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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 929 Session of  
2020

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INTRODUCED BY MURT, KIM, BIZZARRO, KORTZ, MALAGARI, LONGIETTI,  
COX, RYAN, READSHAW, FREEMAN, DONATUCCI, SCHMITT, STAATS AND  
MILLARD, JULY 1, 2020

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, JULY 1, 2020

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating May 1, 2020, 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  
17 Militia by ambush; and

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

3       WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Militia was comprised of  
4 approximately 400 men from Bucks County and historic Cumberland  
5 County as well as from other places throughout this  
6 Commonwealth; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

29       WHEREAS, Brigadier General John Lacey, 48 hours after the  
30 battle, continued with his orders of keeping supplies from

1 occupied Philadelphia and redirecting supplies to Valley Forge;  
2 and

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

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

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

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate May 1,  
19 2020, as "The Battle of the Crooked Billet Day" in Pennsylvania.