

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 578 Session of
2008

INTRODUCED BY WANSACZ, BEAR, BELFANTI, BENNINGHOFF, BEYER, BROOKS, CALTAGIRONE, CAPPELLI, CARROLL, CLYMER, COHEN, CONKLIN, CREIGHTON, CRUZ, DALEY, DeLUCA, DiGIROLAMO, DONATUCCI, EACHUS, GALLOWAY, GEIST, GEORGE, GIBBONS, GINGRICH, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HARHAI, HARKINS, HELM, HENNESSEY, HESS, JAMES, KORTZ, KOTIK, KULA, MAHONEY, MANN, MANTZ, MARKOSEK, MARSHALL, McILHATTAN, MELIO, MILLARD, MOYER, MUNDY, MURT, MYERS, PALLONE, PARKER, PETRONE, PHILLIPS, PYLE, RAMALEY, RAPP, READSHAW, REICHLEY, ROSS, SAINATO, SANTONI, SAYLOR, SCAVELLO, SEIP, SIPTROTH, SONNEY, SURRA, SWANGER, THOMAS, VULAKOVICH, WALKO, J. WHITE, WOJNAROSKI, YOUNGBLOOD AND YUDICHAK, MARCH 12, 2008

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
MARCH 12, 2008

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life and achievements of Pacifico "Joe" Stella, of
2 Pittston Township, Luzerne County, and expressing condolences
3 on his passing.

4 WHEREAS, Pacifico "Joe" Stella was born on December 4, 1923,
5 in the Old Boston section of Jenkins Township, Luzerne County,
6 to Julio and Angela Fioriti Stella; and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Stella attended Pittston Township schools; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Stella served his country during World War II as
9 a United States Navy Seabee and served his community as Pittston
10 Township Police Chief; and

11 WHEREAS, After returning from World War II, Mr. Stella became
12 a surveyor for the Pennsylvania Coal Company, where he was
13 employed for more than 30 years; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Stella laid out the boreholes for flushing
2 projects to backfill unsettled mines in the populated areas
3 throughout the Wyoming and Lackawanna Valleys; and

4 WHEREAS, On January 22, 1959, Mr. Stella was surveying the
5 Knox Mine in Luzerne County when it, as well as nearly every
6 coal mine between Pittston and Wilkes-Barre, flooded with frigid
7 water from the Susquehanna River; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Stella's knowledge of and experience in mining
9 proved invaluable in locating and rescuing 33 men who were
10 trapped in the flooded Knox Mine; and

11 WHEREAS, Beyond lending his experience to the search party,
12 Mr. Stella, at great risk to his own life, entered the flooding
13 mine, waded through freezing waist-high water and dug through
14 debris with his bare hands in order to save the lives of trapped
15 miners; and

16 WHEREAS, The Knox Mine Disaster is recognized as the single
17 event most closely related to the end of mining in northeastern
18 Pennsylvania; and

19 WHEREAS, Mr. Stella lent his expertise and the lessons of the
20 Knox Mine Disaster to the cause of increased mine safety,
21 including testifying before the General Assembly during its
22 investigation of the Knox Mine Disaster, numerous public
23 speaking appearances and his service to the Huber Breaker
24 Preservation Society, the Greater Pittston Historical Society,
25 the Italian Educational Circle of Pittston Township and the
26 Anthracite Heritage Museum of Scranton; and

27 WHEREAS, Mr. Stella is survived by his wife of 62 years, Ann
28 Kopec Stella, son Pacifico Stella, Jr., daughter Beverly Stella
29 Borzell, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren;
30 therefore be it

1 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives note with deep
2 sadness the passing of Pacifico "Joe" Stella and extend
3 heartfelt condolences to his family; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
5 the family of Pacifico "Joe" Stella.