A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of May 2019 as "Military Service-Related
2 Post-Traumatic Stress Injury Awareness Month" in
3 Pennsylvania.

4 WHEREAS, The brave men and women of the United States Armed
5 Forces, who proudly serve the United States and risk their lives
6 to protect our freedom, deserve the investment of every possible
7 resource to ensure their lasting physical, mental and emotional
8 well-being; and

9 WHEREAS, The challenges of serving in combat do not stop for
10 many veterans when they return home; and

11 WHEREAS, A new challenge begins for many of our servicemen
12 and servicewomen, who may struggle in silence daily; and

13 WHEREAS, Beginning with the ravages of the Civil War, a war-
14 related syndrome has been identified and called various names,
15 including "shell shock" during World War I and "battle fatigue"
16 during World War II; and

17 WHEREAS, Since the Vietnam Conflict in the 1960s and 1970s,
18 the syndrome has been known as post-traumatic stress disorder or

PTSD; and

WHEREAS, Post-traumatic stress disorder has historically been viewed as a mental illness caused by a preexisting flaw in the individual's brain or character, and the term carries a stigma that perpetuates this misconception; and

WHEREAS, Post-traumatic stress injury can occur as a result of trauma an individual has experienced such as the stress of combat, rape, sexual assault, battery, torture, confinement, child abuse, car accidents, train wrecks, plane crashes, bombings or natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, Post-traumatic stress is a very common injury to the brain that is treatable and repairable; and

WHEREAS, Referring to post-traumatic stress injury as a disorder perpetuates the stigma of and bias against mental illness; and

WHEREAS, This stigma discourages those suffering from post-traumatic stress from seeking proper and timely medical treatment; and

WHEREAS, Eliminating this stigma can favorably influence those affected and encourage them to seek help without fear of retribution or shame; and

WHEREAS, Veterans currently returning from service in Afghanistan and Iraq are experiencing a high incidence of post-traumatic stress injury; and

WHEREAS, A study published in 2010 in the *American Journal of Public Health* revealed that more than one-third of soldiers returning from Afghanistan and Iraq are diagnosed with a mental health disorder; and

WHEREAS, Of these soldiers, nearly 22% were diagnosed with post-traumatic stress injury; and

WHEREAS, Caused by the horrors experienced during war, post-traumatic stress injury has an insidious effect on the health of individuals; and

WHEREAS, Post-traumatic stress injury causes emotional, social, physical, spiritual and communication challenges for both the veterans suffering from the disorder and their loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Individuals with post-traumatic stress injury have difficulty sleeping and experience all the tangential mental and physical effects of sleep deprivation, feel more irritable and are prone to unexpected or inexplicable outbursts of anger, have difficulty concentrating, expect the worst, feel that danger is imminent and are easily startled; and

WHEREAS, Families of individuals who have post-traumatic stress injury experience more unhappiness, marital strife, anxiety and childhood and adolescent behavioral problems; and

WHEREAS, Less than 40% of veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress injury seek help; and

WHEREAS, The National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder within the Department of Veterans Affairs aims to advance the clinical care and social welfare of veterans through research, education and training on post-traumatic stress injury and stress-related illnesses and provides educational resources for veterans and health care providers, researchers and the general public through its Internet website; and

WHEREAS, The month of May has been designated by the Congress of the United States as "National Military Appreciation Month" to remember those who gave their lives in defense of freedom and to honor the men and women of the United States Armed Forces who have served and are currently serving this country; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting during the month in which "VE Day," "Military Spouse Appreciation Day," "Loyalty Day," "Armed Forces Day" and "Memorial Day" are observed to reflect on this serious injury that affects many of our veterans and their families so that we may renew and increase our awareness of post-traumatic stress injury; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the month of May 2019 as "Military Service-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Injury Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commend the Adjutant General and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs for working to educate service members, veterans, families of service members and veterans, victims of abuse, crime and natural disaster and the general public about the causes, symptoms and treatment of post-traumatic stress injury.