

House Resolution

No. 41

Introduced by Assembly Member Burke

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Jones-Sawyer, McCarty, Ridley-Thomas, Thurmond, and Weber)**

March 1, 2016

House Resolution No. 41—Relative to Tuskegee Airmen Day.

1 WHEREAS, The Tuskegee Airmen is the popular name of the
2 very first group of African-American military aviators in the United
3 States Armed Forces, and they went on to earn distinction for their
4 demonstrated skill as part of the 332nd Fighter Group and the 99th
5 Pursuit Squadron of the United States Army Air Corps; and

6 WHEREAS, Prior to the Tuskegee Airmen, the United States
7 military did not allow African-Americans the opportunity to
8 become aviators; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1941 Congress forced the Army Air Corps to
10 form an African American combat unit, despite the reluctance to
11 initiate any form of substantive integration; and

12 WHEREAS, In June 1941, the Airmen were transferred to
13 Tuskegee, Alabama where they received training before they were
14 deemed ready for combat in 1943 and deployed to North Africa
15 to join the 33rd fighter group; and

16 WHEREAS, In the first battle, the Airmen attacked the island
17 of Pantelleria, effectively clearing a path for the Allied forces to
18 invade Sicily where the Italian population was forced to surrender;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, The Tuskegee Airmen broke barriers by working
21 under the exceptional leadership of Benjamin O. Davis Jr., the first

1 black man to hold the rank of general in the United States Air
2 Force; and

3 WHEREAS, The arrival of more African American aviators
4 strengthened the decisive impact of the Tuskegee Airmen despite
5 a scientific report by the University of Texas detailing that African
6 Americans were of low intelligence and lacked the competency
7 to handle complex situations, such as air combat; and

8 WHEREAS, The Tuskegee Airmen earned their place in history
9 further by flying over 15,000 combat sorties on 1,578 missions
10 during World War II, proving instrumental to the liberation of
11 oppressed groups abroad while African Americans still faced their
12 own form of oppression in the United States; and

13 WHEREAS, After receiving the P-51 Mustang fighters with red
14 paint on the tail section of their aircraft, the pilots of the 332nd
15 became known as the Red Tails; and

16 WHEREAS, After segregation in the military was ended in 1948
17 by President Harry S. Truman through Executive Order, the veteran
18 Tuskegee Airmen went on to share their knowledge by teaching
19 civilian flight to other groups such as the black-owned Columbia
20 Air Center in Maryland; and

21 WHEREAS, The Tuskegee Airman broke boundaries for their
22 brave efforts not only in the Air Force, but for the United States
23 more broadly; now, therefore, be it

24 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California*, That the
25 California State Assembly designates the 4th Thursday in March
26 as Tuskegee Airmen Day in California; and be it further

27 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
28 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.