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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 345 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY RYAN, BARRAR, BIZZARRO, CAUSER, D. COSTA, DAVIS,  
DeLUCA, DIAMOND, DiGIROLAMO, DONATUCCI, DRISCOLL, DUSH,  
FRITZ, GREINER, HEFFLEY, HENNESSEY, HICKERNELL, JAMES,  
KAVULICH, KNOWLES, MARKOSEK, MARSICO, MILLARD, NEILSON,  
PASHINSKI, QUIGLEY, READSHAW, REESE, SAINATO, SANKEY, SAYLOR,  
SCHEMEL, SNYDER, SONNEY, STAATS, TOOHIL, WHEELAND AND WARD,  
MAY 22, 2017

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
MAY 22, 2017

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A RESOLUTION

1 Celebrating the life of Cardinal William H. Keeler in  
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, William H. Keeler was born in San Antonio, Texas, on  
4 March 4, 1931, to Thomas L. Keeler and Margaret T. (Conway)  
5 Keeler; and

6 WHEREAS, William H. Keeler was raised in Lebanon, where he  
7 attended Lebanon Catholic High School; and

8 WHEREAS, William H. Keeler attended St. Mary School in  
9 Schwenksville, St. Charles Seminary in Philadelphia and the  
10 Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome; and

11 WHEREAS, On July 17, 1955, Father William H. Keeler was  
12 ordained to the Catholic priesthood in the Church of the Holy  
13 Apostles, Rome; and

14 WHEREAS, As a young priest, Father Keeler accompanied Bishop  
15 George Leech of Harrisburg to Rome for the Second Vatican

1 Council; and

2 WHEREAS, During the years 1962-1965, Father Keeler, a doctor  
3 of canon law and defender of the bond in the diocesan tribunal,  
4 was appointed one of more than 400 "periti" (experts) of the  
5 Second Vatican Council participating in discussions, reviewing  
6 documents and providing briefings for the English-speaking  
7 media; and

8 WHEREAS, On September 21, 1979, Auxiliary Bishop Keeler was  
9 ordained for the Diocese of Harrisburg; and

10 WHEREAS, On January 4, 1984, Bishop Keeler was ordained for  
11 the Diocese of Harrisburg; and

12 WHEREAS, As part of his work with the United States  
13 Conference of Catholic Bishops, Cardinal Keeler was instrumental  
14 in arranging Pope John Paul II's historic 1987 meetings with  
15 Jewish leaders in Miami, Florida, and with Protestant leaders in  
16 Columbia, South Carolina; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1989, Bishop Keeler was appointed 14th Archbishop  
18 of Baltimore, our nation's oldest diocese; and

19 WHEREAS, Cardinal Keeler is particularly recognized for his  
20 work in furthering Catholic-Jewish dialogue, a distinction that  
21 earned him the appointment of Moderator of Catholic-Jewish  
22 Relations for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops;  
23 and

24 WHEREAS, In 1992, Bishop Keeler was elected President of the  
25 National Conference of Catholic Bishops, now the United States  
26 Conference of Catholic Bishops, after serving as the  
27 organization's vice president the previous three years; and

28 WHEREAS, In 1994, Cardinal Keeler was appointed by the  
29 Vatican to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity  
30 and to the Congregation for the Oriental Churches; and

1       WHEREAS, Cardinal Keeler served as a member of the  
2 International Catholic Orthodox Commission for Theological  
3 Dialogue and as Chairman of the Bishops' Committee for  
4 Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs; and

5       WHEREAS, An ardent promoter of the Catholic Church's teaching  
6 on the sanctity of all human life, Cardinal Keeler twice served  
7 as Chairman of the Committee for Pro-Life Activities of the  
8 Nation Conference of Catholic Bishops; and

9       WHEREAS, One of Cardinal Keeler's priorities was the  
10 strengthening of the Catholic school system and he initiated  
11 several fundraising campaigns to support Catholic schools and  
12 the families they serve including the Archbishop's Annual  
13 Appeal, Heritage of Hope, and Partners in Excellence - The  
14 Partners in Excellence scholarship program; and

15       WHEREAS, In November 1994, Pope John Paul II appointed  
16 Archbishop Keeler to the College of Cardinals making him the  
17 third Archbishop of Baltimore to receive the red hat; and

18       WHEREAS, In 1995, Cardinal Keeler, as Archbishop of  
19 Baltimore, hosted the historic visit of Pope John Paul II to  
20 Baltimore; and

21       WHEREAS, Cardinal Keeler's understanding of the significance  
22 of America's First Cathedral, the Basilica of the National  
23 Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in  
24 Baltimore, led to the restoration of the Basilica's aging  
25 infrastructure which was completed for its 200th anniversary in  
26 November 2006; and

27       WHEREAS, In 2005, following the death of Pope John Paul II,  
28 Cardinal Keeler participated in the Papal Conclave which  
29 resulted in the election of Pope Benedict XVI; and

30       WHEREAS, In 2006, Cardinal Keeler suffered injuries in an

1 automobile accident in Terni, Italy, in which the Cardinal's  
2 friend, Friar Bernard Quinn of the Diocese of Harrisburg, was  
3 killed; and

4 WHEREAS, In July, 2007, Cardinal Keeler's resignation was  
5 accepted and Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien was appointed 15th  
6 Archbishop of Baltimore; and

7 WHEREAS, Cardinal Keeler died March 23, 2017, at St. Martin's  
8 Home for the Aged in Catonsville, Maryland at the age of 86, and  
9 is survived by his sister, Julia Keeler Graham, of Toronto,  
10 Canada; and

11 WHEREAS, Cardinal Keeler received honorary degrees from  
12 Elizabethtown College, Gannon University, Gettysburg College,  
13 Lebanon Valley College, Shippensburg University and Susquehanna  
14 University; therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives celebrate the  
16 life of Cardinal William H. Keeler in Pennsylvania.