

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5646

To designate the FAA Air Control Tower located at Memphis International Airport as the Freedom Tower.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 30, 2010

Mr. COHEN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To designate the FAA Air Control Tower located at Memphis International Airport as the Freedom Tower.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

5 (1) The city of Memphis has played and con-
6 tinues to play a key role in securing American free-
7 doms.

8 (2) Because of its history, Memphis represents
9 the struggle for freedom for millions of Americans
10 and millions more across the world.

1 (3) Memphis and its airport have long symbol-
2 ized America’s fight for freedom—from Memphis fe-
3 male pilot Phoebe Omlie, who served our country
4 well and broke gender barriers, to the city’s many
5 great civil rights leaders who fought for freedom and
6 equality, to our airport’s pivotal national security
7 role on one of our Nation’s darkest days, 9/11.

8 (4) The tower will serve as a tribute to the
9 thousands of men and women who persevered
10 throughout the Civil Rights Movement to fight for
11 freedom for all men and women of America, no mat-
12 ter their race, gender, or creed.

13 (5) Memphis is home to hundreds of freedom
14 fighters including Benjamin Hooks, Vasco and Max-
15 ine Smith, Russell Sugarmon, and Jesse Turner,
16 whose fight for freedom occurred throughout Mem-
17 phis in the form of sit-ins at department store lunch
18 counters and at the main public library.

19 (6) Many of these heroic men and women dem-
20 onstrated their desire for freedom, in spite of threats
21 of violence and death, by riding buses in Memphis
22 and throughout the South proclaiming their equality.

23 (7) The tower will honor all of these freedom
24 fighters as well as individuals throughout the Nation

1 who marched, protested, and spoke out for civil
2 rights, equality, and freedom for all.

3 (8) The tower will safely guide thousands of in-
4 dividuals each year on their journey to the National
5 Civil Rights Museum, which chronicles key episodes
6 of the American Civil Rights Movement and main-
7 tains the legacy of this freedom movement to inspire
8 participation in civil and human rights efforts glob-
9 ally.

10 (9) The existing air tower at MEM is named
11 the Omlie Tower after Phoebe Omlie, who led the
12 way for women's rights in the aviation industry and
13 broke the glass ceiling to allow women the freedom
14 to pursue careers traditionally reserved for men.

15 (10) Named by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt
16 as one of the twelve greatest women in the United
17 States, Omlie is most renowned for being the first
18 woman to hold an official aviation post in the U.S.
19 Federal Government.

20 (11) Omlie's legacy of fighting for freedom and
21 equality for women will be memorialized in the new
22 tower.

23 (12) The tower, located in the Volunteer State,
24 will also serve as a tribute to those who have led,

1 fought, sacrificed, and perished to secure and pre-
2 serve American freedoms.

3 (13) The tower will provide vital aviation serv-
4 ices to the 164th Airlift Wing, located at the Mem-
5 phis Air National Guard Base at MEM, who protect
6 our country and guarantee our freedom.

7 (14) The 164th Airlift Wing fights for our free-
8 doms by providing the Air Mobility Command airlift
9 in support of United States national defense and is
10 capable of carrying fully equipped combat-ready
11 military units to any point in the world.

12 (15) On September 11, 2001, when al Qaeda
13 attacked on American soil because of their opposi-
14 tion to our freedoms, MEM served a vital role by
15 landing more aircraft than any other airport in
16 America immediately after the FAA closed U.S. air-
17 space on that fateful morning.

18 (16) Given MEM's and the city of Memphis's
19 long history of protecting freedom by advancing civil
20 rights, women's rights, and national security, it is
21 appropriate that the new FAA control tower at
22 MEM be named the "Freedom Tower".

1 **SEC. 2. DESIGNATION.**

2 The new FAA Air Control Tower located at Memphis
3 International Airport shall be known and designated as
4 the “Freedom Tower”.

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