

Rep. Stubbs: Statement on 2023 Juneteenth Flag raising at the Wisconsin State Capitol

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MADISON, WI – Today, the Juneteenth flag was raised over the Wisconsin State Capitol.

Representative Shelia Stubbs (D-Madison) released the following statement:

“I am extremely proud to witness the 4th annual raising of the Juneteenth flag over the Wisconsin State Capitol. I would like to thank our wonderful Governor Evers for authorizing the flying of the Juneteenth flag at all state buildings. For the past four years, Governor Evers has held true to his commitment to uplift all Wisconsinites and fight for true equity in our state. The raising of this flag over our state capitol demonstrates our sincere efforts to always celebrate the diverse and rich histories of each and every person who calls Wisconsin home. Today, as I witness a piece of my people’s history proudly displayed at our capitol, I am reassured of our Wisconsin state motto that we are moving *forward* towards a truly equitable future.”

“Juneteenth is known as America’s second Independence Day and has long been celebrated by the African American community, but only became a federal holiday in 2021. Juneteenth celebrates the historic day, June 19th, 1865, when more than 250,000 enslaved African Americans finally became free in the Confederate territory of Texas. This freedom was granted nearly two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation took effect. On Juneteenth we recognize not only one day in history, but every day, every sacrifice, every triumph, every contribution of the African American community.”

“As an elected official, it has been my great honor to champion matters of equity in

Dane County and in all communities across Wisconsin. When I first became a state representative, I partnered with community activist Mrs. Annie Weatherby-Flowers to advance our previous efforts of bringing the Juneteenth flag to the Madison City-County Building to bring the flag to the grounds of the state capitol. I knew then, as I know now, how deeply important it is to represent the history of African Americans' attainment of freedom in our nation. In the words of Mrs. Annie Weatherby-Flowers,

"Representative Stubbs and I have long worked together to ensure the achievements and history of African Americans are legitimized and honored here in Wisconsin. I am grateful to have a dedicated state representative who commits herself to equity and the advancement of all people's civil and human rights, dignity, and wellbeing. The raising of the Juneteenth flag at the Wisconsin State Capitol is an incredible accomplishment and I am thrilled to know that Wisconsin is forever changed for the better thanks to our advocacy."

"Juneteenth is a celebration of the strength, resilience, and empowerment of the African American community. Juneteenth is a time to pay our respects to the millions of lives that were wrongfully oppressed and enslaved for hundreds of years; to our ancestors who fought for our freedoms; to the African American community for fostering love and light even in the darkest of times. Today, we celebrate, but we also continue to fight. We fight to heal the wrongs of the past; to build communities where every person can thrive; to embrace one another as family no matter our different identities and backgrounds. We reflect and we recommit. We recommit ourselves to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; to equality; to equity. We pursue the dreams of our ancestors, to live free and live well; to build a more prosperous, perfect union for our children to enjoy. This is what Juneteenth is all about."

"Thank you to every member of the public and every legislator who have taken time to understand the deep significance of the Juneteenth holiday. Thank you to our Wisconsin state legislators and our Governor Tony Evers for supporting the raising of the Juneteenth flag for the past four years. In closing, I quote the inspiring words of civil rights activist and former US Congressman, John Lewis, who said: "Ours is not the struggle of one day, one week, or one year. Ours is not the struggle of one judicial appointment or presidential term. Ours is the struggle of a lifetime, or maybe even many lifetimes, and each one of us in every generation must do our part."

Let us hear this call to action; this call for justice; this call for freedom.

Happy Juneteenth, Wisconsin!”