

SENATE BILL No. 265

By Committee on Federal and State Affairs

2-13

1 AN ACT concerning days of commemoration; designating November 14
2 of each year as Ruby Bridges walk to school day in the state of Kansas.

3
4 WHEREAS, Kansas was at the epicenter of the landmark United States
5 Supreme Court case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, which was
6 decided on May 17, 1954, and in such case the Supreme Court handed
7 down the unanimous decision that racially segregated public schools
8 violated the 14th Amendment of the Constitution of the United States; and

9 WHEREAS, The Kansas Senate passed Senate Resolution No. 1756
10 and the Kansas House of Representatives passed House Resolution No.
11 6047 commemorating 2024 as the 70th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board*
12 *of Education of Topeka* decision that made public school segregation
13 illegal in the United States; and

14 WHEREAS, The Kansas legislature passed Senate Resolution No.
15 1703 during the 2024 special session recognizing November 14, 2024, as
16 Ruby Bridges walk to school day in the state of Kansas; and

17 WHEREAS, Ruby Nell Bridges is an American activist who became a
18 symbol of the civil rights movement at age six when she was the youngest
19 African American student designated to integrate public schools; and

20 WHEREAS, Artist Norman Rockwell celebrated the courage of Ms.
21 Bridges in 1964 in a painting entitled "The Problem We All Live With"
22 that depicted Ms. Bridges' first day of school, which made Ms. Bridges the
23 national icon for desegregation; and

24 WHEREAS, Ms. Bridges' experience has been depicted in various
25 media, including the 1998 Disney movie entitled "Ruby Bridges" and Ms.
26 Bridges' own book, "Ruby Bridges Goes to School: My True Story." The
27 American Library Association reports a record number of demands to
28 censor library books and other materials, including Ms. Bridges' book; and

29 WHEREAS, The Kansas Senate joined the children of Kansas in
30 welcoming Ms. Bridges to Topeka on November 14, 2024, on the 70th
31 anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision; and

32 WHEREAS, Students, teachers and school staff across the county
33 participate in Ruby Bridges walk to school day on November 14 of each
34 year to honor Ms. Bridges through dialogue, commemorating her historic
35 steps and taking part in their own forms of activism to bring an end to
36 racism and bullying.

1 Now, therefore:

2 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

3 Section 1. November 14 of each year, the same being the anniversary
4 of Ruby Bridges' first day attending William Frantz elementary school, is
5 hereby designated as Ruby Bridges walk to school day in the state of
6 Kansas. Any year in which November 14 falls on a Saturday or Sunday,
7 Ruby Bridges walk to school day shall be commemorated on the following
8 Wednesday.

9 Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
10 publication in the statute book.