



Legislation Text

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**A RESOLUTION HONORING JUNETEENTH AND RECOGNIZING KEENA SMITH, CEO OF WOMEN'S CENTER FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, FOR HER EXEMPLARY WORK AND DEDICATION TO ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND EQUALITY**

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day, is celebrated each June 19th, marking the day in 1865 when Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, ensuring that enslaved African Americans were freed, and recognizing this day as a pivotal moment in American history; and

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth is a crucial time to reflect on the immense toll of enslavement on Black and African Americans and on the nation as a whole, serving as a reminder to strive for equity, equality, and justice for all; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 17, 2021, Juneteenth was declared a national holiday by President Biden, and Governor DeWine officially recognized it as a state holiday in Ohio, affirming its importance and relevance in our nation's consciousness; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council previously demonstrated its commitment to this important day through Ordinance 90-2021, which officially added Juneteenth as an observed paid holiday, reinforcing the city's dedication to reflection and progress on this day; and

**WHEREAS**, Keena Smith, through her tireless work as Founder & CEO of the Women's Center for Economic Opportunity, founded in 2013, has significantly contributed to the empowerment of African American women and women of color, driving forward the ideals of liberation and opportunity that Juneteenth embodies; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Smith's dedication to creating pathways for economic opportunity and personal growth are critical to not only lifting individuals but also advancing the collective prosperity and unity of our community, thereby paving the way for a future where justice and equality are within reach for all.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GAHANNA, COUNTY OF FRANKLIN, STATE OF OHIO:**

**Section 1.** That this Council does hereby recognize Juneteenth, June 19, 2024, in the City of Gahanna and commends the ongoing efforts of all who continue to push for progress in our community.

**Section 2.** That this Council expressly honors Keena Smith for her visionary leadership at the Women's Center for Economic Opportunity and for her unwavering commitment to fostering economic justice and equality.

**Section 3.** That this Council encourages all residents to join in acknowledging the significance of this day and to actively engage in efforts to address and dismantle racial and economic disparities in our community, thereby strengthening the health, vitality, and unity of our community, state, and nation.

**Section 4.** That this Resolution shall be in full force and effect at the earliest period allowed by law.