

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 68

Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY RAMALEY, GERGELY, GIBBONS, WAGNER, KING,
BENNINGTON, BIANCUCCI, BUXTON, CALTAGIRONE, COSTA, CURRY,
DeLUCA, EVERETT, FAIRCHILD, GINGRICH, GRELL, HARHAI,
HENNESSEY, KOTIK, LEVDANSKY, MACKERETH, McILHATTAN, MUSTIO,
NAILOR, PETRARCA, PETRONE, READSHAW, REED, SANTONI, SCAVELLO,
SCHRODER, SOLOBAY, SONNEY, SWANGER, TRUE, VULAKOVICH, WALKO,
WANSACZ, WHEATLEY, WOJNAROSKI, YUDICHAK AND FABRIZIO,
FEBRUARY 9, 2007

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, FEBRUARY 9, 2007

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Establishing a bipartisan commission to conduct a comprehensive
2 study of the impact of reducing the size of the General
3 Assembly.

4 WHEREAS, Under section 16 of Article II of the Constitution
5 of Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth is divided into 50 senatorial
6 and 203 representative districts; and

7 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is the sixth most populous state and
8 ranks seventh in constituents per Senate district and fourteenth
9 in constituents per House district in the nation; and

10 WHEREAS, Many Pennsylvanians have expressed support for
11 reducing the number of legislative districts in this
12 Commonwealth; and

13 WHEREAS, Several bills proposing to amend the Constitution of
14 Pennsylvania to reduce the size of the General Assembly have
15 been introduced; and

1 WHEREAS, These bills vary greatly in the scope of proposed
2 reductions to the size of the General Assembly, ranging from
3 radical to modest reductions; and

4 WHEREAS, Data has been collected to show how much
5 Commonwealth taxpayers currently spend on the General Assembly,
6 including its members, staff and other operational support; and

7 WHEREAS, Various interested parties have used this data to
8 suggest a savings by reducing the size of the General Assembly,
9 but there has been no comprehensive study of potential savings
10 and other issues relating to downsizing the General Assembly;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Information and studies cited by some who seek to
13 reduce the size of the General Assembly are based on other
14 states' particular circumstances and experiences and thus may
15 not be completely relevant to the Commonwealth's unique
16 conditions; and

17 WHEREAS, While the potential benefits of reducing the number
18 of legislative districts in this Commonwealth include cost
19 savings for Pennsylvania taxpayers, a streamlined legislative
20 process and enhanced participation in the process by all
21 legislators and their constituents, possible downsides include
22 less representation for rural areas, difficulty accessing
23 constituent services in larger districts, more expensive
24 political campaigns and increased power in the hands of
25 lobbyists and special interests; and

26 WHEREAS, It is necessary to collect appropriate and
27 applicable information on the potential impact of legislative
28 downsizing, given the significant effect that a reduction in the
29 size of the General Assembly would have on the Commonwealth's
30 government and residents; therefore be it

1 RESOLVED (the Senate concurring), That the General Assembly
2 establish a bipartisan commission to conduct a comprehensive
3 study of the current number of legislative districts within this
4 Commonwealth, proposals to amend the Constitution of
5 Pennsylvania to reduce the size of the General Assembly and the
6 potential impact of the proposed reduction on cost, constituent
7 services, work performed by members and staff, legislative
8 effectiveness and efficiency and representation of constituent
9 interests; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the commission review and analyze information
11 relating to the Commonwealth specifically and to other state
12 legislatures generally when conducting the study; and be it
13 further

14 RESOLVED, That the commission review and consider information
15 relating to the following questions when analyzing the current
16 number of legislative districts within this Commonwealth and
17 proposals to reduce the size of the General Assembly and when
18 making recommendations regarding the proposed downsizing of the
19 legislature:

20 (1) Whether a reduction in the size of the General
21 Assembly would result in a cost savings for Pennsylvania
22 taxpayers.

23 (2) Whether a reduction in the size of the General
24 Assembly would lead to an increase or a decrease in the size
25 of the staff complement.

26 (3) How a reduction in the size of the General Assembly
27 affects constituent services and the ability of legislators
28 to effectively represent constituent interests.

29 (4) Whether there is an optimal size for a
30 representative district and a senatorial district in this

1 Commonwealth.

2 (5) How a reduction in the size of the General Assembly
3 affects the legislative process;

4 and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the commission be comprised of members as
6 follows:

7 (1) The Speaker of the House of Representatives or a
8 designee who is a member of the House of Representatives.

9 (2) The Minority Leader of the House of Representatives
10 or a designee who is a member of the House of
11 Representatives.

12 (3) The President pro tempore of the Senate or a
13 designee who is a member of the Senate.

14 (4) The Minority Leader of the Senate or a designee who
15 is a member of the Senate.

16 (5) The Governor or his designee.

17 (6) The Attorney General or his designee.

18 (7) One person, to be appointed by the Speaker of the
19 House of Representatives, with expertise in Pennsylvania
20 constitutional law.

21 (8) One person, to be appointed by the Minority Leader
22 of the House of Representatives, with expertise in
23 Pennsylvania constitutional law.

24 (9) One person, to be appointed by the President pro
25 tempore of the Senate, with expertise in Pennsylvania
26 constitutional law.

27 (10) One person, to be appointed by the Minority Leader
28 of the Senate, with expertise in Pennsylvania constitutional
29 law.

30 (11) Four persons with expertise in the area of

1 Pennsylvania government and the legislative process, to be
2 appointed by the Governor;
3 and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That appointments to the commission be made within
5 30 days of the adoption of this resolution by the House of
6 Representatives and the Senate; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the bipartisan commission report its findings
8 and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than
9 November 1, 2008.