

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 965 Session of 2014

INTRODUCED BY D. MILLER, SCHLEGEL CULVER, BAKER, BENNINGHOFF, CALTAGIRONE, COHEN, D. COSTA, COX, CUTLER, DAY, DIGIROLAMO, ELLIS, FARINA, FLECK, GODSHALL, GOODMAN, HAHN, KAUFFMAN, M. K. KELLER, KINSEY, LUCAS, MAJOR, MARSHALL, MASSER, McNEILL, MILLARD, MIRABITO, NEILSON, PICKETT, READSHAW, SCHLOSSBERG, SWANGER, TALLMAN, THOMAS, VEREB, SABATINA, WATSON, MURT, ROCK, GRELL, MAHONEY, GINGRICH, McGEEHAN, MALONEY, CORBIN, EVERETT, BISHOP, GAINES, KNOWLES, KORTZ, O'NEILL, PAYNE, ADOLPH, SAYLOR, HEFFLEY, STEVENSON, HARHART, F. KELLER, PASHINSKI, AUMENT, DENLINGER, MARSICO, GABLER, C. HARRIS, McCARTER AND DeLUCA, SEPTEMBER 4, 2014

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, SEPTEMBER 4, 2014

## A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life of Theodore Van Kirk, navigator for the Enola  
2 Gay during its mission to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima,  
3 Japan, during World War II.

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Van Kirk was born in Northumberland,  
5 Pennsylvania, on February 27, 1921; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Van Kirk graduated from Northumberland High  
7 School and briefly attended Susquehanna University before  
8 enlisting in the United States Army Air Forces Aviation Cadet  
9 Program in October 1941; and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Van Kirk received his commission and aviator  
11 wings in 1942 and was assigned to the first navigational B-17  
12 Flying Fortress unit in England; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Van Kirk returned home in 1943 and married Mary

1 Jane Young; and

2 WHEREAS, In 1944, Mr. Van Kirk joined the 509th Composite  
3 Group at Wendover, Utah, as a crew member of the B-29  
4 Superfortress aircraft, the Enola Gay, which he navigated during  
5 its mission to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on  
6 August 6, 1945; and

7 WHEREAS, Mr. Van Kirk received the Silver Star, Distinguished  
8 Flying Cross and 15 Air Medals for his distinguished service;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Mr. Van Kirk ended his service in 1946 at the rank  
11 of Major and enrolled at Bucknell University, where he received  
12 bachelor's and master's degrees in chemical engineering; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Van Kirk accepted a position with DuPont, where  
14 he held various research and marketing positions for 35 years;  
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Following his retirement, Mr. Van Kirk participated  
17 in numerous air shows and spoke to high school and student  
18 groups about his experiences during the war;

19 WHEREAS, Mr. Van Kirk's military career was documented in the  
20 book, My True Course, written by Suzanne Dietz and first  
21 published in 2012; therefore be it

22 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the life of  
23 Theodore Van Kirk, navigator for the Enola Gay during its  
24 mission to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, during  
25 World War II.