



**A Proclamation by Ellis County Judge Todd Little
In Recognition of Juneteenth, 2022**

WHEREAS, from the earliest days of human society, slavery – the classification of certain people as property – existed in the geographic area now constituting the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, the Karankawa, Caddo, Comanche, and Apache tribes occupying present-day Texas prior to European settlement were known to condemn one another to life-long servitude upon battlefield defeat; and

WHEREAS, during the conquest of the New World by Spain, these same indigenous peoples were cruelly subjected to hard labor by conquistadors seeking gold and glory; and

WHEREAS, following the Mexican War of Independence in 1821, Anglo-Americans settling the Mexican State of Coahuila y Tejas brought with them the African slaves who had tended their fields in the southern United States, forcibly perpetuating their servitude through indenture in a new land; and

WHEREAS, following the Texas Revolution of 1836 and Texas statehood in 1845, slavery was twice legalized in Texas, while free blacks and natives were excluded from the rights guaranteed to white Texans in the Constitutions of 1836 and 1845, respectively; and

WHEREAS, many Antebellum Texans fervently resisted the Emancipation Movement due to the widespread belief that those of African descent were “an inferior and dependent race” incapable of “political equality,” and that “the servitude of the African race...[was] mutually beneficial to both bond and free,” as stated unapologetically in the Texas Declaration of Secession of 1861; and

WHEREAS, through the blood and fire of the Civil War, the seceding slave-holding states were defeated, and with them, so too was the “peculiar institution” of legalized property in human beings in the United States; and

WHEREAS, on June 19th, 1865, Union General Gordon Granger stood on the balcony of Ashton Villa at Galveston Island and announced that all slaves in Texas were free – one of the most momentous occasions in Texas history, forever remembered and celebrated as *Juneteenth*; and

WHEREAS, on the 157th anniversary of emancipation in Texas, all citizens of all races are called upon to humbly reflect on the legacy of those who worked toward and died for the political and social equality of all Texans, irrespective of race, color, or national origin – the truest fulfillment of the creed of the United States that “all men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights;” and

WHEREAS, on this occasion of jubilee, let us also solemnly recall that involuntary servitude still exists in Texas today – though illegal, still pervasive in areas afflicted by international trafficking – and let us renew our covenant with God for the wisdom, the will, and the wherewithal to prosecute these evils until every last human being in Texas is free;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED, that I, Ellis County Judge Todd Little, recognize June 19th, 2022 as the 157th Juneteenth in Ellis County, Texas.

Signed the 14th of June, 2022 –


Todd Little, Ellis County Judge