

2018 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 602

Commending the United States Colored Troops Descendants.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, May 30, 2018

WHEREAS, the United States Colored Troops Descendants, which works to preserve the history and heritage of African American troops who served the nation during the Civil War, celebrates its 18th annual Founder's Day in 2018; and

WHEREAS, established in 2002, the United States Colored Troops Descendants is a division of the Bells Mill Historical Research and Restoration Society, Inc., in Chesapeake that works to recognize and certify "Patriot Heroes"—African Americans who served between 1861 and 1965—and their descendants; and

WHEREAS, at the outset of the Civil War, African Americans resolved to "fight for the right to fight," with many Norfolk County residents volunteering for the United States Navy and beginning their service even prior to the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863; and

WHEREAS, on May 22, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln authorized the formation of the United States Colored Troops, resulting in the organization of 182 regiments, 166 of which were mustered into service; the United States Colored Troops Descendants preserves the memory of more than 209,145 Afro-Union troops; and

WHEREAS, United States Colored Troops distinguished themselves in several notable engagements, and more than 50,000 of them made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the nation; three African American soldiers from the Norfolk County area were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their valorous actions; and

WHEREAS, at the end of the war, United States Colored Troops made up a significant part of the Union Army, and there were more African American troops from the Norfolk County area serving in the Union Army than troops from Norfolk County serving in the Confederate States Army; and

WHEREAS, the United States Colored Troops Descendants' Founder's Day Observance, which commemorates the anniversary of the formation of the Bureau of Colored Troops in 1863, was held at the Unknown and Known Afro-Union Civil War Soldiers Memorial in Chesapeake and coincide with Memorial Day events; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That the United States Colored Troops Descendants hereby be commended on the occasion of its 18th annual Founder's Day on May 28, 2018; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to E. Curtis Alexander, curator of the United States Colored Troops Descendants, as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the organization's important work.

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