

H. Res. 668

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

September 24, 2007.

Whereas on May 17, 1954, the United States Supreme Court announced in *Brown v. Board of Education* (347 U.S. 483) that, “in the field of education, the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place”;

Whereas the *Brown* decision recognized as a matter of law that the segregation of public schools deprived students of the equal protection of the laws under the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States;

Whereas in 1957, three years after the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the promise of access and equality within the realm of education remained unfilled in Little Rock, Arkansas, and throughout the Nation;

Whereas on September 4, 1957, nine African American students who would later be deemed the Little Rock Nine, Minnijean Brown, Elizabeth Eckford, Ernest Green, Thelma Mothershed, Melba Pattillo, Gloria Ray, Terrence Roberts, Jefferson Thomas, and Carlotta Walls, were denied admittance to Little Rock Central High by the Arkansas National Guard at the order of the Arkansas Governor;

Whereas on September 23, 1957, the Little Rock Nine, armed with a Federal court order, again tried to attend

Little Rock Central High and implement the law of the land, but protests and violence forced the group of students to leave the school;

Whereas on September 25, 1957, this Nation would realize a historic day when the Little Rock Nine, escorted by Federal troops at the order of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, successfully integrated Little Rock Central High;

Whereas throughout their tenure at Little Rock Central High, the Little Rock Nine, with conviction and dignity, championed school integration despite death threats, verbal and physical assaults, school closings, and other adversities;

Whereas the Little Rock Nine are symbolic of the victorious dismantling of school segregation, as well as the full and equal participation in American society that all citizens are entitled to, and continue to advance such principles through the Little Rock Nine Foundation;

Whereas the significance of the Little Rock Nine and their actions have been acknowledged with numerous awards and recognitions, including the 2007 Little Rock Central High School Desegregation 50th Anniversary Commemorative Coin, the Congressional Gold Medal in 1999, the inclusion of Little Rock Central High School in the National Park System in 1998, and the designation of Little Rock Central High School as a National Historic Landmark in 1982;

Whereas on the 50th anniversary of the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School by the Little Rock Nine, the Nation will celebrate this great civil rights achievement through forums and town halls, commemorations,

and significantly, the dedication of a permanent Little Rock Central High School Museum and Visitor Center; and

Whereas in 2007, as the Little Rock Nine and the entire Nation celebrates 50 years of integration, we must acknowledge recent setbacks to the guarantee of opportunity and inclusion within our educational system, in both K–12 and higher education: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) acknowledges and commemorates the 50th anniversary of the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School by the Little Rock Nine;

(2) encourages all Americans, upon this 50th anniversary, to recognize the historic contributions of the Little Rock Nine, who not only secured integration for Little Rock Central High School, but hundreds of thousands of schools across the country; and

(3) commits itself, in the wake of recent challenges, to continuing the legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Little Rock Nine by protecting and advancing equal educational opportunity for all.

Attest:

Clerk.