National Holiday Observance Returns to the Nation's Capitol**

#### **Myers Request Congress Support the Establishment of Juneteenth Independence Day as a National Day of Observance**

#### **Speaker of the House John Boehner Invited to Discuss the Three-Fifths Clause During Juneteenth**



**Rev. Ronald V. Myers, Sr., M.D., (left) Chairman of the National Juneteenth Observance Foundation (NJOF) and the National Juneteenth Christian Leadership Council (NJCLC), Congressman Danny K. Davis (D-IL), (center) Chairman of the National Juneteenth Congressional Committee and Senator John Boehner(R-OH), (right) Speaker of the House are invited speakers at the 2011 WASHINGTON JUNETEENTH National Holiday Observance.**

(Washington, DC) - Leaders of the [Campaign to Establish Juneteenth as a National Holiday Observance](#) will return to the nation's capitol for the annual [WASHINGTON JUNETEENTH National Holiday Observance](#) hopeful that congress will enact legislation to commemorate **Juneteenth National Freedom Day**, officially marking the "**19th of June**" on all calendars as America's 2nd Independence Day. Speaker of the House John Boehner has been invited to discuss the importance of the three-fifths clause of the U.S. Constitution.

*"The omission of the reading of the three-fifths clause during the historic reading of the*

*U.S. Constitution by congress left open the question of the importance of slavery and the significance Americans of African descent made to the founding of America," states Rev. Ronald V. Myers, Sr., M.D., Founder & Chairman of the [National Juneteenth Observance Foundation \(NJOF\)](#) and the [National Juneteenth Christian Leadership Council \(NJCLC\)](#). "I have issued an invitation for Speaker of the House John Boehner to discuss the three-fifths clause during the [2011 WASHINGTON JUNETEENTH National Holiday Observance](#) at the **U.S. Capitol**."*

**Juneteenth**, or the "**19th of June**", recognizes June 19, 1865, in Galveston, TX, when Union General Gordon Granger announced freedom for all slaves in the Southwest. This was the last major vestige of slavery in the United States following the end of the Civil War. This occurred more than two and a half years after the [Emancipation Proclamation](#) was issued by President Abraham Lincoln. Upon the reading of [General Order #3](#) by General Granger, the former slaves celebrated jubilantly, establishing America's second Independence Day Celebration and the oldest African American holiday observance.

**Juneteenth** is now recognized as a state holiday or state holiday observance in Texas, Oklahoma, Florida, Delaware, Idaho, Alaska, Iowa, California, Wyoming, Missouri, Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, New Jersey, New York, Colorado, Arkansas, Oregon, Kentucky, Michigan, New Mexico, Virginia, Washington, Tennessee, Massachusetts, North Carolina, West Virginia, South Carolina, Vermont, Nebraska, Kansas and Wisconsin. In 2003, the District of Columbia passed legislation to recognize **Juneteenth** as a district holiday observance. Many more states, including Utah, Alabama, South Dakota, Pennsylvania, Montana, and Maryland have recognized **Juneteenth** through state legislative resolutions and Gubernatorial Proclamations.

Congressman Danny K. Davis (D-IL) continues to serve as *Chairman* of the [National Juneteenth Congressional Committee](#).

*"We are very much appreciative of the tremendous support Congressman Danny Davis has given **Juneteenth**," states Dr. Myers, Founder and Chairman of the [National Juneteenth Observance Foundation \(NJOF\)](#) and the [National Juneteenth Holiday Campaign](#). "He has been the heart and soul of **Juneteenth** in congress for many years."*

*"The **U.S. Capitol** and the **White House** were built through the uncompensated labor of the ancestors of Americans of African descent during the tyranny of slavery," states Dr. Myers. "We will honor their sacrifice and contributions in building key institutions in America during the observance of **Juneteenth** in the nation's capitol."*

In 2010, the **U.s. Congress** honored the slaves who built the **U.S. Capitol** with the placement of a historic plaque honoring Philip Reed, an enslaved Black man with a critical role in erecting the **Statue of Freedom** that crowns the **Capitol** dome. Reed was the only one who could figure out, when the statue arrived in Washington from Italy, how to disassemble its plaster mold and cast it in bronze.

*"The initial efforts to honor these great Americans of African descent who built the **U.S. Capitol** was initiated by the late Lula Briggs Galloway, Founder & President of the [National Association of Juneteenth Linage \(NAJL\)](#)," states Dr. Myers, former Chairman of the Board of the [NAJL](#). "Her historic work at the **U.S. Capitol** with former Congressman J.C. Watts, Jr. (R-OK) and former Senate Majority leader Trent Lott (R-MS) on behalf of **Juneteenth Independence Day** was truly remarkable. It has resulted in the placement of this important historic marker at the **Capitol**."*

*"The official recognition of **Juneteenth Independence Day** and the end of slavery by state governments and congress are very significant steps in bringing healing to America from the legacy of enslavement," states Rev. Dr. Myers, also Founder and Chairman of the [National Juneteenth Christian Leadership Council \(NJCLC\)](#), sponsors of the*

[National Day of Reconciliation and Healing From the Legacy of Enslavement](#) and the [National Juneteenth Black Holocaust "MAAFA" Memorial Service](#) in Washington, DC. *"As the descendents of Americans of African descent, our ancestors were brought to America in chains. This should never be forgotten."*

*"The [National Day of Reconciliation and Healing From the Legacy of Enslavement](#), takes place annually on the **"3rd Friday of June"**, during the week of the observance of **Juneteenth** in America,"* states Rev. Dr. Myers. *"The day was the result of the second historic introduction of **Congressional Apology For Slavery** legislation by former Congressman Tony Hall (D-OH) on **Juneteenth**, the **"19th of June"**, 2000. As the leader of the **"Modern Juneteenth Movement"** in America, I was honored to work closely with Congressman Hall."*

Since that time, several states have passed apology for slavery legislation including Virginia, Alabama, North Carolina, Maryland, New Jersey and Florida. The **U.S. House of Representatives [Apology For Slavery and Jim Crow](#)**, sponsored by Congressman Steve Cohen (D-TN), was passed in 2008. Similiar legislation that was passed in the **U.S. Senate** sponsored by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) in 2009. However, it was not passed in the **U.S. House of Representatives** and failed as a concurring, joint congressional resolution.

*"We hope to have the legislation passed during the week of **Juneteenth 2011** with both the **U.S. House of Representatives** and the **U.S. Senate** concurring,"* states Dr. Myers. *"Perhaps the legislation can include a signature by President Barack Obama."*

*"We now observe the annual [World Day of Reconciliation and Healing From the Legacy of Enslavement](#) on the **"20th of August"** in Richmond, VA.,"* states Myers. *"This commemorates the date the first slave ship, the [White Lion](#), landed in Virginia at [Old Point Comfort](#), today's Fort Monroe, from the shores of West Africa. This occurred on the **"20th of August, 1619"**, with the arrival of twenty Angolans, America's first [Middle Passage](#)."*

*"The annual observance of **Juneteenth** provides America with the greatest opportunity to bring about a constructive resolution to the history of the brutal enslavement of Americans of African descent and the racial conflicts that plague the nation,"* continues Dr. Myers.

Dr. Myers, who was appointed **National Advisory Chairman of America's Black Holocaust Museum** by the museum's founder, the late Dr. James Cameron, a lynching survivor, was encouraged by the [Senate Apology For Lynching](#) passed in his honor during the week of **Juneteenth** in 2005.

*"Dr. Cameron taught me the importance of forgiveness, patience and reconciliation by his remarkable life,"* states Dr. Myers. *"It lead to a **U.S. Senate Apology For Lynching**. Congress continues to demonstrate sensitivity to issues surrounding the legacy of enslavement in America."*

For information on the [WASHINGTON JUNETEENTH 2011 National Holiday Observance](#) and the [National Juneteenth Holiday Campaign](#), call Dr. Myers at 662-247-3364, or 662-247-1471; e-mail: [JuneteenthDOC@yahoo.com](mailto:JuneteenthDOC@yahoo.com), web site: [www.NationalJuneteenth.com](http://www.NationalJuneteenth.com).