

SENATE MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 96

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 11, 2021

The Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Resolution No. 96.

As amended, this Senate resolution honors the life of Chief Master Sergeant James A. Cotten. For over 65 years, Chief Master Sergeant Cotten proudly served this nation while bringing about real, long-lasting racial change. As a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, Mr. Cotten was part of an elite group of Black aviators who played a critical role in the Allied victory during World War II and paved the way for desegregation of the Armed Forces in 1948. After serving for twenty years in the Army Air Corps, and later in the newly-constituted Air Force, Mr. Cotten continued serving his country by working as a civilian contract administrator at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst before retiring in 2012 at age 85. In recognition of his service with the Tuskegee Airmen, Mr. Cotten was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2012 and was one of six veterans present at the White House when President Barack Obama honored the unit in 2013.

James Cotten passed away on August 14, 2020, exactly 75 years after he was first drafted into the United States Army. As we lose more members of the Greatest Generation each day, it is important to recognize the accomplishments of men like Chief Master Sergeant Cotten who selflessly served our nation while overcoming racial segregation and prejudice. His legacy stands as an enduring symbol of triumph over adversity and loyalty to one's country that will inspire citizens of both this State and this nation for decades to come.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

There was a technical amendment to the bill to add a word that was inadvertently omitted.