



Office of the San Diego City Attorney

Mara W. Elliott
City Attorney

June 24, 2020

Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer
San Diego City Council
202 C Street, 11th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

Letter in Support of Juneteenth to be declared an official City holiday

Dear Mayor Faulconer and members of the San Diego City Council:

I write to request that June 19th be declared an official City holiday beginning in 2021. Juneteenth is an important part of our nation's heritage, and we would do well to follow the examples of cities such as New York, Honolulu, and Portland in recognizing its significance.

Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, when slaves in Texas learned of their freedom by federal proclamation. Since then, Juneteenth has symbolized the end of slavery in the United States, and is observed by Black communities throughout the country as a celebration of emancipation.

Juneteenth is recognized by 47 states and the District of Columbia, and three of those states – New York, Virginia, and Texas – have made it a paid state holiday for their employees. Many are calling on Congress to recognize Juneteenth as a national holiday – a day when we can collectively reflect on the contributions made by our Black communities and the steps we must take to eradicate the legacy of racism in America.

The City Attorney's Office is dedicated to protecting the communities we serve, and to ensuring that all are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. It is well past time that we, as a City, strive together to address racial disparities, eliminate racism, and recognize the significant contributions and history of our Black community.

Please join me in the effort to ensure that this celebration of freedom is formally recognized by the City of San Diego next year and every year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mara W. Elliott".

Mara W. Elliott
San Diego City Attorney

MWE:se
cc: Nicole Murray-Ramirez, Human Relations Commission