

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 59th Legislature (2024)

3 HOUSE CONCURRENT
4 RESOLUTION 1012

By: Pittman

5
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 A Concurrent Resolution recognizing the importance of
8 the Tuskegee Airmen.

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10 WHEREAS, before World War II African Americans had very limited
11 roles in the defense of the United States and none in military
12 aviation, and when the nation was drawn into the war, African
13 Americans were aspiring to more meaningful roles in the military
14 including flying and maintaining aircraft; and

15 WHEREAS, the rapid expansion of aircraft production during the
16 war created a greater need for military pilots, public outcry from
17 civil rights groups and black professional organizations exhorted
18 the United States War Department to extend to all military members
19 the opportunity to fly airplanes; and

20 WHEREAS, the United States War Department's Civilian Pilot
21 Training Program (CPTP) authorized colleges and universities to
22 train students in order to increase the number of civilian pilots
23 and thereby increase the nation's military preparedness; and
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1 WHEREAS, Alabama's Tuskegee Institute was one of six black
2 colleges and universities chosen to participate in the CPTP was
3 later selected to offer advance training, and finally became the
4 sole site for segregated military flight training; and

5 WHEREAS, the month of March is significant to the Tuskegee
6 Airmen as it is the month in which five of thirteen cadets in the
7 first class completed training and received their silver wings
8 becoming the nation's first black military pilots; and

9 WHEREAS, Charles B. Hall, originally from Brazil, Indiana, while
10 escorting a group of bombers on July 2, 1943, would shoot down an
11 enemy aircraft becoming the first African American assigned to the
12 U.S. Army Air Corps becoming the first to do so, and after his
13 military career would make Oklahoma City his home working for the
14 Federal Aviation Administration and later Tinker Air Force Base; and

15 WHEREAS, Harold H. Brown of Weeletka, Joseph D. Elsberry of
16 Langston, Samuel J. Foreman of Tulsa, James B. Knighten of Tulsa,
17 Faythe A. McGinnis of Muskogee, Lincoln J. Ragsdale of Ardmore,
18 Robert C. Smith of Muskogee, Yancey Williams of Tulsa, and Isaac R.
19 Woods of Tulsa would all commit to serve in the U.S. Army Air Corps
20 to become Tuskegee Airmen representing the spirit of Oklahomans to
21 service to their nation.

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
23 OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 59TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE SENATE
24 CONCURRING THEREIN:
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1 THAT the Oklahoma House of Representatives and the Oklahoma
2 State Senate join in recognizing the important role performed by the
3 persons who were known as the "Tuskegee Airmen" and to acknowledge
4 the contributions made not only to the efforts in combat and
5 bringing an end to the Second World War, but to the advances made
6 that would serve as the foundation for future success of African
7 Americans in the United States Military.

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