

State of Vermont
Executive Department
A Proclamation

WHEREAS, March 9, 2015 is the 150th anniversary of the date on which Vermont ratified the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the Thirteenth Amendment banned slavery and involuntary servitude; and

WHEREAS, the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation freed many slaves in the states in the rebellion, but had not freed those who were in the states still loyal to the Union; and

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln worried that the Emancipation Proclamation, which was an executive order, could be reversed by a different President; and saw a constitutional amendment as a more permanent solution; and

WHEREAS, after approval by the U.S. House of Representatives on January 31, 1895, the proposed Thirteenth Amendment was sent to the states for ratification; and

WHEREAS, Vermont was the final state to ratify the Amendment before the end of the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Vermont had a long history of being a leader on the issue of slavery, banning slavery in its constitution as early as 1777, the first state to do so; and

WHEREAS, on December 31, 1865, Secretary of State William Seward proclaimed the Amendment to have been adopted;

WHEREAS, the Thirteenth Amendment in its entirety reads as follows:

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Peter Shumlin, Governor, do hereby recognize March 9, 2015 as the 150th anniversary of the date on which Vermont ratified the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and call on all Vermonters to honor and celebrate this landmark anniversary in our state's and nation's history.



Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of
Vermont on this 6th day of March, A.D. 2015

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'P' followed by a long horizontal line.

Peter Shumlin
Governor