

State of North Carolina

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

INTERNATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD MONTH

2020

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Underground Railroad was a network of people, routes, and safe houses throughout the United States used by enslaved Black people to escape to freedom in free states and Canada; and

WHEREAS, often cited as the nation's first Civil Rights Movement, the Underground Railroad included many prominent abolitionists among its ranks, including Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, John Brown, Solomon Northrup, William Still, and many others; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina was home to several prominent former slaves that became abolitionists through the Underground Railroad; among these were Harriet Ann Jacobs, a noted feminist, who suffered sexual harassment at the hands of her master and spent seven years in a crawlspace before she was finally able to escape and eventually publish her autobiography; and Abraham Galloway, who returned to North Carolina at the beginning of the Civil War and worked as a spy for the Union Army and would later go on to be a North Carolina state Senator; and

WHEREAS, the Underground Railroad included many locations in North Carolina, places like Elizabeth City and Hatteras Island, and more remote and rugged areas like the Great Dismal Swamp, the Guilford College Woods, and Roanoke Island, which had fallen under Union control during the Civil War; Roanoke Island became such a safe haven that it was eventually designated as the Freedmen's colony, offering training and education to its residents; and

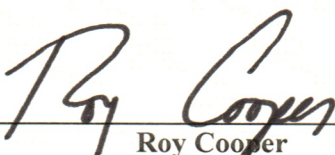
WHEREAS, the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program began as a way to acknowledge the monumental significance of the Underground Railroad, and all those involved, for its contribution to the eradication of slavery in the United States and as a cornerstone for a more comprehensive civil rights movement that followed; and

WHEREAS, International Underground Railroad Month provides an opportunity for world-wide open dialogue to illuminate the terrible history of slavery in the United States, and commemorates the important individuals and institutions that fought to end it; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina encourages every resident, organization, and community leader to educate themselves and reflect on the toll slavery has taken on our state and many others, and to recognize the lasting effects that it still has on the thousands of descendants of enslaved Black people that call our state home today;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROY COOPER, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim September, 2020, as "**INTERNATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD MONTH**" in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.





Roy Cooper
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this eighteenth day of August in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth.