

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 399 Session of
1990

INTRODUCED BY ADOLPH, RAYMOND, RYAN, FLICK, CIVERA, FREIND,
R. C. WRIGHT, MICOZZIE AND GANNON, NOVEMBER 20, 1990

ADOPTED, NOVEMBER 20, 1990

A RESOLUTION

1 Memorializing Congress and the Governor to honor and recognize
2 Martha Raye (Colonel Maggie) for her service to her country
3 and the armed forces.

4 WHEREAS, In the early days of America's commitment in the
5 European Theater of World War II, when our contribution
6 consisted of fewer than 50 flying fortresses in the daylight
7 bombing of Nazi submarine pens, when the indomitable women of
8 London swarmed out of their bomb shelters and, in the lull
9 between Luftwaffe raids, danced around the embattled statue of
10 Eros in Piccadilly Circus singing "We'll Hang Out The Washin' On
11 The Sigfried Line," Martha Raye was there; and

12 WHEREAS, Having answered the call of the USO at the peak of
13 her cinematic career to help bolster the morale of American
14 troops shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Martha Raye
15 traveled the free parts of the world tirelessly and happily
16 entertaining American troops either in one-woman appearances or
17 with Bob Hope and other theatrical personalities; and

18 WHEREAS, After the lights came on all over the world, the

1 United States in our police capacity became involved in the
2 Korean War, and this time as a nurse in the Army Reserve Martha
3 Raye was there; and

4 WHEREAS, Incomprehensible though it may seem, 20 years after
5 the end of World War II when names like DaNang, Tan Sun Hut and
6 Hanoi became recognizable locations on the map of the world, and
7 the "domino theory" and "light at the end of the tunnel" became
8 catch-phrases in military apologetics, when American troops
9 poured into Vietnam in ever increasing numbers, Martha Raye was
10 there; and

11 WHEREAS, Presented with tiger suit, Special Forces insignia
12 and a green beret by Special Forces, Martha Raye was the only
13 performer to visit the most remote outposts and was given the
14 honorary rank of Lt. Colonel. She was endearingly christened the
15 "old lady of the boondocks" by grateful G.I.'s and earned the
16 nickname "Colonel Maggie"; and

17 WHEREAS, Called "the greatest trooper of all" by General
18 Westmoreland and recipient of the complement, "... there is no
19 more dedicated lady," from Congressional Medal of Honor winner
20 Master Sergeant Roy Benavidez of the Green Berets, Martha Raye
21 found herself often in combat situations and was wounded on two
22 occasions and won two Purple hearts; and

23 WHEREAS, Often in Vietnam her performances followed hours
24 spent helping with the wounded, and she continued her efforts to
25 raise the spirits of her boys whenever she came home -
26 collecting hundreds of letters to G.I.'s in Vietnam which she
27 hand delivered to them upon her return; and

28 WHEREAS, Now at age 73 Martha Raye has memories of people and
29 situations concerning her service of more than 30 years --
30 nearly all of it above and beyond the call of duty. Still she

1 persists in refusing attempts to publicize her exploits,
2 deferring to what to her is the more estimable consideration:
3 the need of families for news of their loved ones; therefore be
4 it

5 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
6 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania memorialize the Congress and
7 Governor Robert P. Casey to honor and recognize Martha Raye
8 (Colonel Maggie) for her many years of service to her country
9 and to the members of its military, since never has she received
10 full recognition for her selfless and often arduous
11 contribution; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
13 the presiding officers of each house of Congress, to each member
14 of Congress from Pennsylvania and to Governor Robert P. Casey.