**South Carolina General Assembly**

125th Session, 2023-2024

**S. 1372**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

Concurrent Resolution

Sponsors: Senator Devine

Document Path: SR-0771KM-VC24.docx

Introduced in the Senate on June 26, 2024

Introduced in the House on June 26, 2024

Adopted by the General Assembly on June 26, 2024

Summary: Booker T. Washington High School Foundation 50th Anniversary

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

6/26/2024 Senate Introduced, adopted, sent to House ([Senate Journal‑page 8](h:\sj\20240626.docx))

6/26/2024 House Introduced, adopted, returned with concurrence

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[06/26/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/1372_20240626.docx)

A concurrent RESOLUTION

TO CONGRATULATE the Booker T. Washington High School foundation UPON THE OCCASION OF ITS fiftieth ANNIVERSARY AND TO COMMEND the organization FOR ITS MANY YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE columbia COMMUNITY AND THE PEOPLE AND THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly are pleased to recognize the Booker T. Washington High School Foundation as it celebrates this important milestone; and

Whereas, founded in 1916, Booker T. Washington High School was a center for the education and training of young African Americans of Columbia until its closing in 1974. The school began with elementary grades and became a standard high school in 1924. For many years, it was the largest public high school for Black students in South Carolina, and one of the few schools in the State accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools; and

Whereas, Booker T. Washington High School campus was developed in the southeastern section of Columbia. In 1923, a three‑story fireproof building was erected to house the industrial department of the school. An annex containing twelve classrooms, laboratories, a cafeteria, and an auditorium was built onto the main building in 1927. In 1939, a gymnasium and auditorium were added to the campus. A larger shop building was constructed in 1941 to house vocational classes for boys; and

Whereas, one of the underlying factors that aided the school’s progress was the dedicated faculty and staff of highly trained men and women who were committed to helping students develop and strengthen their basic skills; and

Whereas, Booker T. Washington High School had seven principals during its history, Mr. C.A. Johnson, from 1916 to 1931; Mr. W.J. Cochrane, from 1931 to 1932; Mr. J. Andrew Simmons, from 1932 to 1945; Mr. John H. Whiteman, from 1945 to 1950; Mr. Harry B. Rutherford, from 1950 to 1965; Mr. Stonewall Richburg, from 1965 to 1972; and Mr. Samuel A. Heyward, from 1972 to 1974. Public school desegregation in the State and the expansion of the University of South Carolina led to the closing of the high school in 1974 and utilization of the school’s facilities by the university; and

Whereas, although most of the buildings that comprised Booker T. Washington High School no longer exist, the school’s spirit lives on in the hearts of thousands who were educated there; and

Whereas, the 1974 announcement to close Booker T. Washington High School created a furor of disbelief and indignation which permeated a community of loyal Washingtonians, their families, and friends. The outcry protesting the sale of the school resulted in countless public meetings to resolve a highly charged conflict; and

Whereas, recognizing the need to preserve Booker T. Washington High School’s tradition of academic, vocational, athletic, and cultural excellence, Doris Glymph Greene, from the class of 1959, envisioned a foundation to keep the memory of the school alive. She drafted a concept proposal which the Columbia Pan‑Hellenic Council unanimously adopted. The council established the Booker T. Washington High School Foundation; and

Whereas, the Booker T. Washington tradition flourishes through the class reunions, heritage banquets, the John Work Chorus, alumni picnics, and scholarship programs. The reunion weekend and the high school foundation have served as prototypes for other historic Black schools lost to the confusion of desegregation. The preservation of the Booker T. Washington High School Foundation thrives because of its loyal alumni who are entrenched in fulfilling the mission of the organization, the preservation of the rich, indelible history, traditions, and legacy of their iconic high school; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly greatly appreciate the dedication and commitment of Booker T. Washington High School to serving the people and the State of South Carolina. Now, therefore,

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

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, congratulate the Booker T. Washington High School Foundation upon the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary and commend the organization for its many years of dedicated service to the Columbia community and the people and the State of South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the Booker T. Washington High School Foundation.

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