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President Biden Signs Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site Act

Daytona Beach, FL – January 6, 2025 – On this past Saturday, President Joe Biden signed the Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site Act, officially designating Jackie Robinson Ballpark in Daytona Beach, Florida, as a Commemorative Site. This designation adds the ballpark to the African American Civil Rights Network, recognizing its pivotal role in the nation’s civil rights history. The bill also directs the Department of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to assess the site’s national significance and evaluate its potential designation as a National Historic Landmark.

This historic legislation, introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Congressmen Mike Waltz (FL-6) and Darren Soto (FL-9) and in the U.S. Senate by Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Raphael Warnock (D-GA), recognizes the enduring significance of Jackie Robinson Ballpark in Daytona Beach.

The Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site Act honors the stadium where Jackie Robinson played his first professional game on March 17th, 1946, and broke the color barrier in baseball. This milestone helped pave the way for the integration of Major League Baseball and marked a critical step forward in the fight for racial equality in the United States.

"By designating this site as part of the African American Civil Rights Network, we continue to honor Jackie Robinson’s legacy and ensure that future generations recognize the profound impact of his contributions both on and off the field," said Jim Jaworski, President and General Manager of the Daytona Tortugas.

The African American Civil Rights Network, administered by the National Park Service, connects sites across the country that played essential roles in the civil rights movement. The inclusion of Jackie Robinson Ballpark underscores its historical importance and reinforces its place as a cornerstone in preserving Robinson’s enduring story.

"We are honored to steward Jackie Robinson’s legacy in Daytona Beach," said Bob Fregolle, Co-owner and Operating Partner of the Daytona Tortugas. "This designation is a proud moment for our community and will further strengthen Robinson’s legacy for years to come. We can’t thank enough Representatives Waltz and Soto, and Senators Rubio and Warnock for their sponsorship of this legislation."

Local officials and community leaders have championed this recognition, emphasizing the ballpark’s lasting influence and inspirational value. "President Joe Biden's signing of the Jackie Robinson Ballpark National Commemorative Site Act marks a historic milestone for our community and the legacy of Jackie Robinson. This designation not only honors an icon of civil rights and sports history but also cements our city's role in that legacy. I sincerely thank Representative Michael Waltz and the bipartisan group of sponsors for championing this legislation. Their commitment ensures future generations can learn from this powerful story of courage, resilience and progress." said Daytona Beach Mayor Henry.

The historic ballpark remains home to the Daytona Tortugas, the Single-A Affiliate of the Cincinnati Reds and Bethune-Cookman Baseball, and regularly hosts community events and educational programs. This new designation will bolster efforts to preserve and promote the site, inviting more visitors to learn about Robinson’s groundbreaking achievements and the ballpark’s and baseball’s history in Daytona Beach.

For more information, please contact the Daytona Tortugas at 386-257-3172 or visit www.daytonatortugas.com.
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