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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 349 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY HEFFLEY, BIZZARRO, DUSH, SONNEY, SCHLOSSBERG,  
MCGINNIS, R. BROWN, DRISCOLL, PASHINSKI, COX, O'NEILL,  
LONGIETTI, SCHWEYER, V. BROWN, READSHAW, WHEATLEY, MULLERY,  
CALTAGIRONE, MILLARD, EMRICK, JAMES, SAINATO, MARSHALL,  
ROTHMAN, WHEELAND, WARD, IRVIN, A. HARRIS, D. COSTA, NEILSON,  
HILL-EVANS AND HAHN, MAY 23, 2017

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
MAY 23, 2017

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A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the Mission 22 campaign and raising awareness for  
2 the ongoing epidemic of veteran suicide.

3 WHEREAS, An average of 22 veterans commit suicide every day  
4 in the United States; and

5 WHEREAS, The 22-per-day death average, released by the United  
6 States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in 2013, is the  
7 center of a campaign named Mission 22; and

8 WHEREAS, Mission 22 is a national nonprofit organization  
9 which has the charter of stemming the tide of suicides among our  
10 military personnel and veterans; and

11 WHEREAS, Mission 22 derives its name from the startling  
12 statistic that 22 United States veterans take their own lives  
13 each day and is designed to enlist support in the fight against  
14 veteran suicide; and

15 WHEREAS, From 2001 to 2014, The VA found suicides among

1 United States adult civilians increased 23% while veteran  
2 suicides increased 32%, making the risk of suicide 11% greater  
3 for veterans than civilians; and

4 WHEREAS, The reason for the elevated suicide rate among  
5 recent veterans remains unclear but is most likely attributed to  
6 factors such as the lengthy wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and  
7 added tours of duty; and

8 WHEREAS, Mission 22 was founded by Special Forces operators  
9 Magnus Johnson, Mike Kissel and Infantryman Brad Hubbard; and

10 WHEREAS, Because of their personal battles with posttraumatic  
11 stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI), the  
12 founders' mission is to end veteran suicide in America; and

13 WHEREAS, Mission 22 launched on October 22, 2014, with a call  
14 to action for the public to "claim a 22" on social media; and

15 WHEREAS, These public messages offer an easy way to send a  
16 loud message of compassion to the men and women who put their  
17 lives on the line to protect and serve the United States; and

18 WHEREAS, The campaign also directs attention to the Mission  
19 22 website, which provides a list of resources for veterans who  
20 are in need of help and intends to end the stigma surrounding  
21 PTSD and TBI; and

22 WHEREAS, Mission 22 also creates large-scale public memorials  
23 to honor veterans featuring the "War at Home Memorial," a mobile  
24 monument with a steel plate created in the likeness of a real  
25 American veteran who lost the battle with PTSD or TBI; and

26 WHEREAS, The "War at Home Memorial" details the life and  
27 service of a veteran in an inscription located at the base of  
28 the plate and also honors all those who lost the battle at home;  
29 and

30 WHEREAS, These memorials travel the country before they

1 eventually reach a permanent site in Washington, DC; and

2 WHEREAS, The Borough of Lehigh, Pennsylvania, will be  
3 receiving a memorial cutout during the last week in April in  
4 honor of Michael C. Wargo, a 1994 graduate of Lehigh Area  
5 High School; and

6 WHEREAS, Specialist Wargo joined the United States Army after  
7 9/11 and spent 10 months in Afghanistan as a chemical weapons  
8 specialist before suffering with PTSD for eight years and taking  
9 his life on May 20, 2013; and

10 WHEREAS, Two other Pennsylvania veterans were chosen for the  
11 "War at Home Memorial" distinction; and

12 WHEREAS, On May 22, 2017, Mission 22 will display one of the  
13 steel silhouettes from the "War at Home Memorial" at Soldiers'  
14 Grove on the Capitol Complex, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; and

15 WHEREAS, The residents of Pennsylvania have a responsibility  
16 to help our brothers-in-arms and sisters-in-arms who suffer from  
17 the deepest, invisible wounds of war before these veterans  
18 believe their only choice is taking their own lives; and

19 WHEREAS, The health and well-being of the courageous men and  
20 women who served in uniform are of the highest priority for the  
21 House of Representatives; therefore be it

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23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize and  
24 fully support the Mission 22 campaign as it continues to raise  
25 awareness about veteran suicide and works to ensure that our  
26 veterans and the families of all service members receive the  
27 care, support and service in their greatest hour of need; and be  
28 it further

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recommit to  
30 providing timely access to high-quality, recovery-oriented

1 mental health care to veterans, especially when they are in  
2 crisis; and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to  
4 Mission 22, P.O. Box 1511, Nashville, IN, 47448.