

H. Res. 176

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

May 18, 1999.

Whereas in 1951 Linda Brown was a third-grader and an African-American who was forced to endure hardships such as walking a mile through a railroad switchyard to get to her black elementary school, even though a white elementary school was only 7 blocks away;

Whereas the Reverend Oliver Brown, Linda Brown's father, was turned away when he tried to register his daughter at the nearby white school, simply because the little girl was black;

Whereas Thurgood Marshall, special counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and a protégé of Howard University Law Professor Charles Houston, successfully argued that the "separate but equal" doctrine, established by the Supreme Court in its Plessy v. Ferguson decision in 1896, was unconstitutional;

Whereas Chief Justice Earl Warren read aloud, from the Court's unanimous decision: "We come then to the question presented: Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race, even though the physical facilities and other 'tangible' factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does * * *. We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine

of ‘separate but equal’ has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment”;

Whereas the Brown v. Board of Education decision struck a pivotal blow against Jim Crow laws, as well as the dark forces of racism and segregation; and

Whereas the interaction of students of all races promotes better understanding and the acceptance of racial differences: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the historical significance of the Supreme Court’s unanimous decision in Brown v. Board of Education;

(2) heralds this watershed in our shared history as a significant advancement of the most basic American principles of freedom, justice, and equality under the law; and

(3) repudiates racial segregation as antithetical to the noble ideals upon which this great Nation was found-

ed, and reaffirms the fundamental belief that we are all
“one Nation under God, indivisible.”.

Attest:

Clerk.