

State Of Florida

Resolution

WHEREAS, during World War II, 16 million Americans served in uniform, of which 248,000 were Floridians; and

WHEREAS, more than six million American women nationwide entered the workforce during the war to help alleviate a manpower shortage; and

WHEREAS, aviation pioneer and Florida native Jacqueline Cochran was selected by the Army Air Forces to organize the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP); and

WHEREAS, more than 1,000 brave women earned their wings and became the first women to fly American military aircraft; and

WHEREAS, the WASP were stationed at 120 air bases across the U.S. and in Florida, assuming numerous flight-related missions, relieving male pilots for combat duty; and

WHEREAS, the WASP flew sixty million miles of operational flights from aircraft factories to ports of embarkation and military training bases, towing targets for live anti-aircraft artillery practice and simulated strafing missions, and transporting cargo; and

WHEREAS, the WASP ferried over fifty percent of combat aircraft within the United States during the war; and

WHEREAS, the WASP delivered 12,650 aircraft of 78 different types between September 1942 and December 1944; and

WHEREAS, at the conclusion of the WASP program on December 20, 1944, there were 916 women pilots on duty with the Army Air Forces; and

WHEREAS, thirty-eight WASP fliers lost their lives while serving during the war; 11 in training and 27 in-service; and

WHEREAS, the G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 1977 granted the WASP corps full military status for their service; and

WHEREAS, approximately 300 WASP veterans remain today to share their exploits; and

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2009, President Barack Obama and the United States Congress awarded the WASP the Congressional Gold Medal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Governor and Cabinet of the State of Florida do hereby recognize and honor the remarkable accomplishments, courage, and sacrifice of a distinct group of women in the United States Armed Forces, the

WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS OF WORLD WAR II “WASP”

and commend them and remember them for their dedicated efforts and unwavering service to our country in the fight for freedom.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, the Governor and Cabinet of the State of Florida have hereunto subscribed their names and have caused the Official Seal of the State of Florida to be hereunto affixed in the City of Tallahassee this 13th day of April, 2010.