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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 324 Session of  
1990

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INTRODUCED BY ITKIN, PETRONE, J. L. WRIGHT, KAISER, ANGSTADT,  
GIGLIOTTI, CALTAGIRONE, TRICH, CARLSON, MAINE, PISTELLA,  
NAHILL, HERMAN, TRELLO, RYBAK, COWELL, EVANS, JACKSON,  
GODSHALL, WOGAN, MRKONIC, DALEY, McCALL, STISH, MELIO, FOX,  
DISTLER, LAUGHLIN, KENNEY, RAYMOND, DIETTERICK, WOZNIAK,  
PESCI, VEON, JOHNSON, FARMER, PRESTON, MORRIS, BLAUM, DeLUCA,  
O'BRIEN, HASAY, THOMAS, SEMMEL, KONDRICH, JOSEPHS, MAYERNIK,  
WILLIAMS, HESS, MURPHY, FREEMAN, McHALE, BURD, BILLOW,  
STABACK, E. Z. TAYLOR, BATTISTO, TELEK, BUNT, HALUSKA,  
PETRARCA, MICOZZIE AND BELARDI, MAY 21, 1990

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, MAY 21, 1990

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Establishing an optical program to assist the elderly as a  
2 legislative priority, to be created and funded as soon as  
3 State Lottery Fund moneys are sufficient to allow for  
4 payments for the program, and recommending that the  
5 Department of Aging administer the program.

6 WHEREAS, Approximately 19,500 elderly residents in this  
7 Commonwealth are blind, constituting 61% of the total blind  
8 population; and

9 WHEREAS, It is estimated that an additional 139,000 elderly  
10 residents have severe vision problems, constituting 86% of  
11 residents with these problems; and

12 WHEREAS, Routine eye examinations can provide early detection  
13 and possible prevention of blindness and serious vision  
14 problems, including cataracts and glaucoma; and

15 WHEREAS, Routine eye examinations can detect not only optical

1 problems but also hypertension, brain tumors, arteriosclerosis,  
2 diabetes and other systemic diseases; and

3 WHEREAS, These systemic diseases, if undetected and  
4 untreated, can become more serious and even life threatening;  
5 and

6 WHEREAS, In the long run, early detection of both optical and  
7 systemic diseases detected through eye examinations cannot only  
8 protect the health of the individual but can also be an  
9 important factor in health care cost containment; and

10 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has committed use of the State Lottery  
11 Fund to assist the needs of its 800,000 income-eligible senior  
12 citizens; therefore be it

13 RESOLVED (the Senate concurring), That the General Assembly  
14 establish as a legislative priority an optical program to assist  
15 the elderly, to be created by the legislature and funded under  
16 the State Lottery Fund when the fund reaches a point of  
17 stability which permits access to funds for new senior citizen  
18 assistance programs; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That when the optical program to assist the elderly  
20 is created, it be administered by the Department of Aging, and  
21 that the department establish regulations providing for  
22 reasonable reimbursement for eye examinations which are  
23 conducted and allowed at least biennially, for limits on  
24 eligibility based on annual income which are commensurate with  
25 limits for other senior citizen assistance programs, and for a  
26 copayment level and procedure.