

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 185

Supporting the goals and ideals of Black History Month and honoring the outstanding contributions of African-American Medal of Honor recipients.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 24, 2009

Mr. CASTLE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

RESOLUTION

Supporting the goals and ideals of Black History Month and honoring the outstanding contributions of African-American Medal of Honor recipients.

Whereas the Medal of Honor is the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force which can be bestowed upon an individual serving in the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas since its first presentation in 1863, 3,467 Medals of Honor have been awarded to a total of 3,448 individuals (there have been 19 double recipients);

Whereas African-American service members have played vital roles in military operations throughout the history of our Nation;

Whereas 87 African-Americans have been awarded the Medal of Honor for military valor;

Whereas William Harvey Carney was an American Civil War soldier and the first African-American to earn the Medal of Honor after he risked his own life to save the American flag and return it from the front lines of battle, despite being wounded several times as Confederate troops charged;

Whereas William Harvey Carney was not presented with the Medal of Honor until nearly 37 years after his act of bravery;

Whereas in 1993, a study commissioned by the United States Army described systematic racial discrimination in the criteria for awarding medals during World War II;

Whereas after an exhaustive review, the study recommended seven African-American World War II veterans be awarded the Medal of Honor;

Whereas, on January 13, 1997, President Bill Clinton awarded the medal to these seven distinguished World War II veterans, at which time Vernon Joseph Baker was the only living recipient;

Whereas Lieutenant Vernon Joseph Baker displayed great courage and valor through his actions in 1945 near Viareggio, Italy, when he voluntarily led a battalion advance through enemy mine fields and heavy fire toward the division objective, risking his own life above and beyond the call of duty; and

Whereas African-American men and women who today serve in the United States Armed Forces play a critical role in the defense and security of our Nation: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) recognizes the significance of Black History
- 3 Month as an important time to recognize the con-
- 4 tributions of African-Americans in our Nation's his-
- 5 tory; and
- 6 (2) honors the outstanding contributions of Af-
- 7 rican-American service members, including the 87
- 8 African-Americans who have been awarded the
- 9 Medal of Honor for military valor.

○