

SENATE MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 18

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 12, 2023

The Senate Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee reports favorably Senate Joint Resolution No. 18.

This joint resolution designates May 27 of each year as "Rick Rescorla Day" in New Jersey.

Colonel Rick Rescorla, born as Cyril Richard Rescorla on May 27, 1939 in the town of Hayle in Cornwall, England, was a United States Army officer and decorated Vietnam veteran. Rick Rescorla, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, successfully led his platoon during America's first major battle of the Vietnam conflict, the Battle of Ia Drang. Rick Rescorla's leadership and bravery in Vietnam earned him two Bronze Stars, a Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

On September 11, 2001, Rick Rescorla, a resident of Morristown, New Jersey, was serving as Vice President of Security for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter at their headquarters in the World Trade Center. Following the attacks on the World Trade Center, Rick Rescorla dismissed Port Authority announcements to remain in the building and led a massive evacuation of Morgan Stanley's 2,700-person workforce located in the South Tower. After the last of the employees had evacuated the South Tower, Rick Rescorla returned to the building, despite fears that the towers would fall, to make a final sweep. Rick Rescorla was last seen alive accompanying firemen up the stairwell on the tenth floor, shortly before the South Tower collapsed, moving toward danger much in the same way he had done 36 years prior at the Battle of Ia Drang.

Although Rick Rescorla's remains were never found, the brave military officer is forever memorialized at the Raptor Trust Bird Rehabilitation Center in Long Hill, New Jersey where his epitaph is enshrined at the bald eagle sanctuary that served as a place of solace for him and his wife. Additional public memorials and accolades include the following:

- an engraving at the South Pool, on Panel S-46 at the National September 11 Memorial and Museum;
- a statue of Rick on permanent display at the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning, Georgia, along with a dedicated

portion of the museum's forthcoming exhibit covering the Global War on Terror;

- the Rick Rescorla National Award for Resilience created by the Department of Homeland Security,
- a passenger train operated by Great Western Railways in the United Kingdom commissioned in honor of Rick;
- a plaque honoring Rick at Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial;
- a 2009 induction into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame;
- a stone monument in Cornwall, England;
- the Department of Homeland Security's highest honor, the Distinguished Public Service Medal, awarded posthumously; and
- the Presidential Citizens Medal, the second-highest civilian award, awarded posthumously.

It is fitting and proper for the State of New Jersey to designate May 27 of each year, Rick Rescorla's birthday, as "Rick Rescorla Day" to honor a decorated Vietnam veteran who made a valiant and selfless sacrifice on one of our nation's darkest days.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.