
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 20 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY VULAKOVICH, COSTA, BAKER, BOSCOLA, BROWNE,
DINNIMAN, EICHELBERGER, FONTANA, GREENLEAF, HUGHES,
McGARRIGLE, RESCHENTHALER, YUDICHAK AND KILLION,
FEBRUARY 6, 2017

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, FEBRUARY 6, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating February 3, 2017, as "Four Chaplains Day" in
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On January 11, 1943, the United States Army
4 Transport Dorchester sailed from New York to Greenland carrying
5 more than 900 soldiers, merchant marines and civilian support
6 forces; and

7 WHEREAS, Shortly after midnight on February 3, 1943, the
8 Dorchester was struck by a torpedo fired without warning from a
9 German U-boat patrolling the North Atlantic, instantly killing
10 100 men and cutting off power and radio communication with
11 escort ships; and

12 WHEREAS, In the 20 minutes before the ship sank, four Army
13 chaplains, Lieutenants George L. Fox (Methodist), Alexander D.
14 Goode (Jewish), John P. Washington (Roman Catholic) and Clark V.
15 Poling (Dutch Reformed), comforted the dying, encouraged the
16 living, guided survivors to lifeboats and gave up their own life
17 jackets to men who had none, sacrificing their own lives for

1 those of their spiritual charges; and

2 WHEREAS, Because the four chaplains were technically
3 ineligible for the Medal of Honor, the Congress of the United
4 States authorized a onetime posthumous Special Medal for Heroism
5 which was presented to the four chaplains' next of kin on
6 January 18, 1961, in addition to the Purple Hearts and
7 Distinguished Service Crosses already awarded to them; and

8 WHEREAS, The Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation, located in
9 Philadelphia, continues to honor their peerless legacy by
10 recognizing citizens who perform exemplary service to their
11 communities; therefore be it

12 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate February 3, 2017, as
13 "Four Chaplains Day" in Pennsylvania; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the Senate honor the sacrifice and inspiring
15 selflessness of Lieutenants Fox, Goode, Washington and Poling.