

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 343 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY WATERS, BISHOP, OLIVER, PAYTON, ADOLPH, BELFANTI, BRENNAN, CALTAGIRONE, CLYMER, CRUZ, DALEY, EACHUS, FABRIZIO, FRANKEL, FREEMAN, GEIST, GEORGE, GERBER, GRUCELA, HANNA, HARHAI, HARKINS, HERSHEY, JAMES, JOSEPHS, KIRKLAND, MAHONEY, MANN, MCGEEHAN, MOYER, MURT, M. O'BRIEN, PALLONE, PASHINSKI, PAYNE, RAMALEY, READSHAW, REICHLEY, SCAVELLO, SCHRODER, SHIMKUS, SIPTROTH, STABACK, TANGRETTI, THOMAS, WAGNER, WALKO, WILLIAMS AND YOUNGBLOOD, JUNE 21, 2007

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
JUNE 21, 2007

A RESOLUTION

1 Discouraging the use of the "N" word.

2 WHEREAS, The word "nigger" stems from the Latin word "niger"
3 meaning the color black; and

4 WHEREAS, The "N" word when used as a noun derogatorily refers
5 to a person of color; and

6 WHEREAS, The "N" word has traditionally been used as a word
7 of hate and victimization towards African Americans; and

8 WHEREAS, The "N" word, considered to be the ultimate racial
9 slur, has offended and disparaged African Americans and other
10 ethnic groups; and

11 WHEREAS, The "N" word was used by slavemasters, dating from
12 1786 in reference to African slaves, to denote chattel and has a
13 context of hatred, oppression and violence; and

14 WHEREAS, Civil rights pioneer Booker T. Washington advocated

1 the use of the word "Negro," instead of the epithetical "N"
2 word, to refer to persons of African descent; and

3 WHEREAS, The "N" word connotes an individual who is ignorant,
4 slow, does not speak proper English and who is the property of
5 another, as cemented by the portrayal of African Americans in
6 19th and early 20th century art and literature; and

7 WHEREAS, The "N" word tears down the esteem and destroys the
8 spirit of persons at whom it is directed; and

9 WHEREAS, Since the beginning of the civil rights era, civil
10 rights leaders such as Rosa Parks, the Reverend Dr. Martin
11 Luther King, Jr., Julian Bond, Dr. John Davis, Malcom X, the
12 Reverend Jesse Jackson, Justice Thurgood Marshall and Booker T.
13 Washington have given their blood, sweat and tears to destroy
14 the badges and the incidence of slavery; and

15 WHEREAS, The African-American community remains divided on
16 the use of the "N" word in modern discourse; and

17 WHEREAS, In 2003 the National Association for the Advancement
18 of Colored People (NAACP) successfully influenced Merriam-
19 Webster lexicographers to change the definition of the word to
20 reflect the degradation and disgrace associated with it; and

21 WHEREAS, The City of New York has recently enacted a
22 nonbinding resolution to declare a symbolic moratorium on the
23 use of the "N" word; and

24 WHEREAS, Other municipalities, states and the Congress of the
25 United States are considering similar resolutions; and

26 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has a long and
27 proud history of being at the forefront of civil rights, dating
28 back to its founding by William Penn; therefore be it

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives discourage the
30 use of the "N" word and join in declaring a symbolic moratorium

- 1 on the use of the "N" word and all its variants in this
- 2 Commonwealth.