



Senate of Pennsylvania

APR 13 2012

April 12, 2012

TO: ALL SENATORS

FROM: Stewart J. Greenleaf *Stewart*

SUBJECT: Cosponsorship – **“The Battle of the Crooked Billet Day” in Pennsylvania**

I plan to offer a resolution designating May 1, 2012 as “The Battle of the Crooked Billet Day” in Pennsylvania.

During the American War for Independence at the time of the Valley Forge Encampment in 1777 and 1778, President Thomas Wharton of the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council, commissioned Brigadier General John Lacey, the youngest General in American History and a native of Bucks County, to lead the Pennsylvania militia in patrolling the countryside outside Philadelphia. General George Washington, Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, charged General Lacey with the mission to keep the local inhabitants from selling supplies to the British Army, who occupied Philadelphia, and to reroute those supplies to the Continental Army at Valley Forge.

Due to the success of the Pennsylvania Militia, the British Army developed a plan to annihilate the Pennsylvania militia by ambush and planned to capture General Lacey. The Pennsylvania militia was comprised of approximately 300 men from Bucks County and historic Cumberland County, as well as from other places throughout this Commonwealth.

The British Army attacked the Pennsylvania militia with a force of approximately 850 men in the early morning of May 1, 1778, in the present-day Borough of Hatboro, Montgomery County, and the present-day Township of Warminster, Bucks County. The Queen’s Rangers attempted to push the Pennsylvania militia south toward the point of ambush along present-day Horsham Road. General Lacey was not fooled by the trap and led the Pennsylvania militia north, where they fought their way through a blockade held by British Dragoons, thereby escaping deeper into Bucks County. Twenty-six Pennsylvania militiamen were killed in action that day and 58 Pennsylvania militiamen were captured and the Pennsylvania militia lost all of their supply wagons.

General Lacey’s heroic leadership and quick thinking on that fateful day prevented further casualties, saving the lives of hundreds of Pennsylvania militiamen. Forty-eight hours after the battle, General Lacey continued with his orders of keeping supplies from occupied Philadelphia and redirecting supplies to Valley Forge. General Lacey continued to serve the people of Pennsylvania when, in November of 1778, he was elected to the Pennsylvania General Assembly and, in November 1779, he was elected to the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council.

This resolution designates May 1, 2012, as “The Battle of the Crooked Billet Day” throughout this Commonwealth to honor the men of the Pennsylvania militia under the command and leadership of Brigadier General John Lacey for their heroism, and especially those men who paid the ultimate sacrifice on May 1, 1778, for the competent and heroic leadership of Brigadier General John Lacey in preserving the militia from annihilation and leading them to safety and for all their sacred participation in the fight and struggle for freedom in the early years of the Republic of the United States of America.

*If you are interested in cosponsoring this resolution, please contact Pat Snively of my office by e-mailing her at [psnively@pasen.gov](mailto:psnively@pasen.gov) by the close of business on Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup>.*