

ENGROSSED SENATE
CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION NO. 57

By: Maddox and Monson of the
Senate

and

Dorman of the House

A Concurrent Resolution designating Oklahoma the
"Frontier Home of the Buffalo Soldier"; and directing
distribution.

WHEREAS, after the Civil War, the United States Congress passed legislation establishing a peacetime military. A provision of the 1866 legislation created six regiments of African-American troops--four infantry and two cavalry--of approximately 1,000 men each; and

WHEREAS, the troops were placed under the command of Colonels Benjamin Grierson and Edward Hatch. African-Americans from the North and South, many of them freed slaves, enlisted in what became the 9th and 10th United States Cavalry Regiments. The primary mission of these African-American servicemen was to combat the Native American tribes caught in the westward expansion of the United States and to escort the tribes to reservations; and

WHEREAS, even the Native Americans against whom these troops marshaled admired the troops' fearlessness and courage, qualities also found in the buffalo, and noted that the troops' hair texture and configuration resembled the tuft of hair between the horns of the bison. The Native Americans deemed these troops "Buffalo Soldiers", a badge of honor and pride for the troops; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Soldiers also built and defended telegraph lines, built and repaired forts, helped establish the foundations for future towns, helped settle disputes between and among railroads, unions, and White settlers, and mapped vast territories in New Mexico and Arizona, marking water holes; and

WHEREAS, Colin Powell, then Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, dedicated a memorial to the Buffalo Soldiers at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the birthplace of one of the regiments, thereby indicating official recognition by the military establishment of the debt owed to the valiant Buffalo Soldiers; and

WHEREAS, the legendary history of the Buffalo Soldiers prominently includes service at Fort Gibson, Fort Supply, Fort Arbuckle, Fort Reno, and Fort Sill, Oklahoma, as early as 1876. This service is in part responsible for the proliferation of Oklahoma's historic all-Black towns and settlements; and

WHEREAS, Oklahoma wishes to honor all those Buffalo Soldiers who gave so selflessly to this State and our Nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 49TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

THAT the Oklahoma State Legislature designates the State of Oklahoma the "Frontier Home of the Buffalo Soldier".

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Adopted by the Senate the 24th day of March, 2004.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

Adopted by the House of Representatives the ____ day of _____,
2004.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives