
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 674 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY DONATUCCI, HILL-EVANS, SAINATO, KIM, BIZZARRO,
PEIFER, ROTHMAN, MILLARD, MURT, LONGIETTI, JAMES, BARRAR,
KORTZ, FREEMAN, SCHMITT AND GROVE, JANUARY 17, 2020

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, JANUARY 17, 2020

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing February 3, 2020, as "Four Chaplains Day" in
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On February 3, 1943, a United States Army transport
4 ship, the Dorchester, was transporting more than 900 troops
5 across the North Atlantic to an American base in Greenland as
6 part of a convoy; and

7 WHEREAS, Four chaplains, the Reverend George Fox, a Methodist
8 and native of Lewistown, Rabbi Alexander Goode, who served a
9 congregation in York, the Reverend Clark Poling, part of the
10 Reformed Church in America, and Father John Washington, a Roman
11 Catholic priest, were aboard the ship; and

12 WHEREAS, At approximately 12:55 a.m., a German U-boat's
13 torpedo struck the Dorchester, and the explosion instantly
14 knocked out power and radio communication with the convoy's
15 escort ships; and

16 WHEREAS, Within 20 minutes, the Dorchester sank, leading to
17 more than 670 deaths; and

1 WHEREAS, In the confusion, the four chaplains calmed, aided
2 and guided many of their fellow servicemembers to safety; and

3 WHEREAS, When life vests ran out, each chaplain removed his
4 own life vest and gave it to another person, saving four
5 additional lives; and

6 WHEREAS, As the ship sank, the chaplains were last seen
7 linked arm in arm in prayer; and

8 WHEREAS, The Chapel of the Four Chaplains, located in
9 Philadelphia, tells the story of the Four Chaplains and
10 encourages selfless sacrifice and interfaith cooperation; and

11 WHEREAS, Lieutenants Fox, Goode, Poling and Washington were
12 posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the
13 Purple Heart; and

14 WHEREAS, The Congress of the United States authorized a one-
15 time Chaplain's Medal for Heroism that was presented to each
16 chaplain's next of kin on January 18, 1961; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1988, the Congress of the United States declared
18 February 3 "Four Chaplains Day"; and

19 WHEREAS, On February 6, 2020, the Sheraton Society Hill in
20 Philadelphia is hosting the Four Chaplains Memorial Foundation's
21 52nd Annual Four Chaplains Awards Banquet; and

22 WHEREAS, This year marks the 77th anniversary of the sinking
23 of the Dorchester; therefore be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize
25 February 3, 2020, as "Four Chaplains Day" in Pennsylvania to
26 honor the valor and sacrifice of Lieutenant George Fox,
27 Lieutenant Alexander Goode, Lieutenant Clark Poling and
28 Lieutenant John Washington.