

# ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 159

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 11, 2024

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman SHAVONDA E. SUMTER**

**District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**Assemblyman BENJIE E. WIMBERLY**

**District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Senator ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT**

**District 31 (Hudson)**

**Senator RAJ MUKHERJI**

**District 32 (Hudson)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

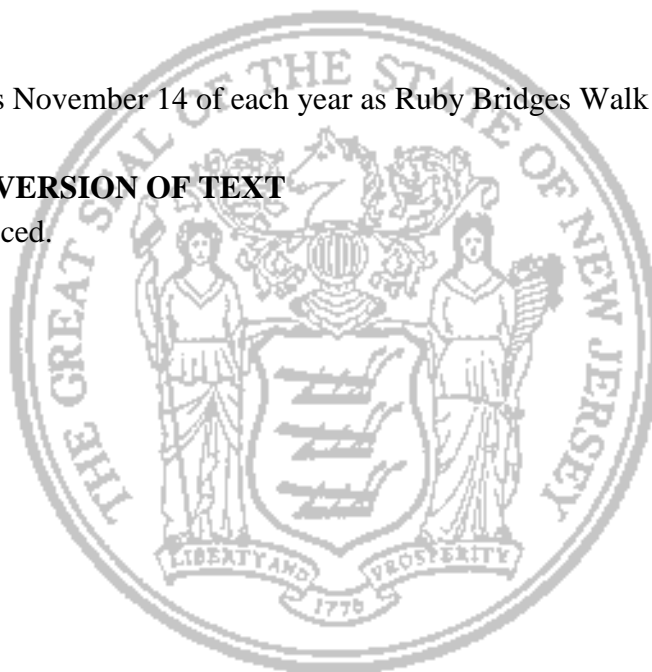
**Assemblywomen Speight, Reynolds-Jackson and Hall**

**SYNOPSIS**

Designates November 14 of each year as Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/30/2025)

AJR159 SUMTER, VERRELLI

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1   **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating November 14 of each year as  
2       Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day.  
3  
4   **WHEREAS**, On November 14, 1960, six-year old Ruby Bridges walked  
5       to school and integrated the first elementary school in the South;  
6       and  
7   **WHEREAS**, Ruby Bridges was born on September 8, 1954 to parents  
8       Lucille and Abon Bridges and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana;  
9       and  
10   **WHEREAS**, In 1954, the United States Supreme Court issued the  
11       landmark ruling in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka,  
12       Kansas, ending racial segregation in public schools; and  
13   **WHEREAS**, Numerous southern states, including Louisiana, failed to  
14       integrate their public schools following the United States Supreme  
15       Court’s ruling; and  
16   **WHEREAS**, In 1960, a federal court ordered Louisiana to desegregate  
17       their public schools beginning on November 14 of that year; and  
18   **WHEREAS**, Ruby Bridges passed the entrance exam for the then all-  
19       white public William Frantz Elementary School; and  
20   **WHEREAS**, On November 14, 1960, Ruby Bridges and her mother  
21       were escorted by federal marshals to the William Frantz Elementary  
22       School where Ruby faced violent protesters; and  
23   **WHEREAS**, Ruby Bridges experienced blatant racism from protesters  
24       and parents every day throughout her first year of attendance at  
25       William Frantz Elementary; and  
26   **WHEREAS**, Ruby Bridges had to be taught in a classroom by herself as  
27       all other students were pulled out at the request of their parents; and  
28   **WHEREAS**, Ruby Bridges had to remain separate from the other  
29       children and was not allowed to go to the cafeteria or outside for  
30       recess; and  
31   **WHEREAS**, Despite these hardships, Ruby Bridges never missed a day  
32       of school and by the end of her first year, the school decided to  
33       admit more African American children the following year; and  
34   **WHEREAS**, Ruby Bridges’ act of bravery inspired America and paved  
35       the way for other African American children across the country;  
36       and  
37   **WHEREAS**, Famous painter Norman Rockwell depicted Ruby Bridges  
38       walking to school in his painting “The Problem We All Live With”  
39       which has endured as one of Rockwell’s most renowned pieces; and  
40   **WHEREAS**, Ruby Bridges became a lifelong activist for racial equality  
41       by establishing The Ruby Bridges Foundation in 1999, which uses  
42       educational initiatives to promote tolerance and unity among  
43       schoolchildren; and  
44   **WHEREAS**, Ruby Bridges has gained numerous accolades for her life’s  
45       work, including the Carter G. Woodson Book Award and the  
46       honorary title of deputy federal marshal; and



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1 and the honorary title of deputy federal marshal. By setting aside  
2 November 14 of each year as Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day,  
3 we can celebrate the courage of young Ruby Bridges and the impact  
4 her actions had on African American children across America.