
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 287 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, TEPLITZ, SABATINA, EICHELBERGER, COSTA,
DINNIMAN, SCAVELLO, FOLMER, ARGALL, VULAKOVICH, AUMENT,
SCHWANK, WOZNIAK, FONTANA, McILHINNEY, BARTOLOTTA, HAYWOOD,
YUDICHAK, WARD, RAFFERTY, HUTCHINSON, WHITE, FARNESE,
BOSCOLA, MENSCH AND RESCHENTHALER, FEBRUARY 10, 2016

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, FEBRUARY 10, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the birth of George Washington and honoring the
2 contributions he made to this country.

3 WHEREAS, George Washington was born on February 22, 1732, in
4 Bridges Creek, Westmoreland County, Virginia, to Mary and
5 Augustine Washington; and

6 WHEREAS, George Washington, a surveyor and a member of the
7 Virginia militia quickly became captain of the Virginia militia;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Washington's interest in the affairs of the colony
10 led him to seek a seat in the House of Burgesses. As tension
11 with England increased, he became a delegate to the First
12 Continental Congress; and

13 WHEREAS, The Second Continental Congress, assembled in
14 Philadelphia in May 1775 and presided over by John Hancock,
15 elected George Washington to become the first Commander of the
16 Continental Army; and

1 WHEREAS, The Continental Congress failed to form a national
2 navy. In 1775, Washington commissioned six privately owned
3 schooners, later known as "Washington's Secret Navy," to
4 intercept incoming British ships with much-needed supplies; and

5 WHEREAS, The schooners flew the "Washington Cruisers Flag,"
6 sometimes called the "Liberty Tree Flag," a white flag with an
7 evergreen tree in the middle with the words "An Appeal to
8 Heaven" stitched across it; and

9 WHEREAS, The idea to use this flag came from Colonel Joseph
10 Reed, an aide to General Washington. In a letter dated October
11 20, 1775, Colonel Reed described the "Washington Cruisers Flag"
12 that flew on the ships. The letter read in part, "Please to fix
13 upon some particular colour for a flag, and a signal by which
14 our vessels may know one another. What do you think of a flag
15 with a white ground, a tree in the middle, the motto "Appeal to
16 Heaven?" This is the flag of our floating batteries"; and

17 WHEREAS, In April 1776, the State of Massachusetts adopted a
18 similar flag for its own official navy. Its resolution for
19 operations read, "Resolved, that the uniforms of the officers be
20 green and white, and that the colors be a white flag, with a
21 green pine tree, and the inscription, 'An Appeal to Heaven'";
22 and

23 WHEREAS, The phrase "Appeal to Heaven" was a popular phrase
24 during and prior to the American Revolution representing the
25 colonists' trust in God to deliver them from the tyrannical
26 British government; and

27 WHEREAS, This phrase is thought to have come from English
28 philosopher John Locke's work, "Second Treatise of Government."
29 Locke wrote in part "The people have no other remedy in this, as
30 in all other cases where they have no judge on earth, but to

1 appeal to heaven"; and

2 WHEREAS, This phrase was emblazoned on George Washington's
3 Revolutionary War flag to remind those over whom it flew that
4 after all other alternatives of seeking justice have been
5 exhausted, only an "appeal to heaven" remains; and

6 WHEREAS, "Washington's Secret Navy" was so successful that it
7 inspired the creation of the United States Navy as we know it
8 today; and

9 WHEREAS, George Washington served as a general and commander
10 in chief of the colonial armies during the American Revolution
11 and because of his strategy, revolutionary forces captured two
12 major British armies at Saratoga in 1777 and Yorktown in 1781;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Elected as a delegate in 1787 to the Constitutional
15 Convention in Philadelphia, he served as the presiding officer
16 of the convention; and

17 WHEREAS, Following ratification of the new Constitution, in
18 the first national election, Washington was elected President of
19 the United States by a unanimous vote of the Electoral College,
20 serving from 1789 to 1797; and

21 WHEREAS, George Washington spent his first term establishing
22 the administrative and procedural features of the executive
23 branch, which includes the President's Cabinet and the
24 department agencies of the Federal Government, many of which are
25 still utilized today; and

26 WHEREAS, Washington was a natural leader and instrumental in
27 creating a united nation out of a conglomeration of struggling
28 colonies and territories and his birthday is a special day for
29 the United States of America; therefore be it

30 RESOLVED, That the Senate commemorate the birth of George

1 Washington and honor the contributions he made to this country.