

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

## HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 177 Session of  
2005

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

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, JUNE 30, 2005

## 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~~

12 WHEREAS, ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY ARE <—  
13 VALUES INDISPENSABLE TO THE AMERICAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES;  
14 AND

15 WHEREAS, FROM ITS FIRST FORMULATION IN THE GENERAL REPORT OF  
16 THE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TENURE OF THE AMERICAN

1 ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS, THE CONCEPT OF ACADEMIC  
2 FREEDOM HAS BEEN PREMISED ON THE IDEA THAT HUMAN KNOWLEDGE IS A  
3 NEVER-ENDING PURSUIT OF THE TRUTH, THAT THERE IS NO HUMANLY  
4 ACCESSIBLE TRUTH THAT IS NOT, IN PRINCIPLE, OPEN TO CHALLENGE,  
5 AND THAT NO PARTY OR INTELLECTUAL FACTION HAS A MONOPOLY ON  
6 WISDOM; AND

7 WHEREAS, ACADEMIC FREEDOM IS LIKELY TO THRIVE IN AN  
8 ENVIRONMENT OF INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY THAT PROTECTS AND FOSTERS  
9 INDEPENDENCE OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH; AND

10 WHEREAS, STUDENTS AND FACULTY SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM THE  
11 IMPOSITION OF IDEOLOGICAL ORTHODOXY, AND FACULTY MEMBERS HAVE  
12 THE RESPONSIBILITY TO NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR AUTHORITY  
13 POSITION TO INTRODUCE INAPPROPRIATE OR IRRELEVANT SUBJECT MATTER  
14 OUTSIDE THEIR FIELD OF STUDY; THEREFORE BE IT

15 RESOLVED, THAT A SELECT COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THE  
16 SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE,  
17 PLUS ONE MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF  
18 REPRESENTATIVES AND ONE MEMBER APPOINTED BY THE MINORITY LEADER  
19 OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, examine, study and inform the  
20 House of Representatives on matters relating to the academic  
21 atmosphere and the degree to which faculty have the opportunity  
22 to instruct and students have the opportunity to learn in an  
23 environment conducive to the pursuit of knowledge and truth and  
24 the expression of independent thought at State-related and  
25 State-owned colleges, universities and community colleges,  
26 including, but not limited to, whether:

27 (1) faculty are hired, fired, promoted and granted  
28 tenure based on their professional competence and subject  
29 matter knowledge and, ~~in the humanities, social sciences and~~  
30 ~~arts,~~ with a view of helping students explore and understand

<—

various methodologies and perspectives;

(2) students have an academic environment, quality life on campus and reasonable access to affordable course

materials that create an environment conducive to learning, the development of critical thinking and the exploration and expression of independent thought and that the students are evaluated based on their subject knowledge ~~or ability to~~ defend their perspective in various courses; and

(3) THAT STUDENTS ARE GRADED BASED ON ACADEMIC MERIT, WITHOUT REGARD FOR IDEOLOGICAL VIEWS, AND THAT academic freedom and the right to explore and express independent thought is available to and practiced freely by faculty and students;

and be it further

RESOLVED, That the ~~Speaker~~ CHAIRMAN OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE of the House of Representatives ~~appoint the chairman of the committee from among the members of the~~ SHALL BE CHAIRMAN OF THE SELECT committee, that committee vacancies not affect the power of the remaining members to execute committee functions and that committee vacancies be filled in the same manner as the original appointment; and be it further

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

RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk, with the Speaker's approval, pay for the reasonable, appropriate and proper expenses incurred 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.