

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1997

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HOUSE BILL 1724

Short Title: Commission on NC Black Troops/Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Hardaway; H. Hunter and Bonner.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar and Operations of the House.

June 1, 1998

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A
3 COMMISSION TO STUDY THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLACK TROOPS FROM
4 NORTH CAROLINA IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR AND OTHER
5 CONFLICTS AND TO DEVELOP PLANS FOR THE APPROPRIATE
6 COMMEMORATION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE TROOPS.

7 Whereas, on July 1, 1862, the United States Congress authorized President
8 Abraham Lincoln to organize black men for military purposes in the American Civil
9 War; and

10 Whereas, President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, issued September
11 24, 1862, stated that all slaves in those areas of the South that were in rebellion against
12 the United States on January 1, 1863, would be free, and from that time large numbers of
13 black soldiers, under the command of white officers, were accepted into the service of the
14 United States; and

15 Whereas, by May 22, 1863, the War Department had established the Bureau of
16 Colored Troops to administer the affairs of this new body of troops, which by war's end
17 had totaled over 186,000 men, and another 19,000 blacks served in the Union Navy; and

18 Whereas, while many of these troops served on garrison and occupation duty, a
19 large number of them belonged to combat units such as the famous 54th Massachusetts
20 Infantry, whose exploits were portrayed in the film, "Glory"; and

1 (3) Two persons appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
2 one of whom shall be recommended by the Chair of the North Carolina
3 Historical Commission; and

4 (4) The Chair of the North Carolina Historical Commission or the Chair's
5 designee.

6 The members appointed to the Commission on North Carolina's Black Troops should
7 be chosen from among individuals who have education or experience in the fields of
8 North Carolina history, black history, or military history.

9 (d) Terms. – Members shall serve for the duration of the Commission. Initial
10 terms shall commence July 1, 1998.

11 (e) Chair. – The chair shall be the Chair of the North Carolina Historical
12 Commission or the Chair's designee on the Commission, or a member selected by the
13 Chair of the North Carolina Historical Commission or the Chair's designee.

14 (f) Vacancies. – Vacancies resulting from the resignation of a member or
15 otherwise shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made,
16 and the term shall be for the balance of the unexpired term.

17 (g) Compensation. – The Commission members shall receive no salary as a result
18 of serving on the Commission but shall receive per diem, subsistence, and travel
19 expenses in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 120-3.1, 138-5, and 138-6, as
20 applicable.

21 (h) Removal. – Members may be removed in accordance with G.S. 143B-13.

22 (i) Meetings. – The chair shall convene the Commission. The Commission shall
23 meet at least quarterly and more frequently if necessary.

24 (j) Quorum. – A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a
25 quorum for the transaction of business. The affirmative vote of a majority of the members
26 present at meetings of the Commission shall be necessary for action to be taken by the
27 Commission.

28 (k) Termination of Commission. – The Commission shall terminate June 30,
29 2000.

30 **"§ 143-681. Powers and duties of the Commission.**

31 The Commission shall advise the Secretary of Cultural Resources on appropriate
32 means of acknowledging the contributions of black troops from North Carolina in the
33 American Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and other conflicts as the Commission
34 finds appropriate, including the construction of a memorial or memorials in appropriate
35 locations, and the collection, publication, or exhibition of materials associated with North
36 Carolina's black troops, in cooperation with the North Carolina Museum of History.

37 **"§ 143-682. Commission reports.**

38 The Commission shall submit a final report to the General Assembly no later than
39 June 30, 2000. The final report shall summarize the activities of the Commission and
40 shall make specific recommendations on appropriate methods of commemorating the
41 contributions of North Carolina's black troops.

42 **"§ 143-683. Application of Article.**

1 The provisions of Article 1 of Chapter 121 of the General Statutes apply to the
2 Commission."

3 Section 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
4 Cultural Resources the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for the 1998-99
5 fiscal year to pay per diem and travel expenses of the members of the Commission on
6 North Carolina's Black Troops.

7 Section 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 1998.