



# City of Columbus

Office of City Clerk  
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## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 0039X-2007, **Version:** 1

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To honor and pay tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen, 99<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron.

**WHEREAS**, in 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt overruled his top generals and ordered the creation of an all Black flight training program. President Roosevelt took this action one day after the NAACP filed suit on behalf of Howard University student Yancy Williams and others in Federal court to force the Department of War to accept Black pilot trainees; and

**WHEREAS**, Due to the rigid system of racial segregation that prevailed in the United States during World War II, Black military pilots were trained at a separate airfield built near Tuskegee, Alabama. They became known as the "Tuskegee Airmen"; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tuskegee Squadron was considered an "experiment", but proved to be a squadron of men above and beyond in terms of bravery, courage and competence. They destroyed over 260 enemy aircraft, sank one enemy destroyer and demolished numerous enemy installations, and completed what was perhaps their most heroic mission: opening the door to an integrated armed forces; and

**WHEREAS**, German pilots, who both feared and respected the Tuskegee Airmen, called them the "Schwartz Vogelmenchen"(or "Black Birdmen"). White American bomber crews reverently referred to them as the "Black Redtail Angels", because of the bright red painted on the tail assemblies of their fighter aircraft and because of their reputation for not losing a single bomber to enemy fighters as they provided close escort for bombing missions over strategic targets in Europe; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tuskegee Airmen have established an exemplary combat record achieving 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 1 Legion of Merit & Red Star of Yugoslavia, 9 Purple Hearts; 1 Silver Star, 14 Bronze Stars; 3 Distinguished Unit Citations and an impressive 744 Air Medals and clusters amongst them; and

**WHEREAS**, Tuskegee Airmen are forever a part of our history as we salute these brave men and honor them for their dedication in defense of the principles and rights that our nation was founded upon; now, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:**

That we do hereby pay tribute the Tuskegee Airmen, 99<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron and we want to express our sincere appreciation for your heroism, fearlessness and tenacity on this 29<sup>th</sup> day of March 2007.