

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 121

Rep. Meerman offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to declare June 15, 2023, as William DeHart
2 Hubbard Day in the state of Michigan.

3 Whereas, American history is full of extraordinary individuals
4 who break barriers and strive for greatness, whose accomplishments
5 should be recognized; and

6 Whereas, William DeHart Hubbard was born on November 25th,
7 1903, in Cincinnati, Ohio, son of the late William Alexander
8 Hubbard and the late Caroline Hubbard; and

9 Whereas, William DeHart Hubbard was an outstanding student and
10 athlete at Walnut Hills High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he
11 starred on the school's track and field team, as well as the
12 football team, and was known as a person of dignity and honor; and

1 Whereas, At the time, sports teams were divided by race and as
2 an African American, some questioned Hubbard's eligibility to play
3 in his school's sports conference and instead of letting Hubbard be
4 expelled from the team, his teammates rallied behind him, supported
5 his eligibility and ended up withdrawing from competition that
6 academic year, allowing Hubbard to focus on track and field
7 competitions, which ended bringing him to the University of
8 Michigan; and

9 Whereas, William DeHart Hubbard started his track and field
10 career at the University of Michigan in 1922, he competed in the
11 Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) as a freshman because he was not
12 allowed to compete in varsity competitions; and

13 Whereas, In his freshman year of college, William won first
14 overall in the triple jump and long jump AAU events, which
15 qualified him to the National Collegiate Athletic Association
16 (NCAA) varsity competitions the next academic year; and

17 Whereas, In his sophomore year of college, William DeHart
18 Hubbard competed in the NCAA in the long jump competition, where he
19 placed first overall, he also competed in various AAU events and
20 place first in the triple jump and long jump; and

21 Whereas, In 1924, William DeHart Hubbard competed in the Paris
22 Summer Olympics in the long jump event, where he leapt 24.43 feet,
23 awarding him the gold medal in that event; and

24 Whereas, When William DeHart Hubbard left for the Olympics, he
25 sent his family a letter say that he would be the first African
26 American champion and when he returned home, he was exactly that,
27 the first African American man to win a gold medal in any
28 individual event in the Olympics; and

29 Whereas, His athletic record continued to grow when he

1 returned to the University of Michigan and during his junior year,
2 on June 13th, 1925, William DeHart Hubbard set a world record in
3 the long jump event at the NCAA competition in Chicago, Illinois,
4 having jumped 25.10 feet; and

5 Whereas, Later that month, Hubbard tied the world record in
6 the 100-yard dash, completing the event in 9.8 seconds, securing
7 him the win against the Ohio State University at Ferry Field in Ann
8 Arbor, Michigan; and

9 Whereas, During his senior year, Hubbard competed in the
10 Amateur Athletic Union championship, where he placed first in the
11 long jump competition yet again; and

12 Whereas, Upon his graduation from the University of Michigan,
13 Hubbard was a National Collegiate Athletic Association "All
14 American Champion," a seven-time track and field Big Ten Conference
15 Champion, and was an accomplished student, after graduating from
16 the University of Michigan with full honors; and

17 Whereas, Hubbard's passion for sports continued after his
18 undergraduate years. In 1934, he founded the Cincinnati Tigers, a
19 professional baseball team that competed in the Negro Southern
20 League and the Negro American League. He was an avid bowler and in
21 1956, Hubbard became the ninth president of the National Bowling
22 Association; and

23 Whereas, William DeHart Hubbard made a serious impact on the
24 athletic world and on the University of Michigan's community. In
25 1957, he was voted into the National Track Hall of Fame and in 1979
26 he was posthumously inducted into the University of Michigan Hall
27 of Fame, and in 2010, The University of Michigan endowed The
28 William DeHart Hubbard Memorial Scholarship; and

29 Whereas, June 15th, 2023, marks the 100th anniversary of the

1 1923 NCAA Track and Field Championships at Stagg Field in Chicago,
2 in which William DeHart Hubbard competed in the final event of the
3 inaugural year of his athletic career at the University of Michigan
4 and set the NCAA record in the broad jump with a distance of 25
5 feet, 2 inches; now, therefore, be it

6 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members
7 of this legislative declare June 15, 2023, as William DeHart
8 Hubbard Day in the state of Michigan. We honor the 100th
9 anniversary of William DeHart Hubbard's athletic career at the
10 University of Michigan and recognize his accomplishments in
11 sports, including being the first African American man to win a
12 gold medal in any individual event in the Olympics. We honor his
13 life as a trailblazer and example in Michigan, the United States,
14 and the world. We encourage educators in our state to introduce
15 their students to the impactful accomplishments of Mr. Hubbard.