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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 174 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY MURT, ACOSTA, BENNINGHOFF, BRADFORD, CALTAGIRONE,  
COHEN, D. COSTA, COX, DIGIROLAMO, DONATUCCI, DUSH, FARINA,  
GILLEN, GINGRICH, GROVE, HARHART, HEFFLEY, HELM, HENNESSEY,  
KINSEY, KIRKLAND, MAHONEY, MAJOR, MARSICO, McNEILL, MILLARD,  
O'NEILL, QUIGLEY, READSHAW, ROSS, ROZZI, SONNEY, THOMAS,  
WATSON AND WHEELAND, MARCH 24, 2015

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
MARCH 24, 2015

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating May 1, 2015, as "The Battle of the Crooked Billet  
2 Day" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, During the American War for Independence at the time  
4 of the Valley Forge encampment in 1777 and 1778, President  
5 Thomas Wharton of the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council  
6 commissioned Brigadier General John Lacey, the youngest general  
7 in American history and a native of Bucks County, to lead the  
8 Pennsylvania Militia in patrolling the countryside outside  
9 Philadelphia; and

10 WHEREAS, General George Washington, commander in chief of the  
11 Continental Army, charged General John Lacey with the mission to  
12 keep the local inhabitants from selling supplies to the British  
13 Army, which occupied Philadelphia, and to reroute those supplies  
14 to the Continental Army at Valley Forge; and

15 WHEREAS, Due to the success of the Pennsylvania Militia, the

1 British Army developed a plan to annihilate the Pennsylvania  
2 Militia by ambush; and

3 WHEREAS, The British Army also planned to capture General  
4 John Lacey; and

5 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Militia was comprised of  
6 approximately 300 men from Bucks County and historic Cumberland  
7 County as well as from other places throughout this  
8 Commonwealth; and

9 WHEREAS, The British Army attacked the Pennsylvania Militia  
10 with a force of approximately 850 men in the early morning of  
11 May 1, 1778, in the present-day Borough of Hatboro, Montgomery  
12 County, and the present-day Township of Warminster, Bucks  
13 County; and

14 WHEREAS, The Queen's Rangers attempted to push the  
15 Pennsylvania Militia south toward the point of ambush along  
16 present-day Horsham Road; and

17 WHEREAS, General John Lacey was not fooled by the trap and  
18 led the Pennsylvania Militia north, fighting its way through a  
19 blockade held by British Dragoons, escaping deeper into Bucks  
20 County; and

21 WHEREAS, The British committed war atrocities on the wounded  
22 by throwing them into burning piles of buckwheat straw and  
23 stabbing, with their bayonets and cutlasses, militiamen who were  
24 surrendering and wounded; and

25 WHEREAS, Twenty-six Pennsylvania Militiamen were killed in  
26 action that day; and

27 WHEREAS, Fifty-eight Pennsylvania Militiamen were captured;  
28 and

29 WHEREAS, General John Lacey's heroic leadership and quick  
30 thinking on that fateful day prevented further casualties,

1 saving the lives of hundreds of Pennsylvania Militiamen; and

2 WHEREAS, General John Lacey, 48 hours after the battle,  
3 continued with his orders of keeping supplies from occupied  
4 Philadelphia and redirecting supplies to Valley Forge; and

5 WHEREAS, General John Lacey continued to serve the people of  
6 Pennsylvania when, in November of 1778, he was elected to the  
7 Pennsylvania General Assembly and, in November 1779, he was  
8 elected to the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council; and

9 WHEREAS, It is fitting to honor the men of the Pennsylvania  
10 Militia under the command and leadership of Brigadier General  
11 John Lacey for their heroism and, especially for those men who  
12 paid the ultimate sacrifice on May 1, 1778, to recognize the  
13 competent and heroic leadership of Brigadier General John Lacey  
14 in preserving the militia from annihilation and leading it to  
15 safety, and to remember the militia's sacred participation in  
16 the fight and struggle for freedom in the early years of the  
17 young republic that would become the United States of America;  
18 therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate May 1,  
20 2015, as "The Battle of the Crooked Billet Day" in Pennsylvania.