

Legislation Text

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Commemorating the unveiling of a statue of Corporal Michael J. Crescenzo, Philadelphia's only Medal of Honor Recipient of the Vietnam War, at the Philadelphia Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

WHEREAS, Michael Joseph Crescenzo was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on January 14, 1949 in the West Oak Lane section of the City and graduated from Cardinal Dougherty High School in 1966; and

WHEREAS, Michael Joseph Crescenzo enlisted in the United States Army in February 1968 and was sent to Vietnam in September 1968. He earned the rank of Corporal, serving in the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 196th Infantry Brigade. Cpl. Crescenzo was one of 646 Philadelphians who served in the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, On November 20, 1968, Cpl. Crescenzo was killed in action near Hiep Duc, Vietnam. That morning, his unit engaged a large, well-entrenched force of the North Vietnamese Army whose initial burst of fire pinned down the lead squad and killed the 2 point men, halting the advance of Company A. Immediately, Cpl. Crescenzo left the relative safety of his own position, seized a nearby machine gun and with complete disregard for his safety, charged 100 meters up a slope toward the enemy's bunkers which he effectively silenced, killing the 2 occupants of each. Undaunted by the withering machine gun fire around him, Cpl. Crescenzo courageously moved forward toward a third bunker which he also succeeded in silencing, killing 2 more of the enemy and momentarily clearing the route of advance for his comrades. Suddenly, intense machine gun fire erupted from an unseen, camouflaged bunker. Realizing the danger to his fellow soldiers, Cpl. Crescenzo disregarded the barrage of hostile fire directed at him and daringly advanced toward the position. Assaulting with his machine gun, Cpl. Crescenzo was within 5 meters of the bunker when he was mortally wounded by the fire from the enemy machine gun. As a direct result of his heroic actions, his company was able to maneuver freely with minimal danger and to complete its mission, defeating the enemy. Cpl. Crescenzo's bravery and extraordinary heroism at the cost of his life are in the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit and the U.S. Army; and

WHEREAS, On April 7, 1970, Cpl. Crescenzo was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Richard M. Nixon, making him the only Philadelphian to receive this honor for his service during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, Cpl. Crescenzo has his name inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. on Panel 38W, Line 016; and

WHEREAS, On April 24, 2016 an 8-foot bronze sculpture in the likeness of Cpl. Crescenzo will be unveiled and dedicated at the Philadelphia Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The statue was designed and sculpted by renowned

local sculptor Chad Fisher. The Michael J. Crescenzo Memorial Foundation, which is comprised of veterans, raised the necessary funds for this statue by December, 2014. The dedication ceremony will include remarks by Thomas Roberts, the President of the Michael J. Crescenzo Memorial Foundation, Charles Crescenzo, Michael's older brother and a former Marine who served in Vietnam and William 'Doc' Stafford, the medic who attempted to save Cpl. Crescenzo from his ultimately fatal wounds; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby commemorate the unveiling of a statue of Corporal Michael J. Crescenzo, Philadelphia's only Medal of Honor recipient of the Vietnam War, at the Philadelphia Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Michael J. Crescenzo Memorial Foundation, evidencing the sincere admiration and respect of this legislative body.