

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: _____

Name: _____

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): _____

Position/Title: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Best Contact Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): 238

Specific Issue: _____

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? _____

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.



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Brief Buffalo Soldiers History

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After the ending of the Civil War in 1865, there was a need for a peace time Military as part of the reconstruction period to bring together the North and South. So on July 28, 1866, recognizing the contributions of the more than 180,000 black Americans who fought to preserve the Union during the Civil War, the 39th United States Congress passed a bill titled: "An Act to Increase and Fix the Military Establishment of the United States." That bill created 60 Military Regiments, 6 of which were all Black Army Regiments. Of those six units, two were Cavalry and four were Infantry regiments, which eventually became the most highly decorated units in American military history during that time. Despite suffering the discrimination and the injustice that plagued all black Americans during the days of segregation, the members of the Cavalry and Infantry regiments served with pride and distinction.

These regiments of African American men, later known as Buffalo Soldiers, served on the western frontier, engaged in a protection mission of the United States. For more than two decades in the late 19th century, the 9th and 10th cavalries engaged in military campaigns against hostile Native Americans and protection Native American Reservations on the Plains and across the Southwest. These Buffalo Soldiers also captured horse and cattle thieves, enforced Marshall Law in cities that were lawless, guarded the southern U.S. borders, built roads, and protected the U.S. mail, stagecoaches, and wagon trains, all while contending with challenging terrain, inadequate supplies, and discrimination. The nickname Buffalo Soldiers was bestowed on these African American Soldiers by the plains Indians, because they were impressed with their toughness in battle and because of the Soldiers' dark, curly, black hair resembled that of a buffalo. The Soldiers viewed the nickname as one of respect and even used a figure of a buffalo in its coat of arms.

Organized at Greenville, Louisiana, and at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the 9th and 10th Cavalry regiments played key roles in the development of the western United States. In addition to protecting settlers, wagon trains and railroads as they crossed the western frontier, these skilled horsemen soldiers assisted in the construction of roads, forts and were in pursuit of cattle thieves and other outlaws. During a battle in 1867 near Fort Hays, Kansas, Cheyenne warriors remarked that the black American soldiers fought as fiercely and with as much strength as a buffalo. Hence, the Buffalo Soldiers wore their nickname as a badge of honor.

While the Buffalo Soldiers blazed many significant trails in the history of the American frontier, their achievements were not limited to the western United States. Members of these regiments also served in Virginia, Vermont, and New York, and answered the call to duty in places as far-flung as Cuba, Mexico, and the Philippines. They continued to prove their courage through two world wars and the conflict in Korea. In 1948, President Harry Truman issued an executive order eliminating racial segregation and discrimination in America's armed forces. In 1952, the military was integrated, eliminating black and white segregated regiments. By the time of their integration, the Buffalo Soldiers had earned twenty-four Congressional Medals of Honor, including honors from France, as well as numerous campaign and unit citations.

From their ranks emerged several famed military leaders, including General Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., who also was responsible for inspections over the U.S. Military, to include the Army Air Corps where his son, Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., was the commander over the 99th Tuskegee Fighter Squadron, Colonel Charles Young, the first Black National Parks Superintendent in 1903 and Lieutenant Henry Flipper, the first black graduate of West Point.

One of Ohio's connections to the Buffalo Soldiers is Col. Charles Young. Charles Young was born into slavery in Mays Lick, Kentucky, on March 12, 1864. In 1865 he and his parents escaped slavery crossing the Ohio River to Ripley, Ohio. Young attended the all-white high school in Ripley, graduating at the top of his class in 1880.

Two years after graduating, Young took a competitive examination for appointment as a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point and in 1883 reported to the Academy. He graduated with his commission as second lieutenant in 1889, only the third black man to do so. Though initially assigned to the Tenth U.S. Cavalry Regiment of Buffalo Soldiers, he was reassigned to the Ninth U.S. Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers and promoted to first lieutenant.

In 1894, after his initial service with the Buffalo Soldiers and leading them in Cuba and the Philippines during the Spanish-American War, Young became a faculty member at Ohio's Wilberforce University, the first college owned and operated by African-Americans. In 1903, Col Young was appointed the first black U.S. National Park superintendent and the highest-ranking black officer in the U.S. Army of his era or any before. Young and his troops arrived in Sequoia National Park that year to manage and patrol the area, as well as build new roads and trails for public use.

In 1907, Young purchased a home in Wilberforce that now stands as the Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument. President Barack Obama used the Antiquities Act to preserve the home as a national monument in March 2013.

In honor of the Buffalo Soldiers significant contributions to the United States, on July 24, 1992, by Proclamation 6461, George H. W. Bush, President of the United States of America, proclaimed July 28, 1992, National Buffalo Soldiers Day. On July 28, 2021, we will celebrate the 29th Anniversary of National Buffalo Soldiers Day. Today in Ohio, there are four motorcycle organizations that represent the history and legacy of the Buffalo Soldiers. They are the Dayton, Cleveland and Columbus chapters of the National Association of Buffalo Soldiers and Troopers Motorcycle Clubs and the Toledo Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club, Inc. The mission of these organizations are to provide history of the Buffalo Soldiers enacted in 1866 and provide community service, with emphasis on young people.

Respectfully Submitted,

Toledo Buffalo Soldiers