

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



SENATOR ELVI GRAY-JACKSON  
SENATE DISTRICT G

## Sponsor Statement for SB 22

In 1865, union soldiers landed at Galveston, TX. with news that the war had ended. This news meant that enslaved people were now free. Since 1865, people across the world have joined together to celebrate an important day. Juneteenth- also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day- is a holiday celebrating the emancipation of previously enslaved peoples in America. Each year on June 19<sup>th</sup>, people of all races join one another in fellowship to honor those who gave so much for America and educate themselves about the struggles toward liberation for Black Americans. Juneteenth has been recognized and celebrated throughout Alaska. There have been events ranging from parades to street fairs.

Senate Bill 22 would make Juneteenth an observed legal state holiday alongside July 4<sup>th</sup> and Memorial Day. This bill would make Juneteenth a paid state holiday.