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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 512 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY DAVIS, GALLOWAY, DIGIROLAMO, BISHOP, MACKENZIE, BOYLE, BURNS, D. PARKER, MAJOR, BIZZARRO, VEREB, DRISCOLL, COHEN, BARRAR, MURT, DONATUCCI, CALTAGIRONE, SCHLOSSBERG, HENNESSEY, LONGIETTI, SCHWEYER, MARSICO, FARINA, MILLARD, GOODMAN, THOMAS, O'NEILL, YOUNGBLOOD, READSHAW, McNEILL, PASHINSKI, GIBBONS, WHEELAND, D. COSTA, PAYNE, ROSS, MAHONEY, GROVE, SCHREIBER, TOEPEL, TAYLOR, SAYLOR, RAPP, NEILSON, KORTZ, O'BRIEN, SANTARSIERO, KINSEY, CORBIN, KIM, FARRY, KOTIK, P. DALEY, M. DALEY, EVERETT, PHILLIPS-HILL, ROZZI, DAVIDSON, SAMUELSON, WARD AND NEUMAN, SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of September as "Code Green: First  
2 Responders Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month" in  
3 Pennsylvania.

4 WHEREAS, First responders, including law enforcement  
5 officers, firefighters and paramedics, routinely and  
6 courageously confront risk; and

7 WHEREAS, First responders draw on training and experience to  
8 make sound decisions in the middle of a crime scene, four-alarm  
9 fire or medical emergency and, when duty requires, experience  
10 horrors, trauma and loss that few, if any, can imagine; and

11 WHEREAS, For many years, the prevailing culture among first  
12 responders has been stoicism, any trauma a first responder had  
13 gone through was to be dealt with quietly, dealt with alone and  
14 the first responder was expected to return to work; and

1       WHEREAS, Thanks to efforts like The Code Green Campaign,  
2 after many decades that culture is changing; and

3       WHEREAS, The first responder community is learning that  
4 emotional health, in addition to physical health, is critical to  
5 readiness and that seeking support is a sign of strength and not  
6 weakness; and

7       WHEREAS, The Code Green Campaign was founded in March 2014 by  
8 a group of emergency medical services (EMS) professionals who  
9 had been growing increasingly concerned about the high rate of  
10 suicide among fellow first responders and the lack of discussion  
11 about mental health in general in the profession; and

12       WHEREAS, The Code Green Campaign takes its name from both the  
13 color of the mental health awareness ribbon and from the "code  
14 alerts" that EMS uses to designate an emergency patient, and by  
15 using the symbol of a code green, the idea is that first  
16 responders are calling a code alert on their own mental health;  
17 and

18       WHEREAS, The mission of The Code Green Campaign is to first  
19 bring awareness to the high rates of mental health issues among  
20 first responders and reduce them, then to eliminate the stigma  
21 that prevents people from admitting these issues exist and  
22 asking for help and also to educate first responders on self and  
23 peer care and finally to lobby for systemic change in how mental  
24 health issues are addressed by first responder agencies; and

25       WHEREAS, The campaign raises awareness by giving first  
26 responders an outlet to tell individual stories of mental health  
27 issues anonymously and republishing those stories so the stories  
28 can be viewed by everyone; and

29       WHEREAS, It also allows those who do not have first-hand  
30 experience with mental health issues to see that mental health

1 issues can affect anyone, which will hopefully decrease the  
2 stigma; and

3 WHEREAS, In the future, The Code Green Campaign hopes to be  
4 able to provide education to first responders, agencies and  
5 communities; and

6 WHEREAS, More information and additional resources about The  
7 Code Green Campaign, suicide prevention and suicide awareness  
8 can be found at [www.CodeGreenCampaign.org](http://www.CodeGreenCampaign.org); therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the  
10 month of September 2015 as "Code Green: First Responders Suicide  
11 Prevention and Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania; and be it  
12 further

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge all  
14 residents to better understand the behavioral health issues of  
15 first responders and recognize that when first responders take  
16 better care of themselves, they serve our community better; and  
17 be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to  
19 the Pennsylvania State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police, the  
20 Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, the Pennsylvania  
21 Emergency Medical Services Council and the Pennsylvania  
22 Professional Fire Fighters Association.