



SPONSOR: Rep. Griffith & Sen. Sturgeon & Sen. Brown  
Reps. Baumbach, Bennett, Bentz, Bolden, Brady,  
Briggs King, Bush, Carson, Chukwuocha, Cooke,  
Dorsey Walker, Heffernan, K. Johnson, Kowalko,  
Lambert, Longhurst, Lynn, Matthews, Minor-Brown,  
Mitchell, S. Moore, Morrison, Osienski, Schwartzkopf,  
K. Williams, Wilson-Anton; Sens. Bonini, Ennis, Gay,  
Hansen, Hocker, Lawson, Lockman, Lopez, Mantzavinos,  
S. McBride, Paradee, Pettyjohn, Pinkney, Poore,  
Richardson, Sokola, Townsend, Walsh, Wilson

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 25

RECOGNIZING MAY 17, 2021 AS THE 67TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION OF TOPEKA.

1 WHEREAS, May 17, 2021 marks the 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Supreme Court's landmark decision in Brown v.  
2 Board of Education of Topeka; and

3 WHEREAS, in the 1896 case of Plessy v. Ferguson, the Supreme Court held that the doctrine of "separate but  
4 equal" did not violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, allowing state-mandated segregation laws  
5 to remain; and

6 WHEREAS, citizens in the communities of Claymont and Hockessin solicited the counsel of Louis L. Redding,  
7 the state's first African American attorney, to address racial segregation in Delaware's education system; and

8 WHEREAS, resident Sarah Bulah's request to the Department of Public Instruction and the Governor to provide  
9 her child, Shirley, with bus transportation was denied as Shirley could not ride on a bus serving white children; and

10 WHEREAS, African American parents living in Claymont petitioned the all-white Claymont High School to  
11 admit their children into the school and were denied; and

12 WHEREAS, these historic cases became known as Belton v. Gebhart and Bulah v. Gebhart in the Delaware Court  
13 of Chancery; and

14 WHEREAS, Louis L. Redding argued that state laws requiring school segregation by race denied African  
15 American students their constitutional right to equal protection under the law; and

16 WHEREAS, Chief Judge of the Delaware Court of Chancery, Collins J. Seitz, ruled that the facilities and  
17 programs at the all-black schools were not equal and ordered the students to be allowed to enroll in the all-white schools;  
18 and

19 WHEREAS, the ruling in Bulah v. Gebhart was the first substantial legal victory for those opposed to the  
20 institutional practice of segregation in Delaware and in the United States; and

21 WHEREAS, the ruling did not apply broadly, as Chancellor Seitz opined that the responsibility of striking down  
22 the principle of “separate but equal” belonged to the U.S. Supreme Court, and the State Supreme Court affirmed his  
23 opinion; and

24 WHEREAS, *Belton* and *Bulah* were consolidated as *Belton (Bulah) v. Gebhart* to join four other cases before the  
25 Supreme Court, and was a part of *Brown v. Board of Education* decision; and

26 WHEREAS, the unanimous ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* reversed a previous ruling in *Plessy v.*  
27 *Ferguson* and found that “separate but equal accommodations” were a violation of the 14th amendment and denied persons  
28 of color the equal protection of the laws of the United States; and

29 WHEREAS, the ruling found that “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal,” effectively beginning  
30 the end of racial segregation in our public schools; and

31 WHEREAS, the ruling’s impacts were even more broadly felt, instituting the principle that the Constitution  
32 forbids segregation on the basis of race in any instance;

33 WHEREAS, an integrated society is one that fosters a greater sharing of cultures, ideas, and values, resulting in a  
34 richer community experience for all citizens; and

35 WHEREAS, we must continue to work towards ensuring that we provide the resources necessary to make sure that  
36 our schools are accommodating and effective for students of all backgrounds

37 NOW, THEREFORE:

38 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the 151<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the  
39 Senate concurring therein, that we recognize and honor May 17, 2021 as the 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Brown v. Board of  
40 Education of Topeka.

41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House and Senate recognize and honor the courage and fortitude of Louis  
42 L. Redding, Collins J. Seitz, Sarah Bulah, Shirley Bulah, Ethel Louise Belton, and the Claymont parents and students that  
43 sparked the action leading to Belton v. Gebhart.

44 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House and Senate recognize that the work against institutional racism  
45 must be continued by all Delawareans.

#### SYNOPSIS

This Resolution recognizes May 17, 2021 as the 67th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*.