
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 707 Session of
2018

INTRODUCED BY KINSEY, DEAN, DONATUCCI, MILLARD, NEILSON,
READSHAW, DIGIROLAMO, ROTHMAN, GREINER, PASHINSKI, THOMAS,
HENNESSEY, PICKETT, BURNS, DAVIS, CHARLTON, MURT, LONGIETTI,
DRISCOLL, YOUNGBLOOD, A. DAVIS, WARREN, SCHWEYER, BULLOCK,
O'NEILL, SCHLEGEL CULVER, HILL-EVANS, KIRKLAND AND MARSICO,
MARCH 6, 2018

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
MARCH 6, 2018

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of March 2018 as "Disabilities Awareness
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On October 27, 1955, the Pennsylvania General
4 Assembly passed the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, which
5 prohibited discrimination in the areas of employment, housing,
6 and public accommodations on the basis of race, color, familial
7 status, religious creed, ancestry, handicap or disability, age,
8 sex and national origin; and

9 WHEREAS, On September 26, 1973, the Congress of the United
10 States passed the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which was the
11 precursor to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act
12 of 1990, and prohibited the Federal Government, as an employer,
13 from discriminating against qualified individuals with
14 disabilities; and

15 WHEREAS, On July 26, 1990, President George H. W. Bush signed

1 into law the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA),
2 which served as the world's first comprehensive civil rights law
3 for individuals with disabilities; and

4 WHEREAS, According to the United States Census Bureau, nearly
5 1 in 5 individuals, or approximately 56.7 million individuals,
6 in the United States have a disability; and

7 WHEREAS, In this Commonwealth, approximately 14.4%, or an
8 estimated 1.8 million residents under 65 years of age, have a
9 disability; and

10 WHEREAS, According to data obtained from the 2016 American
11 Community Survey, the prevalence of disability in this
12 Commonwealth by race was 11.7% among whites, 14.2% among those
13 of Hispanic or Latino origin, 16.7% among black or African
14 Americans, 17.1% among individuals of other races and 29.9%
15 among Native Americans; and

16 WHEREAS, According to United States Census data, the economic
17 consequences of having a disability in America are compelling;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Approximately 17.9% of working-age Americans with a
20 disability are employed as compared to 65.3% of working-age
21 nondisabled Americans; and

22 WHEREAS, This presents a quality-of-life issue as in 2016 the
23 poverty rate of working-age individuals with disabilities in
24 this Commonwealth was estimated to be 28.4% as compared to 9.6%
25 for working-age individuals without a disability; and

26 WHEREAS, According to the American Academy of Pediatrics,
27 childhood disability rates are trending upwards and increased by
28 16% between 2001 and 2011, which underscores our need as
29 policymakers to ensure that the current legal protections in
30 place are fully and consistently enforced; and

1 WHEREAS, Although the act of fostering awareness about the
2 issue of our Commonwealth's disabled population is important,
3 the real objective lies in ensuring that Pennsylvanians with
4 disabilities are provided the dignity, respect and
5 accommodations that they deserve; and

6 WHEREAS, The purpose of this resolution is to recognize the
7 prevalence of the systemic inequities that exist within our
8 society pertaining to the treatment of our residents with
9 disabilities as well as acknowledge the many invaluable efforts
10 that have been made throughout the history of our nation to
11 institute much-needed civil protections for all Americans;
12 therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
14 month of March 2018 as "Disabilities Awareness Month" in
15 Pennsylvania; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage all
17 Pennsylvanians to learn more about the many unique challenges
18 confronting this Commonwealth's residents who are disabled and
19 assume the task of fostering a greater degree of awareness and
20 education regarding this critically important subject.