

SENATE RESOLUTION No. ____

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED RESOLUTION

A SENATE RESOLUTION honoring the 75th anniversary of the desegregation of post-season United States collegiate basketball tournaments and recognizing the efforts of Clarence Walker, John Wooden, and Indiana State Teachers College towards desegregation.

FORD JON

_____, read first time and referred to Committee on



Introduced

First Regular Session 123rd General Assembly (2023)

SENATE RESOLUTION _____

MADAM PRESIDENT:

I offer the following resolution and move its adoption:

1 A SENATE RESOLUTION honoring the 75th anniversary
2 of the desegregation of post-season United States collegiate
3 basketball tournaments and recognizing the efforts of Clarence
4 Walker, John Wooden, and Indiana State Teachers College
5 towards desegregation.

6 *Whereas, On March 8, 1948, at the Municipal Auditorium*
7 *in Kansas City, Missouri, Clarence Walker, coach John*
8 *Wooden, and the Indiana State Teachers College basketball*
9 *team became the first desegregated team to play in a national*
10 *collegiate basketball tournament;*

11 *Whereas, Clarence Walker was born and raised in East*
12 *Chicago, Indiana, where he led his Washington High School*
13 *basketball team to a record of 24-3 and advanced to the final*
14 *16 in the 1946 Indiana High School Athletic Association State*
15 *Tournament;*

16 *Whereas, In 1946, Indiana State Teachers College (ISTC),*
17 *now known as Indiana State University, broke the color barrier*
18 *in basketball at ISTC when Walker was recruited as a guard by*
19 *first-year head basketball coach and athletic director, John*
20 *Wooden;*

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1 *Whereas, Coach Wooden was originally from Hall,*
2 *Indiana, graduated from Martinsville High School, was an All-*
3 *American guard at Purdue University, and coached high school*
4 *basketball in Kentucky and Indiana before accepting a position*
5 *under ISTC president Dr. Ralph Tirey;*

6 *Whereas, In 1947, Coach Wooden and ISTC turned down*
7 *a bid to play in the National Association of Intercollegiate*
8 *Basketball (NAIB) post-season tournament due to the*
9 *segregated practices of the league that prohibited African*
10 *American players from playing in national collegiate basketball*
11 *leagues;*

12 *Whereas, In 1948, ISTC once again turned down an*
13 *invitation to play in the NAIB post-season tournament due to*
14 *continued segregation league practices that would prohibit*
15 *Walker from playing;*

16 *Whereas, Following ISTC's response and due to pressure*
17 *from various sources, the NAIB agreed to allow Walker to play*
18 *in the 1948 tournament, but placed additional stipulations on*
19 *Walker, Coach Wooden, and the ISTC basketball team that*
20 *prohibited Walker from staying in a team hotel or appearing in*
21 *public with all-white teammates, prompting Coach Wooden to*
22 *once again reject the invitation;*

23 *Whereas, Due to additional support from Wooden's family,*
24 *Walker's teammates, the ISTC administration, the Terre Haute*
25 *NAACP, and the Terre Haute community at large for having the*
26 *team attend the tournament, Coach Wooden amended his*
27 *response and accepted the invitation with the caveat that*
28 *Walker would be able to eat with all other ISTC team members;*

29 *Whereas, During the tournament, Walker stayed with a*
30 *local African American minister due to the city's segregated*
31 *hotel customs and endured the Jim Crow treatment from his*
32 *teammates' hotel and restaurants with dignity and courage;*



1 *Whereas, On March 8, 1948, Walker stepped onto the court*
2 *to become the first African American (male or female) to play*
3 *in a post-season national collegiate basketball tournament as*
4 *part of a racially integrated men's basketball team;*

5 *Whereas, Walker scored three points during the March 8th*
6 *game and several more points for ISTC throughout the*
7 *tournament, where the Sycamores finished as national runners-*
8 *up behind the University of Louisville;*

9 *Whereas, Following the 1948 tournament, Coach Wooden*
10 *was appointed the head coach of the University of California,*
11 *Los Angeles men's basketball team, where he officially retired*
12 *after forty years of coaching, and later became the first person*
13 *to be elected to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame*
14 *as both a player and a coach;*

15 *Whereas, Walker went on to lead the Sycamores to a 1949*
16 *national semi-final appearance and won the 1950 NAIB*
17 *national championship during his senior year under Coach*
18 *John Longfellow;*

19 *Whereas, Upon graduation from ISTC, Walker earned a*
20 *Purple Heart in the Korean War, had a successful 35-year*
21 *career as a teacher, counselor, administrator, and assistant*
22 *superintendent in East Chicago, and was posthumously*
23 *inducted into the 60th class of the Indiana Basketball Hall of*
24 *Fame; and*

25 *Whereas, The historic efforts of Walker, Coach Wooden,*
26 *and ISTC helped transform collegiate basketball in Terre*
27 *Haute, Indiana, and across the nation: Therefore,*

28 *Be it resolved by the Senate of the*
29 *General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

30 SECTION 1. That the Indiana Senate honors the 75th



1 anniversary of the desegregation of post-season United States
2 collegiate basketball tournaments and recognizes the efforts of
3 Clarence Walker, John Wooden, and Indiana State Teachers
4 College towards desegregation.

5 SECTION 2. The Secretary of the Senate is hereby directed
6 to transmit copies of this Resolution to Indiana State University,
7 the Vigo County Historical Museum, Susan Brock Williams,
8 Indiana State University Professor Crystal Reynolds, and State
9 Senator Jon Ford.

