

To the Honorable Delegates and Members of this legislative body we thank you all for your invitation to make a presentation in favor of a Tuskegee Airmen Commemoration Day in the State of Maryland. I am Deborah J. Keith board member of the East Coast Chapter Tuskegee Airmen Inc. ECCTAI.

The ECCTAI is dedicated to preserving the history of the Tuskegee Airmen Experience and educating our young in aviation and aerospace science.

By our work we perpetuate the noble legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen. Passing this bill into law will assist that effort by reminding everyone in our state and those further afield to understand that those patriots overcame racism at home and tyranny abroad during World War II and afterwards. Their heroic fight despite the challenges of racial prejudice birth a new era of freedom for all Americans and inspired democracy loving people the world over. Maryland must therefore recognize the work of the Tuskegee Airmen - many of whom were born in Maryland.

The truth should be held self-evident To the House of Delegates, that our East Coast chapter has awarded scholarships to over 500 graduates in over 22 years.

The Director Yvonne McGee, Gen. McGee's daughter has administered the "Youth In Aviation Program," YIAP in College Park, Md. for over 22 years with 10-15 students in each class. Our students alone have made remarkable strides in industry such as pilots, aviation mechanics, air traffic controllers, veterinarians,

doctors, attorneys, etc. We also have an AVDYNE Aero services Major Anderson Tuskegee Airmen Maintenance Academy now formed at Baltimore Washington Thurgood Marshall International Airport.

We do this in recognition of keeping the Pride, Progress, Potential and Legacy Alive of all the 15,000 Tuskegee Airmen who had to endure against all odds tribulations and injustices suffered but succeeded with Determination and Perseverance. Such as my Uncles of the 332nd of the 99th, “Documented Original Tuskegee Airmen,” I am a direct decedent a teacher, a doctor of Natural Health and Director of the East Coach Chapter Tuskegee Airmen. We need to remember retired General McGee who turned 100 this year and was promoted to Brigadier General by the President of the US for his many combat missions. We remember General Benjamin O. Davis and the other Tuskegee Airmen too many to name, it’s long over due. We are not only here to give out scholarships in remembrance, such as my cousin who received an award last year retired Chief Justice Alan Page who also gives out scholarships in Education through the Page Foundation, but of historical facts of the TUSKEGEE AIRMEN DAY that will remain on the minds of our youth and many others to come.

This designated day will impact the education system the study of an important aspect of national history. The purpose of passing the Maryland Tuskegee Airmen Commemoration Bill into law is to consolidate their victory for all Americans and

humanity. To pass this bill into law is to ensure we can continue to improve on the quality of our democracy and progress. The time is now. When justice rains down like water for all generations to come and particularly the veterans, we would like to acknowledge that there be marked a “Tuskegee Airmen Day” in the State of Maryland, and let this bill be passed and made the law of the land. Thank you