



SPONSOR: Sen. Townsend & Rep. Lynn
Sens. Buckson, Gay, Hocker, Hoffner, Richardson,
Sokola, Wilson; Reps. Baumbach, Briggs King, Bush,
Griffith, K. Johnson, Morrison, Osienski, Romer

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
152nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

RECOGNIZING MARCH 18, 2023 AS NATIONAL PUBLIC DEFENSE DAY.

1 WHEREAS, Clarence Earl Gideon was a Florida man charged with breaking into a pool hall during the summer of
2 1961, for which he requested the assistance of counsel at trial, which was refused; and

3 WHEREAS, representing himself at trial, Mr. Gideon was convicted and sentenced to 5 years in a Florida prison,
4 while always maintaining his innocence; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Gideon appealed his conviction in the Florida courts, which was denied; however, the U.S.
6 Supreme Court agreed to hear his case; and

7 WHEREAS, on March 18, 1963, the United States Supreme Court issued a landmark opinion in the case of
8 *Gideon v. Wainwright*, which held that, under the 6th Amendment, Gideon was entitled to counsel; and

9 WHEREAS, on retrial, now represented by a court-appointed lawyer, Gideon was found not guilty; and

10 WHEREAS, in 1964 the State of Delaware established the Office of the Public Defender; and

11 WHEREAS, in 2015 this body passed Senate Bill 47, which modernized Delaware's public defense system and
12 created the Office of Defense Services; and

13 WHEREAS, the Office of Defense Services provides legal representation to any adult who cannot afford an
14 attorney and faces potential jail time, as well as all juveniles in criminal and delinquency matters in Delaware; and

15 WHEREAS, the employees of the Office of Defense Services zealously fight injustice and abuses of power while
16 guarding the human and Constitutional rights of the everyday citizens of Delaware; and

17 WHEREAS, the employees of the Office of Defense Services are often the unsung heroes of our justice system,
18 winning trials and appeals in courtrooms throughout the state; and

19 WHEREAS, the employees of the Office of Defense Services advocate tirelessly for reforms to the criminal justice
20 system, in Legislative Hall, in our courts, and anywhere policies impact the lives of their clients; and

21 WHEREAS, March 18, 2023, marks National Public Defense Day and the 60th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme
22 Court's landmark decision of *Gideon*.

23 NOW, THEREFORE:

24 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 152nd General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House of
25 Representatives concurring therein, that the legacy and importance of the *Gideon* decision is acknowledged, the necessity
26 of providing effective counsel to all accused of a crime or an act of delinquency in Delaware is recognized, and the
27 continuing mission of the Office of Defense Services to provide legal representation to the indigent commended.

SYNOPSIS

This Resolution recognizes March 18, 2023, as National Public Defense Day.

Author: Senator Townsend