

House Resolution 705

By: Representatives Taylor of the 173rd, Smyre of the 135th, Watson of the 172nd, Carter of the 175th, and Williams of the 168th

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending Lieutenant Henry Ossian Flipper and recognizing the Lieutenant Henry Ossian
2 Flipper Historic Cemetery Fence Dedication; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, Henry Ossian Flipper was born a slave in 1856 but learned to read and write;
4 at 17, he entered the Military Academy where he was publicly shunned by fellow cadets, but
5 he persevered in the face of constant racism and became West Point's first black graduate;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, he was assigned to frontier duty with the 10th Cavalry, the famous all-black unit
8 known as the Buffalo Soldiers; and

9 WHEREAS, in 1881, his white commander at Fort Davis in Texas accused him of stealing
10 \$2,500.00, and Lieutenant Flipper was court-martialed and was found not guilty of stealing
11 but guilty of conduct unbecoming an officer; and

12 WHEREAS, after the trial, the judge said the charges were probably motivated by racism and
13 recommended a light punishment, but President Chester A. Arthur rejected his
14 recommendation, and Lieutenant Flipper was dishonorably discharged from the Army; and

15 WHEREAS, Lieutenant Flipper continued to serve his country by working for the
16 Department of the Interior and the Department of Justice and became a respected engineer
17 and historian; and

18 WHEREAS, in 1976, the Army gave Lieutenant Flipper an honorable discharge; later,
19 President Clinton gave him a full pardon, clearing his reputation completely; and

20 WHEREAS, on March 21, 2015, the City of Thomasville, Georgia, will host the Lieutenant
21 Henry Ossian Flipper Historic Cemetery Fence Dedication to properly honor Lieutenant
22 Flipper and his place in history.

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
24 the members of this body commend Lieutenant Henry Ossian Flipper and recognize the
25 Lieutenant Henry Ossian Flipper Historic Cemetery Fence Dedication hosted by the City of
26 Thomasville.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
28 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the
29 City of Thomasville.