

Date of Hearing: August 25, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Lori D. Wilson, Chair

SCR 90 (Grove) – As Introduced June 4, 2025

**SENATE VOTE:** 37-0

**SUBJECT:** Brigadier General Charles Young Memorial Highway

**SUMMARY:** Redesignates and extends the postmile marker starting at Salt Creek Road (41.226) on State Highway 198 to the end at Sequoia National Park in the County of Tulare as the Brigadier General Charles Young Memorial Highway and requests the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to update the signs identifying this highway, as specified.

**EXISTING LAW:** Assigns Caltrans the responsibility of operating and maintaining state highways, including the installation and maintenance of highway signs.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown, but the measure requests that Caltrans determine the cost of appropriate signage consistent with requirements for the state highway system, and only erect the appropriate signage upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the cost.

**COMMENTS:** Brigadier General Charles Young was born into slavery on March 12, 1864, in Mays Lick, Kentucky, to Gabriel Young and Arminta Bruen. After his father, Gabriel Young, escaped from slavery and enlisted in the Fifth Regiment of Colored Artillery, his service earned Gabriel and his wife their freedom. Charles Young attended the all-white high school in Ripley, Kentucky.

In 1883, Charles Young took an examination for appointment as a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point, and was admitted in 1884. Having graduated from West Point in 1889 with a commission as a second lieutenant, the third African American to do so at the time, he served with the Ninth U.S. Cavalry Regiment for 28 years.

Young served as a professor for four years at Wilberforce College, where he led the new military sciences department. When the Spanish-American War broke out, Young was promoted to the temporary rank of Major of Volunteers on May 14, 1898, where he commanded the 9th Ohio Infantry Regiment.

In 1903, Young was then appointed acting superintendent of Sequoia and General Grant National Parks, becoming the first black superintendent of a national park. Young, in one summer, accomplished more than the previous three officers assigned to the park through the management of extensive road construction, along with the improvement of the underdeveloped park, which allowed more visitors to enjoy the park than ever before. In his final report on the Sequoia Park to the Secretary of the Interior, Young recommended the acquisition of privately held lands there to secure more park area for future generations, from which legislation was introduced in the House of Representatives.

In 1904, Young married Ada Mills in Oakland, California, and later became the father of two children, Charles Noel and Marie Aurelia.

Because of his exceptional leadership of the 10th Cavalry, Young was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in September 1916, the first African American to achieve the rank of colonel in the United States Army. Brigadier General Young died on January 8, 1922, from a kidney infection while on a reconnaissance mission in Nigeria, and was given a full military funeral at Arlington National Cemetery.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:****Support**

None on file

**Opposition**

None on file

**Analysis Prepared by:** Aimee Anspach / TRANS. / (916) 319-2093