

By: Representatives Mayo, Burnett, Coleman
(29th), Espy, Huddleston, Peranich

To: Rules

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 21

1 A RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE SERVICE, SACRIFICE AND BRAVERY OF
2 TUSKEGEE AIRMAN, RETIRED LIEUTENANT COLONEL WASHINGTON DUBOIS
3 ROSS, TO THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI AND THE UNITED STATES.

4 WHEREAS, born March 4, 1919, in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, as
5 the fourth of six children, to Robert Warren Ross, Sr., and Teresa
6 Elizabeth Calloway Ross, Lieutenant Colonel Washington DuBois Ross
7 served his country in many capacities as a groundbreaking Tuskegee
8 Airman, a decorated fighter pilot and a highly respected officer;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, having received his bachelor of science degree in
11 education from Hampton Institute (now Hampton University) in
12 Hampton, Virginia, Lieutenant Colonel Ross also received his
13 private pilot's license through participation in the Civilian
14 Pilot Training Program (CPT); and

15 WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Ross furthered his educational
16 pursuits at Wayne State University and at the University of
17 Detroit, from which he earned a master's degree in mathematics,
18 additionally obtaining a bachelor of business administration and a
19 master of business administration from D'etre University in
20 Detroit, Michigan; and

21 WHEREAS, one of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, Ross arrived at
22 Tuskegee as part of the Class 43-I, graduating in 1943 as a
23 fighter pilot with the rank of Second Lieutenant before being sent
24 to Selfridge Field, Michigan, in October of 1943 for overseas
25 training, and later joining the 332nd Fighter Group for a tour of
26 duty in the European Theater; and

27 WHEREAS, after spending some time in North Africa for
28 additional training, Lieutenant Colonel Ross and his comrades were
29 flown to Naples, Italy, to join other members of the 332nd, where
30 he flew patrol in P-39s, before being transferred to the 15th Air
31 Force to fly P-47s, and he finally flew P-51s on long escort
32 missions protecting bombers; and

33 WHEREAS, having flown a combination of sorties and missions,
34 for a total of 63 missions, Lieutenant Colonel Ross and fellow
35 members of the 332nd Fighter Group shared the distinction of not
36 losing a single bomber to enemy fighters; and

37 WHEREAS, the timeline of Lieutenant Colonel Ross' military
38 career is complemented by an impressive record of service as he
39 progressed through the ranks, first as cadet and later as a
40 twin-engine instructor for the B-25 at Tuskegee Army Air Base in
41 Alabama and Lockbourne Air Force Base in Ohio; and

42 WHEREAS, after four years of active military service, Ross
43 joined the United States Air Force Reserves where he served for 20
44 years in a number of assignments, before retiring in 1981 with the
45 rank of Lieutenant Colonel; and

46 WHEREAS, while Lieutenant Colonel Ross carried great
47 responsibility in the Air Force, he also remained active in
48 community groups and social organizations, including Tuskegee
49 Airmen, Inc.; life member of the Reserve Officers Association; the
50 Berea Lutheran Church in Detroit; Berea Day School Board of
51 Education; and the Detroit Chapter of the National Hampton Alumni
52 Association, Inc.; and

53 WHEREAS, hailed as a legend of his time, Lieutenant Colonel
54 Ross has been supported and encouraged in every endeavor he has
55 undertaken by his loving family, including his late wife of 60
56 years, Willie Pearl White Ross; children, Paula Ross, Rodney
57 Enix-Ross, Mark Ross and Robert Ross; and three grandchildren,
58 Langston Ross, Parker Enix-Ross and Miya Ross; and

59 WHEREAS, it is the policy of the House of Representatives to
60 commend the lives and service of such notable and humble native
61 Mississippians as Lieutenant Colonel Ross, whose life will be
62 etched in the rich history of this state and nation and who has
63 inspired countless numbers to strive diligently to achieve their
64 dreams:

65 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
66 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby
67 commend the service and sacrifice of the legendary Tuskegee
68 Airman, astute soldier and devout Mississippian, Lieutenant
69 Colonel Washington DuBois Ross, and extend our warmest wishes for
70 his continued health, peace and success in all of his future
71 endeavors.

72 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be
73 furnished to Lieutenant Colonel Ross and to the members of the
74 Capitol Press Corps.