

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 547 Session of
2008

INTRODUCED BY CRUZ, YOUNGBLOOD, WHEATLEY, SANTONI, BRENNAN,
LENTZ, BUXTON, HERSHEY, JAMES, RAPP, BLACKWELL, BELFANTI,
MAHER, FAIRCHILD, GRUCELA, MENSCH, KIRKLAND, K. SMITH,
PALLONE, SIPTROTH, DONATUCCI, REICHLEY, RUBLEY, PAYNE,
JOSEPHS, PARKER, READSHAW, GEORGE, THOMAS, GOODMAN,
WOJNAROSKI, CLYMER AND EVERETT, JANUARY 3, 2008

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
JANUARY 3, 2008

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the service, courage and patriotism of Hispanic
2 Americans who have served and continue to serve as members of
3 the United States Armed Forces.

4 whereas, People of Hispanic descent, including Puerto Ricans
5 and many other Americans, come from various countries, including
6 Mexico, the Dominican Republic, the Caribbean, Central America,
7 South America, Portugal and Spain; and

8 WHEREAS, Men and women of Hispanic descent have served in
9 every major military conflict in the history of the United
10 States; and

11 WHEREAS, Hispanic American servicemen and servicewomen have
12 been awarded 42 Congressional Medals of Honor for distinguished
13 service in United States wars, receiving more of these awards
14 than any other ethnic group; and

15 WHEREAS, There are currently approximately 1,300,000 Hispanic
16 American veterans in the United States; and

1 WHEREAS, Department of Defense data shows that as of August
2 2006, more than 210,000 servicemembers of Hispanic descent were
3 serving in the United States military and more than 400 Hispanic
4 Americans had died in Afghanistan and Iraq as of June 2007; and

5 WHEREAS, Close to 20,000 Hispanic Americans participated in
6 the Persian Gulf War and 26 Hispanic servicemembers died in
7 combat during that war; and

8 WHEREAS, During the Vietnam conflict, more than 80,000
9 Hispanic Americans served in the United States Armed Forces,
10 more than 3,000 Hispanic Americans died in combat and 16
11 Hispanic Americans were awarded the Congressional Medal of
12 Honor; and

13 WHEREAS, Nearly 150,000 Hispanic Americans served in the
14 Korean War, including 61,000 Puerto Ricans, and during that war
15 eight Hispanic American officers were awarded the Congressional
16 Medal of Honor; and

17 WHEREAS, The Puerto Rican 65th Infantry Regiment was the only
18 all-Hispanic unit in the Korean War and, while serving with
19 distinction, earned four Distinguished Service Crosses and 124
20 Silver Stars; and

21 WHEREAS, The Puerto Rican 65th Infantry Regiment is credited
22 with the last recorded battalion-sized bayonet assault in the
23 history of the United States Army; and

24 WHEREAS, A total of six Hispanic Americans were flying aces
25 in World War II and the Korean War; and

26 WHEREAS, 400,000 to 500,000 Hispanic American servicemembers
27 served in the United States Armed Forces during World War II,
28 including approximately 200 Puerto Rican women who served in the
29 Women's Army Corps and served in the critical role of "Code
30 Talkers" to avoid enemy intelligence, and in that war 13

1 Hispanic American servicemembers were awarded the Congressional
2 Medal of Honor; and

3 WHEREAS, Many Hispanic Americans of World War II and the
4 Korean and Vietnam eras joined with African-Americans to fight
5 racial barriers so that later generations could enjoy greater
6 opportunities; and

7 WHEREAS, In World War I approximately 200,000 Hispanic
8 Americans were mobilized, the majority of Mexican descent; and

9 WHEREAS, Three Mexican Americans were awarded the
10 Congressional Medal of Honor during the Civil War; and

11 WHEREAS, Approximately 10,000 Mexican Americans, including
12 women, served in the Army during the Civil War and in the
13 volunteer units of the Union and the Confederacy; and

14 WHEREAS, During the War of 1812, Hispanic American troops in
15 Louisiana and the surrounding areas were instrumental in General
16 Andrew Jackson's defeat of the British; and

17 WHEREAS, The first Hispanaic American involvement in the
18 United States military history was during the Revolutionary War
19 in 1777; and

20 WHEREAS, In the decisive Battle of Yorktown, 4,000 Spanish,
21 Puerto Rican and Cuban soldiers were killed and wounded in the
22 defeat of British forces; and

23 WHEREAS, The bravery and patriotism of Hispanic American
24 servicemen and servicewomen remain unquestioned despite their
25 second-class treatment at home; and

26 WHEREAS, Hispanic American men and women on the battlefield
27 faced hardships of discrimination, language barriers and
28 cultural insensitivity within their ranks, while placing their
29 lives and safety on the line in a heroic manner; and

30 WHEREAS, During World War II, Hispanic Americans faced

1 segregation in many public institutions, continued to serve
2 their country loyally and returned from the battlefield to
3 dismantle the racial barriers of their time; and

4 WHEREAS, The contributions of Hispanic Americans to the
5 United States Armed Forces have been largely unrecognized in
6 American history; therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
8 service, courage and patriotism of Hispanic Americans who have
9 served and continue to serve as members of the United States
10 Armed Forces.