

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 709

By Hulsey

A RESOLUTION relative to the perception of racism and discrimination in the U.S. military.

WHEREAS, an Associated Press (AP) article from May 2021 titled "Deep-rooted racism, discrimination permeate U.S. military" presented alleged evidence of a racist culture in the U.S. military; and

WHEREAS, according to the AP, a total of 750 complaints of discrimination by race or ethnicity were processed during fiscal year 2020 in the entire U.S. armed forces; and

WHEREAS, these complaints represent only 0.058 percent of all active-duty service members, and even if the number of complaints were increased by ten, the percentage of complaints to military personnel is exceptionally low; and

WHEREAS, among the approximately 425,000 members of the active-duty military who are members of a racial minority, only 0.18 percent reported discrimination in 2020; and

WHEREAS, instead of evidencing a culture of racism, this data, provided by the military, actually makes the opposite case that racism in the U.S. military is uncommon and not a large-scale problem; and

WHEREAS, it is thus grossly incorrect to state that the U.S. military is permeated with "deep-seated racism" and fosters a "culture of discrimination"; and

WHEREAS, certainly individual instances of racism and discrimination should be dealt with quickly and severely by the U.S. military, but the data suggests that the AP article is identifying a problem that does not exist; and

WHEREAS, U.S. service members daily demonstrate the most noble precepts of patriotism, putting their lives on the line so that their fellow Americans may enjoy the bounties of freedom and democracy; and

WHEREAS, allegations that members of the U.S. military are racist and that the military itself accepts a culture of discrimination are not only blatantly false but an insult to the brave men and women who combat racism and discrimination at home and around the globe; and

WHEREAS, in making these allegations, the AP has engaged in the lowest form of yellow journalism and should be held accountable by the American public and their elected officials; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that it is the sense of this General Assembly that the May 2021 Associated Press article alleging "deep-seated racism" and a "culture of discrimination" in the U.S. military is manifestly untrue and disingenuously presents data to identify a problem that does not exist, and we reprimand the AP for engaging in the lowest form of incendiary journalism.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this General Assembly proudly supports our U.S. service members and fiercely defends them against false charges of racism and discrimination.