

AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION honoring the New Jersey National Guard.

WHEREAS, The men and women of the New Jersey National Guard have honorably served the people of this State since it was a colony, tracing their lineage to the unification of the provinces of East and West Jersey and the signing of the first Militia Act in 1704; and

WHEREAS, For more than 300 years of history, members of the New Jersey National Guard and the State militia, a direct predecessor, have served in every major conflict, at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS, In the throes of the Revolutionary War, the State's militia provided security and stability across New Jersey, combatting local Tories and British Loyalists while also providing support to the Continental Army under the command of General George Washington in battles at Trenton and Princeton; and

WHEREAS, When the Civil War broke out in 1860, New Jerseyans overwhelmingly responded to President Lincoln's call to action, sending the first full brigade of militia to defend Washington, D.C. and ultimately committing more than 70,000 New Jerseyans to the fight for freedom; and

WHEREAS, Following the war, in 1869, the State enacted a critical new piece of legislation to reorganize and consolidate the militia and the New Jersey Rifle Corps into what is now known as the New Jersey National Guard, forming a more modern State-based fighting force; and

WHEREAS, Through this reformation, the State incorporated African American men into the State's fighting force for the first time, established a regular training schedule, and better positioned the National Guard for the conflicts that lay ahead; and

WHEREAS, These reforms paid dividends when President Woodrow Wilson federalized New Jersey National Guard units and deployed them to the front lines in France during World War I, demonstrating that the guardsmen were prepared for combat, wherever and whenever called upon; and

WHEREAS, The New Jersey National Guard further demonstrated their capability and determination when multiple units were deployed to combat tyranny in Europe during World War II, including the 102nd Cavalry which landed at Omaha Beach on D-Day plus two and was instrumental in the liberation of Paris; and

WHEREAS, In 1948, the New Jersey National Guard made history in another sense when, following the adoption of a new State Constitution which expressly prohibited discrimination in military and civilian life, the New Jersey National Guard became the first federally recognized military component to integrate; and

WHEREAS, In the years since, men and women of all backgrounds have joined the New Jersey National Guard and served honorably in every modern conflict from Korea and Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, These servicemembers have also dedicated themselves to the betterment of their State and local communities, providing relief

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and emergency response in recent crises, including Hurricane Sandy and the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Today, more than 8,000 New Jerseyans serve in the National Guard, hailing from all parts of the State and all manner of backgrounds, united in service and sacrifice and the knowledge that they carry forth a tradition of honor and duty more than three centuries in the making; and

WHEREAS, The General Assembly recognizes the service of these brave soldiers and the sacrifices they and their families have made, acknowledges the great debt of gratitude each resident of this State owes to these outstanding men and women, and honors them for courageous and exemplary service; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. The General Assembly honors the legacy of the New Jersey National Guard and expresses its deep and profound gratitude to all New Jerseyans who have served this State and the United States in the National Guard.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the Governor, the Adjutant General, the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Veterans Affairs, and to the commanders and other ranking officers of the New Jersey National Guard.

STATEMENT

This Assembly resolution honors the legacy of the New Jersey National Guard and expresses its deep and profound gratitude to all New Jerseyans who have served this State and the United States in the National Guard.

The men and women of the New Jersey National Guard have honorably served the people of this State since it was a colony, tracing their lineage to the unification of the provinces of East and West Jersey and the signing of the first Militia Act in 1704. For more than 300 years of history, members of the New Jersey National Guard and the State militia, a direct predecessor, have served in every major conflict, at home and abroad.

In the throes of the Revolutionary War, the State's militia provided security and stability across New Jersey, combatting local Tories and British Loyalists while also providing support to the Continental Army under the command of General George Washington in battles at Trenton and Princeton.

When the Civil War broke out in 1860, New Jerseyans overwhelmingly responded to President Lincoln's call to action, sending the first full brigade of militia to defend Washington, D.C.

and ultimately committing more than 70,000 New Jerseyans to the fight for freedom. Following the war, in 1869, the State enacted a critical new piece of legislation to reorganize and consolidate the militia and the New Jersey Rifle Corps into what is now known as the New Jersey National Guard, forming a more modern State-based fighting force. Through this reformation, the State incorporated African American men into the State's fighting force for the first time, established a regular training schedule, and better positioned the National Guard for the conflicts that lay ahead.

These reforms paid dividends when President Woodrow Wilson federalized New Jersey National Guard units and deployed them to the front lines in France during World War I, demonstrating that the guardsmen were prepared for combat, wherever and whenever called upon. The New Jersey National Guard further demonstrated their capability and determination when multiple units were deployed to combat tyranny in Europe during World War II, including the 102nd Cavalry which landed at Omaha Beach on D-Day plus two and was instrumental in the liberation of Paris.

In 1948, the New Jersey National Guard made history in another sense when, following the adoption of a new State Constitution which expressly prohibited discrimination in military and civilian life, the New Jersey National Guard became the first federally recognized military component to integrate.

In the years since, men and women of all backgrounds have joined the New Jersey National Guard and served honorably in every modern conflict from Korea and Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan. These servicemembers have also dedicated themselves to the betterment of their State and local communities, providing relief and emergency response in recent crises, including Hurricane Sandy and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Today, more than 8,000 New Jerseyans serve in the National Guard, hailing from all parts of the State and all manner of backgrounds, united in service and sacrifice and the knowledge that they carry forth a tradition of honor and duty more than three centuries in the making.

Honors New Jersey National Guard.