



United States Senator

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 17, 2005

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SEN. MARY LANDRIEU STATEMENT ON JUNETEENTH

WASHINGTON – United States Senator Mary Landrieu, D-La., issued the following statement in commemoration of Juneteenth.

“I am proud to join millions of Americans this Sunday in celebrating the anniversary of Juneteenth. Juneteenth holds a special place in our nation’s history as we celebrate the day in 1865 when news of emancipation finally reached the enslaved people of Galveston, Texas – a full two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the emancipation proclamation.

“Lincoln once said, ‘a man who cares nothing about his past can care little about his future.’ I agree with Mr. Lincoln. We must learn from our past which is why I have proposed the SEARCH Act, which creates a national database to assist African-Americans researching their family’s own personal history, which is often a difficult task because of the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow.

“Though we must continue to honor days like Juneteenth, we must also learn from our mistakes. With this in mind, the United States Senate passed a long overdue apology this week for its failure to protect African-Americans from the fear of lynching – a fear that haunted African-Americans for a full century after emancipation. It is my hope that the Senate’s apology will give us all an opportunity to re-examine our own mistakes, and the mistakes of our institutions, so we can make our country even stronger.

“As we look back on both our mistakes and our triumphs we can see clearly the progress our country has made, yet we can also see that there is more progress yet to be made. And if we work together there is no limit to what our future may be – a future where full equality in the workplace, in our schools and in our communities is a reality for all of us.

“Juneteenth is not just a day for African Americans to remember emancipation, but a day for all Americans to celebrate the shared promise of a better tomorrow.”