

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 151 Session of 2011

INTRODUCED BY HEFFLEY, KNOWLES, BEAR, BOYD, BRADFORD, BROOKS, BUXTON, CALTAGIRONE, CARROLL, CLYMER, COHEN, D. COSTA, CREIGHTON, DAY, DIGIROLAMO, DONATUCCI, EVANKOVICH, EVERETT, FARRY, FLECK, GEIST, GILLEN, GILLESPIE, GOODMAN, GROVE, HARHART, HENNESSEY, HICKERNELL, KILLION, KORTZ, KULA, MAHER, MAJOR, MARSICO, METCALFE, MILLARD, MILLER, MIRABITO, MOUL, MURT, MUSTIO, MYERS, PAYNE, PEIFER, PICKETT, PYLE, QUINN, RAPP, READSHAW, REED, REESE, REICHLEY, ROCK, ROSS, SAINATO, SCHRODER, SONNEY, SWANGER AND VEREB, MARCH 28, 2011

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, MARCH 28, 2011

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life of John J. "Sonny" Kovatch, Jr., a pillar of
2 Carbon County.

3 WHEREAS, John J. "Sonny" Kovatch, Jr., of Nesquehoning, died
4 Saturday, January 29, 2011, leaving behind his wife of 63 years,
5 Helen (Yelito); his son, John J., III; four daughters, Marianne
6 Meixell, Jane Beury, Kathy Reaman and Judy Lebo; brother,
7 Joseph; three sisters, Helen Homcha, Agnes Barachie and Ann
8 Orner; 11 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren; and

9 WHEREAS, During a career that spanned more than six decades,
10 Mr. Kovatch went to great lengths and sacrificed much for his
11 community, employees, country and family; and

12 WHEREAS, Mr. Kovatch graduated from Nesquehoning High School
13 and bravely served his country in the United States Army in the
14 Pacific during World War II; and

1 WHEREAS, In March 1946, he opened a small car repair shop;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Throughout the years, Mr. Kovatch became the founder
4 of several companies bearing his name that today are global
5 leaders in specialty vehicle manufacturing; and

6 WHEREAS, His company, Kovatch Mobile Equipment Corporation
7 (KME), was created in the 1980s to begin the manufacture of new
8 fire apparatus, and today, the company is the largest family-
9 held fire truck manufacturer in North America; and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Kovatch operated under his philosophy of hard
11 work and commitment to a family-operated company that puts its
12 customers and employees first; and

13 WHEREAS, Over the years, Mr. Kovatch provided jobs to
14 hundreds of people in Carbon County; and

15 WHEREAS, Not only was Mr. Kovatch a great businessman, he
16 also truly cared about improving the quality of life in his
17 community; and

18 WHEREAS, Through Mr. Kovatch's efforts, many businesses and
19 services were brought to Nesquehoning, including a large
20 supermarket, a community college and other manufacturers located
21 in the Green Acres Industrial Park; and

22 WHEREAS, Over the last several years, Mr. Kovatch was
23 instrumental in the push to bring solar power to the Carbon
24 County area; and

25 WHEREAS, Nesquehoning Fire Chief John McArdle stated that Mr.
26 Kovatch had "been a pillar of the community for a long, long
27 time" and was a "friend and asset for our fire companies"; and

28 WHEREAS, William J. O'Gurek, chairman of the Carbon County
29 Board of Commissioners, described Mr. Kovatch's impact on the
30 community as "phenomenal" and stated, "He not only built a great

1 organization, but he contributed greatly to helping to enhance
2 the quality of life for those in his hometown and all of our
3 surrounding communities"; and

4 WHEREAS, Wayne Nothstein, Carbon County commissioner, stated,
5 "What he did for the local fire departments is
6 incredible...bringing in a quality manufacturing plant, so many
7 jobs, letting firefighters leave their jobs to fight fires, he
8 was a community-oriented person who went above and beyond"; and

9 WHEREAS, His son, John Kovatch, III, who is now the CEO of
10 the Kovatch Corporation, said, "My father was a true American
11 success story. He loved what he did and had a passion to build a
12 legacy that will continue to positively affect our lives for
13 generations to come"; therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the life of
15 Mr. Kovatch by recognizing his dedicated service to his country,
16 this Commonwealth and his community.