

Date of Hearing: April 9, 2018

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Jim Frazier, Chair

ACR 142 (Mathis) – As Amended April 2, 2018

SUBJECT: Colonel Charles Young Memorial Highway

SUMMARY: Designates a portion of State Highway 198 in the County of Tulare as the “Colonel Charles Young Memorial Highway”. Specifically, **this resolution:**

- 1) Recounts the life and career of United States Army Colonel Charles Young.
- 2) Designates the portion of State Highway 198, extending from the post mile marker starting at Salt Creek Road (41.226) on Highway 198 to the end at Sequoia National Park in the County of Tulare as the “Colonel Charles Young Memorial Highway”.
- 3) Requests the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to determine the cost of appropriate signs showing each of these special designations, consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system, and, upon receiving donations from non-state sources sufficient to cover the cost of the signs for which the donations were made, to erect those signs.

EXISTING LAW: Assigns Caltrans the responsibility of operating and maintaining state highways including the installation and maintenance of highway signs.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown, but the resolution requests that Caltrans only erect the appropriate signage upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the cost.

COMMENTS: The author seeks to honor the extraordinary life of U.S. Army Colonel Charles Young. Colonel Young was born into slavery in 1864 in Mays Lick, Kentucky. His father escaped from slavery and enlisted in the Fifth Regiment of the Colored Artillery and his service earned his family’s freedom. Young attended an all-white high school in Ripley, Kentucky, and graduated at the top of his class. In 1884, he was admitted to the United States Military Academy at West Point, from where he graduated in 1889, with a commission as a Second Lieutenant. Young was the third African American to do so. He then served with the Ninth U.S. Cavalry Regiment for 28 years.

During his time in the U.S. Army, Young served as a professor at Wilberforce College, where he led the new military sciences department. When the Spanish-American War broke out, Young was promoted to the temporary rank of Major of Volunteers in 1898, where he commanded the 9th Ohio Infantry Regiment.

In 1903, Young was appointed acting superintendent of Sequoia and General Grant National Parks, becoming the first black superintendent of a national park. Young was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 1916, the first African American to achieve the rank of colonel in the U.S. Army.

According to the author, “As a soldier, diplomat, and civil rights leader, Charles Young overcame stifling inequality to become a leading figure in the years after the Civil War when the

United States emerged as a world power. His work ethic, academic leadership, and devotion to duty provided a strong base for his achievements in the face of racism and oppression. His long and distinguished career as a commissioned officer in the U. S. Army made him a popular figure of his time and a role model for generations of new leaders.”

In writing in support of the resolution, a private citizen noted, “Young was the first African American National Park Superintendent at the Sequoia National Park, so it is befitting that the road leading into the park bear his name. This will be the second highway in California to honor the legacy of the Buffalo Soldiers.”

Colonel Young died on January 8, 1922 from a kidney infection while on a reconnaissance mission in Nigeria. His body was returned to the United States and he was given a full military funeral at Arlington National Cemetery. Young married to Ada Mills in 1904 in Oakland, California and had a son and a daughter. This resolution in his honor acknowledges his pioneering contributions to our country.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., 12th District
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Mu Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Chi Nu Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Epsilon Xi Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Eta Alpha Alpha Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Lambda Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Lambda Omicron Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Mu Alpha Alpha Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Mu Kappa Kappa Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Omicron Mu Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Omicron Nu Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Phi Beta Beta
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Pi Rho Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Pi Rho Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Rho Iota Iota Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Tau Tau Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Xi Gamma Gamma Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Zeta Rho Chapter
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., Zeta Tau Chapter
192 private citizens

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Melissa White / TRANS. / (916) 319-2093