

A RESOLUTION recognizing the 75th anniversary of the Tuskegee Airmen.

WHEREAS, the Tuskegee Airmen were dedicated, determined young men who enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps to become one of America's first black military airmen, considered to be an experiment; and

WHEREAS, approximately 1,000 cadets graduated from Tuskegee Army Airfield and received their commissions and pilot wings, and more than 17,000 were trained as ground support personnel; and

WHEREAS, the Tuskegee Airmen accepted the challenge during the era of Jim Crow at home in America to serve as pilots, aircrews, and ground support personnel in the military at a time when many people thought that blacks lacked the intelligence, skills, courage, and patriotism; and

WHEREAS, the Tuskegee Airmen flew more than 1,200 missions for the 99th, 100th, 301st, and 302nd Fighter Squadrons under the 12th and 15th Air Forces. In total, the 99th Fighter Squadron and the 332nd Fighter Group had over 112 aerial victories during World War II; and

WHEREAS, through their successful bomber escort missions, many bomber crews felt safe under their protection; and

WHEREAS, upon orders from the Commander of the 15th Air Force, the airmen painted the tails of their planes red; thus the nickname "Red Tails" was coined. Bomber crews applied a more effusive label: the "Red-Tail Angels"; and

WHEREAS, the black airmen returned to the United States facing continued racism and bigotry despite their outstanding war record, but still fought for freedom and justice for all; and

WHEREAS, the term "Documented Original Tuskegee Airmen" or "DOTA" was adopted to include vetted personnel who trained or were stationed at Tuskegee Army Airfield and other designated units or locations between the period of 1941 and 1949; and

WHEREAS, on March 29, 2007, the Tuskegee Airmen were recognized by

President Bush and Congress for their outstanding service to help defeat the Axis powers and overcome racism, for which the Tuskegee Airmen as an organization was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal;

NOW, THEREFORE,

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

➔Section 1. The Senate hereby honors the 75th anniversary of the Tuskegee Airmen.

➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor of the Tuskegee Airmen.

➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Senator Reginald Thomas for delivery.