

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

GOVERNOR MURPHY SIGNS LEGISLATION DESIGNATING OCTOBER 3RD AS "SERGEANT DOMINICK PILLA AND CORPORAL JAMIE SMITH DAY"

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed SJR75 into law, which designates October 3rd of every year as "Sergeant Dominick Pilla and Corporal Jamie Smith Day." Sergeant Pilla and Corporal Smith were United States Army Rangers and residents of New Jersey. They were both tragically killed in Mogadishu, Somalia in the line of duty twenty-five years ago today.

"Sergeant Pilla and Corporal Smith served our country courageously and selflessly, protecting the people of our nation," **said Governor Murphy**. "It is my honor to sign this legislation and recognize the incredible service and sacrifice of these two heroic individuals."

United States Army Rangers Sergeant Pilla and Corporal Smith were deployed to Mogadishu, Somalia and died on October 3, 1993 during the Battle of Mogadishu. For their heroic acts, they were both given prestigious distinctions; Sergeant Pilla was awarded the Bronze Star with valor device and the Purple Heart and Corporal Smith was awarded the Bronze Star with valor device, an Oak Leaf Cluster, and a Purple Heart.

Sponsors of the legislation include Assemblymen Ryan Peters, Bruce Land, and Bob Andrzejczak, and Senator Troy Singleton.

"The men and women fighting for us in foreign lands are often nameless to the public. When they make the ultimate sacrifice, they deserve to be known," **said Assemblyman Peters**, who served multiple tours overseas as a Navy SEAL. "It's appropriate that we remember the names of these two New Jersey heroes and celebrate their courageous lives."

"We wanted to ensure that these soldiers' lives are forever commemorated in the state of New Jersey," **said Assemblyman Land**. "It is our way of keeping their memories alive and making sure that their service is never forgotten."

"These soldiers gave their lives to protect many of the liberties that we enjoy as Americans," **said Assemblyman Andrzejczak**. "This designation is our way of honoring their sacrifices, commitment and heroism."

"There is no higher honor in our military than to give one's life for their country," **said Senator Singleton**. "Sergeant Pilla and Corporal Smith, both of whom were New Jersey natives, embodied what it meant to be Army Rangers. Nearly 25 years ago, they sacrificed their lives during the Battle of Mogadishu in Somalia. I want to thank my colleague, Assemblyman Ryan Peters, for joining me in this bipartisan effort to designate October 3rd in their honor, which will ensure that these great men are never forgotten."

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