



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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## **Juneteenth Celebrates Freedom and Achievement**

Democratic Weekly Radio Address

By Rep. David Crowley (D-Milwaukee)

### [Audio File of Radio Address](#)

Hello, this is State Representative David Crowley with this week's Democratic Address.

This week, Governor Tony Evers, Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes, and legislative Democrats honored Juneteenth at events in Milwaukee and Madison. Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the end of slavery in the United States.

It was on this day, 154 years ago, that Union soldiers landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the Civil War had ended, signaling the end of slavery.

Juneteenth, today, celebrates African American freedom and achievement. It recognizes and encourages continuous self-development and a respect for all cultures. As we reflect on the history of slavery and the lives lost in the fight for equal rights, we must acknowledge and address the racial disparities in our state.

A study by the Annie E. Casey Foundation ranked Wisconsin as the lowest of all states in its ability to prepare African American children for educational and financial success. The disparity in graduation rate is the highest in the country for African American students. The current incarceration rate for African American Wisconsinites is 10 times higher than for white Wisconsin residents.

While this year marks the 57th celebration of Juneteenth in Milwaukee, there is progress to be made when it comes to economic equity, criminal justice reform, and fair housing practices.

We are still fighting against measures to restrict voting rights. We are still working to ensure all children, regardless of zip code, receive a quality education.

I am proud to chair the Legislative Black Caucus. We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. We honor them, and the legacy they built in our state. Democrats will continue to pursue an agenda that builds on our successes and addresses the challenges facing our state as we work toward a more fair and equal society.

Thank you.

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