
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 298 Session of
2001

INTRODUCED BY YUDICHAK, GEORGE, MANN, THOMAS, DERMODY, STABACK,
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MANDERINO, FORCIER, YOUNGBLOOD, McCALL, COLEMAN, L. I. COHEN,
DALLY, BELFANTI, HORSEY, BENNINGHOFF, DeLUCA, J. WILLIAMS,
WANSACZ, PRESTON, LUCYK, HARHART, R. STEVENSON, C. WILLIAMS,
CIVERA, ROHRER, SEMMEL AND KELLER, OCTOBER 1, 2001

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, OCTOBER 1, 2001

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing December 15, 2001, as "Bill of Rights Day," in
2 Pennsylvania, encouraging all governmental bodies in the
3 State to observe the day in a manner that brings to mind its
4 meaning and importance and declaring that the Bill of Rights
5 be read in all public schools, government meetings,
6 courtrooms on that date and on the first legislative session
7 day following that date in the House of Representatives.

8 WHEREAS, The first ten amendments to the Constitution of the
9 United States are referred to as the Bill of Rights, limit the
10 powers of the Federal Government and are set forth as follows:

ARTICLE I

12 Freedom of Religion, Speech and Press. Right of Petition.
13 Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of
14 religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging

1 the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the
2 people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for
3 a redress of grievances.

4 ARTICLE II

5 Right of People to Bear Arms. A well regulated Militia, being
6 necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the
7 people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

8 ARTICLE III

9 Quartering of Troops. No Soldier shall, in time of peace be
10 quartered in any house, without consent of the Owner, nor in
11 time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

12 ARTICLE IV

13 Persons and Houses to be Secure From Unreasonable Searches
14 and Seizures. The right of the people to be secure in their
15 persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable
16 searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants
17 shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or
18 affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be
19 searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

20 ARTICLE V

21 Trials for Crimes. Compensation for Private Property Taken
22 for Public Use. No person shall be held to answer for a capital,
23 or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or
24 indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land
25 or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in
26 time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject
27 for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or
28 limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a
29 witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or
30 property, without due process of law; nor shall private property

1 be taken for public use, without just compensation.

2 ARTICLE VI

3 Rights of Accused Persons in Criminal Prosecutions. In all
4 criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a
5 speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and
6 district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which
7 district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to
8 be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be
9 confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory
10 process for obtaining Witnesses in his favor, and to have the
11 Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

12 ARTICLE VII

13 Rights in Civil Suits. In Suits at common law, where the
14 value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of
15 trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury,
16 shall be otherwise reexamined in any Court of the United States,
17 than according to the rules of the common law.

18 ARTICLE VIII

19 Excessive Bail, Fines and Punishments Prohibited. Excessive
20 bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor
21 cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

22 ARTICLE IX

23 Reserved Rights of People. The enumeration in the
24 Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny
25 or disparage others retained by the people.

26 ARTICLE X

27 Powers not Delegated, Reserved to States and People. The
28 powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution,
29 nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States
30 respectively, or to the people;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, The Bill of Rights recognizes, affirms and protects
3 fundamental human and civil rights for which persons of all
4 races have struggled for thousands of years; and

5 WHEREAS, Several of the original states refused to ratify the
6 Constitution without an express Bill of Rights; and

7 WHEREAS, The Bill of Rights secures our freedom to speak,
8 print, read, assemble, pray, petition the Government and keep
9 and bear arms; protects us from unreasonable arrests, searches,
10 excessive bail, double jeopardy, coerced confessions and cruel
11 and unusual punishment; and secures our rights to due process,
12 jury trials and counsel and to confront witnesses; and

13 WHEREAS, The Bill of Rights is integral to the American way
14 of life, and America's civic holidays, Presidents' Day,
15 Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Memorial Day and
16 Thanksgiving, all remind us of the special contributions and
17 sacrifices made by our forefathers and leaders to preserve,
18 protect and extend our freedoms; and

19 WHEREAS, The Bill of Rights energizes our military defense
20 because American servicepersons swear an oath to preserve and
21 defend the Constitution of the United States, which includes the
22 Bill of Rights; and

23 WHEREAS, When American military personnel fight and die for
24 our country, they do so to protect our rights and freedoms under
25 the Bill of Rights; and

26 WHEREAS, "Bill of Rights Day" would prevent the study of the
27 Bill of Rights from being neglected and, since many Americans do
28 not know the Bill of Rights, would encourage our schools to
29 instruct children about this aspect of our American heritage;
30 and

WHEREAS, "Bill of Rights Day" would declare to the world
America's commitment to fundamental human rights; and

WHEREAS, Just as celebrating religious holidays reminds
Americans of their religious beliefs and traditions, "Bill of
Rights Day" reminds Americans of the manner in which history and
philosophy have secured the rights for which oppressed people
everywhere still yearn; and

WHEREAS, "Bill of Rights Day" is a memorial day honoring the
personal sacrifices and deaths of countless millions of people
who have struggled for basic human and civil rights over
thousands of years; and

WHEREAS, "Bill of Rights Day" reminds elected and appointed
officials and employees of executive, legislative and judicial
branches of State and local governments that their authority and
powers are limited; and

WHEREAS, "Bill of Rights Day" reminds all members of
government that they serve, not rule, the citizens and that the
citizens always hold the right to restrain government; and

WHEREAS, The rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Bill of
Rights deserve perennial celebrations, and the sacrifices made
to protect the Bill of Rights deserve eternal remembrance; and

WHEREAS, The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United
States was ratified on December 15, 1791; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize
December 15, 2001, as "Bill of Rights Day" in Pennsylvania; and
be it further

RESOLVED, That all governmental bodies in this Commonwealth
be encouraged to observe "Bill of Rights Day" in a manner that
brings to mind the meaning and importance of each of the ten
provisions contained therein, including the reading of the Bill

1 of Rights in all State and local government meetings and
2 courtrooms convening that day; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That on "Bill of Rights Day," the Secretary of
4 Education call upon each primary and secondary public and
5 private school to proclaim and celebrate "Bill of Rights Day" on
6 December 15 and that the Bill of Rights be read in all public
7 schools; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That on the first legislative session day following
9 "Bill of Rights Day," the Bill of Rights be read aloud in its
10 entirety in the House of Representatives and that the Senate be
11 urged to do likewise.