

17104338D

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 340**

Senate Amendments in [ ] — February 6, 2017

*Designating April 23, in 2018 and in each succeeding year, as Barbara Johns Day in Virginia.*

Patrons Prior to Engrossment—Senators Peake, Dance, Deeds, Dunnavant, Ebbin, Favola, Howell, Locke, Lucas, Mason, McClellan, McPike, Ruff, Spruill and Surovell; Delegates: Aird, Bagby, Boysko, Carr, Cole, Freitas, Hayes, Heretick, Herring, Hester, Hope, James Kory, Krizek, Landes, Lindsey, McQuinn, Mullin, Peace, Price, Rasoul, Simon, Torian, Tyler, Ward, Ware and Wright

Unanimous consent to introduce

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Barbara Johns played a unique role in the early years of the Civil Rights movement by leading the only student protest associated with the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling; and

WHEREAS, Barbara Johns was educated in segregated public schools in Prince Edward County and attended R. R. Moton High School in Farmville, which was designed to house [ ~~200~~ 180 ] students but enrolled close to double that number; and

WHEREAS, Barbara Johns and other students at R. R. Moton High School struggled with leaky ceilings and freezing cold in the winters; parents of black students appealed to the all-white school board, which constructed tar paper shacks to handle the overflow of students; and

WHEREAS, frustrated by the school board's lack of action regarding the unequal facilities, Barbara Johns, then a 16-year-old junior at R. R. Moton High School, met with several classmates and planned a student strike to protest the difficult conditions; and

WHEREAS, on April 23, 1951, Barbara Johns delivered a memorandum to teachers announcing a special assembly, and when teachers and students arrived at the assembly, they were surprised to find Barbara Johns preparing to reveal her plan for the strike; and

WHEREAS, the students of R. R. Moton High School agreed to participate in the protest [ ~~and marched to city hall to make city officials aware of the unequal conditions between black and white schools~~ ], and Barbara Johns and her fellow strike leaders met with the school superintendent to inform him of the protest and demand a new school ] ; and

WHEREAS, Barbara Johns also sought legal counsel from the NAACP, which agreed to provide assistance as long as the a lawsuit would challenge the segregated school system; the ensuing case of *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* reached the Supreme Court of the United States along with four other similar cases and formed the basis of the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling; and

WHEREAS, *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* was the only school integration case initiated by a student strike, making Barbara Johns a pioneer in the peaceful protests that were a hallmark of the Civil Rights movement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly designate April 23, in 2018 and in each succeeding year, as Barbara Johns Day in Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the family of Barbara Johns so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the Senate post the designation of this day on the General Assembly's website.

ENGROSSED

SI340E