

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 12

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By: **Senators Trotter, Blount, Kelley, Currie, Lawlah, Hughes, and  
McFadden**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 1998  
Assigned to: Economic and Environmental Affairs

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Buffalo Soldier Day - February 20**

3 FOR the purpose of acknowledging the participation of African American soldiers in  
4 every major military conflict in which the United States has been involved;  
5 joining other state legislatures across the United States in honoring the "Buffalo  
6 Soldier" for the heroic contributions made in defending the United States of  
7 America; and declaring February 20 of each year, during Black History Month,  
8 to be "Buffalo Soldier Day".

9 WHEREAS, Nearly 200,000 Black Americans served in the Union Army during  
10 the Civil War, and more than 33,000 died on Civil War battlefields; and

11 WHEREAS, The United States Congress created four Black regiments in 1867:  
12 The 9th U.S. Cavalry, 10th U.S. Cavalry, 24th Infantry, and the 25th Infantry, which  
13 were assigned to protect settlements and railroad workers, build roads, establish  
14 telegraphs, and map large swaths of previously unknown territory, particularly in the  
15 Southwest; and

16 WHEREAS, It is reported that the Native American tribes of the West both  
17 feared and respected the Black soldiers and named them "Buffalo Soldiers" because  
18 their hair and fierce fighting spirit reminded them of the buffalo, for which the Native  
19 Americans had great reverence; and

20 WHEREAS, These Buffalo Soldiers had a far lower desertion rate and far lower  
21 rate of alcoholism than other soldiers during the same time period; and

22 WHEREAS, Buffalo Soldiers of the Old West earned 25 Medals of Honor, the  
23 highest distinction a soldier may earn for battlefield valor; and

24 WHEREAS, Black soldiers who fought in World War I were highly decorated by  
25 the French for their heroic battlefield deeds, but not until 70 years after the War  
26 ended did a Black soldier, Cpl. Freddie Stowers posthumously receive the Medal of  
27 Honor; and

1 WHEREAS, Although more than one million Black soldiers were involved in  
2 World War II, of which 50,000 saw combat, not until 1997 did seven (six  
3 posthumously) receive the Medal of Honor; and

4 WHEREAS, The Buffalo became the mascot of the segregated troops during  
5 World War II; now, therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the  
7 General Assembly acknowledges the significant contributions and achievements of  
8 the Black soldier in serving in every major American military conflict; and be it  
9 further

10 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland hereby declares February  
11 20, 1998, and every February 20 hereafter, to be "Buffalo Soldier Day" in Maryland;  
12 and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
14 Legislative Services to the Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor of Maryland;  
15 the Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; and  
16 the Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the House of Delegates.