

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 807 Session of
2008

INTRODUCED BY HARKINS, McCALL, EACHUS, D. O'BRIEN, FABRIZIO, BISHOP, PALLONE, GRUCELA, LONGIETTI, WATSON, CREIGHTON, FRANKEL, R. TAYLOR, SIPTROTH, BRENNAN, KENNEY, KORTZ, M. O'BRIEN, WOJNAROSKI, READSHAW, M. SMITH, MILLARD, DALLY, BARRAR, HERSHEY, BEAR, MANTZ, BOYD, RUBLEY, TRUE, CASORIO, VULAKOVICH, HICKERNELL, BEYER, MOYER, RAMALEY, STABACK, MUSTIO, HENNESSEY, HORNAMAN, SONNEY, DeWEESE, PHILLIPS, THOMAS, CALTAGIRONE, WALKO, BELFANTI, HARHART, SWANGER, RAPP, JAMES, DERMODY, CONKLIN, DONATUCCI, GEIST, YOUNGBLOOD, MARSHALL, O'NEILL, PAYNE, McILHATTAN, COX, KULA, SCHRODER, MURT, HARHAI, TANGRETTI, GEORGE, HESS, ADOLPH, CARROLL, DePASQUALE, EVERETT, FREEMAN, GERGELY, MAJOR, MARKOSEK, MICOZZIE, MOUL, PARKER, PASHINSKI, SANTONI, SHIMKUS, SOLOBAY, WANSACZ, YUDICHAK AND SAYLOR, JUNE 17, 2008

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
JUNE 17, 2008

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life of Timothy John "Tim" Russert, Jr.; and
2 recognizing his contributions to journalism, the American
3 electoral process and the citizens of this Commonwealth and
4 our nation.

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert, the Managing Editor and Moderator of
6 Meet the Press and political analyst for NBC Nightly News and
7 the Today Show and host of the Tim Russert Show died suddenly on
8 June 13, 2008; and

9 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert was born in Buffalo, New York, on May 7,
10 1950, to Irish-American Catholic parents, Elizabeth, a
11 homemaker, and Timothy John Russert, Sr., a garbage collector
12 and newspaper truck driver; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert graduated from Canisius High School in
2 Buffalo, where he received a Jesuit education; received his
3 bachelor of arts from John Carroll University in Cleveland
4 Heights, Ohio; and graduated with honors from Cleveland State
5 University, Cleveland-Marshall College of Law in Cleveland,
6 Ohio, where he received his juris doctorate; and

7 WHEREAS, After graduating from law school, Mr. Russert worked
8 as chief of staff for the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan
9 and later as counselor to then New York Governor, Mario Cuomo;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert changed his career path in 1984 and
12 joined NBC News Washington Bureau; and

13 WHEREAS, It is reported that Mr. Russert became a political
14 analyst accidently when his daily political banter during
15 conference calls got the attention of NBC executives who decided
16 to make him a Today Show political commentator; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1985 Mr. Russert supervised live broadcasts of
18 the Today Show from Rome and arranged a television appearance by
19 Pope John Paul II, a first for American television; and

20 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert became the moderator of Meet the Press
21 in 1991; and

22 WHEREAS, Because of Mr. Russert's proclivity for detailed
23 research, Meet the Press evolved into the most celebrated and
24 watched news program in America; and

25 WHEREAS, Washingtonian Magazine anointed Mr. Russert as the
26 best and most influential journalist in Washington, D.C., and
27 labeled Meet the Press as "the most interesting and important
28 hour on television;" and

29 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert's even-keeled examination of current
30 affairs enhanced public debate and created a better-informed

1 electorate; and

2 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert is credited with devising the terms "red
3 state" and "blue state" to explain America's electoral divide;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert was named by Time Magazine as one of the
6 100 most influential people in the world for 2008; and

7 WHEREAS, In the Time Magazine article, former Governor Mario
8 Cuomo relayed that "Tim's influence can be measured by the size
9 of his audience"; and

10 WHEREAS, It is estimated that more than 4 million Americans
11 watch Meet the Press every Sunday; and

12 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert served as Senior Vice President and
13 Washington Bureau Chief of NBC News; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert received numerous awards and a long list
15 of honors for his skills as a political analyst and his
16 professional acumen, including a 2005 Emmy Award for his role in
17 the coverage of President Ronald Reagan's funeral; and

18 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert's on-air use of a white dry eraser board
19 to explain the outcome of the 2000 Presidential Election as
20 dependent upon "Florida, Florida, Florida," was selected by TV
21 Guide Magazine as one of the 100 most memorable television
22 moments in history; and

23 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert was a treasure to the keenest political
24 observers as well as the curious outsiders who simply sought to
25 better understand the process by which their laws are made and
26 leaders are chosen; and

27 WHEREAS, Despite Mr. Russert's obvious professional success,
28 he appeared to never forget Buffalo and his working-class roots:
29 his commentary was rich with references to his hometown and his
30 beloved Buffalo Bills and Buffalo Sabres; and

1 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert's books, "Big Russ & Me," in which he
2 expressed his deep love for his father, and "Wisdom of Our
3 Fathers" were New York Times best sellers and brought national
4 recognition to his working-class father and his western New York
5 upbringing; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert was a devout and faithful Catholic who
7 spoke openly and fondly of his Catholic school education, his
8 faith and the role of the Catholic Church and Sister Mary
9 Lucille in his life; and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert, who loved children and was loved by
11 them, was named "Father of the Year" by the National Father's
12 Day Committee in 1995 and by the National Fatherhood Initiative
13 in 2001; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert was a loving and dependable son, devoted
15 and loving husband to his wife of 25 years, Maureen Orth, and
16 loving and proud father to his son Luke; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert represented the finest qualities of
18 life: he loved politics and people but he loved his family more
19 and he had mastered true happiness; and

20 WHEREAS, Mr. Russert believed that the best way to exercise
21 the human heart was to bend down and pick somebody up; therefore
22 be it

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
24 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania honor the life and recognize the
25 contributions of Timothy John "Tim" Russert, Jr., including his
26 journalistic accomplishments, his commitment to the highest
27 journalistic standards and fair play, his efforts to explain
28 presidential politics, his success in making government and
29 politics more accessible and understood by viewers, and his role
30 in transforming presidential elections; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives proffer its
2 thanks and appreciation to Timothy John "Tim" Russert, Jr., for
3 helping to define fatherhood; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its deep
5 and profound sorrow upon the passing of Timothy John Russert,
6 Jr., and direct that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
7 his father, Mr. Timothy John Russert, Sr., and his wife, Mrs.
8 Maureen Orth, in care of NBC News Washington Bureau.