

1 INTERIM RESOLUTION 2007-003

2
3 COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HISTORIC INTEGRATION OF
4 CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL.
5

6 WHEREAS, September 25, 2007, will mark the 50th anniversary of the
7 integration of Little Rock's historic Central High School; and
8

9 WHEREAS, numerous local and national events are planned through late
10 September 2007, including a festival and a series of educational and judicial
11 forums, culminating with a ceremony on the front lawn of Central High School
12 on September 25, 2007; and
13

14 WHEREAS, dozens of organizations and institutions, including the
15 National Park Service Central High School National Historic Site, the
16 Arkansas Repertory Theatre, the Central Arkansas Library System, the UALR
17 William H. Bowen School of Law, the Clinton School of Public Service, and the
18 William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park will be participating in the
19 commemoration through their own events; and
20

21 WHEREAS, on the morning of September 23, 1957, nine African-American
22 teenagers, Minnijean Brown Trickey, Elizabeth Eckford, Ernest Green, Thelma
23 Mothershed Wair, Melba Pattillo Beals, Carlotta Walls LaNier, Terrence
24 Roberts, Jefferson Thomas, and Gloria Cecelia Ray Karlmark, now commonly and
25 affectionately known as the "Little Rock Nine" held the line against an angry
26 mob protesting integration in front of Little Rock's Central High School; and
27

28 WHEREAS, as the students met their new classmates for the first time
29 inside the school, violence escalated outside, and the Little Rock police
30 removed the Little Rock Nine from the school for their safety. The next day
31 President Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered the United States Army's 101st
32 Airborne Division into Little Rock to escort the nine (9) students into
33 Central High School the following day, and each student was assigned his or
34 her own guard; and
35

36 WHEREAS, the integration of Central High School on September 25, 1957,

1 broadcast across the nation and around the world; was the site of the first
2 important test for the implementation of the United States Supreme Court's
3 historic decision in the case of Brown v. Board of Education in 1954; became
4 the epitome of state resistance to desegregation when Governor Orval Faubus
5 directly questioned the authority of the federal court system and the
6 validity of desegregation; and forced the nation to resolve to enforce
7 African-American civil rights in the face of massive southern defiance during
8 the years following the Brown v. Board of Education decision; and

9
10 WHEREAS, the Little Rock Nine should be commended for their courage,
11 determination, and significant roles in the civil rights movement; and

12
13 WHEREAS, the members of the 50th Anniversary Commission are Co-chair
14 Virgil Miller, Co-chair Nancy Rousseau, Annie Abrams, Dr. Edith Altheimer,
15 Ralph Brodie, Senator Irma Hunter Brown, Shannon Butler, Dale Charles,
16 Cynthia East, Ashley Fisher, Dr. Andre' Guerrero, Schawnee Hightower, Carlotta
17 Walls LaNier, Representative Wilhelmina Lewellen, Mike Madell, Dr. Kathryn
18 Mitchell, Blake Rutherford, Derrick Smith, Senator Tracy Steele, Minnijean
19 Brown Trickey, Darrin Williams, Reginald Wright, Representative Fred Allen,
20 and Joy Secuban; and

21
22 WHEREAS, the trials and tribulations of the Little Rock Nine and their
23 families should always be remembered as beacons of strength in the face of
24 overwhelming odds, dignity in the face of adversity, courage in the face of
25 hostility, and perseverance for the betterment of their fellow man and the
26 ultimate success of the civil rights movement,

27
28 NOW THEREFORE,
29 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH
30 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

31
32 THAT the Arkansas Legislative Council of the Eighty-Sixth General
33 Assembly of the State of Arkansas respectfully commemorates the 50th
34 anniversary of the historic integration of Central High School and honors the
35 courage and achievements of the Little Rock Nine.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36

Respectfully submitted,

Senator Tracy Steele
District 34

Filed Date: 09/13/2007 By: DLP/sml