

105<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 4211

To establish the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, in association with the Tuskegee University, in the State of Alabama, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 14, 1998

Mr. RILEY (for himself and Mr. HILLIARD) introduced the following bill;  
which was referred to the Committee on Resources

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## A BILL

To establish the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site, in association with the Tuskegee University, in the State of Alabama, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS.**

4 As used in this Act:

5 (1) HISTORIC SITE.—The term “historic site”  
6 means the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site  
7 as established by section 3.

8 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
9 the Secretary of the Interior.

1           (3) TUSKEGEE AIRMEN.—The term “Tuskegee  
2           Airmen” means the thousands of men and women  
3           who served in America’s African-American Air Force  
4           units of World War II and shared in the Tuskegee  
5           Experience.

6           (4) TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY.—The term  
7           “Tuskegee University” means the institution of  
8           higher education by that name located in the State  
9           of Alabama and founded by Booker T. Washington  
10          in 1881, formerly named Tuskegee Institute.

11 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

12          (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

13           (1) The struggle of African-Americans for  
14           greater roles in North American military conflicts  
15           spans the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. Op-  
16           portunities for African-American participation in the  
17           United States military were always very limited and  
18           controversial. Quotas, exclusion, and racial discrimi-  
19           nation were based on the prevailing attitude in the  
20           United States, particularly on the part of the United  
21           States military, that African-Americans did not pos-  
22           sess the intellectual capacity, aptitude, and skills to  
23           be successful fighters.

24           (2) By the early 1940’s these perceptions con-  
25           tinued within the United States military. Key lead-

1       ers within the United States Army Air Corps did not  
2       believe that African-Americans possessed the capac-  
3       ity to become successful military pilots. After suc-  
4       cumbing to pressure exerted by civil rights groups  
5       and the black press, the Army decided to train a  
6       small number of African-American pilot cadets  
7       under special conditions. Although prejudice and dis-  
8       crimination against African-Americans was a na-  
9       tional phenomenon, not just a southern trait, it was  
10      more intense in the South where it had hardened  
11      into rigidly enforced patterns of segregation. Such  
12      was the environment where the military chose to lo-  
13      cate the training of the Tuskegee Airmen.

14           (3) The military selected Tuskegee Institute  
15      (now known as Tuskegee University) as a civilian  
16      contractor for a variety of reasons. These included  
17      the school's existing facilities, engineering and tech-  
18      nical instructors, and a climate with ideal flying con-  
19      ditions year round. Tuskegee Institute's strong in-  
20      terest in providing aeronautical training for African-  
21      American youths was also an important factor. Stu-  
22      dents from the school's civilian pilot training pro-  
23      gram had some of the best test scores when com-  
24      pared to other students from programs across the  
25      Southeast.

1           (4) In 1941 the United States Army Air Corps  
2 awarded a contract to Tuskegee Institute to operate  
3 a primary flight school at Moton Field. Tuskegee In-  
4 stitute (now known as Tuskegee University) chose  
5 an African-American contractor who designed and  
6 constructed Moton Field, with the assistance of its  
7 faculty and students, as the site for its military pilot  
8 training program. The field was named for the  
9 school's second president, Robert Russa Moton. Con-  
10 sequently, Tuskegee Institute was one of a very few  
11 American institutions (and the only African-Amer-  
12 ican institution) to own, develop, and control facili-  
13 ties for military flight instruction.

14           (5) Moton Field, also known as the Primary  
15 Flying Field or Airport Number 2, was the only pri-  
16 mary flight training facility for African-American  
17 pilot candidates in the United States Army Air  
18 Corps during World War II. The facility symbolizes  
19 the entrance of African-American pilots into the  
20 United States Army Air Corps, although on the  
21 basis of a policy of segregation that was mandated  
22 by the military and institutionalized in the South.  
23 The facility also symbolizes the singular role of  
24 Tuskegee Institute (Tuskegee University) in provid-

1 ing leadership as well as economic and educational  
2 resources to make that entry possible.

3 (6) The Tuskegee Airmen were the first Afri-  
4 can-American soldiers to complete their training suc-  
5 cessfully and to enter the United States Army Air  
6 Corps. Almost 1,000 aviators were trained as Ameri-  
7 ca's first African-American military pilots. In addi-  
8 tion, more than 10,000 military and civilian African-  
9 American men and women served as flight instruc-  
10 tors, officers, bombardiers, navigators, radio techni-  
11 cians, mechanics, air traffic controllers, parachute  
12 riggers, electrical and communications specialists,  
13 medical professionals, laboratory assistants, cooks,  
14 musicians, supply, firefighting, and transportation  
15 personnel.

16 (7) Although military leaders were hesitant to  
17 use the Tuskegee Airmen in combat, the Airmen  
18 eventually saw considerable action in North Africa  
19 and Europe. Acceptance from United States Army  
20 Air Corps units came slowly, but their courageous  
21 and, in many cases, heroic performance earned them  
22 increased combat opportunities and respect.

23 (8) The successes of the Tuskegee Airmen  
24 proved to the American public that African-Ameri-  
25 cans, when given the opportunity, could become ef-

1       fective military leaders and pilots. This helped pave  
2       the way for desegregation of the military, beginning  
3       with President Harry S Truman’s Executive Order  
4       9981 in 1948. The Tuskegee Airmen’s success also  
5       helped set the stage for civil rights advocates to con-  
6       tinue the struggle to end racial discrimination dur-  
7       ing the civil rights movement of the 1950’s and  
8       1960’s.

9               (9) The story of the Tuskegee Airmen also re-  
10       flects the struggle of African-Americans to achieve  
11       equal rights, not only through legal attacks on the  
12       system of segregation, but also through the tech-  
13       niques of nonviolent direct action. The members of  
14       the 477th Bombardment Group, who staged a non-  
15       violent demonstration to desegregate the officer’s  
16       club at Freeman Field, Indiana, helped set the pat-  
17       tern for direct action protests popularized by civil  
18       rights activists in later decades.

19       (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are the fol-  
20       lowing:

21               (1) To benefit and inspire present and future  
22       generations to understand and appreciate the heroic  
23       legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen, through interpreta-  
24       tion and education, and the preservation of cultural

1 resources at Moton Field, which was the site of pri-  
2 mary flight training.

3 (2) To commemorate and interpret the impact  
4 of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II; the  
5 training process for the Tuskegee Airmen including  
6 the roles played by Moton Field, other training fa-  
7 cilities, and related sites; the strategic role of  
8 Tuskegee Institute (Tuskegee University) in the  
9 training; the African-American struggle for greater  
10 participation in the United States military and more  
11 significant roles in defending their country; the sig-  
12 nificance of successes of the Tuskegee Airmen in  
13 leading to desegregation of the United States mili-  
14 tary shortly after World War II; and the impacts of  
15 Tuskegee Airmen accomplishments on subsequent  
16 civil rights advances of the 1950's and 1960's.

17 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN NA-**  
18 **TIONAL HISTORIC SITE.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is hereby established as a  
20 unit of the National Park System the Tuskegee Airmen  
21 National Historic Site, in association with Tuskegee Uni-  
22 versity, in the State of Alabama.

23 (b) DESCRIPTION.—The total historic site, after the  
24 conditions are met for its full development and manage-  
25 ment, and subsequent to agreements to donate land by

1 Tuskegee University and the city of Tuskegee, shall con-  
2 sist of approximately 90 acres, known as Moton Field, in  
3 Macon County, Alabama, as generally depicted on a map  
4 entitled “Alternative C, Living History: Tuskegee Airmen  
5 Experience”, dated June 1998. Such map shall be on file  
6 and available for public inspection in the appropriate of-  
7 fices of the National Park Service.

8 **SEC. 4. PROPERTY ACQUISITION.**

9       The Secretary may acquire by donation, exchange, or  
10 purchase with donated or appropriated funds the real  
11 property described in section 3(b), except that any prop-  
12 erty owned by the State of Alabama or any political sub-  
13 division thereof or Tuskegee University may be acquired  
14 only by donation. It is understood that property donated  
15 by Tuskegee University shall be used only for purposes  
16 consistent with this Act in commemorating the Tuskegee  
17 Airmen. The initial donation of land by Tuskegee Univer-  
18 sity shall consist of approximately 35 acres with the re-  
19 mainder of the acreage to be donated by Tuskegee Univer-  
20 sity after agreement is reached regarding the development  
21 and management of the Tuskegee Airmen National Cen-  
22 ter. The Secretary may also acquire by the same methods  
23 personal property associated with, and appropriate for, the  
24 interpretation of the historic site.

1 **SEC. 5. ADMINISTRATION OF HISTORIC SITE.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer  
3 the historic site in accordance with this Act and the laws  
4 generally applicable to units of the National Park System,  
5 including the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), and  
6 the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666).

7 (b) ROLE OF TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE NATIONAL HIS-  
8 TORIC SITE.—Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site  
9 shall serve as the principal administrative facility for the  
10 historic site.

11 (c) ROLE OF TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY.—Tuskegee  
12 University shall serve as the principal partner with the  
13 National Park Service, and other Federal agencies mutu-  
14 ally agreed upon, for the leadership, organization, develop-  
15 ment, and management of the historic site.

16 (d) ROLE OF TUSKEGEE AIRMEN.—The Tuskegee  
17 Airmen shall assist the principal partners for the historic  
18 site in fundraising for the development of visitor facilities  
19 and programs, and provide artifacts, memorabilia, and  
20 historical research for interpretive exhibits.

21 (e) DEVELOPMENT.—The general management plan  
22 for the operation and development of the historic site shall  
23 reflect Alternative C, Living History: The Tuskegee Air-  
24 men Experience, as expressed in the draft special resource  
25 study entitled “Moton Field/Tuskegee Airmen Special Re-  
26 source Study”, dated June 1998. Subsequent development

1 of the historic site, with the approval of Tuskegee Univer-  
2 sity, shall reflect Alternative D.

3 (f) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter  
5 into cooperative agreements with Tuskegee Univer-  
6 sity, other nonhigher educational institutions, the  
7 Tuskegee Airmen, individuals, private and public or-  
8 ganizations, and other Federal agencies in further-  
9 ance of the purposes of this Act. The Secretary shall  
10 recognize the concern of Tuskegee University for the  
11 wise management, use, and development of the his-  
12 toric site, and shall consult with Tuskegee Univer-  
13 sity in the formulation of any cooperative agreement  
14 that may affect the historic site.

15 (2) TUSKEGEE AIRMEN NATIONAL CENTER.—

16 The Secretary may enter into a cooperative agree-  
17 ment with Tuskegee University to define and imple-  
18 ment the public/private partnership needed to de-  
19 velop the historic site, including the Tuskegee Air-  
20 men National Center on the grounds of the historic  
21 site. The purpose of the center shall be to extend the  
22 ability to relate more fully the story of the Tuskegee  
23 Airmen at Moton Field. The center shall house a  
24 Tuskegee Airmen Memorial and provide large exhibit  
25 space for the display of period aircraft and equip-

1       ment used by the Tuskegee Airmen and a Tuskegee  
2       University Department of Aviation Science. It is the  
3       intent of the Congress that interpretive programs for  
4       visitors benefit from the school's active pilot training  
5       instruction program, and that the training program  
6       will provide a historical continuum of flight training  
7       in the tradition of the Tuskegee Airmen. The  
8       Tuskegee University Department of Aviation Science  
9       may be located in historic buildings within the  
10      Moton Field complex until the Tuskegee Airmen Na-  
11      tional Center has been completed.

12           (3) REPORT.—Within one year after the date of  
13      the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and  
14      Tuskegee University, in consultation with the  
15      Tuskegee Airmen, shall prepare a report on the  
16      partnership needed to develop and operate the  
17      Tuskegee Airmen National Center, and submit the  
18      report to the Committee on Resources of the House  
19      of Representatives and the Committee on Energy  
20      and Natural Resources of the Senate. Subject to the  
21      approval of the Congress, the Secretary and  
22      Tuskegee University may enter into a cooperative  
23      agreement to permit the development of the Center.  
24      Before the balance of the land is donated and before  
25      the development of the Tuskegee Airmen National

1 Center can proceed, a cooperative agreement accept-  
2 able to the Secretary and Tuskegee University must  
3 be executed.

4 (g) GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN.—Within 2 com-  
5 plete fiscal years after funds are first made available to  
6 carry out this Act, the Secretary shall prepare, with the  
7 full participation of Tuskegee University, a general man-  
8 agement plan for the historic site and submit the plan to  
9 the Committee on Resources of the House of Representa-  
10 tives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Re-  
11 sources of the Senate.

12 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

13 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums  
14 as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

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