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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1912 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY MALONEY, DONATUCCI, O'BRIEN, COHEN, HENNESSEY,  
FREEMAN, WHITE, KIM, BAKER, CORBIN, IRVIN, SACCONI, MILLARD,  
TOEPEL, R. BROWN, J. HARRIS, SCHLOSSBERG, DAVIS, D. COSTA,  
COX, V. BROWN, PHILLIPS-HILL, WARD, LONGIETTI, KINSEY, VEREB,  
THOMAS, KILLION, TOOHIL, BURNS, READSHAW, PETRI, NEILSON,  
HARHART, SONNEY, DUSH, PAYNE, ELLIS, ORTITAY, ROSS, WHEELAND,  
KAUFFMAN, HARHAI, ROZZI, CALTAGIRONE, GOODMAN, JOZWIAK,  
DeLUCA, SAINATO, GIBBONS, MAHONEY, GROVE, EVERETT, MILNE,  
SCHLEGEL CULVER AND BENNINGHOFF, MARCH 18, 2016

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS, MARCH 18, 2016

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AN ACT

1 Designating September 27 of each year as "First Responders Day."

2 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
3 hereby enacts as follows:

4 Section 1. Short title.

5 This act shall be known and may be cited as the First  
6 Responders Day Act.

7 Section 2. Legislative findings and declarations.

8 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

9 (1) Our first responders, who are police, fire,  
10 emergency medical service and public health personnel, work  
11 selflessly on behalf of the people of this Commonwealth,  
12 regardless of the risk or hazard, and truly are citizens  
13 serving the community.

1           (2) Most Pennsylvanians have benefited in some way from  
2 the courageous service of first responders across this  
3 Commonwealth.

4           (3) First responders carry out the critical role of  
5 protecting and ensuring public safety in emergency  
6 situations.

7           (4) The men and women who bravely serve as first  
8 responders have found themselves on the front lines of  
9 homeland defense in the war against terrorism.

10          (5) First responders are called upon in the event of  
11 natural disasters, such as Superstorm Sandy.

12          (6) Approximately 150,000 first responders perform these  
13 crucial services in this Commonwealth.

14          (7) Approximately 30,000 sworn police officers from  
15 State, city and county law enforcement agencies protect lives  
16 and property, detect and prevent crimes, uphold the law and  
17 ensure justice.

18          (8) Tens of thousands of firefighters, including  
19 approximately 50,000 volunteers and 10,000 career  
20 firefighters, provide fire suppression, emergency medical  
21 services, search and rescue, hazardous materials response,  
22 terrorism response and critical fire prevention and safety  
23 education.

24          (9) Approximately 60,000 emergency services  
25 professionals in this Commonwealth respond to and treat a  
26 variety of life-threatening emergencies, from cardiac and  
27 respiratory arrest to traumatic injuries.

28          (10) First responders make personal sacrifices to  
29 protect our communities, as witnessed in the aftermath of the  
30 terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and of the natural

1 destruction caused by Hurricanes Katrina, Irene and Sandy.  
2 They are called every day to protect individuals and property  
3 in cities and towns across this Commonwealth.

4 (11) Many law enforcement officers die in the line of  
5 duty in the United States each year, including four killed in  
6 2014 in Pennsylvania alone.

7 (12) Many firefighters are killed in the line of duty  
8 across the United States each year and thousands more are  
9 injured.

10 (13) Many medics are injured on the job, have been  
11 assaulted by patients or have been exposed to infectious  
12 diseases.

13 (14) Emergency medical service personnel in the United  
14 States have a fatality rate of more than twice the national  
15 average for all other workers.

16 (15) Thousands of first responders have made the  
17 ultimate sacrifice.

18 (16) These men and women, by their dedicated  
19 professionalism, have earned our gratitude and respect.

20 Section 3. First Responders Day.

21 (a) Designation.--September 27 of each year is designated as  
22 "First Responders Day."

23 (b) Proclamation.--The Governor shall issue annually a  
24 proclamation calling upon all public schools and educational  
25 institutions to observe "First Responders Day" and to conduct  
26 exercises recognizing the contributions and remembering the  
27 sacrifices that first responders have made.

28 (c) Limitations.--"First Responders Day" may not be a paid  
29 holiday or a day that school districts close.

30 Section 4. Effective date.

1        This act shall take effect immediately.