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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 623 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY RIGBY, McNEILL, LONGIETTI, COX, DiGIROLAMO, RYAN,  
METZGAR, SCHMITT, HENNESSEY, DELLOSO, MILLARD, KORTZ,  
ROTHMAN, JAMES, BERNSTINE, SAINATO, TOEPEL, READSHAW, HILL-  
EVANS AND JOZWIAK, DECEMBER 2, 2019

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS, DECEMBER 2, 2019

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of December 2019 as "Sgt. Michael Strank  
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On November 10, 1919, Sgt. Michael Strank was born  
4 in Jarabina, Czechoslovakia; and

5 WHEREAS, When he was three years of age, Sgt. Strank and his  
6 mother immigrated to the United States to join his father, who  
7 was a miner, and the family settled in Johnstown, Pennsylvania;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Sgt. Strank was considered a gifted student who  
10 excelled at learning English and often acted as an interpreter  
11 for neighbors who had doctors appointments; and

12 WHEREAS, Influenced by the lack of jobs and the great  
13 depression, Sgt. Strank joined the Civilian Corps after  
14 graduating high school and earned \$30 a month; and

15 WHEREAS, On October 6, 1939, he enlisted in the Marine Corps  
16 and was among the first of the troops deployed overseas after

1 the attack on Pearl Harbor just two years later; and

2 WHEREAS, On January 26, 1942, Sgt. Strank was promoted to the  
3 rank of Sergeant; and

4 WHEREAS, On February 19, 1945, Sgt. Strank led his men in an  
5 assault on the island of Iwo Jima and four days later an  
6 American flag was hoisted atop Mount Suribachi; and

7 WHEREAS, After being ordered to raise a larger flag, Sgt.  
8 Strank chose five Marines to assist and the six men raised the  
9 flag as photographer Joe Rosenthal captured the most iconic  
10 image of World War II; and

11 WHEREAS, The photograph was quickly utilized for the 7th  
12 national bond drive and raised more than \$26 billion for the war  
13 effort; and

14 WHEREAS, This photograph is the most revered by the Marine  
15 Corp and depicts six heroes, which has helped increase  
16 enlistment and inspired generations of military members; and

17 WHEREAS, The two flags flown over Mount Suribachi are two of  
18 the most treasured items in the Marine Corps Museum in Quantico,  
19 Virginia, and the image of the six men is immortalized as a  
20 sculpture at the Marine Corps war memorial in Arlington National  
21 Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia; and

22 WHEREAS, Of the 70,000 Marines who fought the 20,000 Japanese  
23 soldiers for 36 days on Iwo Jima, 6,800 Marines died, including  
24 three of the flag raisers; and

25 WHEREAS, On March 1, 1945, just six days after raising the  
26 flag, Sgt. Michael Strank was killed in action on Iwo Jima; and

27 WHEREAS, On January 13, 1949, Sgt. Strank was brought home  
28 and reinterred in Grave 7179, section 12, at Arlington National  
29 Cemetery; and

30 WHEREAS, Sgt. Strank's 100th birthday is the perfect time for

1 those in his hometown and beyond to reflect on the life of this  
2 young man and the supreme sacrifice he made defending his  
3 country, think about the thousands of men and women from this  
4 region who have served their country, meditate on what it means  
5 to be an American and a patriot and tell others the stories of  
6 our hometown heroes who all too often disappear from memory;  
7 therefore be it

8       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the  
9 month of December 2019 as "Sgt. Michael Strank Month" in  
10 Pennsylvania.