

1 State of Arkansas  
2 95th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2025

HR 1025

4  
5 By: Representative Steele

6  
7  
8 **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

9 TO RECOGNIZE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2025, AS DAISY  
10 GATSON BATES DAY AND ALSO PRESIDENT’S DAY, AND TO  
11 HONOR DAISY GATSON BATES FOR HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO  
12 ARKANSAS, THE NATION, AND THE WORLD, NOW MEMORIALIZED  
13 IN THE DISPLAY OF HER STATUE AT THE NATIONAL STATUARY  
14 HALL COLLECTION IN THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL.

15  
16  
17 **Subtitle**

18 TO RECOGNIZE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2025,  
19 AS DAISY GATSON BATES DAY, AND TO HONOR  
20 DAISY GATSON BATES FOR HER CONTRIBUTIONS  
21 TO ARKANSAS, THE NATION, AND THE WORLD,  
22 NOW MEMORIALIZED IN THE DISPLAY OF HER  
23 STATUE IN THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL.

24  
25 WHEREAS, Daisy Gatson Bates Day is observed annually in the State of  
26 Arkansas on the same day as President’s Day to honor the life of Daisy Gatson  
27 Bates, a civil rights activist who played a prominent role during the 1957  
28 integration crisis at Little Rock Central High School; and

29  
30 WHEREAS, the life and legacy of Daisy Gatson Bates has been honored  
31 previously by the General Assembly, including by Representative Steele during  
32 the 2011 Regular Session in House Resolution 1013; and

33  
34 WHEREAS, Daisy Gatson Bates was born in Huttig, Arkansas, in 1914, but  
35 her mother was murdered in a racially motivated incident when Bates was just  
36 three (3) years old, prompting Bates’s lifelong interest in ending racial



1 injustice; and

2

3 WHEREAS, in 1941, Daisy Gatson Bates moved to Little Rock to start a  
4 newspaper, the "Arkansas State Press", in order to advocate for civil rights  
5 and other important issues impacting Black Arkansans; and

6

7 WHEREAS, Daisy Gatson Bates and her husband, Lucious Christopher Bates,  
8 worked closely with the Little Rock branch of the National Association for  
9 the Advancement of Colored People, and in 1952 Bates was elected president of  
10 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Arkansas  
11 State Conference; and

12

13 WHEREAS, Daisy Gatson Bates was already well-known as a civil rights  
14 advocate in the Arkansas Black community when she came to the attention of  
15 the rest of the state and the entire world as an advocate for public school  
16 integration during the federal court case, Aaron v. Cooper, 143 F.Supp. 855  
17 (E.D. Ark. 1956), that set the stage for the 1957 desegregation of Little  
18 Rock Central High School; and

19

20 WHEREAS, Daisy Gatson Bates mentored and cared for the nine (9) Black  
21 students, later known as the Little Rock Nine, who attended Little Rock  
22 Central High School during the school year of 1957-1958, functioning as the  
23 principal spokesperson for the children and for school desegregation, as a  
24 result of which she and her family suffered intimidation and physical  
25 attacks; and

26

27 WHEREAS, Daisy Gatson Bates never wavered in her support of the Little  
28 Rock Nine during their difficult first year at Little Rock Central High  
29 School, a time in which all nine (9) students suffered verbal and physical  
30 assaults from classmates, teachers, and other citizens of Arkansas; and

31

32 WHEREAS, in 1960, Daisy Gatson Bates moved to New York City and wrote a  
33 memoir, "The Long Shadow of Little Rock", about her experience with the  
34 Little Rock Nine and her efforts to desegregate public schools; and

35

36 WHEREAS, Daisy Gatson Bates later moved to Washington, D.C., where she

1 spoke at the March on Washington in 1963 and worked in the administration of  
2 President Lyndon B. Johnson on antipoverty programs; and

3  
4 WHEREAS, after suffering a stroke, Daisy Gatson Bates returned to  
5 Arkansas in 1965 to advocate for economic self-sufficiency for poor Black  
6 Arkansans, securing grants and donations for community improvements such as  
7 sewer systems and Head Start programs; and

8  
9 WHEREAS, following the death of Daisy Gatson Bates in 1999, a crowd of  
10 more than two thousand (2,000) gathered at Robinson Auditorium in Little Rock  
11 to honor her memory, at which event President William Jefferson "Bill"  
12 Clinton compared Bates to a diamond that gets "chipped away and formed and  
13 shines more brightly"; and

14  
15 WHEREAS, in 2001, the General Assembly enacted a provision recognizing  
16 the third Monday in February as Daisy Gatson Bates Day, an official state  
17 holiday; and

18  
19 WHEREAS, many streets in Arkansas towns, including in Little Rock, bear  
20 the name of Daisy Gatson Bates; and

21  
22 WHEREAS, in February 2012, the Public Broadcasting Service broadcast a  
23 documentary called "Daisy Bates: First Lady of Little Rock"; and

24  
25 WHEREAS, in 2019, the General Assembly passed a law to replace the  
26 statues in the National Statuary Hall Collection in the United States Capitol  
27 with statues of Johnny Cash and of Daisy Gatson Bates; and

28  
29 WHEREAS, the statue of Daisy Gatson Bates, created by artist Benjamin  
30 Victor, was unveiled in the United States Capitol on May 8, 2024; and

31  
32 WHEREAS, the statue of Daisy Gatson Bates depicts her walking forward  
33 with a folded copy of the Arkansas State Press newspaper in her left hand and  
34 a pen and notepad in her right hand, with a National Association for the  
35 Advancement of Colored People pin on her left lapel and a rose on the left  
36 side of her jacket, which is a symbol of Bates's continually blossoming

1 motivation for addressing racial inequality,

2

3 NOW THEREFORE,

4 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL

5 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

6

7 THAT the House of Representatives recognize Monday, February 17, 2025,

8 as Daisy Gatson Bates Day and also President's Day, and honor Daisy Gatson

9 Bates for her contributions to Arkansas, the nation, and the world, now

10 memorialized in the display of her statue at the National Statuary Hall

11 Collection in the United States Capitol.

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36