

2021 -- H 6045

LC001745

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

A N A C T

RELATING TO HOLIDAYS AND DAYS OF SPECIAL OBSERVANCE

Introduced By: Representatives Williams, Henriess, Hull, Biah, Abney, Kislak, Ajello,
Diaz, Barros, and Alzate

Date Introduced: February 26, 2021

Referred To: House Special Legislation

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The General Assembly finds "Emancipation Day" is the day to observe the
2 end of slavery in the United States; and

3 The General Assembly finds, Rhode Island has a tradition of acknowledging significant
4 milestones in advancing the cause of freedom, and Rhode Islanders, some of whom descend
5 directly from those brave men and women that gained freedom upon emancipation, join in
6 celebrating Emancipation Day; and

7 The General Assembly finds, the observance of Emancipation Day honors the history,
8 perseverance, and achievements of African Americans, and celebrates America's progress and
9 continuing commitment to realizing the principles of liberty and equality upon which our nation
10 was founded; and

11 The General Assembly finds, this observance is a reminder of the hardships and losses
12 suffered by African Americans in their struggle to attain freedom, and we pay tribute to the memory
13 of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in this quest; through their experiences and those of others
14 who were successful in achieving victory, we find among the most poignant and valuable lessons
15 of humankind that continue to resonate with people of all backgrounds.

16 SECTION 2. Section 25-1-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 25-1 entitled "Holidays" is
17 hereby amended to read as follows:

18 **25-1-1. General holidays enumerated.**

19 The first day of January or, in the event that day is a Saturday or Sunday, then state

1 employees will celebrate the holiday on the following Monday (as New Year's Day), the third
2 Monday of January (as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday), the third Monday of February (as
3 Washington's Birthday), the fourth day of May (as Rhode Island Independence Day), the last
4 Monday of May (as Memorial Day), the fourth day of July or, in the event that day is a Saturday
5 or Sunday, then state employees will celebrate the holiday on the following Monday (as
6 Independence Day), the ~~second Monday~~ first Monday of August (as ~~Victory Day~~ Emancipation
7 Day), the first Monday of September (as Labor Day), the second Monday of October (as Columbus
8 Day), the eleventh day of November or, in the event that day is a Saturday or Sunday, then state
9 employees will celebrate the holiday on the following Monday (as Veterans' Day), the twenty-fifth
10 day of December, or in the event that day is a Saturday or Sunday, then state employees will
11 celebrate the holiday on the following Monday (as Christmas Day), and each of the above days in
12 every year, or when either of the above days falls on the first day of the week, then the day following
13 it, the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November in each year in which a general election of
14 state officers is held (as election day), the first day of every week (commonly called Sunday), and
15 any other days as the governor or general assembly of this state or the president or the congress of
16 the United States shall appoint as holidays for any purpose, days of thanksgiving, or days of solemn
17 fast, shall be holidays.

18 SECTION 3. Section 25-1-1.3 of the General Laws in Chapter 25-1 entitled "Holidays" is
19 hereby repealed.

20 ~~**25-1-1.3. Victory Day -- Prohibition against use of other name for holiday.**~~

21 ~~No state or municipal governmental department or agency shall refer to the second Monday~~
22 ~~of August, "Victory Day" by any other name in an advertisement paid for by the department or~~
23 ~~agency.~~

24 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
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- 1 This act would eliminate the state holiday of Victory Day and insert in place thereof the
- 2 state holiday of Emancipation Day to be held on the first Monday in August.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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