

Good morning,

I want to take a moment this morning to both reflect and to recognize the importance of today. Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. It was on June 19, 1865, that Union soldiers landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and enslaved black people in Texas learned that they were free. This was more than two years after the effective date of President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. As a result, this day is of special importance to black people in America and is a date to celebrate freedom, but also to remember how far we must go to fully realize that promise. I hope you will spend a portion of Juneteenth individually or collectively reflecting on the long and deep wounds of racism that have endured notwithstanding the end of slavery and educating yourselves on paths to change.

For more information on Juneteenth, see <https://www.history.com/news/what-is-juneteenth>.

Thank you,

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