

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 1349

Congratulating the United States Air Force on the occasion of its 75th anniversary.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

Mr. GARAMENDI (for himself, Mr. TURNER, Mr. KINZINGER, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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## RESOLUTION

Congratulating the United States Air Force on the occasion of its 75th anniversary.

Whereas the United States Air Force celebrates its 75th birthday on September 18, 2022;

Whereas the military has always been a leader in technological innovation, with aviation roots in the aerial balloons used in the Civil War, inspired to powered flight by the patent issued to the Wright brothers, and then evolving to space capabilities;

Whereas the storied history of the Air Force spans milestones over the past century and around the world, with notable landmarks and advances breaking new boundaries;

Whereas the Air Force is a strong champion of joint operations and the support necessary between military

branches to effectively sustain modern combat, and has led the exploration and expansion into space operations;

Whereas, in May 1908, Lieutenant Thomas Selfridge became the first officer to fly solo in an aircraft for a distance of more than 240 feet in the “White Wing” in Hammondsport, New York;

Whereas, on March 19, 1910, the Wright Brothers Flying School opened in Montgomery, Alabama, as a civilian flight school in a location that eventually became Maxwell Air Force Base;

Whereas, on September 14, 1944, Colonel Floyd B. Wood, Major Harry Wexler, and First Lieutenant Frank Reckord became the first crew to deliberately fly into a hurricane to collect scientific data, bringing back findings that the eye of a hurricane has strong upward currents and the perimeter has a strong down current;

Whereas, on October 14, 1947, merely a month after the Air Force was officially created as a separate service, Air Force Captain Charles “Chuck” Yeager broke the sound barrier in level flight for the first time;

Whereas, in 1948 and 1949, the Air Force embarked on “Operation Vittles”, now known as the Berlin Airlift, to transport more than 1.7 million tons of supplies and 62,000 passengers into the isolated, Western-controlled section of Berlin during the 15 months of the largest humanitarian airlift operation in history;

Whereas, on May 3, 1952, Air Force Lieutenant Colonels Joseph Fletcher and William Benedict became the first pilots to land an aircraft at the North Pole, along with navigator First Lieutenant Herbert Thompson and crew members Staff Sergeant Harold Turner and Airman

First Class Robert Wishard, as they carried out scientific observations of ocean depth and gravity field strength in the polar area;

Whereas, in December 1958, the Air Force launched the first communications satellite, which President Dwight Eisenhower used to broadcast a Christmas message, the first time a human voice was heard from space;

Whereas, in October 1962, at the beginning of the Cuban Missile Crisis, U-2 pilots Major Richard Heyser and Major Rudolf Anderson, Jr., flew exceedingly difficult reconnaissance missions over Cuba to prove that the Soviet Union was constructing missile sites;

Whereas, on June 18, 1981, the F-117 Nighthawk, the world's first stealth combat aircraft, flew for the first time, representing a new age of innovative design and construction for fighter and attack aircraft;

Whereas, on April 27, 1994, the Air Force officially declared the satellite network of the Global Positioning System operational, marking the start of a new age of useful military electronics that had applicability to civilian lives;

Whereas, on August 30, 2005, the Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard dedicated more than 8,000 airmen to begin Hurricane Katrina relief operations, efforts that expanded to include the evacuation of almost 27,000 displaced persons, medical evacuations of 2,600 patients, and the airlift of 11,500 tons of relief supplies;

Whereas the Space Force was established on December 20, 2019, ushering in a new age of a military service focused solely on pursuing superiority in the space domain;

Whereas the Air Force has long been an organization that attracts successful and pioneering individuals, including great heroes who sacrificed significantly for the good of the Nation, proving that a culture of success is best aided by celebrating diversity within the ranks;

Whereas, on March 11, 1918, Army Air Service Lieutenant Paul Baer became the first American pilot to shoot down an enemy aircraft, earning the Distinguished Service Cross;

Whereas, on April 2, 1939, the National Defense Act of 1940 was signed, authorizing the Air Corps to train African-American pilots, and the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama began flight training with 12 African-American pilot candidates in July of 1941;

Whereas, in August 1942, Lieutenant Colonel Jacqueline Cochran was appointed as the director of the new Women Airforce Service Pilots, known as WASPs, and was the first woman to break the sound barrier in 1953;

Whereas, on August 13, 1945, First Lieutenant Oscar Perdomo became an “Ace in a Day” and the final Ace of World War II by shooting down 5 enemy aircraft in a single day, and received a Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in action and an Air Medal with an oak leaf cluster;

Whereas Major Richard Bong, the top United States Ace of all time and known as the “Ace of Aces”, officially shot down 40 enemy aircraft over the course of WWII while flying a P-38 in the Pacific theater and earning a Congressional Medal of Honor;

Whereas, following President Truman's Executive Order 9981, the Air Force became the first branch to enact a plan for racial integration of all personnel and units;

Whereas, in 1948, the Women's Armed Service Integration Act was enacted, inspiring Staff Sergeant Esther Blake, who had previously experienced both of her sons being shot down in combat but returned safely by the end of World War II, to sign up in the first minute of the first day of eligibility;

Whereas, in 1954, the former Tuskegee Airman General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., became the first African-American general in the Air Force;

Whereas, in June 1965, Major Edward White became the first United States astronaut to conduct an extravehicular "walk" in space while embarked in Gemini 4;

Whereas General Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr., a veteran of 3 wars, became the first African American to reach the rank of four-star general on September 1, 1975;

Whereas, on June 28, 1976, the Air Force Academy admitted the first female cadets of whom one member, General Janet Wolfenbarger, would later become the first female four-star general in the Air Force in 2012;

Whereas, in January 1978, Colonel Ellison Onizuka became an astronaut candidate and later became the first Asian American in space on the Space Shuttle Discovery in 1985;

Whereas Lieutenant Colonel Guion S. Bluford became the first African-American astronaut to enter spaceflight on the Space Shuttle Challenger on August 30, 1983, for the first of his 4 shuttle missions;

Whereas, on June 10, 1989, Captain Jacquelyn Parker became the first woman to graduate from the Air Force Test Pilot School;

Whereas, on October 3, 1993, Technical Sergeant Timothy Wilkinson ran through enemy fire as a pararescueman to extricate dead and wounded special operations forces in Mogadishu, Somalia, during the longest sustained fire fight in over 20 years; and

Whereas, on July 23, 1999, Colonel Eileen Collins became the first female commander of a space shuttle mission when Space Shuttle Columbia launched: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) commends the stalwart spirit of the Air  
3       Force to adapt to new technology and societal  
4       changes;

5               (2) honors the Airmen past and present who  
6       have so honorably served the Nation and the world;  
7       and

8               (3) congratulates the United States Air Force  
9       on the occasion of its 75th anniversary.

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