

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 792 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY MURT, BAKER, BENNINGHOFF, COHEN, D. COSTA,
DIGIROLAMO, DUSH, EVERETT, GINGRICH, GROVE, KINSEY, KIRKLAND,
MAHONEY, MILLARD, O'NEILL, PASHINSKI, PAYNE, PETRI, QUIGLEY,
READSHAW, ROSS, SONNEY, THOMAS, TOOHIL, VEREB, WATSON,
YOUNGBLOOD, GOODMAN AND PHILLIPS-HILL, APRIL 7, 2016

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
APRIL 7, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating May 1, 2016, as "The Battle of the Crooked Billet
2 Day" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, During the American War of 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
16 British Army developed a plan to annihilate the Pennsylvania

1 Militia by ambush; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

28 WHEREAS, General John Lacey's heroic leadership and quick
29 thinking on that fateful day prevented further casualties,
30 saving the lives of hundreds of Pennsylvania Militiamen; and

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

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

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

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate May 1,
19 2016, as "The Battle of the Crooked Billet Day" in Pennsylvania.