

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 51 Session of 2011

INTRODUCED BY D. O'BRIEN, CALTAGIRONE, D. COSTA, FRANKEL, KORTZ, MURT, STURLA, VULAKOVICH AND WAGNER, FEBRUARY 2, 2011

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, FEBRUARY 2, 2011

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct an
2 in-depth study focusing on creating a nonpartisan interbranch
3 institute to assist policymakers, particularly in the
4 legislature, in making informed judgments about significant,
5 long-term criminal justice issues facing this Commonwealth;
6 and requiring a report.

7 WHEREAS, State funding for criminal justice matters comprises
8 a large percentage of the Commonwealth's annual budget; and

9 WHEREAS, Emerging research on best practices indicates that
10 interbranch strategic planning saves public dollars and improves
11 delivery of public services by reducing redundancy and
12 increasing government efficiency; and

13 WHEREAS, In order to improve the overall decision-making
14 process and increase efficiency for criminal justice matters in
15 this Commonwealth, it is imperative to create a long-term
16 strategic plan that involves participation and input from all
17 branches of government; and

18 WHEREAS, This strategic planning effort should take into
19 consideration the operational needs of State, county and local
20 justice agencies, as well as short-term and long-term trends

1 affecting the justice system overall; and

2 WHEREAS, The strategic planning effort should document
3 specific goals and measurable objectives for the criminal
4 justice system as a whole; and

5 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth's higher education institutions
6 are a source of knowledge that can be applied to solving the
7 Commonwealth's economic and social problems; and

8 WHEREAS, Commissions, agencies and higher education
9 institutions that presently conduct studies on policy issues for
10 the legislative, executive and judicial branches could save
11 taxpayer dollars by working together in a more cooperative and
12 coordinated effort; therefore be it

13 RESOLVED (the Senate concurring), That the House of
14 Representatives direct the Joint State Government Commission to
15 conduct an in-depth study into creating a nonpartisan
16 interbranch institute to assist policymakers, particularly in
17 the legislature, in making informed judgments about significant,
18 long-term criminal justice issues facing this Commonwealth; and
19 be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission be
21 authorized to create a task force and an advisory committee to
22 assist the task force in this undertaking; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the task force be comprised of individuals
24 representing the interests of the legislative, executive and
25 judicial branches; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission endeavor
27 to include individuals on the task force from criminal justice
28 stakeholder groups, such as crime victims groups, district
29 attorneys associations, county associations and prison wardens
30 associations; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the study address the need for cost benefits
2 analysis of ongoing efforts as part of the long-term plan and
3 should also include a feasibility study showing the pros and
4 cons of implementing a plan similar to the Washington State
5 Institute for Public Policy; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing, the
7 Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, the Legislative Office
8 for Research Liaison, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and
9 Delinquency, the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts
10 and the Commonwealth's higher education institutions be
11 encouraged to assist in this endeavor; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the task force be authorized to hold public
13 hearings, take testimony and take other actions that assist in
14 this endeavor; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission compile
16 a report based on the findings and recommendations of the task
17 force and submit the report to the General Assembly as soon as
18 possible but no later than one year following the adoption of
19 this resolution.