



Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs

Office of the Secretary

WES MOORE
GOVERNOR

ARUNA MILLER
LT. GOVERNOR

ANTHONY WOODS
SECRETARY

March 15, 2023

The Honorably Joseline A. Pena-Melnyk
Chair, Health and government Operations
Committee Members
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 0370, 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day
Dear Chairperson Pena-Melnyk and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs supports HB0370. The bill will require the Governor to annually proclaim March 9th as 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day.

In 1944, an all women battalion was formed consisting of 817 predominantly black women from the Women's Army Corp (WAC). Eventually, this number would reach 855 and consist of women from forty different states, with 19 calling Maryland home, members such as Corporal Mary Jackson, Private Laura Jones, Private Gloria Taylor and Private Eleanor Wilson.

The mission of the 6888th Battalion, also known as the "Six Triple Eight," was to clear more than 17 million pieces of mail and packages that had been backlogged for more than two years, in hopes of restoring morale for the troops that were stationed in the European Theater of Operations.

Despite poor working conditions, the 6888th was committed to 24 hours a day, seven days a week regiment. This would enable the Battalion to process 5.85 million pieces of mail monthly. Their work ethic resulted in a six-month tasker being accomplished in a record three months and significantly raised the morale of the service members stationed in the European theater.

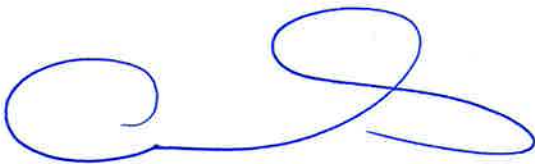
The 6888th returned home with no fanfare, or acknowledgement of their honorable service. It would be more than 75 years and all, but six members of the battalion deceased, before the accomplishment of these dedicated women would even be recognized.

Recognition for this unique unit that process mail that was in many cases not delivered for two years in a time of war is long overdue. I feel that passage of this legislation in March is appropriate as March is Women's History Month. There would be no better way to recognize the contributions of Maryland women and especially women veterans than to annually recognize the contributions of the only all-female, predominantly black unit that served in the European theater during World War II.

I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 0370.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Anthony Woods
Secretary