
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 107 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY J. WARD, MARTIN, BARTOLOTTA, FARNESE, FONTANA,
BREWSTER, GORDNER, STREET, PHILLIPS-HILL, BLAKE, DINNIMAN,
TARTAGLIONE, SANTARSIERO, K. WARD, FOLMER, REGAN, VOGEL,
BROWNE, SCHWANK, KILLION, YUDICHAK, BAKER, MENSCH, AUMENT,
MUTH AND COSTA, MAY 6, 2019

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, MAY 6, 2019

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing all Pennsylvania nurses who served with honor and
2 distinction during World War II, especially those who served
3 in Bataan and Corregidor.

4 WHEREAS, The week of May 6 through 12 is set aside each year
5 as a time to celebrate and recognize the nursing profession; and

6 WHEREAS, While the event formally honors all nurses across
7 this Commonwealth, Pennsylvania nurses who served during World
8 War II as members of the United States Army and Navy Nurse Corps
9 deserve special recognition; and

10 WHEREAS, World War II saw the service of 59,000 or more
11 American nurses; and

12 WHEREAS, On December 8, 1941, the story of these nurses
13 started while stationed in Army and Navy hospitals across the
14 Philippine islands; and

15 WHEREAS, The nurses provided continuous care for the wounded
16 during an attack, with little sleep and food and while enduring
17 bombing by Japanese Zeros; and

1 WHEREAS, In late December, the nurses were transferred to
2 Bataan due to the Japanese invasion of Manila; and

3 WHEREAS, In Bataan, the Army nurses established two
4 hospitals, the first of which performed 187 major surgeries in a
5 24-hour period during a fierce battle and was bombed twice,
6 resulting in numerous casualties; and

7 WHEREAS, The nurses in the second hospital, the first open-
8 air ward since the Civil War, endured contaminated water,
9 dwindling supply of food, disease and minimal medical supplies
10 while providing care; and

11 WHEREAS, Each hospital was built to accommodate 1,000
12 patients, but by the end of March 1942, treated over 5,000
13 patients with minimal staffing; and

14 WHEREAS, In the spring of 1942, the nurses were ordered to
15 the Island of Corregidor for the safety of the Malinta Tunnels,
16 built by the United States Army Corps of Engineers; and

17 WHEREAS, The tunnels served as an air raid shelter, a
18 warehouse for food and ammunition and housed a hospital set up
19 by the nurses; and

20 WHEREAS, It is noteworthy that in spite of being ordered to
21 Corregidor, many nurses refused to leave their patients, despite
22 knowledge of personal risk that may have occurred; and

23 WHEREAS, The nurses reluctantly left their patients only
24 under the condition of a direct order to evacuate; and

25 WHEREAS, On May 6, 1942, United States Lieutenant General
26 Jonathan Wainwright IV, surrendered to the Japanese and the
27 nurses became prisoners of war; and

28 WHEREAS, A total of 77 Army and Navy nurses were captured and
29 transported to the Santo Tomas Internment Camp in Manila; and

30 WHEREAS, The nurses created a hospital to care for their

1 incarcerated community and themselves; and

2 WHEREAS, The "Angels of Bataan" as they were referred to by
3 the men, or the "Battling Belles of Bataan," survived in
4 captivity for nearly three years without losing a single nurse
5 and were liberated by American forces on February 3, 1945; and

6 WHEREAS, Several Pennsylvania nurses: Major Adele F. Foremen
7 of Masten, Captain Clara L. Mueller of Philadelphia, First
8 Lieutenant Anna E. Williams of Harrisburg, Commander (honorary)
9 Margaret A. Nash of Wilkes-Barre and Captain Ann A. Bernatitus
10 of Exeter, along with their fellow nurse comrades, are deserving
11 of praise and honor; and

12 WHEREAS, The standards the nurses maintained form the
13 foundation of the proud and distinguished profession of nursing;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, The nurses exceeded what was expected of an officer
16 of the United States Army and Navy, served our country bravely
17 and deserve our utmost thanks and respect; therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize all Pennsylvania nurses
19 who served with honor and distinction during World War II,
20 especially those who served in Bataan and Corregidor.