

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 87 Session of 2019

INTRODUCED BY MALONEY, BARRAR, READSHAW, BERNSTINE, BIZZARRO, BOBACK, BROWN, BURNS, CALTAGIRONE, COX, DIGIROLAMO, DRISCOLL, FEE, FREEMAN, GOODMAN, HICKERNELL, HILL-EVANS, IRVIN, JAMES, KINSEY, KNOWLES, KORTZ, LONGIETTI, MACKENZIE, McNEILL, MEHAFFIE, MENTZER, B. MILLER, MURT, OBERLANDER, OWLETT, PASHINSKI, PICKETT, RYAN, SAINATO, SCHLOSSBERG, SONNEY, STAATS, ZIMMERMAN, SAYLOR, HAHN, CIRESI, HERSHEY, NEILSON, MARKOSEK AND WARREN, JANUARY 28, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, JANUARY 28, 2019

AN ACT

1 Designating September 27 of each year as "First Responders Day."

2 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
3 hereby enacts as follows:

4 Section 1. Short title.

5 This act shall be known and may be cited as the First
6 Responders Day Act.

7 Section 2. Legislative findings and declarations.

8 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

9 (1) Our first responders, who are police, fire,
10 emergency medical service and public health personnel, work
11 selflessly on behalf of the people of this Commonwealth,
12 regardless of the risk or hazard, and truly are citizens
13 serving the community.

14 (2) Most Pennsylvanians have benefited in some way from

1 the courageous service of first responders across this
2 Commonwealth.

3 (3) First responders carry out the critical role of
4 protecting and ensuring public safety in emergency
5 situations.

6 (4) The men and women who bravely serve as first
7 responders have found themselves on the front lines of
8 homeland defense in the war against terrorism.

9 (5) First responders are called upon in the event of
10 natural disasters, such as Hurricane Sandy.

11 (6) Approximately 150,000 first responders perform these
12 crucial services in this Commonwealth.

13 (7) Approximately 30,000 sworn police officers from
14 State, city and county law enforcement agencies protect lives
15 and property, detect and prevent crimes, uphold the law and
16 ensure justice.

17 (8) Tens of thousands of firefighters, including
18 approximately 50,000 volunteers and 10,000 career
19 firefighters, provide fire suppression, emergency medical
20 services, search and rescue, hazardous materials response,
21 terrorism response and critical fire prevention and safety
22 education.

23 (9) Approximately 60,000 emergency services
24 professionals in this Commonwealth respond to and treat a
25 variety of life-threatening emergencies, from cardiac and
26 respiratory arrest to traumatic injuries.

27 (10) First responders make personal sacrifices to
28 protect our communities, as witnessed in the aftermath of the
29 terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and of the natural
30 destruction caused by Hurricanes Katrina, Irene and Sandy.

1 They are called every day to protect individuals and property
2 in cities and towns across this Commonwealth.

3 (11) Many law enforcement officers die in the line of
4 duty in the United States each year, including five killed in
5 2015 in Pennsylvania alone.

6 (12) Many firefighters are killed in the line of duty
7 across the United States each year and thousands more are
8 injured.

9 (13) Many medics are injured on the job, have been
10 assaulted by patients or have been exposed to infectious
11 diseases.

12 (14) Emergency medical service personnel in the United
13 States have a fatality rate of more than twice the national
14 average for all other workers.

15 (15) Thousands of first responders have made the
16 ultimate sacrifice.

17 (16) These men and women, by their dedicated
18 professionalism, have earned our gratitude and respect.

19 Section 3. First Responders Day.

20 (a) Designation.--September 27 of each year is designated as
21 "First Responders Day."

22 (b) Proclamation.--The Governor shall issue annually a
23 proclamation calling upon all public schools and educational
24 institutions to observe "First Responders Day" and to conduct
25 exercises recognizing the contributions and remembering the
26 sacrifices that first responders have made.

27 (c) Limitations.--"First Responders Day" may not be a paid
28 holiday or a day that school districts close.

29 Section 4. Effective date.

30 This act shall take effect immediately.