



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Congratulating William Beck on being formally awarded the Silver Star for his immeasurable contribution to one of the most significant and the first major engagement by the United States Army in the Vietnam War, the Battle of the Ia Drang Valley.

WHEREAS, Bill Beck was born in the Bronx, New York and grew up in Steelton, Pennsylvania, where he starred in football, basketball, and track and field at Steelton-Highspire High School; and

WHEREAS, Bill Beck earned a degree in Commercial Art from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh and worked at an advertising agency before completing basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina and advanced infantry training at Fort Benning, Georgia, then deploying to Vietnam; and

WHEREAS, Bill Beck was an assistant machine gunner with A Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) at Landing Zone X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley on the fateful morning of 14 November 1965; and

WHEREAS, Thousands of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regulars surrounded the battalion and waged a close-in, three-day, two-night battle resulting in heavy casualties on both sides; and

WHEREAS, Bill Beck fought, carried ammunition, tended to the wounded and ultimately took over the machine gun to single-handedly stave off the attacking NVA by putting up a wall of fire that kept an entire battalion of the NVA soldiers from exploiting a seam between two of the defending companies; and

WHEREAS, Without his stout defense, the North Vietnamese force would have overrun the landing zone perimeter and inflicted heavy casualties on his beloved unit; and

WHEREAS, After the war, Bill Beck resumed his career as a commercial artist and settled in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania with his wife, Jennifer; and

WHEREAS, Bill Beck remains in contact with his band of brothers with whom he experienced the crucible of combat; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby congratulate Bill Beck for his valor in the face of the enemy.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Mr. Beck as evidence of the sincere sentiments and recognition of this legislative body.