

February 10, 2021

Honorable members of the North Dakota Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee:

My name is Adam Fortwengler. I've lived in Grand Forks for nearly 11 years after growing up on the Grand Forks AFB. I'm currently a resident of District 42.

I am writing in strong support of SB 2232, which would make North Dakota the 47th state to recognize Juneteenth as a state holiday. Juneteenth, celebrated each year on June 19th, is a holiday that commemorates the day that the last people enslaved in the United States (in Galveston, Texas) learned of the Emancipation Proclamation – of their freedom (and a full two years after Lincoln's edict).

Juneteenth marks a turning point in our nation's history and the progress we've made since our founding. It serves as a celebration, a memorial and remembrance, and a reminder of the hard and necessary work left to ensure America lives up to our promise of equality and freedom for all.

As U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R – Texas) stated last year as he introduced a bill that would make it a federal holiday, Juneteenth is “an opportunity to reflect on our history, the mistakes we have made, but yet how far we've come in the fight for equality, and a reminder of just how far we still have to go.”

I ask that you to vote “DO PASS” on SB 2232 and ensure this important day in our history is officially recognized in North Dakota. Thank you.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Fortwengler', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Adam Fortwengler