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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 317 Session of  
2020

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INTRODUCED BY REGAN, ARNOLD, AUMENT, BAKER, BARTOLOTTA, BLAKE,  
BREWSTER, BROWNE, COSTA, DINNIMAN, HUGHES, HUTCHINSON,  
IOVINO, KILLION, LEACH, MARTIN, MASTRIANO, MENSCH, PHILLIPS-  
HILL, PITTMAN, SANTARSIERO, TARTAGLIONE AND J. WARD,  
MARCH 13, 2020

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REFERRED TO VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,  
MARCH 13, 2020

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating March 24, 2020, as "17th Airborne Division Day" in  
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Formed and trained during wartime, the 17th Airborne  
4 Division of the First Allied Airborne Army entered combat  
5 December 25, 1944, at Ardennes, Belgium; and

6 WHEREAS, The division engaged in the Rhineland, Ardennes-  
7 Alsace and Central Europe campaigns of World War II, having  
8 command posts in England, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and  
9 Germany; and

10 WHEREAS, Major General William M. Miley led the division from  
11 its activation in April 1943 through its inactivation in  
12 September 1945; and

13 WHEREAS, More members of this specialized volunteer unit came  
14 from Pennsylvania than from any other state; and

15 WHEREAS, The division received many Presidential Unit  
16 Citations; and

1       WHEREAS, Individual paratroopers received the Distinguished  
2 Service Cross, Legion of Merit, Silver Star, Bronze Star,  
3 Soldier's Medal and Air Medal; and

4       WHEREAS, Four paratroopers earned the Medal of Honor, our  
5 nation's highest military decoration, for actions during the  
6 Battle of the Bulge and Operation Varsity; and

7       WHEREAS, General George Patton observed that paratroopers  
8 "ran right into the flank of the German attack" at a Battle of  
9 the Bulge site near Bastogne, Belgium; and

10       WHEREAS, The division suffered heavy losses against a larger  
11 enemy force in the weeks-long Battle of the Bulge; and

12       WHEREAS, In Operation Varsity, tens of thousands of American  
13 and British glidermen and paratroopers departing bases in France  
14 landed close to Allied troops on the ground in Westphalia,  
15 Germany; and

16       WHEREAS, It was the first airborne invasion over the Rhine  
17 into Germany, the first Rhine crossing by an invading army since  
18 1805, and the largest single-lift airborne assault in history;  
19 and

20       WHEREAS, General Miley, who is remembered as "a pioneering  
21 commander of a unit of pioneers," was the first man out of the  
22 first plane that day, March 24, 1945; therefore be it

23       RESOLVED, That the Senate designate March 24, 2020, as "17th  
24 Airborne Division Day" in Pennsylvania.