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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 331 Session of  
2011

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INTRODUCED BY BARRAR, SAINATO, AUMENT, BOBACK, BRENNAN, BROOKS, CALTAGIRONE, CAUSER, CLYMER, DAVIS, DeWEESE, EVERETT, FABRIZIO, FLECK, GEORGE, GINGRICH, GODSHALL, GOODMAN, GRELL, HEFFLEY, HICKERNELL, HORNAMAN, KAUFFMAN, M. K. KELLER, KILLION, KNOWLES, KOTIK, KULA, MAJOR, MARSHALL, MARSICO, MICCARELLI, MILLARD, MILNE, MURT, MUSTIO, O'NEILL, PASHINSKI, QUINN, RAPP, READSHAW, SANTONI, SAYLOR, STEVENSON, SWANGER, TALLMAN, TAYLOR, THOMAS, VEREB, VULAKOVICH, HESS, BEAR AND DENLINGER, JUNE 14, 2011

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, JUNE 14, 2011

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A RESOLUTION

1 Establishing a select committee to conduct a study for the  
2 future of Soldiers' Grove and the continued use of the Medal  
3 of Honor Memorial Garden, known as the "Tides of War,"  
4 located within Soldiers' Grove, and to provide for the  
5 necessary enhancements to this hallowed ground.

6 WHEREAS, The area lying between the Forum Building and the  
7 Finance Building on the grounds of the State Capitol in  
8 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, was designated as "Soldiers' Grove"  
9 through act 75 of 1987; and

10 WHEREAS, Soldiers' Grove is a hallowed location where armed  
11 forces personnel from the Commonwealth who are awarded the  
12 Congressional Medal of Honor are recognized by placing a  
13 memorial stone in their honor within Soldiers' Grove and it also  
14 is a location where past wars and conflicts in which the United  
15 States has engaged are recognized; and

1       WHEREAS, Two large plaques mounted on waist-high posts along  
2 the western edge of Soldiers' Grove read: "This Grove is  
3 dedicated by a grateful Commonwealth in recognition of the  
4 Soldiers and Sailors who served in any of this country's wars  
5 and in memory of those who made the supreme sacrifice"; and

6       WHEREAS, Act 75 of 1987 requires the Department of General  
7 Services to provide ten memorial bronze plaques on granite  
8 plinths commemorating: Pennsylvania's Unknown Veterans, the  
9 Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War,  
10 the American Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World War I,  
11 World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam Conflict; and

12       WHEREAS, In 1994, the Medal of Honor Memorial Garden, known  
13 as the "Tides of War," was installed in Soldiers' Grove and was  
14 designed by artists Winifred Lutz and Stacy Levi. There are 13  
15 arcs within the Tides of War representing conflicts from the  
16 Civil War through the Somalia Conflict, and within each arc are  
17 contained memorial stones honoring each of Pennsylvania's 378  
18 Medal of Honor recipients. Following these arcs is an area  
19 identified as the "Shores of Peace"; and

20       WHEREAS, In 1996, six flagpoles were installed in a  
21 semicircle pattern at the entrance of Soldiers' Grove nearest  
22 the Capitol to honor each of the United States' military  
23 branches and also to honor our Prisoners of War and our Missing  
24 in Action soldiers; and

25       WHEREAS, In 2006, a Historical Highway Marker was placed in  
26 the southeast corner of Soldiers' Grove to commemorate the  
27 "United States Colored Troops Grand Review" that took place on  
28 the site in November of 1865; and

29       WHEREAS, Commencing on the western end of Soldiers' Grove and  
30 moving east, every two feet within the Tides of War represents

1 one year in history, ending at the beginning of the Shores of  
2 Peace; and

3 WHEREAS, The last memorial stone placed within the Tides of  
4 War, in terms of chronological order, recognizes Army Private  
5 First Class Ross A. McGinnis for his heroic actions on December  
6 4, 2006, in Adhamiyah, Northeast Baghdad, Iraq; and

7 WHEREAS, There is limited space for the Tides of War to  
8 continue within Soldiers' Grove as there are currently fewer  
9 than 20 feet of open grass now available between the memorial  
10 stone honoring Private First Class McGinnis and the Shores of  
11 Peace; and

12 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth, due to this limited space, will  
13 not be able to memorialize and honor Pennsylvania's Medal of  
14 Honor recipients with the placement of a memorial stone beyond a  
15 projected date of 2016; and

16 WHEREAS, It will be difficult to maintain symmetry and  
17 chronological order if plaques are placed within Soldiers' Grove  
18 to recognize other conflicts beyond those currently recognized  
19 through the ten existing bronze plaques on granite plinths; and

20 WHEREAS, Soldiers' Grove is a landmark on the grounds of the  
21 State Capitol and, as such, deserves to be preserved and  
22 continued for our posterity; and

23 WHEREAS, It is fitting to assemble a select committee to  
24 investigate the current issues facing Soldiers' Grove and to  
25 devise a plan for its future use as a place to honor our Medal  
26 of Honor recipients; therefore be it

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives form a select  
28 committee to conduct a study for the future of Soldiers' Grove  
29 and the continued use of the Medal of Honor Memorial Garden,  
30 known as the "Tides of War," located within Soldiers' Grove, and

1 to provide for the necessary enhancements to allow for the  
2 continued use of this hallowed ground; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the select committee be composed of 11 members  
4 which shall include the chairman and minority chairman of the  
5 Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee of the  
6 House of Representatives, three members designated by the  
7 Speaker of the House of Representatives, two members designated  
8 by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, two  
9 members designated by the chairman of the Veterans Affairs and  
10 Emergency Preparedness Committee of the House of  
11 Representatives, two members designated by the minority chairman  
12 of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee of  
13 the House of Representatives; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That each select committee member may appoint a  
15 designee to represent the member if the member is unable to  
16 participate in or attend a committee function; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the chairman of the Veterans Affairs and  
18 Emergency Preparedness Committee of the House of Representatives  
19 serve as chairman of the select committee and the minority  
20 Chairman of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness  
21 Committee of the House of Representatives serve as the vice  
22 chairman of the select committee; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the chairman of the select committee use  
24 staff of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness  
25 Committee of the House of Representatives for administration  
26 purposes for the select committee; be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the select committee meet on the grounds of  
28 the State Capitol Complex, at times that best fit the needs and  
29 conveniences of the committee members; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the select committee hold hearings, take

1 testimony and seek out additional resources to complete the work  
2 of the committee; and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That the select committee make a report of its  
4 findings and any recommendations for remedial legislation or  
5 other appropriate action to the House of Representatives on or  
6 before November 30, 2012.