

RESOLUTION NO. 180541

Recognizing the importance of the 70th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9981 ending segregation in the Military.

WHEREAS, on the 26th of July 2018, the Black Veterans Memorial at 12th Street and Paseo and the 5th District American Legion hosted the 70th Anniversary Ceremony of Executive Order 9981 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., a “Day of Remembrance” (the end of segregation in the military); and

WHEREAS, the date 26 July marks an important milestone in United States military history and race relations. On this date in 1948, President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981, “that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all person in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin”; and

WHEREAS, since the beginning of the American military, it had been an uphill struggle for African Americans and other minorities to prove their patriotism and devotion to defense of the nation and prior to the Executive Order 9981, blacks and some other minorities were often segregated into separate units from their white counterparts and assigned menial tasks in the rear and rarely saw combat; and

WHEREAS, those African Americans that did see combat displayed great courage and bravery under fire, such as the famed 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment in the Civil War, the 369th Infantry “Harlem Hellfighters” in World War I, and the 761st Tank Battalion in World War II; and

WHEREAS, politics was only one of several factors that led to Executive Order 9981, which came to fruition during the presidential election campaign and its content and timing capitalized on the crucial black vote in the urban centers of the south; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF KANSAS CITY:

That the Mayor and Council do hereby commend the United States military of the present-day, comprised of servicemen and women of diverse social and racial backgrounds, all dedicated to one common purpose, the defense of their country and its citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be spread upon the Minutes of the Council in testimony thereof and that a copy hereof be presented to Rev. Tom Lindon, Post Commander, Wayne Miner Post 149, and Steven Boeck, Commander, 5th District Department of Missouri American Legion, with the encouragement of the Mayor and Council that all Kansas Citians join in the observance of this day and thank those who have fought to protect our way of life.
