
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 1032 Session of
2014

INTRODUCED BY BENNINGHOFF, V. BROWN, CALTAGIRONE, D. COSTA,
GINGRICH, GRELL, JAMES, W. KELLER, KILLION, KIM, KORTZ,
LONGIETTI, MAHONEY, MARSICO, MURT, PAINTER, PEIFER, PICKETT,
READSHAW, ROCK, SAYLOR, SCHLOSSBERG, THOMAS, TOOHL, WATSON,
YOUNGBLOOD, GROVE AND COHEN, SEPTEMBER 22, 2014

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, SEPTEMBER 22, 2014

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to study, in
2 consultation with an advisory committee, the issue of truancy
3 and school dropout prevention in this Commonwealth.

4 WHEREAS, Chronic truancy and school dropout rates continue to
5 be critical problems nationally and in this Commonwealth, and
6 educators, parents, community leaders and policymakers at all
7 levels of government have focused attention on the need to
8 address the academic achievement gap and the declining high
9 school graduation rate; and

10 WHEREAS, Students who have unexcused absences from school and
11 become truant are more likely to fail to maintain academic pace
12 with their peers and to be at risk of dropping out of school;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Research indicates that truancy is a barrier to
15 opportunities for future employment success and contributes to
16 involvement in drug use, daytime crime and violence; and

17 WHEREAS, Adopting court performance measures for children in

1 foster care may provide educational stability and success; and

2 WHEREAS, Current truancy policy and laws may not apply
3 equally to all public schools, as the enforcement standards
4 differ for traditional school districts and for charter and
5 cyber charter schools; and

6 WHEREAS, Current truancy penalties may need further scrutiny
7 and revision, as penalties and practices may not be effective at
8 curtailing truancy; and

9 WHEREAS, The current collection of truancy data may be
10 insufficient; and

11 WHEREAS, Schools, law enforcement, parents and courts may
12 have insufficient authority to deal with truancy issues; and

13 WHEREAS, Current detention programs for truants may not be
14 effective; therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
16 State Government Commission to do the following:

17 (1) Conduct a comprehensive study of the issues of
18 truancy and school dropout prevention in this Commonwealth.

19 (2) Establish an advisory committee comprised of
20 representatives of the Department of Education, educational
21 organizations, the judiciary, district attorneys, law
22 enforcement, public organizations involved in truancy issues
23 and other organizations selected by the Joint State
24 Government Commission to consult with the Joint State
25 Government Commission in conducting the study;

26 and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the study to be conducted by the Joint State
28 Government Commission include, but not be limited to, the
29 following:

30 (1) A thorough and comprehensive study of current

1 truancy laws and policy.

2 (2) Barriers and best practices regarding education
3 success and stability.

4 (3) Court competencies.

5 (4) Data collection.

6 (5) Measurement of educational outcomes for children in
7 foster care.

8 (6) Statutes, best practices and legislative initiatives
9 in other states.

10 (7) Studies or initiatives promoted by national
11 educational advocacy organizations relating to truancy.

12 (8) Specific enforcement in charter and cyber charter
13 schools be reviewed by charter and cyber charter operatives;
14 and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission hold
16 informational meetings to receive testimony from professionals
17 or organizations with expertise in truancy and truancy
18 prevention; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission issue a
20 report of its findings and recommendations to the House of
21 Representatives not later than one year after the date of
22 adoption of this resolution.