
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 686 Session of
2018

INTRODUCED BY HILL-EVANS, READSHAW, NEILSON, KULIK, MCGINNIS,
BAKER, RYAN, SCHLOSSBERG, DIGIROLAMO, SOLOMON, BARRAR,
DRISCOLL, PASHINSKI, SAYLOR, SONNEY, WARD, LONGIETTI, MURT,
KINSEY, YOUNGBLOOD, SCHWEYER, KAVULICH, WATSON, B. MILLER,
KORTZ, FITZGERALD, ROZZI, THOMAS, BIZZARRO, BRADFORD, GOODMAN
AND GILLEN, FEBRUARY 8, 2018

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
FEBRUARY 8, 2018

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing February 3, 2018, as "Four Chaplains Day" in
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On February 3, 1943, a United States Army transport
4 ship, the Dorchester, was transporting more than 900 troops
5 across the North Atlantic to an American base in Greenland as
6 part of a convoy; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

10 WHEREAS, The Chapel of the Four Chaplains, located in
11 Philadelphia, tells the story of the Four Chaplains and
12 encourages selfless sacrifice and interfaith cooperation; and

13 WHEREAS, Lieutenants Fox, Goode, Poling and Washington were
14 posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the
15 Purple Heart; and

16 WHEREAS, The Congress of the United States authorized a one-
17 time Chaplain's Medal for Heroism that was presented to each
18 chaplain's next of kin on January 18, 1961; and

19 WHEREAS, In 1988, the Congress of the United States declared
20 February 3 "Four Chaplains Day"; and

21 WHEREAS, On February 8, 2018, the Sheraton Society Hill in
22 Philadelphia will host the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation's
23 50th Annual Four Chaplains Awards Banquet; and

24 WHEREAS, This year marks the 75th anniversary of the sinking
25 of the Dorchester; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize
27 February 3, 2018, as "Four Chaplains Day" in Pennsylvania to
28 honor the valor and sacrifice of Lieutenant George Fox,
29 Lieutenant Alexander Goode, Lieutenant Clark Poling and
30 Lieutenant John Washington.