



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**PROCLAMATION**  
BY THE GOVERNOR

**WHEREAS**, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., born on January 15, 1929, was the transformational leader of the American Civil Rights Movement and one of the most influential figures in world history; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. King's message of peace, freedom, justice, and equality for all through non-violent means can never be forgotten and his famous "I Have A Dream" speech in Washington, D.C., at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963 lives on today; and

**WHEREAS**, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in November 1983 to honor Dr. King's life and legacy as an outstanding leader of the civil rights movement; and

**WHEREAS**, Tennessee first recognized Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in 1984, even though the first federal holiday for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was not celebrated until 1986; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. King's final call for civility, respect for human dignity, and a better America was envisioned in his famous "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech delivered in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 3, 1968, and Dr. King's life, legacy, and message live on in the soul of Memphis through the National Civil Rights Museum established at the place of his assassination; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Tennessee recognizes the significant contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to the civil rights movement and to the United States of America, and therefore observes Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a paid state holiday;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim January 15, 2026, as

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

in Tennessee and encourage all citizens to join me in this worthy observance.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed at Nashville on this fifteenth day of January 2026.



*Bill Lee*

Governor

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Secretary of State