

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 742 Session of 2010

INTRODUCED BY MARSICO, HELM, PAYNE, BUXTON, GRELL, HICKERNELL, BAKER, BELFANTI, BEYER, BRADFORD, BRENNAN, BROOKS, CALTAGIRONE, CIVERA, CLYMER, COHEN, CONKLIN, COX, CREIGHTON, DALEY, DIGIROLAMO, DONATUCCI, EVERETT, FAIRCHILD, FARRY, FLECK, GABLER, GEIST, GEORGE, GINGRICH, GOODMAN, GROVE, GRUCELA, HARHART, HENNESSEY, KAUFFMAN, M. KELLER, KILLION, KNOWLES, KORTZ, KOTIK, MAHER, MAJOR, MARKOSEK, MARSHALL, MATZIE, MELIO, METZGAR, MICOZZIE, MILLARD, MOUL, MURT, MUSTIO, OBERLANDER, M. O'BRIEN, O'NEILL, PHILLIPS, PICKETT, PYLE, QUINN, RAPP, ROAE, ROHRER, ROSS, SANTONI, SAYLOR, SEIP, SIPTROTH, STEVENSON, SWANGER, TALLMAN, R. TAYLOR, TURZAI, VEREB, VULAKOVICH AND YOUNGBLOOD, APRIL 15, 2010

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, APRIL 15, 2010

## A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life of Colonel Alfred W. Baker, a true American  
2 patriot.

3 WHEREAS, Alfred W. Baker of Susquehanna Township, Dauphin  
4 County, passed away on March 5, 2010, leaving behind his wife,  
5 Joan; his brother, Joseph; six children; 17 grandchildren; and  
6 two great-grandchildren; and

7 WHEREAS, After serving more than 31 years in the United  
8 States Army, he retired in 1994 with the rank of Colonel; and

9 WHEREAS, His assignments included three tours in Vietnam  
10 commanding a Mechanized Infantry Battalion for three years as a  
11 lieutenant colonel, after which he was sent to the Middle East  
12 to command United States Forces in a five-country area and to

1 serve in Lebanon as the Commander of the United Nations Observer  
2 Group Lebanon; and

3 WHEREAS, After attending the United States Army War College  
4 in Carlisle, Colonel Baker returned to Beirut, Lebanon, to lead  
5 the effort to rebuild the Lebanese Army, arriving just days  
6 before a terrorist bomb destroyed the Marine barracks in Beirut;  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Subsequent to commanding a brigade at Fort Jackson,  
9 South Carolina, Colonel Baker returned to the Middle East as  
10 Chief of Staff of the Multinational Force and Observers in  
11 Sinai, Egypt, and there he was assigned to Berlin, Germany,  
12 where he was Chief of Staff, assigned to close out the United  
13 States Military presence in Berlin, after having first  
14 transitioned the power of administering the city back to local  
15 officials; and

16 WHEREAS, *The Los Angeles Times Magazine* quoted the Department  
17 of Defense as stating that Colonel Baker was "one of the most  
18 decorated soldiers in the Army"; and

19 WHEREAS, Colonel Baker's awards and decorations include the  
20 Silver Star for gallantry in action, multiple awards of the  
21 Defense Superior Service Medal, multiple awards of the Legion of  
22 Merit, three awards of the Bronze Star, three awards of the  
23 Meritorious Service Medal, four awards of the Purple Heart medal  
24 (for wounds received in battle) and many other service and  
25 achievement medals; and

26 WHEREAS, Colonel Baker's awards from other agencies include  
27 the Department of State Honor Medal, the CIA Medallion, the  
28 German Cross of Honor, the National Order of the Cedars (issued  
29 by the Lebanese Government) and numerous other international,  
30 national and departmental honors; and

1 WHEREAS, Stories about Colonel Baker's exploits have appeared  
2 in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *LA Times*, *The*  
3 *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *The Patriot-*  
4 *News* and many other newspapers; and

5 WHEREAS, Colonel Baker was interviewed on "Journey of City,"  
6 a national broadcast on PBS, spoke at many universities and  
7 participated in international and national forums; and

8 WHEREAS, In January 2002, *Harrisburg Magazine* selected the  
9 retired colonel as one of the "Movers and Shakers of Harrisburg"  
10 and Mayor Reed honored him as an "Outstanding Citizen"; and

11 WHEREAS, Colonel Baker is also believed to be a model for the  
12 main character in the movie "Apocalypse Now"; and

13 WHEREAS, Since 1995, Colonel Baker served as President and  
14 CEO of Pennsylvania Industries for the Blind and Handicapped, a  
15 company which markets products and services provided by people  
16 with disabilities throughout this Commonwealth, where he  
17 increased annual revenues from \$8 million per year to nearly \$40  
18 million per year and provided work for more than 4,000 people  
19 that would otherwise be unable to work; and

20 WHEREAS, In 2003, under Colonel Baker's leadership, the  
21 American Business Awards presented Pennsylvania Industries for  
22 the Blind and Handicapped with the inaugural Stevie Award as the  
23 "Best Overall Company" in the nation; and

24 WHEREAS, Colonel Baker also worked to employ clients of  
25 agencies such as Goodwill Industries, Easter Seals of Western  
26 Pennsylvania, county blind associations and centers for  
27 retardation and was a founding member of the Heroes Grove  
28 Advisory Committee, which is currently raising funds for a park  
29 honoring Pennsylvania veterans, law enforcement officials,  
30 military personnel and emergency responders; and

1       WHEREAS, Colonel Baker has also helped the Special Olympics  
2 of Dauphin, Cumberland, Perry and Northern York Counties by  
3 sponsoring and organizing an annual golf outing, the largest  
4 one-day fundraiser of the Special Olympics; and

5       WHEREAS, Colonel Baker and his wife, Joan, ran RAE's Tobacco  
6 Shop, a Harrisburg landmark and company which strongly supports  
7 America's service members, and in 2008 he was awarded the  
8 Pennsylvania Achievement Medal by order of the Governor for his  
9 care of Pennsylvania soldiers; and

10       WHEREAS, Colonel Baker was President of the National State  
11 Use Programs Association, was chosen by Governor Ridge as a  
12 Pennsylvania Ambassador and served on many boards and  
13 commissions; therefore be it

14       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the life of  
15 Colonel Alfred W. Baker by recognizing his lifetime achievements  
16 and his dedicated service to his country, his Commonwealth and  
17 his fellow citizens; and be it further

18       RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to  
19 his wife at 1021 Blue Ridge Road, Harrisburg, PA 17110.