
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 45 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY HILL-EVANS, READSHAW, GREINER, YOUNGBLOOD,
PHILLIPS-HILL, BOBACK, MURT, HENNESSEY, KINSEY, DRISCOLL,
JAMES, DIGIROLAMO, PEIFER, SCHWEYER, SONNEY, DUSH, RYAN,
GROVE, MILLARD, CALTAGIRONE, O'NEILL AND WARD,
JANUARY 25, 2017

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
JANUARY 25, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing February 3, 2017, as "Four Chaplains Day" in
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On February 3, 1943, the USAT Dorchester was
4 crossing the North Atlantic in a convoy, transporting more than
5 900 troops to an American base in Greenland; and

6 WHEREAS, Four chaplains, the Reverend George Fox who was a
7 Methodist and a native of Lewistown, Rabbi Alexander Goode who
8 was Jewish and who served a congregation in York, the Reverend
9 Clark Poling who was part of the Reformed Church in America and
10 Father John Washington who was Roman Catholic, were aboard the
11 ship; and

12 WHEREAS, At approximately 12:55 a.m., a German U-boat's
13 torpedo struck the Dorchester, the explosion instantly knocking
14 out power and radio communication with escort ships; and

15 WHEREAS, Within 20 minutes, the Dorchester sank, leading to
16 more than 670 deaths; and

1 WHEREAS, In the confusion, the four chaplains calmed, aided
2 and guided as many of their fellow service members to safety as
3 possible; and

4 WHEREAS, When life vests ran out, each chaplain removed his
5 own life vest and gave it to another man, saving four additional
6 lives; and

7 WHEREAS, As the ship sank, the chaplains were last seen
8 linked arm in arm in prayer; and

9 WHEREAS, Lieutenants Fox, Goode, Poling and Washington were
10 posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the
11 Purple Heart; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1948, the Congress of the United States declared
13 February 3 "Four Chaplains Day"; and

14 WHEREAS, Congress authorized a one time Chaplain's Medal for
15 Heroism on July 14, 1960; and

16 WHEREAS, A Chaplain's Medal for Heroism was presented to each
17 chaplain's next of kin on January 18, 1961; therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize
19 February 3, 2017, as "Four Chaplains Day" in Pennsylvania and
20 honor the valor and sacrifice of these men.