

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 627
Committee Substitute Favorable 3/17/05

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 15, 2005

1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE MEMORY OF DR. WILLA B. PLAYER,
2 WHILE OBSERVING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH.

3 Whereas, women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made
4 contributions to all facets of American life, including government, business, education,
5 law, science, medicine, and the arts; and

6 Whereas, some notable American women include Madam C. J. Walker
7 (Sarah Breedlove), the first African-American millionaire; Mary Kies, the first woman
8 to receive a patent; Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman elected to
9 Congress; Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman to earn a medical degree; Dr. Sally
10 Ride, the first American woman to travel into space; and Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole, the first
11 African-American to chair the Board of the United Way of America and the fourth
12 female President of Bennett College for Women; and

13 Whereas, influential women with ties to North Carolina include Penelope
14 Barker, the reputed leader of the 1774 Edenton Tea Party, one of the first political
15 activities in this country staged by women; Mary Jane Patterson, a Raleigh native and
16 the first African-American woman in this country to receive a bachelors degree; Tabitha
17 Ann Holton, the first female to pass the North Carolina State Bar; Dr. Annie Lowrie
18 Alexander, the State's first licensed female doctor; Susie Sharp, the first woman to serve
19 on the North Carolina Supreme Court; Representative Lillian Exum Clement, the first
20 woman elected to serve in the General Assembly; Eva Clayton, the first woman and the
21 first African-American woman to represent North Carolina in Congress; Elizabeth Dole,
22 the first woman to serve as United States Secretary of Transportation and the first
23 woman to represent North Carolina in the United States Senate; Kate Burr Johnson, the
24 first woman in the State to head a major department; Elaine Marshall, the State's first
25 female Secretary of State; Cherie Berry, the State's first female Commissioner of Labor;
26 and Beverly Perdue, the State's first female Lieutenant Governor; and

27 Whereas, despite the countless contributions women have made and continue
28 to make, their role in history has been consistently inadequate in the teaching and
29 studying of American history; and

1 Whereas, each year since 1987, the month of March has been designated as
2 Women's History Month to honor, recognize, and celebrate the diverse
3 accomplishments of women; and

4 Whereas, during Women's History Month it is important to commemorate the
5 women who have helped expand the opportunities of women, such as Dr. Willa B.
6 Player, an educator and civil rights leader; and

7 Whereas, Willa B. Player was born on August 9, 1909, in Jackson,
8 Mississippi; and

9 Whereas, Willa B. Player earned an undergraduate degree from Ohio
10 Wesleyan University, a masters degree from Oberlin College, and a doctorate degree
11 from Columbia University; and

12 Whereas, Willa B. Player was the first African-American woman to serve as a
13 practice teacher in the public schools of Akron, Ohio, in 1929, as President of the
14 National Association of Schools and Colleges of the Methodist Church in 1962, as
15 Trustee of Ohio Wesleyan University, and as President of Bennett College for Women
16 in Greensboro from 1956 to 1966; and

17 Whereas, Dr. Willa B. Player died on August 27, 2003, knowing that she had
18 made a difference in the lives of countless women across the nation; Now, therefore,
19 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

20 **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Dr. Willa B.
21 Player for her outstanding service to Bennett College for Women.

22 **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly urges the citizens of this State to
23 participate in ceremonies and events to commemorate and honor women for their
24 invaluable contributions to our State and nation and to learn more about the significant
25 roles women have had in the creation of our history.

26 **SECTION 3.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.