

A RESOLUTION honoring the late Colonel Charles D. Young for his dedication to service of our country and distinction as the highest ranking African-American officer in the United States Armed Forces until his death.

WHEREAS, the late Charles Young was born to enslaved parents Gabriel and Arminta Young on March 12, 1864, in Mays Lick, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, Charles D. Young was accepted to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and graduated in 1889, becoming the third African-American cadet to graduate from West Point; and

WHEREAS, upon graduation, Colonel Charles Young served with the famed Buffalo Soldiers serving in the Ninth Cavalry at western posts in Nebraska and Utah as a second lieutenant; and

WHEREAS, once appointed Major in the Ohio National Guard in 1898, Charles Young was placed in command of its Ninth Infantry Battalion; and during that time he served as Professor of Military Science at Wilberforce University in Ohio; and

WHEREAS, as a Captain in 1901, Colonel Charles Young commanded a troop of the Ninth Cavalry in combat in the Philippine Islands during the Philippine Insurrection; and

WHEREAS, in 1903, Charles Young was in command of the 10th Cavalry at the Presidio in San Francisco, at which time he was designated acting superintendent of Sequoia National Park in California, becoming the first African American to serve as superintendent of a national park; and

WHEREAS, during Charles Young's tenure as acting superintendent at Sequoia National Park, the 10th Cavalry extended the wagon road deep into the park, thus enhancing public access to the natural wonders the park had to offer by building more miles of road in the park than had been built in all the years prior to his service in 1903. He also undertook conservation measures such as curtailing illegal grazing of livestock in the park, putting fences around trees to protect their root systems from the footsteps of

visitors, and recommending to the Secretary of the Interior that the federal government acquire privately held lands within the park; and

WHEREAS, with the creation of the Army's Military Information Division (MID), Charles Young became an Army military attaché in Port Au Prince, Haiti in 1904, one of the first individuals so designated and the first African American so named. The position of military attaché involved observing the training and exercises of foreign armies and reporting on their strengths and weaknesses; and

WHEREAS, in 1912, this time in Liberia, Colonel Charles Young was appointed as military attaché once again, where, for his service as an advisor to the Liberian government, he was awarded the Spingarn Award from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), an annual award that recognizes the African American who attained the highest achievement during the year in any field of honorable human endeavor; and

WHEREAS, in 1916, Charles Young distinguished himself during the expedition into Mexico in pursuit of Pancho Villa, who was responsible for the deaths of American citizens in towns near the U.S.-Mexico border. Commanding a squadron of the 10th Cavalry, Charles Young led a charge against the forces of Pancho Villa, rescuing a wounded American general and his men who had been outflanked by the enemy, and later coming to the aid of the 13th U.S. Cavalry squadron which was involved in heavy fighting; and

WHEREAS, because of his distinguished service during the expedition into Mexico, Charles Young was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and served as commander of Fort Huachuca in Arizona; and

WHEREAS, Charles D. Young was the highest ranking African-American officer in the Army when the United States entered World War I, but during his scheduled Army physical, doctors discovered that he suffered from nephritis, high blood pressure, and an enlarged heart and on June 22, 1917, he was forced into medical retirement and returned

to his teaching post at Wilberforce University in Ohio; and

WHEREAS, only one year later, Charles Young rode 500 miles on horseback from Wilberforce, Ohio to Washington, D.C. to demonstrate his fitness for duty and to petition the Secretary of War for immediate reinstatement and command of a combat unit in Europe. Charles D. Young was reinstated and promoted to full colonel, the first African American to attain the rank of colonel in the Army. When the war ended, Colonel Charles Young was reassigned to Liberia as a military attaché; and

WHEREAS, Charles D. Young fell critically ill on an intelligence mission in Nigeria, and later died on January 8, 1922. His funeral was the fourth ever held at Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery, and Colonel Charles Young was laid to rest in Section 3 of the cemetery; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Charles Young was the devoted husband of his wife, Ada, and the proud father of their two children, Charles, Jr., and Marie, and, in addition to being a distinguished military officer and dedicated family man, was also an accomplished musician and a linguist who was fluent in several languages; and

WHEREAS, on March 25, 2013, President Barack Obama established the Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument in Wilberforce, Ohio, to recognize and honor the perseverance, devotion, and great leadership displayed during Colonel Charles Young's career and ascent to prominence in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Charles D. Young's extraordinary military career spanned thirty-three years of segregated service. Despite the internal struggle of racism that plagued our nation, Colonel Young remained a distinguished and devoted American who served his nation proudly. Through hard work, talent, and perseverance, Colonel Charles Young overcame the discrimination and prejudice he encountered and held the title of highest ranking African American in the United States Armed Forces until his death in 1922;

NOW, THEREFORE,

*Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

➔Section 1. When the House adjourns this day, it will do so in honor of the late Colonel Charles D. Young.

➔Section 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Representative Mike Denham, Room 329, Capitol Annex.