



STATE SENATOR
EDNA BROWN

11TH DISTRICT

SB 73 Sponsor Testimony
Senator Edna Brown
Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee
May 30, 2017

Chairman Uecker, Vice Chair Wilson, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 73.

This bill would designate October 7th as “Moses Fleetwood Walker Day,” in honor of the Ohioan who was the first African-American major league baseball player under contract.

Born in Mount Pleasant, Ohio, Moses Fleetwood Walker played baseball for the Toledo Blue Stockings when the team was admitted to the American Association in 1884. The American Association was a professional baseball league that existed for ten seasons, beginning in 1882 and ending in 1891. His baseball career would begin over half-a-century prior to that of Jackie Robinson’s.

In addition to his athletic accomplishments, Walker attended Oberlin College as a student-athlete and received his undergraduate degree. He later enrolled in law school at the University of Michigan and was a member of the University Baseball Club.

Walker’s contributions to the game of baseball far exceeded his athletic ability. Though his name is relatively unknown in comparison to Jackie Robinson’s, he was the first to break the barrier prohibiting black men from playing organized baseball. It’s important that we give him the recognition that he deserves.

Representatives West and Leland recently passed this bill out of the House, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same in the Senate.

Chairman Uecker, thank you again for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony today. I’d be happy to answer any questions from the committee.