
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 197 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY MURT, BAKER, BIZZARRO, CALTAGIRONE, D. COSTA, COX,
DIGIROLAMO, DUSH, FREEMAN, GILLEN, GOODMAN, HENNESSEY,
KINSEY, LONGIETTI, MARSICO, MILLARD, NEILSON, QUIGLEY,
READSHAW, RYAN, SONNEY AND WATSON, MARCH 31, 2017

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
MARCH 31, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating May 1, 2017, as "The Battle of the Crooked Billet
2 Day" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, During the American War of 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 Brigadier General John Lacey with the
12 mission of keeping the local inhabitants from selling supplies
13 to the British Army occupying Philadelphia and rerouting those
14 supplies 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

1 Militia by ambush; and

2 WHEREAS, The British Army also planned to capture Brigadier
3 General John Lacey; and

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

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

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

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

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

23 WHEREAS, Twenty-six Pennsylvania militiamen were killed in
24 action that day; and

25 WHEREAS, Fifty-eight Pennsylvania militiamen were captured;
26 and

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

30 WHEREAS, Brigadier General John Lacey, 48 hours after the

1 battle, continued with his orders of keeping supplies from
2 occupied Philadelphia and redirecting supplies to Valley Forge;
3 and

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

8 WHEREAS, It is fitting to honor the men of the Pennsylvania
9 Militia under the command and leadership of Brigadier General
10 John Lacey for their heroism and for those men who paid the
11 ultimate sacrifice on May 1, 1778; and

12 WHEREAS, It is fitting to recognize the competent and heroic
13 leadership of Brigadier General John Lacey in preserving the
14 militia from annihilation and leading it to safety as we
15 remember the militia's sacred participation in the fight and
16 struggle for freedom in the early years of the young republic
17 that would become the United States of America; therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate May 1,
19 2017, as "The Battle of the Crooked Billet Day" in Pennsylvania.