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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 318 Session of  
1998

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INTRODUCED BY BISHOP, READSHAW, ROEBUCK, GODSHALL, CAPPABIANCA,  
GIGLIOTTI, GEORGE, BELARDI, BUXTON, KAISER, SANTONI, JAROLIN,  
FICHTER, LAUGHLIN, OLASZ, DALEY, MELIO, SERAFINI,  
CALTAGIRONE, MARSICO, TRELLO, ARGALL, PESCI, FAIRCHILD AND  
COY, JANUARY 21, 1998

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, JANUARY 21, 1998

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## A RESOLUTION

1 Celebrating February 20, 1998, as "Buffalo Soldier Day."

2 WHEREAS, Black Americans have fought heroically in every  
3 major conflict in the United States, even during the Indian wars  
4 and the American Revolution; and

5 WHEREAS, Nearly 200,000 black Americans served in the Union  
6 Army during the Civil War, and more than 33,000 of them died on  
7 Civil War battlefields; and

8 WHEREAS, The Medal of Honor, established during the Civil War  
9 era and commonly referred to as the Congressional Medal of  
10 Honor, is the highest distinction a soldier may earn for  
11 battlefield valor; and

12 WHEREAS, The term "Buffalo Soldier" dates back to the 1860s,  
13 when Congress created four black regiments in 1867, the 9th  
14 United States Cavalry, 10th United States Cavalry, 24th Infantry  
15 and the 25th Infantry; and

16 WHEREAS, These troops were sent west, where they were

1 assigned to protect settlements and railroad workers and build  
2 roads and establish telegraphs; and

3 WHEREAS, They mapped huge swaths of previously unknown  
4 territory, particularly in the Southwest; and

5 WHEREAS, It is reported that the American Indian both feared  
6 and respected black soldiers and it is said that the American  
7 Indian named the black soldiers "Buffalo Soldiers" because the  
8 soldiers' hair and fierce fighting spirit reminded them of the  
9 buffalo, for which they had great reverence; and

10 WHEREAS, Buffalo Soldiers of the Old West earned 25 Medals of  
11 Honor; and

12 WHEREAS, Black soldiers who fought in World War I were denied  
13 the Medal of Honor, despite the fact that during World War I  
14 black soldiers were highly decorated by the French for their  
15 heroic battlefields deeds; and

16 WHEREAS, Seventy years after World War I, Corporal Freddie  
17 Stowers was given the Medal of Honor posthumously; and

18 WHEREAS, The buffalo became the mascot of the segregated  
19 troops during World War II; and

20 WHEREAS, It is reported that more than 1 million black  
21 soldiers were involved in World War II, that more than 50,000 of  
22 them saw combat and that none of these men received the Medal of  
23 Honor until 1997; and

24 WHEREAS, On January 13, 1997, during a White House Ceremony  
25 in the East Room, 52 years after their World War II service,  
26 seven black World War II veterans were presented the Medal of  
27 Honor, six of them posthumously; and

28 WHEREAS, Vernon J. Baker was the only living black World War  
29 II veteran to receive the Medal of Honor on January 13, 1997;  
30 and

1       WHEREAS, The legacy of the Buffalo Soldiers lingers not only  
2 in Vernon Baker's valor, but also in the fact that the first two  
3 blacks to become generals in the United States Army came from  
4 the ranks of the World War II Buffalo Division; therefore be it

5       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives celebrate  
6 February 20, 1998, as "Buffalo Soldier Day."