

ENROLLED HOUSE
RESOLUTION NO. 1031

By: Billy, Armes, Auffet, Bailey, Banz, Benge, Blackwell, Brannon, Brown, Buck, Cannaday, Carey, Christian, Collins, Coody, Cooksey, Cox, Dank, Denney, Derby, DeWitt, Dorman, Duncan, Enns, Faught, Fields, Glenn, Hamilton, Harrison, Hickman, Hilliard, Holland, Hoskin, Inman, Jackson, Jett, Johnson, Jones, Jordan, Joyner, Kern, Key, Kiesel, Kirby, Kouplen, Lamons, Liebmann, Luttrell, Martin (Scott), Martin (Steve), McAffrey, McCullough, McDaniel (Jeannie), McDaniel (Randy), McMullen, McNiel, McPeak, Miller, Moore, Morgan, Morrissette, Murphey, Nations, Nelson, Ortega, Osborn, Ownbey, Peters, Peterson, Pittman, Proctor, Pruett, Renegar, Reynolds, Richardson, Ritze, Roan, Rousselot, Sanders, Schwartz, Scott, Sears, Shannon, Shelton, Sherrer, Shoemake, Shumate, Smithson, Steele, Sullivan, Terrill, Thompson, Thomsen, Tibbs, Trebilcock, Walker, Watson, Wesselhoft, Williams, Wright (Harold) and Wright (John)

A Resolution recognizing the service, valor, and dedication of the Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, on April 6, 1917, the United States, after extraordinary provocations, declared war on Germany, and thus the United States entered World War I, the War to End All Wars; and

WHEREAS, at the time of this declaration of war, most American Indian people in the United States were not accorded the status of citizens of the United States; and

WHEREAS, many members of the Choctaw Nation joined many members of other American Indian tribes and nations in enlisting in the Armed Forces to fight on behalf of their native land; and

WHEREAS, members of the Choctaw Nation were enlisted in the force known as the American Expeditionary Force, which began hostile actions in France in the fall of 1917, and specifically, members of the Choctaw Nation were incorporated in a company of American Indian enlistees serving in the 142nd Infantry Company of the 36th Division; and

WHEREAS, a major impediment to Allied operations in general, and American operations in particular, was the fact that the German forces had deciphered all codes used for transmitting information between Allied commands, leading to substantial loss of men and material during the first year of American action; and

WHEREAS, an American commander realized the fact that he had under his command a number of men who spoke a native language, and while the use of such native languages was discouraged by the American Government, the commander sought out and recruited eighteen Choctaw Indians to transmit field telephone communications during an upcoming campaign; and

WHEREAS, because the language used by the Choctaw soldiers in the transmission of information was not based on a European language or on a mathematical progression, the Germans were unable to understand any of the transmissions and never succeeded in breaking the Choctaw code; and

WHEREAS, the first use of the Choctaw Code Talkers was on October 17, 1918, and was particularly important in the movement of American soldiers, including securing forward and exposed positions, in the protection of supplies during American action including protecting gun emplacements from enemy shelling, and in the preparation for the assault on German positions in the final stages of combat operations in the fall of 1918; and

WHEREAS, in the opinion of the officers involved, the use of Choctaw Indians to transmit information in their native language saved men and munitions, and was highly successful; and

WHEREAS, this was the first time in modern warfare that the transmission of messages in a Native American language was used for the purpose of confusing the enemy; and

WHEREAS, this action by members of the Choctaw Nation is another example of the commitment of American Indians to the defense of our great Nation and adds to the proud legacy of such service; and

WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation has honored the actions of these eighteen Choctaw Code Talkers through a memorial bearing their names located at the entrance of the tribal complex in Durant, Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, on October 15, 2008, the President signed the "Code Talkers Recognition Act of 2008", which formally recognized the Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I and authorized Congressional Medals to be issued to the Choctaw Nation and family members of the original Code Talkers; and

WHEREAS, the original Choctaw Code Talkers were: Joseph Oklahombi, Robert Taylor, Ben Carterby, James Edwards, Ben Hampton, Solomon Louis, Mitchell Bobb, Albert Billy, Tobias Frazier, Jeff Nelson, Victor Brown, Walter Veach, Joseph Davenport, Pete Maytubby, Otis Leader, Calvin Wilson, George Davenport and Noel Johnson.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 52ND OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the Oklahoma House of Representatives recognizes the service, valor, and dedication of the Choctaw Code Talkers of World War I to the United States and the contributions of the Code Talkers to the United States victory in World War I.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to the Chief of the Choctaw Nation and to the next of kin or other personal representative of Joseph Oklahombi, Robert Taylor, Ben Carterby, James Edwards, Ben Hampton, Solomon Louis, Mitchell Bobb, Albert Billy, Tobias Frazier, Jeff Nelson, Victor Brown, Walter Veach, Joseph Davenport, Pete Maytubby, Otis Leader, Calvin Wilson, George Davenport and Noel Johnson.

Adopted by the House of Representatives the 1st day of April,
2009.

Presiding Officer of the House of
Representatives