



Legislation Text

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Recognizing and celebrating the 235th Anniversary of the Siege of Fort Mifflin, known as the “Valiant Defender of the Delaware,” and for its many roles in the security of the United States.

WHEREAS, In 1771, British Royal Engineer Captain John Montresor arrived in Philadelphia, charged with the task of designing river fortifications to defend the wealthy city which included an ambitious plan for a fort on Mud Island; and

WHEREAS, Plans for the fort went through several revisions and construction was begun but never completed by the British; and

WHEREAS, By 1776, the incomplete fort was in the hands of the Committee of Safety and was made ready to defend Philadelphia against the British; and

WHEREAS, By early fall 1777, the fort at Mud Island was named Fort Mifflin and approximately 200 men were garrisoned and charged with holding the British off “to the last extremity” so that General Washington and his army could successfully move into winter headquarters; and

WHEREAS, On the frozen, marshy ground within the walls of the stone and wood fort, The American Revolution produced a shining monument now made up of 400 men whose valiant efforts held the mighty British Navy at bay allowing Washington and his troops to arrive safely at Valley Forge while withstanding the largest bombardment of the Revolutionary War; and

WHEREAS, After a 10-day barrage by 209 British cannons, the garrison under the command of Major Simeon Thayer evacuated Fort Mifflin under the cover of nightfall with the exception of 40 men who remained behind to set fire to the remaining portions of the fort; and

WHEREAS, The garrison at Fort Mifflin may have been ultimately defeated, their defense of the site under extreme circumstances afforded General Washington and the Continental Army the time to safely establish winter headquarters in Valley Forge and therefore create a turning point in the Revolutionary War; and

WHEREAS, Fort Mifflin, forever after known as the “Valiant Defender of the Delaware” was reconstructed in the late 18th Century and continued to play many roles in the security of the United States to include being garrisoned in the War of 1812, a prison during the Civil War and munitions depot in World Wars I & II; and

WHEREAS, Fort Mifflin was decommissioned in 1954 and designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1970; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA That it hereby recognizes and celebrates the 235th Anniversary of the Siege of Fort Mifflin, known as the “Valiant Defender of the Delaware,” and for its many roles in the security of the United States.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Fort Mifflin on the

Delaware as sincere sentiments of this legislative body.