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HR-41 (2015-2016)

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AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 17, 2016

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2015–2016 REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE RESOLUTION

NO. 41

Introduced by Assembly Member Burke

(Coauthors: Assembly Members Brown, Cooper, Gipson, Holden, Jones-Sawyer, McCarty, Ridley-Thomas, Thurmond, ~~and Weber~~ *Weber, Achadjian, Alejo, Baker, Bonilla, Brough, Calderon, Campos, Chang, Chau, Chávez, Chu, Cooley, Dahle, Daly, Dodd, Eggman, Frazier, Beth Gaines, Gallagher, Cristina Garcia, Eduardo Garcia, Gatto, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gray, Grove, Hadley, Harper, Roger Hernández, Irwin, Jones, Lackey, Levine, Linder, Lopez, Maienschein, Mathis, Mayes, Melendez, Mullin, Nazarian, Obernolte, Olsen, Patterson, Quirk, Rendon, Rodriguez, Santiago, Steinorth, Mark Stone, Ting, Wagner, Waldron, Wilk, and Williams*)

March 01, 2016

Relative to Tuskegee Airmen Day.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

HR 41, as amended, Burke.

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, The Tuskegee Airmen broke barriers by working under the exceptional leadership of Benjamin O. Davis Jr., the first black man to hold the rank of general in the United States Air Force; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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