



HR0878

LRB103 42059 LAW 75283 r

1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

2

WHEREAS, Following the Emancipation Proclamation in
3 January of 1863, President Abraham Lincoln called for the
4 raising of a Black regiment for the Union Army; and

5

WHEREAS, Massachusetts Governor John Andrew quickly
6 answered President Lincoln's call and began forming the 54th
7 Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment, one of the first
8 Black regiments to serve in the U.S. Civil War; and

9

10

11

WHEREAS, Black men from across the state, country, and
even other nations traveled to Boston to join this historic
regiment; and

12

13

14

15

16

WHEREAS, The 54th Massachusetts helped inspire the
enlistment of more than 180,000 Black soldiers, a boost in
morale and manpower that President Lincoln recognized as
essential to the victory of the United States and the
destruction of slavery throughout the country; and

17

18

19

20

WHEREAS, Twelve of these brave African Americans who
answered the call and enlisted on April 26, 1863 with Company H
of the 54th Massachusetts hailed from the City of Galesburg;
and

1 WHEREAS, Sergeant Joseph Barquet, Corporal Samuel Wells,
2 Private Clay Welcome, Private Joseph White, Private Preston
3 Williams, Private Reuben Caldwell, Private John Davis, Private
4 John Dickinson, Private Hiram Garnet, Private George Hubbard,
5 Private Henry Kirk, and Private William Timms served bravely
6 with the 54th Massachusetts; and

7 WHEREAS, Sgt. Barquet, the most prominent of these figures
8 in Galesburg's history, is known for serving as chairman of
9 the Convention of 1866 to discuss civil rights, being a
10 staunch advocate for the desegregation of schools, and
11 delivering many speeches for equal rights for African
12 Americans, especially African American veterans; and

13 WHEREAS, While serving with the 54th Massachusetts, Pvt.
14 Kirk and Pvt. Dickinson were wounded and captured at the
15 Second Battle of Fort Wager in South Carolina in 1863; and

16 WHEREAS, Pvt. Kirk and Pvt. Dickinson were held captive in
17 Salisbury, North Carolina until March 4, 1865 when a prisoner
18 exchange of 8,684 Union soldiers took place, which included
19 120 who were African American; and

20 WHEREAS, Despite six out of the 12 either being wounded or
21 captured, only one died while in service to their country,
22 Pvt. Williams, who died due to an accident while in

1 Jacksonville, Florida; the rest of the brave men left the 54th
2 Massachusetts being discharged at the expiration of their
3 term; therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
5 HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
6 we recognize the brave men from Galesburg who joined the 54th
7 Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment to help bring
8 victory and, ultimately, the destruction of slavery throughout
9 the country.