THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 318 Session of 2009

INTRODUCED BY CURRY, BEYER, BRENNAN, DiGIROLAMO, FLECK, GEIST, HARRIS, HENNESSEY, HESS, HUTCHINSON, McCALL, MELIO, M. O'BRIEN, SIPTROTH, K. SMITH, VULAKOVICH, YOUNGBLOOD AND MURT, FEBRUARY 9, 2009

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, FEBRUARY 9, 2009

AN ACT

1 Selecting, designating and adopting the Eastern Box Turtle
2   (Terrapene carolina carolina) as the official reptile for the
3   Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

4   WHEREAS, Turtles have lived on Earth for over 250 million

5 years; and

6   WHEREAS, Reptiles, such as the Eastern Box Turtle, have lived

7 in abundance in Pennsylvania; and

8   WHEREAS, The scientific name for the Eastern Box Turtle is

9 Terrapene carolina carolina; and

10   WHEREAS, The Eastern Box Turtle was given the name of "box

11 turtle" for its unique ability to hinge its lower shell and pull

12 its entire body into its shell, sealing itself tighter than a

13 box; and

14   WHEREAS, Recently, the number of Eastern Box Turtles in

15 Pennsylvania has begun to decrease, prompting the Pennsylvania

16 Fish and Boat Commission to place restrictions on the number of

17 turtles taken from the wild to two turtles per person, per day;

1 and

2   WHEREAS, The loss of habitat, pollution, being taken for the

3 retail pet trade, killed by vehicles, predators eating turtle

4 eggs, and the inability to locate mates have severely decreased

5 the Pennsylvania turtle population; and

6   WHEREAS, By raising the awareness of the Eastern Box Turtle's

7 plight, we can save the Eastern Box Turtle and other reptiles in

8 Pennsylvania.

9   The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. Designation of the official reptile of the

12   Commonwealth.

13   The Eastern Box Turtle or Terrapene carolina carolina is

14 hereby selected, designated and adopted as the official reptile

15 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

16 Section 2. Effective date.

17   This act shall take effect immediately.