

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 695 Session of  
2012

INTRODUCED BY MURT, APRIL 30, 2012

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, APRIL  
30, 2012

## A RESOLUTION

1 Designating May 1, 2012, as "The Battle of the Crooked Billet  
2 Day" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, During the American War for Independence at the time  
4 of the Valley Forge encampment in 1777 and 1778, President  
5 Thomas Wharton of the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council  
6 commissioned Brigadier General John Lacey, the youngest general  
7 in American history and a native of Bucks County, to lead the  
8 Pennsylvania Militia in patrolling the countryside outside  
9 Philadelphia; and

10 WHEREAS, General George Washington, commander in chief of the  
11 Continental Army, charged General John Lacey with the mission to  
12 keep the local inhabitants from selling supplies to the British  
13 Army, which occupied Philadelphia, and to reroute those supplies  
14 to the Continental Army at Valley Forge; and

15 WHEREAS, Due to the success of the Pennsylvania Militia, the  
16 British Army developed a plan to annihilate the Pennsylvania  
17 Militia by ambush; and

18 WHEREAS, The British Army also planned to capture General

1 John Lacey; and

2 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Militia was comprised of  
3 approximately 300 men from Bucks County and historic Cumberland  
4 County as well as from other places throughout this  
5 Commonwealth; and

6 WHEREAS, The British Army attacked the Pennsylvania Militia  
7 with a force of approximately 850 men in the early morning of  
8 May 1, 1778, in the present-day Borough of Hatboro, Montgomery  
9 County, and the present-day Township of Warminster, Bucks  
10 County; and

11 WHEREAS, The Queen's Rangers attempted to push the  
12 Pennsylvania Militia south toward the point of ambush along  
13 present-day Horsham Road; and

14 WHEREAS, General John Lacey was not fooled by the trap and  
15 led the Pennsylvania Militia north, fighting its way through a  
16 blockade held by British Dragoons, escaping deeper into Bucks  
17 County; and

18 WHEREAS, The British committed war atrocities on the wounded  
19 by throwing them into burning piles of buckwheat straw and  
20 stabbing, with their bayonets and cutlasses, militiamen who were  
21 surrendering and wounded; and

22 WHEREAS, Twenty-six Pennsylvania Militiamen were killed in  
23 action that day; and

24 WHEREAS, Fifty-eight Pennsylvania Militiamen were captured;  
25 and

26 WHEREAS, General John Lacey's heroic leadership and quick  
27 thinking on that fateful day prevented further casualties,  
28 saving the lives of hundreds of Pennsylvania Militiamen; and

29 WHEREAS, General John Lacey, 48 hours after the battle,  
30 continued with his orders of keeping supplies from occupied

1 Philadelphia and redirecting supplies to Valley Forge; and

2 WHEREAS, General John Lacey continued to serve the people of  
3 Pennsylvania when, in November of 1778, he was elected to the  
4 Pennsylvania General Assembly and, in November 1779, he was  
5 elected to the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council; and

6 WHEREAS, It is fitting to honor the men of the Pennsylvania  
7 Militia under the command and leadership of Brigadier General  
8 John Lacey for their heroism and, especially for those men who  
9 paid the ultimate sacrifice on May 1, 1778, to recognize the  
10 competent and heroic leadership of Brigadier General John Lacey  
11 in preserving the militia from annihilation and leading it to  
12 safety, and to remember the militia's sacred participation in  
13 the fight and struggle for freedom in the early years of the  
14 young republic that would become the United States of America;  
15 therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate May 1,  
17 2012, as "The Battle of the Crooked Billet Day" in Pennsylvania.