

Whereas in his book, “Black Reconstruction in America”, published in 1935, DuBois wrote that “[n]othing else made Negro citizenship conceivable, but the record of the Negro soldier as a fighter.”;

Whereas the 369th Infantry, known as the Harlem Hell-fighters, fought the Germans during World War I as part of the French Army and served the longest stretch in combat—191 days without replacement—without losing a foot of ground or a man as prisoner;

Whereas at the end of the service of the 369th Infantry, the entire regiment received the Croix de Guerre, which was France’s highest military honor, from a grateful French nation;

Whereas Alain Locke, the first black Rhodes Scholar, wrote in 1925 about a “New Negro” who had returned from battle with a bold new spirit that helped spark a new mood in the Black community;

Whereas in 1917, Charles Hamilton Houston encountered racism after entering World War I as a commissioned first lieutenant in the segregated 17th Provisional Training Regiment, later writing that “I made up my mind that if I got through this war I would study law and use my time fighting for men who could not strike back.”;

Whereas Dorie Miller, a messman attendant in the Navy, was catapulted to national hero status and an icon to generations, after displaying heroism on board the USS West Virginia during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941;

Whereas before becoming a famous baseball player, Jackie Robinson was court-martialed in the Army for refusing to sit in the back of the bus in 1944, and when he was later acquitted, he wrote that “[i]t was a small victory, for I had learned that I was in two wars, one against the foreign enemy, the other against prejudice at home.”;

Whereas the famed Tuskegee Airmen, a group of Black pilots, flew with distinction during World War II under the command of Captain Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., the highly decorated officer who served for more than 35 years and became the first Black general in the Air Force;

Whereas during World War II, the 6888 (known as the “Six Triple Eights”), the first all-woman Black Postal Battalion who served in England and then France, were given the daunting task of clearing out a two-year backlog of over 90,000 pieces of mail, succeeded in their mission, completed it in three months, and went on to make a positive impact on racial integration in the military;

Whereas during World War II, the Army’s 92nd Infantry Division, better known as the “Buffalo Soldiers”, which traces its direct lineage back to the 9th and 10th Cavalry units from 1866 to the early 1890s, was the only Black segregated unit to experience combat during the Italian campaign of 1944–45 with several members later earning Medals of Honor for bravery;

Whereas Reverend Benjamin Hooks, who served in the 92nd Division, found himself in the humiliating position of guarding Italian prisoners of war who were allowed to eat in restaurants that were off-limits to him;

Whereas even after President Truman issued Executive Order 9981 desegregating the military on July 26, 1948, discrimination continued;

Whereas in 1946, when Charles and Medgar Evers tried to register to vote, they were turned away at the polling station;

Whereas after serving overseas in the Army, Charles and Medgar Evers returned home to Mississippi where, in 1952, they began to organize voter registration drives for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP);

Whereas Oliver L. Brown, a World War II Army veteran from Kansas, and Harry Briggs, a World War II sailor from South Carolina, were the fathers of two of the five named plaintiffs in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* and *Briggs v. Elliott*, the historic school desegregation cases of 1954;

Whereas the Black heroes and heroines of World War II and the Korean War, such as Private Sarah Keys and Women’s Army Corps (WAC) officer Dovey Roundtree, won significant victories against discrimination in interstate transportation in landmark civil rights cases, including *Keys v. Carolina Coach Company*, which was decided in 1955, six days before Rosa Parks’ historic protest of Alabama’s Jim Crow laws in Montgomery;

Whereas in his address at Riverside Church on April 4, 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., commented on the irony of Blacks fighting in Vietnam to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia while not enjoying the same rights at home;

Whereas Black veterans who were in the forefront of the leadership of the Civil Rights Movement, with their strong resolve to address the paradox of military service abroad and the denial of basic rights at home, brought deeper meaning to the word “democracy”, and through their example, transformed the face of the United States;

Whereas the Black veterans of the Nation’s wars sowed the seeds for today’s bountiful harvest through the Niagara Movement, the NAACP, and the latter-day Civil Rights Movement, all of which share a common ancestry in the Civil War, without which there would be no Civil Rights Movement and no equal rights for all Americans; and

Whereas today, Black veterans suffer at a disproportionate rate from chronic illnesses and homelessness and are plagued by health disparities; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress recognizes—

(1) the difficult challenges Black veterans faced when returning home after serving in the Armed Forces, their heroic military sacrifices, and their patriotism in fighting for equal rights and for the dignity of a people and a Nation; and

(2) the need for the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue to work to eliminate any health and benefit disparities for our Nation’s minority veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CAO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 238, the critical and essential role of black veterans in the civil rights movement, sponsored by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. KISSELL). I want to thank my colleagues in the House and especially on the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Ms. CORRINE BROWN from Florida particularly, for being original cosponsors and bringing this to the House floor as quickly as we did. I want to also recognize the National Association for Black Veterans, the NAACP, and other civil rights organizations for their continued hard work to ensure equality of rights for all persons.

The proposed resolution honors the heroic sacrifices of black veterans and

recognizes the fundamental role that those veterans played in the evolution of the civil rights movement. It recognizes, also, the difficult challenges that black veterans face when returning home after serving in the Armed Forces and encourages the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue working to eliminate any health and benefit disparities for minority veterans. I note that this resolution derived from a similar unabridged resolution approved by the NAACP during its centennial convention in July of 2009, which I had the privilege to attend and participate.

This resolution represents a small token of gratitude that Congress can provide for these veterans who have sacrificed so much for our country, often in the face of tremendous challenges, and serves also as a reminder that we have a long way to go.

I will yield for as much time as he may consume to Mr. KISSELL of North Carolina.

Mr. KISSELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I also rise in full support of House Concurrent Resolution 238. I would like to thank Chairman FILNER and Representative BROWN and others that made this bill possible.

As a son of a World War II veteran and coming from a part of North Carolina that has a high proportion of veterans and as a student of history, we take full honor and pride in any opportunity to talk about our veterans and what they’ve done for our Nation throughout history. It is with great pride that, during this Black History Month, we have the opportunity to recognize the contributions of African American veterans and what they have done for our Nation.

Throughout history, they have answered the call, from the Revolutionary War on. African Americans have fought for this Nation often as second-class citizens and often coming home as veterans and not enjoying the full benefits and the rights of our Nation. Throughout the years, African Americans have answered the call of Frederick Douglass, who said, every man that could to enlist, to get an eagle on their button, a musket on their shoulder, and a star-spangled banner over their head.

Throughout the years, we have seen great heroic acts from African Americans, whether individually or as part of a unit. And to recognize some of these today, I would like to bring forth the 369th Infantry, the Harlem Hellfighters, who, during World War I, went to Europe and were loaned to the French to fight with them. They fought for 191 straight days without replacements, without giving up any grounds, and without losing any of their members as prisoners. The French so appreciated the 369th, they gave them the Croix de Guerre, the highest honor the French can give any unit of the military.

Individuals such as Dorie Miller, who won great fame while he worked in the

mess in the Battleship West Virginia, on December 7, 1941, he rose to the decks and he fought back in the great epic battle of Pearl Harbor and became a national hero.

Jackie Robinson. He fought for his Nation and he fought against the segregation of the military long before he took on the battle of integrating professional baseball.

The famous Tuskegee Airmen, led by Captain Benjamin Davis, the Tuskegee Airmen, who fought in the airplane designated the P-51, the Mustang. They had the famous red tail. The red tails became famous in the air over Europe during World War II. Our bomber crews always looked for the red tails, because there was not a single bomber lost to enemy fighters while the red tails were protecting them.

In the 92d Infantry, the only all-black infantry to fight in Italy, many members of which won the Congressional Medal of Honor, a military unit that was the direct descendant of the Buffalo Soldiers of the 9th and 10th Cavalry that was active from 1866 into the early 1890s.

But all too often these veterans, once again, had to come home and be treated as second-class citizens. Even after Harry Truman issued the Executive order to integrate the military, it was not until many years that we saw equity even begin to be approached.

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So many of these veterans came home and took prominent roles in the civil rights movement, and it meant so much to their communities and to this Nation as we move forward.

Mr. Speaker, so often as we look at the big picture of our legislation and of our resolutions, we always know that it comes back to individuals. I would like to take a moment of personal privilege to talk about a family from my hometown in Biscoe, North Carolina. It is a family with a mother who was a lady extraordinaire, Ms. Kagel, with many sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters who contributed so much to our community and still do. She had four sons who served our Nation—Pete, Jimmy, Lee, and Dan—who are my friends.

Jimmy and I are members of the same church.

Let me talk about Dan for just a second. He is a veteran of the Korean war. He was in the Air Force, and he worked at the school that I attended when I was in elementary school. He had the patience to answer many questions from my friends and me about his service. While I grew to know Dan as a friend, as a man, and as many things, I thought of him, first and foremost, as a veteran because he represented, as we are honoring here today, the African Americans who went and served our Nation and who then came back and served our communities.

This resolution recognizes the accomplishments of these veterans. It also recognizes the inequities that have

been in the VA system for too long. It calls upon the VA to always try to make sure that the inequities in terms of benefits and in terms of how illnesses are treated are ironed out and are made equal as we move forward.

Mr. CAO. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 238, a resolution in honor of black veterans—their patriotism and their heroic military service and sacrifices on behalf of our Nation.

It is appropriate in this last week of Black History Month that we honor and recognize the contributions of black Americans who fought in the Armed Forces for our Nation's freedom from the time of the American Revolution through today's fighting force. This resolution only lists a few of the countless deeds and individuals who fought for freedom despite racial prejudices they faced during their service and following their return from combat.

Clearly, these brave warriors' love for our Nation is rooted in the love of freedom itself. They fought to help the United States of America become and remain that which our Founding Fathers envisioned—the shining city on the hill and the beacon of freedom and hope for all people.

I would like to thank the sponsor of this legislation, Mr. KISSELL of North Carolina, as well as Chairman FILNER, Ranking Member BUYER, and Ms. BROWN for their work in bringing this legislation to the floor so quickly.

African Americans have contributed greatly to our Nation and also to the State of Louisiana, in particular, for centuries by defending our freedoms in the Armed Forces, even at a time when they, themselves, were not free. Had it not been for the service of African Americans in 1814–1815 in the Battle of New Orleans, which was really the battle for New Orleans from British control, the United States would not have the New Orleans we know and love today.

Today, there are more military veterans who are African American than any other minority group. I am proud to represent Orleans and Jefferson Parishes, which have large populations of African American veterans and members of the Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 238.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FILNER. I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for his personal story.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard that black citizens of our country have made incredible sacrifices for our Nation. Yet, even with those sacrifices, many black veterans face tremendous challenges in the fight for civil liberties both at home and while they are serving.

I want to recognize, Mr. Speaker, because he is in the gallery, Joe Wynn of

the Black Veterans of America, who has brought us this resolution. We thank him for all of his work on behalf of equality for all Americans.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARAMENDI). Members are reminded not to refer to people in the gallery.

Mr. FILNER. This resolution recognizes the soldiers and patriots who had to fight in both types of wars, and it helps to memorialize and to serve as a testament to their great spirit and determination.

We've heard about Jackie Robinson, but as a member of the Army before becoming the famous baseball player who broke the color barrier, he once suggested that he was in two wars—one against the foreign enemy, the other against prejudice at home.

Charles Hamilton Houston, who served as a commissioned 1st lieutenant in the 17th Provisional Training Regiment during World War I, boldly stated after encountering racism, "I made up my mind that if I got through this war I would study law and use my time fighting for men who could not strike back." As we know, he became a famed civil rights lawyer and was the chief legal strategist behind Brown v. Board of Education.

In seeing this paradox of fighting for the promise of liberty and freedom abroad and experiencing the denial of basic rights at home, black veterans were often in the forefront of the leadership of the civil rights movement. For instance, Civil War veterans later became champions for equal pay in the military, and many World War II and Korean war veterans came home and organized voter registration drives.

Mr. Speaker, by their heroic deeds, black Americans brought deeper meaning to the word "democracy." Their exemplary actions and activism on behalf of civil rights emboldened many others to participate in the NAACP, in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and in other civil rights organizations and activities. Ultimately, of course, they transformed the face of democracy in America.

Even though we have made great progress, black Americans, who were once denied the right to serve side by side in battle with other Americans, have achieved some of the highest ranks in our military and government: Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., the first black general in the Army; Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., the first black four-star general in the Air Force, who led the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II; and General Colin Powell, the first black Joint Chief of Staff. These men are just to name a few.

Unfortunately today, Mr. Speaker, black veterans are more likely to be homeless, are more likely to receive less than honorable discharges, and are more likely to suffer from disparities in treatment and access for many chronic illnesses, such as hypertension, kidney dysfunction, respiratory disease, substance abuse, diabetes, cancer,

as well as post-traumatic stress disorder.

So I wholeheartedly urge the passage of this resolution in the hope that we will not only recognize those who blazed the trail for us but that we will increase awareness of the need to continue the advancement of civil rights and liberties for all Americans.

I urge the VA specifically to recognize the unique struggle of many minority veterans and to, accordingly, ensure that they receive all of the benefits and care that they have earned and that they deserve. Passing this resolution is the least we can do for these veterans who have done so much for our country.

I urge the passage of this legislation.
GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 238.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SARAH MOORE GREENE ON HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

(Mr. DUNCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, today is the 100th birthday of a great lady and Tennessee icon, Sarah Moore Greene.

Ms. Greene has been both a national leader and a leader in our hometown of Knoxville. By the way, she still attends many events, and is always dressed like a fashion model. She has served on the national board of directors for the NAACP, and has been a delegate to numerous Republican national conventions.

My father served as mayor of Knoxville for almost 6 years from early 1959 through the end of 1964. During that time, Knoxville received the All-American City award from Look magazine, primarily because it had the most peaceful integration of almost any major city. Sarah Moore Greene and my father led the effort to peacefully integrate our city.

Mrs. Greene has touched thousands of lives in good and positive ways through her years as a teacher and through her work in the community. She has helped countless numbers, young and old, but her special love is her children, both the hundreds she taught and the thousands who have attended the Sarah Moore Greene Elementary School.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation is a better place today because of my friend Sarah Moore Greene, a great American.

SORROW AND OUTRAGE AT THE DEATH OF CUBAN DISSIDENT ORLANDO ZAPATA TAMAYO

(Mr. McGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my deepest sorrow and outrage at the death of Cuban dissident Orlando Zapata Tamayo. Imprisoned since 2003, he had been on a hunger strike for several weeks. He first heard he was seriously ill last week, and yesterday, he died at the prison clinic.

Zapata Tamayo paid the ultimate sacrifice for his commitment to changing Cuba's system. He commands our respect. No one has starved himself to death in a Cuban prison in over 40 years. Surely, the Cuban Government could have and should have intervened earlier to have prevented this tragedy. His death is on their conscience.

I have always felt and continue to believe that, if we are truly going to do a better job of standing with the Cuban people, then we need to be closer to them and in greater numbers. We need to travel freely to the island to meet and to learn from them and they from us. I hope that day comes soon so we can tell all of the Cuban people that we remember the sacrifice of Orlando Zapata Tamayo.

[From the Washington Post]

ACTIVISTS: CUBA DISSIDENT DIES AFTER HUNGER STRIKE

Havana—An opposition political activist imprisoned since 2003 died Tuesday after a lengthy hunger strike, members of Cuba's human rights community said.

Orlando Zapata Tamayo, who was jailed on charges including disrespecting authority, died at a clinic at Havana's Combinado del Este prison, according to Vladimiro Roca, a leading dissident who said he spoke to Zapata Tamayo's family.

Zapata Tamayo, 42, was not among the island's best-known dissidents. He was arrested in 2003 on charges of disrespecting authority, said Elizardo Sanchez, head of the Havana-based, independent Cuban Commission on Human Rights and National Reconciliation.

He was sentenced to three years in prison, which Sanchez said was lengthened to 25 years, in part because of his political activism while behind bars.

Sanchez said Zapata Tamayo staged a hunger strike for weeks before his death. His family first announced last week that prison doctors said he was gravely ill.

Relatives were transporting Zapata Tamayo's remains to his hometown in

Holguin province, said Roca, a former fighter pilot and son of a legendary communist leader who served nearly five years in prison himself for his opposition political beliefs.

Word of Zapata Tamayo's death was first reported on Cuban exile radio stations in southern Florida, which broadcast an interview with his mother, Reina Luisa Tamayo.

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, a Republican from Florida—and the nephew of Fidel Castro's ex-wife, Mirta Diaz-Balart—said on the floor of the U.S. Congress on Tuesday that the dissident's "condition and fate are the Castro brothers' doing."

Hours later, as news of Zapata Tamayo's death spread, the congressman issued a second statement declaring that his "murder by the tyrant Fidel Castro and his cowardly jailers will never be forgotten."

U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, of Florida, said in his own statement that "freedom-loving people everywhere should hold the Cuban regime responsible for the fate of Orlando Zapata Tamayo."

"His reported death today is a sad reminder of the tragic cost of oppression and a dictatorship that devalues human life," Nelson said.

Democratic U.S. Rep. Kendrick Meek, also of Florida, noted that Amnesty International declared Zapata Tamayo a "prisoner of conscience" in 2003.

"The Cuban government's stunning lack of respect for human rights was highlighted by Orlando as much in his life as in his death," Meek said in a statement.

EMPOWERMENT

(Mr. NEUGEBAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, just last week, I was traveling across my district to ask the people in the 19th Congressional District, How do we move America away from this entitlement mode, which we seem to be moving toward, and back to an empowerment mode so we can create jobs?

With 9.2 percent of the American people unemployed, people want to know what we are going to do about jobs. What they do know is that the government can't continue what it has been doing, which is taxing too much, spending too much, and borrowing too much—mortgaging the future of our future generations.

I asked a number of businesspeople, Why aren't you hiring more people? Why aren't you expanding your plants?

The overriding answer was, Congressman, it's too uncertain right now. Congress is talking about raising our taxes, imposing insurance on us, talking about more regulation, raising the cost of energy in this country. If you continue down that road, we can't create new businesses. In fact, in many cases, we will have to lay off people if we move in that direction.

So, Mr. Speaker, what we have to do is quit doing what we have been doing and get back to making America the great Nation it is by empowering the people. That means taking less taxes and letting businesses do what they know how to do, which is to create jobs. Take away the uncertainty of the business environment in this country