



April 26, 2021

Co-Chair Senator Rob Wagner
Co-Chair Senator Fred Girod
Senate Committee on Rules
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chair Wagner, Co-Chair Girod, and Committee Members,

My name is Dr. Reginald Richardson, and I am the president of the Salem-Keizer NAACP. I am writing in support of House Bill 2168 to establish Juneteenth as a legal state holiday.

Juneteenth is an incredibly important holiday with great significance in the history of our country. For our Black communities, the significance of Juneteenth is on par with America's Independence Day. Also known as Freedom Day or Liberation Day, Juneteenth celebrates the final emancipation of slaves in Texas who finally learned that slavery had already been outlawed almost two and a half years earlier. More than 150 years later, Juneteenth continues to be a joyful day of celebrating history, culture, stories, and food among Black communities nationwide.

Establishing Juneteenth as a state holiday in Oregon would be an important step away from our state's shameful history related to Black people, and toward a place that is more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Reginald C. Richardson, Sr.', with a stylized, flowing script.

Dr. Reginald C. Richardson, Sr.
Salem-Keizer NAACP President