

1 A RESOLUTION recognizing Colonel Charles Young.

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

4 WHEREAS, Colonel Young was the third African American cadet to graduate from
5 the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1889; and

6 WHEREAS, upon graduation, Colonel Young served with the Ninth and Tenth
7 Cavalries. He was appointed Major in the Ohio National Guard in 1898 and placed in
8 command of its Ninth Infantry Battalion, and during that time he served as Professor of
9 Military Science at Wilberforce University in Ohio; and

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

12 WHEREAS, in 1903, Colonel Young led a cavalry unit based out of the Presidio in
13 San Francisco. He became the first African American Superintendent of Sequoia National
14 Park and oversaw the extension of roads into the park, making many parts accessible for
15 visitors for the first time; and

16 WHEREAS, in 1904, Colonel Young became the first African American officer
17 appointed to duty as a military attaché, serving in Hispaniola. By 1912, Colonel Young
18 was military attaché to Liberia, where he was promoted to Major and developed the
19 Liberian Frontier Forces. In 1916, he was awarded the Spingarn Award from the NAACP
20 for his exceptional work developing Liberia's infrastructure; and

21 WHEREAS, Colonel Young was reassigned to the Tenth United States Cavalry and
22 served in the Punitive Expedition in Mexico with General Pershing from 1916-1917,
23 where he led a cavalry charge against Pancho Villa's troops and was wounded rescuing a
24 large part of the Thirteenth Cavalry. For his leadership, he was promoted to Lieutenant
25 Colonel; and

26 WHEREAS, at the beginning of the First World War, Colonel Young was the
27 highest ranking African American serving in the United States Army. In June 1917, due

1 to a diagnosis of hypertension, he was declared medically unfit for duty and medically
2 retired; and

3 WHEREAS, Colonel Young challenged the decision and rode 500 miles on
4 horseback from Wilberforce, Ohio, to Washington, D.C., to demonstrate his fitness for
5 duty. In June 1918, he was reinstated and assigned as military attaché to Liberia; and

6 WHEREAS, Colonel Young was struck critically ill while on an intelligence
7 mission and later died on January 8, 1922. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery
8 on June 1, 1923, and his eulogy was delivered by his friend W.E.B. DuBois; and

9 WHEREAS, Colonel Young's extraordinary military career spanned 33 years of
10 segregated service at a time when our nation was plagued by the internal struggle of
11 racism. From 1894 until his death in 1922, he was the highest-ranked African American
12 in the United States Armed Forces;

13 NOW, THEREFORE,

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

16 ➔Section 1. The Senate hereby recognizes Colonel Charles Young, and
17 posthumously thanks him for his courageous service to the United States of America.

18 ➔Section 2. When the Senate adjourns this day, it does so in honor of Colonel
19 Charles Young.

20 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit a copy of this
21 Resolution to Senator Gerald A. Neal.