



SR0035

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, January 1st marks the official day when enslaved people were declared free following President Abraham Lincoln's issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation; and

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WHEREAS, The Confederate states were mandated to free the slaves at midnight on January 1, 1863; however, it took nearly two more years, until June 19, 1865, for many individuals to be informed that they were free; this freedom mandate included short-term and long-term contingencies for the Black and Diaspora communities; and

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WHEREAS, While Juneteenth is celebrated as the day enslaved people learned of their freedom, January 1st will forever be the official freedom date; and

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WHEREAS, Frederick Douglass argued that freedom would be empty if the formerly enslaved were not guaranteed the rights and protections of American citizens; and

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WHEREAS, Fannie Lou Hamer once said, "Nobody's free until everybody's free"; and

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WHEREAS, Acknowledging January 1st as the day enslaved people officially received their freedom will enhance our

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1 understanding of the oppression and challenges they faced,
2 including the denial of their rights and the struggle for
3 equality; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
5 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we declare January 1,
6 2026 as Black Diaspora Freedom Day in the State of Illinois to
7 educate, showcase, discuss, and mend fences between the Black
8 and Diaspora communities.