



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: Senate Bill 303 – General Provisions – Commemorative Days – Tuskegee Airmen Commemoration Day

SPONSOR: Senator Patterson

HEARING DATE: March 11, 2021

COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 303**, which proclaims the fourth Thursday in March as Tuskegee Airmen Commemoration Day. This action urges informative programs and activities to observe the Tuskegee Airmen.

The Tuskegee Airmen were America's first group of African American and Caribbean-born military pilots who fought in World War II. In response to pressure from African American leaders, civil rights groups, and community advocates, the American Air Corps trained a group of almost 1,000 cadets under certain conditions at Tuskegee Institute. During a time heightened with segregation, discrimination, and prejudice stacked against African Americans, these individuals successfully completed the training program to become the first African American military pilots (and approximately 14,000 African American individuals were trained as navigators, bombardiers, and other support personnel).

The Tuskegee Airman brought attention to African Americans in North American military conflicts and proved that African Americans did not, in fact, have limited intellectual capacity, aptitude, and skills. Instead, these Airmen were the first African American soldiers to complete training under the American Army Core leading to desegregation in the military and civil rights advocacy during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s.

Prince George's County's Human Relations Commission (HRC), encourages the growth and development of Prince George's County to promote equal opportunity for all individuals. Similarly, the HRC acknowledges and appreciates individuals who

sacrificed their time, efforts, and lives to ensure that discrimination is opposed. To further highlight and recognize the contributions of the Tuskegee Airmen, the HRC supports the proclamation of a Tuskegee Airmen Commemoration Day to highlight the history-making efforts of the Tuskegee Airmen.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 303** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.