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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 177 Session of  
2005

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INTRODUCED BY ARMSTRONG, BARRAR, BENNINGHOFF, BIRMELIN, BOYD,  
CALTAGIRONE, CLYMER, CRAHALLA, CREIGHTON, FAIRCHILD, FICHTER,  
FORCIER, GABIG, GILLESPIE, GINGRICH, GOODMAN, HERSHEY, JAMES,  
W. KELLER, KILLION, LEH, METCALFE, R. MILLER, MUSTIO,  
PALLONE, PHILLIPS, READSHAW, ROBERTS, ROHRER, SCAVELLO,  
SCHRODER, SHANER, STERN, R. STEVENSON, E. Z. TAYLOR, TRUE,  
WILT, YOUNGBLOOD AND DENLINGER, MARCH 29, 2005

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, MARCH 29, 2005

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## A RESOLUTION

1 Establishing a select committee to examine the academic  
2 atmosphere and the degree to which faculty have the  
3 opportunity to instruct and students have the opportunity to  
4 learn in an environment conducive to the pursuit of knowledge  
5 and truth at State-related and State-owned colleges and  
6 universities and community colleges in this Commonwealth.

7 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives establish a  
8 select committee of seven members, four from the majority party  
9 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and  
10 three from the minority party appointed by the Minority Leader,  
11 to examine, study and inform the House of Representatives on  
12 matters relating to the academic atmosphere and the degree to  
13 which faculty have the opportunity to instruct and students have  
14 the opportunity to learn in an environment conducive to the  
15 pursuit of knowledge and truth and the expression of independent  
16 thought at State-related and State-owned colleges, universities  
17 and community colleges, including, but not limited to, whether:

1           (1) faculty are hired, fired, promoted and granted  
2     tenure based on their professional competence and subject  
3     matter knowledge and, in the humanities, social sciences and  
4     arts, with a view of helping students explore and understand  
5     various methodologies and perspectives;

6           (2) students have an academic environment, quality life  
7     on campus and reasonable access to affordable course  
8     materials that create an environment conducive to learning,  
9     the development of critical thinking and the exploration and  
10    expression of independent thought and that the students are  
11    evaluated based on their subject knowledge or ability to  
12    defend their perspective in various courses; and

13          (3) academic freedom and the right to explore and  
14    express independent thought is available to and practiced  
15    freely by faculty and students;

16 and be it further

17     RESOLVED, That the Speaker of the House of Representatives  
18     appoint the chairman of the committee from among the members of  
19     the committee, that committee vacancies not affect the power of  
20     the remaining members to execute committee functions and that  
21     committee vacancies be filled in the same manner as the original  
22     appointment; and be it further

23     RESOLVED, That the committee may hold hearings, take  
24     testimony and conduct investigations within this Commonwealth as  
25     necessary, each committee member having the power to administer  
26     oaths and affirmations to witnesses appearing before the  
27     committee; and be it further

28     RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk, with the Speaker's approval,  
29     pay for the reasonable, appropriate and proper expenses incurred  
30     by the committee; and be it further

1       RESOLVED, That the committee make a report of its findings  
2   and any recommendations for remedial legislation and other  
3   appropriate action by June 30, 2006, and that the committee may  
4   extend the investigation for additional time, if necessary, but  
5   no later than November 30, 2006.