



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF BLACK VETERANS

- WHEREAS:** Since the founding of our country, African Americans have played a significant role in our military history, despite racial discrimination and facing limited opportunities; *and*
- WHEREAS:** During the Civil War, the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment was the first military unit consisting of free Black soldiers fighting for the Union Army who displayed exceptional bravery and honor; *and*
- WHEREAS:** In World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen, an all Black Army Air Corps aviation unit based in Tuskegee, Alabama, trained Black pilots, navigators, bombardiers and personnel, overcoming segregation and discrimination to become one of the most respected fighter groups in the war that later paved the way for desegregation in the U.S. military; *and*
- WHEREAS:** A well-known Tuskegee Airmen from Boston was the former Boston Police Deputy Superintendent Willis Saunders, who received a Congressional Gold Medal for his service. Saunders, a respected role model in the city, always treated people with dignity and respect. His father, an Army veteran, served in World War I; *and*
- WHEREAS:** We are proud of the historic Twelfth Baptist Church in Roxbury for their outreach and support to the African American veterans throughout the Greater Boston area, especially through their 60+ veterans group. The Church has had many notable pastors over the years, including Reverend George Washington Williams, who was a Civil War veteran; *and*
- WHEREAS:** We are also honored to have the William E. Carter American Legion Post 16, the oldest African-American post in the American Legion, in Mattapan. Established over a century ago, it recognizes the important work of black veterans and their bravery, self-sacrifice, and commitment.
- WHEREAS:** Every year, Boston's Office of Veterans Services host a Black Veterans Appreciation Brunch, where we celebrate the courageous service and sacrifices of Black veterans, while recognizing the racism and discrimination faced by these same veterans in America; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect without fear of discrimination, and we should continue our support to the Black veterans by standing with them and celebrating their remarkable achievements and sacrifices for our country.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the Boston City Council affirms its support for the Black veteran community and recognizes the contributions and sacrifices they have made towards the City of Boston.