WHEREAS, on June 17, 2021, President Joe Biden signed the bill establishing Juneteenth National Independence Day a federal holiday, and

WHEREAS, in 1860, Montgomery County had a population of 18,322, including some 5,500 slaves and 1,500 free blacks. Maryland would remain a slave-holding state until the Maryland Constitution of 1864 outlawed slavery on November 1, 1864, and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth has come to symbolize freedom for many African Americans just as the Fourth of July means freedom to all Americans, and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is one of several freedom-day celebrations commemorating the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 and celebrates the notification of the last slaves in Galveston, Texas by General Gordon Granger on June 19, 1865, almost two and a half years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation; and

WHEREAS, throughout our nation, Juneteenth is celebrated annually as a historical and memorable tribute to our country’s African American heritage and triumph of the human spirit over the cruelty of slavery; and

WHEREAS, the Quakers in Montgomery County actively participated in the freedom of slaves and were the first to provide secret trails to the Underground Railroad and safe houses leading to Canada and freedom; and

WHEREAS, tonight we honor the life-long contributions made by Dr. Elwood Raphael Gray, Willie Mackey King, Reverend Dr. Sterling King Jr., John Macklin, and Dr. Hercules Pinkney who have served to further the cause of social justice, inclusion, and a more harmonious Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County is proud to join in honoring Juneteenth with this twenty fourth countywide celebration to promote and enhance the unity and spiritual strength that brought Africans out of slavery and sustained their dignity and perseverance to the present day.

NOW, THEREFORE, DO WE, Marc Elrich, as County Executive, and Thomas Hucker, as Council President proclaim June 19, 2021 as JUNETEENTH in Montgomery County. We encourage all residents to observe the 156th anniversary of this historic day.

Signed this 19th day of June in the year 2021

MARC ELRICH
County Executive

TOM HUCKER
Council President