THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION
No. 1083 Session of 2018

INTRODUCED BY NEILSON, HENNESSEY, READSHAW, BRIGGS, CHARLTON, BIZZARRO, THOMAS, DONATUCCI, VITALI, KINSEY, BURNS, HILL-EVANS, DIGIROLAMO, J. McNEILL, KAUFFMAN, CORBIN, MILLARD, JAMES, STURLA, BARRAR, GODSHALL, YOUNGBLOOD, B. O'NEILL, ROEBUCK, DRISCOLL, SOLOMON, CALTAGIRONE AND WATSON,
SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

A RESOLUTION

Honoring the life and legacy of Harold FitzGerald "Gerry" Lenfest for his contributions to Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, From childhood, Harold FitzGerald "Gerry" Lenfest was an entrepreneurial force who grew to be not only an astute businessman but a guiding philanthropic force of Philadelphia's educational, cultural and media landscape; and

WHEREAS, Born May 29, 1930, in Jacksonville, Florida, and raised primarily on his family's farm in Hunterdon County, New Jersey, Gerry Lenfest came from humble beginnings; and

WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest's naval architect father entered him into Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, True to his industrious nature, Gerry Lenfest worked as a roughneck in North Dakota, a farm hand and aboard a ship that carried oil between Venezuela and Europe upon graduation from Mercersburg Academy; and
WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest later attended and graduated from Washington and Lee University with a degree in economics before joining the Navy, where he rose to captain and served in the Navy Reserve for 24 years; and

WHEREAS, While in the Navy Reserve, Gerry Lenfest attended and graduated from Columbia Law School; and

WHEREAS, In 1965, Gerry Lenfest began his career in the communications industry by serving as counsel for Walter Annenberg and Triangle Publications, Inc., and later went on to serve as editorial director, publisher and president of cable for Seventeen Magazine; and

WHEREAS, In 1974, Gerry Lenfest started his first business, Lenfest Communications when he bought two cable systems from Annenberg; and

WHEREAS, After selling his company, Gerry Lenfest and his wife, Marguerite, made the impactful decision to give their entire fortune to charity; and

WHEREAS, By providing the single-largest donation to the Museum of the American Revolution and encouraging others to support the museum, Gerry Lenfest showed his dedication to honoring both his fellow veterans, past and present, and the history of our nation; and

WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest was also dedicated to preserving Philadelphia's future by investing in the city's media institutions; and

WHEREAS, Being a champion of free speech and the free press, Gerry Lenfest purchased the Philadelphia Media Network (PMN), publisher of Philly.com and the long-established, Pulitzer prize-winning Inquirer and Daily News, with his friend and business partner Lewis Katz; and
WHEREAS, Upon Lewis Katz's death, Gerry Lenfest donated PMN to the Institute for Journalism in New Media, renamed the Lenfest Institute for Journalism in 2016; and

WHEREAS, David Boardman, chair of the Lenfest Institute for Journalism and dean of Temple University's Klein College of Media and Communication, said "His vision of local journalism as an essential public trust – as worthy of philanthropic and community support as hospitals and libraries – has been groundbreaking"; and

WHEREAS, Gerry and Marguerite Lenfest together gave more than $1.3 billion to 1,100 organizations through the Lenfest Foundation and jointly accepted the Philadelphia Award in 2009 and the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy in 2017; and

WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest elevated Philadelphia's art community by both supporting and serving as chairman of the board to the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Curtis Institute of Music; and

WHEREAS, Continuously committed to the advancement of his fellow man, Gerry Lenfest entrusted his vision of excellence to his partners, invested in his employees and supported educational institutions such as Marguerite's alma mater, Wilson College, and his alma maters, served as vice chairman of Temple University's board of trustees and established the Lenfest Scholarship Program for students from rural Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest was, as historian David McCullough described, "A devoted Philadelphian if ever there was one. His love of that city and its history, and his willingness to be not only generous with his philanthropy but to work hard to attain a worthy objective, is something we could all take a lesson from on how to go about life"; and
WHEREAS, On Sunday, August 5, 2018, at the age of 88, Gerry Lenfest passed away, survived by his wife, children, two sisters, a brother and four grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest's life-long contribution as a leader and philanthropist are worthy of honor and recognition; and

therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor Harold FitzGerald "Gerry" Lenfest for his contributions to Pennsylvania.