



Michele Reynolds
State Senator
3rd Senate District

Ohio Senate
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Chair Ray, Vice Chair Fischer, Ranking Member Brent, and distinguished members of the House General Government Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 17, which seeks to designate March 9th as "6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day" in Ohio. I am honored to present this historic legislation alongside my joint sponsor, Senator Craig.

The "Six Triple Eight," as they were known, stands as the only all-female Women of Color battalion to serve overseas during World War II. Their story is not just one of military service—it is a powerful narrative of breaking barriers, overcoming adversity, and demonstrating exceptional dedication to our country when called to duty.

This legislation holds special significance for Ohio because the battalion's commander, Captain Charity Adams, was a proud Ohioan. Raised and educated in Dayton after her birth in South Carolina, Captain Adams made history as the first African American woman commissioned as an officer in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). Her exemplary leadership guided the 6888th to success while opening doors for countless African American women in military service.

The date of March 9th was chosen with purpose, as it marks the day these courageous women began their deployment in Birmingham, England. Their mission was daunting: to address an overwhelming backlog of nearly 17 million pieces of undelivered mail. Working around the clock in three shifts, seven days a week, they processed an astounding 65,000 pieces of mail per shift. Their motto, "No Mail, Low Morale," reflected their understanding that connecting service members with loved ones was vital to maintaining troop morale and, ultimately, supporting the war effort.

These remarkable women accomplished their mission in just three months—far exceeding all expectations—despite facing harsh working conditions and pervasive racial and gender discrimination. Their efficiency, resilience, and unwavering patriotism serve as an inspiration for all Americans.

Recognition for the 6888th has been long overdue. While they were recently awarded the Congressional Gold Medal—the highest honor Congress can bestow—thanks to U.S. Senator Jerry Moran and his colleagues, we in Ohio have a special responsibility to further preserve their legacy. By designating March 9th in their honor, we ensure that their contributions become a permanent part of our state's historical record and serve as an educational touchstone for future generations.

The service of the 6888th Battalion exemplifies the enduring strength and perseverance of women of color in our military. Their achievements remind us that patriotism and service know no boundaries of

race or gender. It is only fitting that Ohio—home to their pioneering commander—takes this step to recognize their sacrifice and enshrine their place in our state's history.

This bill was unanimously passed by the Senate, demonstrating the bipartisan recognition of the 6888th's historical importance. I urge this committee to support Senate Bill 17 and help ensure that the legacy of these extraordinary women endures for generations to come.

Thank you, Chair Ray, Vice Chair Fischer, and Ranking Member Brent, for allowing me this opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele Reynolds", with a stylized flourish at the end.

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