

Sept. 14, 2005  
[H. Con. Res. 67]

ARMY'S BLACK CORPS OF ENGINEERS—  
RECOGNITION OF WORLD WAR II  
CONTRIBUTIONS

Whereas the bombing of Pearl Harbor necessitated constructing an overland route between Alaska and the lower 48 States for military purposes;

Whereas on February 11, 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt authorized the construction of the Alaska-Canada Highway (also known as the "Alcan Highway");

Whereas construction of the Alcan Highway, a 1,522-mile long road from Dawson Creek, Canada, to Fairbanks, Alaska, was an engineering feat of enormous challenge;

Whereas the Alcan Highway was constructed by approximately 10,000 United States troops through rugged, unmapped wilderness and extreme temperatures, ranging from 80-degrees-below to 90-degrees-above zero;

Whereas the Corps of Engineers units assigned to construct the Alcan Highway were segregated by race;

Whereas the 93rd, 95th, and 97th Regiments and 388th Battalion of the Corps of Engineers, part of a group known as the "Black Corps of Engineers", were African American units assigned to the Alcan Highway project, and these units comprised one-third of the total engineering workforce on the project;

Whereas despite severe discriminatory policies, and abominable living and social conditions, the soldiers of the Black Corps of Engineers performed notably and unselfishly on the project;

Whereas on November 20, 1942, the Alcan Highway was completed in an astonishing 8 months and 12 days, becoming one of the Nation's greatest public works projects in the 20th century;

Whereas the Alcan Highway became the only land route that strategically linked the northern territory to the remainder of the continental United States and facilitated the construction of airstrips for refueling planes and vital supply routes during World War II;

Whereas although considerable praise was bestowed upon soldiers for exemplary work in constructing the Alcan Highway, the soldiers of the Black Corps of Engineers were seldom recognized; and

Whereas despite enduring indignities and double standards, the soldiers of the Black Corps of Engineers contributed unselfishly to the western defense in World War II and these contributions helped lead to the subsequent integration of the military: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),* That Congress honors the soldiers of the Army's Black Corps of Engineers for their contributions in constructing the Alaska-Canada highway during World War II and recognizes the importance of these contributions to the subsequent integration of the military.

Agreed to September 14, 2005.