

As Introduced

**136th General Assembly
Regular Session
2025-2026**

H. C. R. No. 11

Representative Jarrells

**Cosponsors: Representatives Brennan, Brownlee, Grim, McNally, Mohamed,
Piccolantonio, Russo, Sims, Upchurch**

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To acknowledge, condemn, and apologize for the wrongful
displacement of the Randolph Freedpeople.

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BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF OHIO (THE SENATE CONCURRING):

WHEREAS, In 1833, Virginia slaveholder John Randolph died
and thereby, through his will, freed his slaves from bondage;
and

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WHEREAS, Randolph's former slaves, a group of 383 persons
known now as the Randolph Freedpeople, ultimately secured their
emancipation after a thirteen-year long legal battle over John
Randolph's will; and

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WHEREAS, In June 1846, The Randolph Freedpeople began their
journey north from Virginia, primarily by foot, to 3,200 acres
of land in Ohio, which had been purchased for their settlement;
and

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WHEREAS, Community leaders and elected officials in Ohio,
hearing of the approach of the Randolph Freedpeople, passed a
resolution stating their refusal to live among African Americans
and their intent to violently resist the settlement of African
Americans; and

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WHEREAS, The Randolph Freedpeople were prevented from 19
settling on their purchased land by an armed white mob and 20
forced, for fear of their lives, to settle elsewhere in western 21
Ohio; and 22

WHEREAS, Though dispossessed of their land and forced to 23
start their new lives from nothing, the Randolph Freedpeople 24
made significant contributions to the cultural, social, 25
political, and economic fabric of the areas of Ohio they 26
eventually settled and the state as a whole; and 27

WHEREAS, Despite the severe injustice inflicted upon the 28
Randolph Freedpeople, the State of Ohio failed to intervene on 29
their behalf; and 30

WHEREAS, Despite Ohio's status as a "free" state, by the 31
enactment and operation of Ohio's "Black Laws," racial 32
discrimination and racist restrictions on the rights of African 33
Americans were official state policy at the time the Randolph 34
Freedpeople came to Ohio; and 35

WHEREAS, The State of Ohio has never officially recognized 36
or apologized for its role, by action and inaction, in 37
encouraging, supporting, and condoning the unlawful displacement 38
of the Randolph Freedpeople; and 39

WHEREAS, Slavery and the legal framework that supported it, 40
including Ohio's Black Laws, left a legacy of racial mistrust 41
and prejudice that continues to affect Ohioans to this day, 42
including the descendants of the Randolph Freedpeople, whose 43
ancestors never received the justice they deserved; and 44

WHEREAS, The United States Congress has previously passed 45
resolutions apologizing for the enslavement and segregation of 46
African Americans, demonstrating how the recognition of wrongs 47
committed in the past is crucial for racial reconciliation and 48
provides the opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to a just 49

future and a more perfect Union; now therefore be it 50

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the 136th General 51
Assembly of the State of Ohio, acknowledge, condemn, and 52
apologize for the violent and wrongful acts committed against 53
the Randolph Freedpeople when they were forced off their land; 54
and be it further 55

RESOLVED, That we recognize the Randolph Freedpeople's many 56
valuable contributions to the land they settled, our state, and 57
our country, and honor their perseverance, in the face of great 58
adversity, to live free; and be it further 59

RESOLVED, That we reaffirm the commitment of the State of 60
Ohio to treat all persons with equal respect and fairness; and 61
be it further 62

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives 63
transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the 64
news media of Ohio. 65