Session of 2025

HOUSE BILL No. 2330

By Committee on Appropriations

Requested by Representative Ballard on behalf of the Kansas Black Leadership Council

2-7

AN ACT concerning days of commemoration; designating November 14 of each year as Ruby Bridges walk to school day in the state of Kansas.

WHEREAS, Kansas was at the epicenter of the landmark United States Supreme Court case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, which was decided on May 17, 1954, and in such case the Supreme Court handed down the unanimous decision that racially segregated public schools violated the 14th Amendment of the Constitution of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Kansas Senate passed Senate Resolution No. 1756 and the Kansas House of Representatives passed House Resolution No. 6047 commemorating 2024 as the 70th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision that made public school segregation illegal in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Kansas legislature passed Senate Resolution No. 1703 during the 2024 special session recognizing November 14, 2024, as Ruby Bridges walk to school day in the state of Kansas; and

WHEREAS, Ruby Nell Bridges is an American activist who became a symbol of the civil rights movement at age six when she was the youngest African American student designated to integrate public schools; and

WHEREAS, Artist Norman Rockwell celebrated the courage of Ms. Bridges in 1964 in a painting entitled "The Problem We All Live With" that depicted Ms. Bridges' first day of school, which made Ms. Bridges the national icon for desegregation; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Bridges' experience has been depicted in various media, including the 1998 Disney movie entitled "Ruby Bridges" and Ms. Bridges' own book, "Ruby Bridges Goes to School: My True Story." The American Library Association reports a record number of demands to censor library books and other materials, including Ms. Bridges' book; and

WHEREAS, The Kansas Senate joined the children of Kansas in welcoming Ms. Bridges to Topeka on November 14, 2024, on the 70th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision; and

WHEREAS, Students, teachers and school staff across the county participate in Ruby Bridges walk to school day on November 14 of each year to honor Ms. Bridges through dialogue, commemorating her historic

steps and taking part in their own forms of activism to bring an end to racism and bullying.

Now, therefore:

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

Section 1. November 14 of each year, the same being the anniversary of Ruby Bridges' first day attending William Frantz elementary school, is hereby designated as Ruby Bridges walk to school day in the state of Kansas. Any year in which November 14 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, Ruby Bridges walk to school day shall be commemorated on the following Wednesday.

Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the statute book.