

SENATE RESOLUTION

8618

By Senator O'Ban

1 WHEREAS, The United States of America was founded on the
2 principles embodied in our Declaration of Independence: That all men
3 are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain
4 unalienable rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of
5 happiness; and

6 WHEREAS, The purpose of government, as defined by our
7 Declaration, is to secure these rights; and

8 WHEREAS, Black Americans were denied these rights by the practice
9 of slavery, starting in 1619 when the first African immigrants were
10 brought in captivity to Jamestown, Virginia; and

11 WHEREAS, In order to create a union of United States, compromises
12 were made by the colonies and slavery continued to deny black
13 Americans their individual rights and dignity, split families, and
14 debase the American values enshrined in the Declaration; and

15 WHEREAS, The abolitionist sentiments that were present at the
16 founding of the country multiplied under the influence of the
17 American spiritual revival of the 1820s known as the second great
18 awakening, leading to the creation of religious organizations
19 dedicated to changing culture and law in order to bring about
20 emancipation; and

21 WHEREAS, Despite violent threats and actions against them, these
22 abolitionist organizations continued exercising their religious

1 freedoms and rights of conscience; uniting freedmen, former slaves,
2 women, and white abolitionists in the anti-slavery cause; and

3 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln was nominated by his new party as their
4 nominee for president in 1860; and

5 WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln, whose direct influence on and
6 connection to Washington state was noted in Senate Resolution 8623 in
7 February of 2009, refused to allow further expansion of slavery or
8 the dissolution of the union; and

9 WHEREAS, An eighth of our population was in bondage and that
10 bondage was concentrated in the southern part of the United States,
11 and fierce interests sought to strengthen, perpetuate, and extend
12 this interest [slavery] even at the cost of a civil war; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1863, when confronted with rebellion, President
14 Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation as a wartime measure to
15 free slaves in rebel territory, and acted upon his belief that a
16 "government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free" by
17 urging his party in 1864 to approve a platform that read in part,
18 "the principles of Republican Government, justice and the National
19 safety demand its [slavery's] utter and complete extirpation from the
20 soil of the Republic; and

21 WHEREAS, In order to ensure the sacrifices of the Union would not
22 be in vain, and that the nation would resolve the issue of slavery
23 once and for all in favor of emancipation, President Lincoln worked
24 tirelessly to ensure the passage of the 13th Amendment to the
25 Constitution of the United States, which abolished slavery forever in
26 the United States;

27 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate
28 recognize the 152nd anniversary of the Congress of the United States
29 passing the 13th Amendment on January 31, 1865, and celebrate this
30 milestone on the path to the realization of the principle expressed
31 in the Declaration that "all men are created equal."

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