

French Alliance Day in Delaware

DELAWARE LEGISLATURE JOINT RESOLUTION

LONG TITLE: DESIGNATING SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2003, AS FRENCH ALLIANCE DAY IN DELAWARE, TO COMMEMORATE THE SIGNING OF BOTH THE TREATY OF AMITY AND COMMERCE AND THE TREATY OF (MILITARY) ALLIANCE BY THE UNITED STATES WITH FRANCE IN PARIS ON FEBRUARY 6, 1778.

(introduced in the House on Jan 28, 2003; passed by the Senate on Jan 30, 2003)

SPONSOR: Rep. Smith & Sen. Cloutier; Rep. D. Ennis

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 142nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3

DESIGNATING SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2003, AS FRENCH ALLIANCE DAY IN DELAWARE, TO COMMEMORATE THE SIGNING OF BOTH THE TREATY OF AMITY AND COMMERCE AND THE TREATY OF (MILITARY) ALLIANCE BY THE UNITED STATES WITH FRANCE IN PARIS ON FEBRUARY 6, 1778.

WHEREAS, after years of increasing exploitation and denial of participation in governance, the people of the United States of America declared themselves free from the rule of Great Britain and its King in July, 1776; and

WHEREAS, during our war for independence, France assisted the United States from the earliest stages through military officers, engineers and supplies; and

WHEREAS, the young French patriot, the Marquis de Lafayette, came to America and upon winning the confidence of General George Washington was named an American General and led American forces in battle at Brandywine and in Virginia, fought alongside his men, was wounded, and gave financial support to the Continental Army; and

WHEREAS, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane and Arthur Lee -- representatives of the United States -- and Conrad Alexander Gerard -- the representative of Louis XVI of France -- signed two treaties on February 6, 1778, in Paris, one of friendship and commerce, recognizing the United States of America as an independent nation and a second of secret military alliance in which the two nations agreed to fight as allies in case war should break out between France and Great Britain; and

WHEREAS, French troops and fleets, aided by Spanish forces, faced and engaged British forces in Europe, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Indian theaters of war, bringing much pressure on Great Britain internationally, thus also helping our fight for independence; and

WHEREAS, Allied forces comprised of 9,000 soldiers under the command of French General Rochambeau, 8,000 soldiers under the command of American General Washington and 28,000 sailors under the command of French Admirals de Grasse and de Barras won a decisive victory for American independence by successfully beating off an attack by British Admiral Graves and besieging the troops of British General Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, with the surrender occurring on October 19, 1781; and

WHEREAS, French soldiers were aided by Delaware militia on their march south, fought alongside Delaware Continental soldiers at Yorktown, camped in our communities and towns when marching to and from Yorktown and were stationed in Wilmington for four months in 1782-83, where many chose to stay rather than return to Europe.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED that the citizens of Delaware, represented by their duly-elected House of Representatives of the 142nd General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the Senate concurring therein, stand united in a day of thanks to the citizens of France for pledging their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor in alliance with ours.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Delaware Legislature hereby declares Saturday, February 8, 2003, as FRENCH ALLIANCE DAY IN DELAWARE, and encourages the citizens of Delaware to participate in area events recognizing and commemorating the support of France and the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce and the Treaty of Alliance, which ensured that our fight against tyranny would succeed.

=====

See the Delaware Legislative Web site at <http://www.legis.state.de.us/Legislature.nsf>
This was both a House and a Senate "passed" Joint Resolution.