

## A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States to create a task force  
2 to review the records of minority service members who served  
3 in World War I to determine if they were denied the Medal of  
4 Honor or other valor awards due to discrimination and create  
5 legislation that will lift statutes of limitations preventing  
6 this important and necessary review.

7 WHEREAS, Award reviews for minority service members of other  
8 wartime engagements have been conducted by the United States  
9 military; and

10 WHEREAS, Each branch of the armed services of the United  
11 States has regulations in place that permit no margin of error  
12 in deciding whether a service member is deserving of the Medal  
13 of Honor; and

14 WHEREAS, The act committed by the service member must have  
15 conspicuously distinguished the service member by gallantry and  
16 intrepidity at the risk of their life above and beyond the call  
17 of duty in the following situations:

18 (1) while engaged in an action against an enemy of the  
19 United States;

1           (2) while engaged in military operations involving  
2 conflict with an opposing foreign force; or

3           (3) while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged  
4 in an armed conflict against an opposing force in which the  
5 United States is not a belligerent party;

6 and

7       WHEREAS, Two posthumous Medal of Honor bestowals to Corporal  
8 Freddie Stowers and Sergeant Henry Johnson, challenge the claims  
9 of there being no black and few other minority Medal of Honor  
10 recipients; and

11       WHEREAS, Minorities who served with valor during World War I  
12 deserve our due diligence in acknowledging their service; and

13       WHEREAS, Of the 225 Medal of Honor awards presented to World  
14 War I service members, only two were awarded to African-American  
15 service members and one was awarded to a Hispanic-American  
16 service member; and

17       WHEREAS, The American Legion, along with volunteers, is  
18 planning to review the records of approximately 70 African-  
19 American service members who may have been denied the Medal of  
20 Honor or other valor awards; and

21       WHEREAS, Of those 70 African-American service members, eight  
22 were nominated for a Medal of Honor; and

23       WHEREAS, The eight African-American service members had been  
24 nominated for the award because their chain of command knew that  
25 they committed an act that conspicuously distinguished  
26 themselves by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their  
27 life above and beyond the call of duty; and

28       WHEREAS, Although their chain of command felt that they  
29 distinguished themselves beyond the call of duty, none of those  
30 eight African-American nominees were awarded the Medal of Honor

1 until the 1990s; and

2 WHEREAS, Of the eight African-American nominees, only two  
3 were awarded the Medal of Honor, posthumously, in 1991 and 2015  
4 after prior valor award reviews; and

5 WHEREAS, Researchers at Park University in Parkville,  
6 Missouri, are reviewing the records of approximately 40,000  
7 African-American troops who fought in combat during World War I;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, In addition to the African-American troops of World  
10 War I, Park University researchers plan to eventually look into  
11 the records of other minority groups, including Asian Americans,  
12 Hispanic Americans, Jewish Americans and Native Americans; and

13 WHEREAS, At the time of consideration, the award criteria was  
14 race-neutral when determining whether the service member  
15 qualified for the particular valor award; and

16 WHEREAS, Due to prejudices and racial discrimination, many  
17 minorities were not granted the same considerations for a valor  
18 award when reviewing their actions and bravery during their  
19 service in World War I; and

20 WHEREAS, It is important and necessary to research and  
21 rightfully award minority service members valor awards for their  
22 distinguished service during which they risked their lives and  
23 went above and beyond the call of duty, reflecting honorably on  
24 their units, the United States Armed Forces and their country;  
25 and

26 WHEREAS, The American Legion adopted Resolution 109 in 2018  
27 requesting legislation that would lift the statutes of  
28 limitations preventing proper review of the records of minority  
29 service members for their consideration of valor awards for  
30 their service in World War I; therefore be it

1       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
2 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United  
3 States to create a task force to review the records of minority  
4 service members who served in World War I to determine if they  
5 were denied the Medal of Honor or other valor awards due to  
6 discrimination and create legislation that will lift statutes of  
7 limitations preventing this important and necessary review; and  
8 be it further

9       RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to  
10 the President of the United States, the presiding officers of  
11 each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from  
12 Pennsylvania.