

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

**SESSION 2005
RATIFIED BILL**

**RESOLUTION 2005-17
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 627**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Whereas, Dr. Willa B. Player died on August 27, 2003, knowing that she had made a difference in the lives of countless women across the nation; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

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

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

SECTION 3. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 22nd day of March, 2005.

Marc Basnight
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives