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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 261 Session of  
2023

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INTRODUCED BY SOLOMON, GILLEN, ROZZI, PIELLI, FLICK, McNEILL,  
HOHENSTEIN, MADDEN, DELLOSO, GUENST, KAZEEM, KHAN, SANCHEZ,  
JAMES, HILL-EVANS, HADDOCK, BOROWSKI, MENTZER AND JOZWIAK,  
NOVEMBER 13, 2023

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, NOVEMBER 13, 2023

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A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the Lost 74 and all sailors who ever served aboard  
2 the Destroyer USS Frank E. Evans (DD 754).

3 WHEREAS, The destroyer USS Frank E. Evans (DD 754) was named  
4 after the Brigadier General and fellow Pennsylvanian who served  
5 in the Marine Brigade of the American Expeditionary Force in  
6 France during World War I; and

7 WHEREAS, Service members aboard the USS Frank E. Evans (DD  
8 754) provided naval support during the Vietnam War, including  
9 during the Tet Offensive; and

10 WHEREAS, In 1969, the USS Frank E. Evans (DD 754) and the  
11 Australian aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne (R21) were taking  
12 part in a Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) joint  
13 training exercise called Operation Sea Spirit; and

14 WHEREAS, In the early morning hours of June 3, the two ships  
15 collided in the South China Sea; and

16 WHEREAS, The collision split the USS Frank E. Evans (DD 754)  
17 in half and the forward section of the destroyer sank in more

1 than 6,000 feet of water within two minutes; and

2 WHEREAS, The sinking resulted in 74 American sailors  
3 drowning; and

4 WHEREAS, These sailors have become known as the Lost 74; and

5 WHEREAS, Five of the Lost 74 service members were from  
6 Pennsylvania, including Seaman Patrick M. Corcoran of  
7 Philadelphia, Seaman Apprentice Raymond J. Earley of Shenandoah,  
8 Seaman Apprentice Stephen D. Fagan of Huntington, Seaman  
9 Apprentice Donald E. Gearhart of Lewistown and Radarman Petty  
10 Officer Second Class Victor T. Rikal of Butler; and

11 WHEREAS, The incident occurred approximately 100 miles  
12 outside of the official combat zone, making the Lost 74  
13 ineligible for inclusion on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall  
14 in Washington, DC; and

15 WHEREAS, Seventy-four United States Navy sailors gave their  
16 lives in service to our nation; and

17 WHEREAS, Boundary lines should not determine the respect we  
18 pay service members killed in the line of duty; and

19 WHEREAS, It is long overdue that the Lost 74 receive the  
20 recognition they deserve; therefore be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize those  
22 who served aboard the USS Frank E. Evans (DD 754), including  
23 those who were lost on June 3, 1969, and the families and  
24 friends of those service members.