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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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**HOUSE BILL**  
**No. 2051** Session of  
1976

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INTRODUCED BY RITTER, PARKER, TOLL, WRIGHT, KERNICK, WANSACZ,  
MENHORN, MILANOVICH, MUSTO, ZWIKL, SCHWEDER, FLAHERTY,  
CRAWFORD, DORR, ZEARFOSS, HEPFORD, McLANE, D. S. HAYES AND  
SALOOM, JANUARY 14, 1976

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE RELATIONS,  
JANUARY 14, 1976

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AN ACT

1 Providing for a report by the Governor on the economic condition  
2 of the Commonwealth; creating the Council of Economic  
3 Advisors and the Joint Council on the Economic Report;  
4 providing for these powers and duties; and making an  
5 appropriation.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. Short Title.--This act shall be known and may be  
9 cited as the "Commonwealth Economic Councils Act."

10 Section 2. Declaration of Policy.--The General Assembly  
11 hereby declares that it is the continuing policy and  
12 responsibility of the Commonwealth to use all practical means  
13 consistent with its needs and obligations and other essential  
14 considerations of State policy, with the assistance and  
15 cooperation of industry, agriculture, labor, and Commonwealth  
16 departments and agencies and local governments, to coordinate  
17 and utilize all its plans, functions, and resources for the  
18 purpose of creating and maintaining, in a manner calculated to

1 foster and promote free competitive enterprise and the general  
2 welfare, conditions under which there will be afforded useful  
3 employment opportunities, including self-employment, for those  
4 able, willing, and seeking to work, and to promote maximum  
5 employment, production and purchasing power within the  
6 Commonwealth.

7 Section 3. Definitions.--As used in this act:

8 "Council" means the Council of Economic Advisors.

9 "Economic Report" means the economic report which the  
10 Governor transmits to the General Assembly pursuant to section  
11 4.

12 "Joint Council" means the Joint Council on the Economic  
13 Report.

14 Section 4. Economic Report of the Governor.--(a) The  
15 Governor shall transmit to the General Assembly within 60 days  
16 after the beginning of each regular session, beginning 1977 an  
17 economic report setting forth:

18 (1) the levels of employment, production, and purchasing  
19 power obtaining in the Commonwealth and such levels needed to  
20 carry out the policy of this act;

21 (2) current and foreseeable trends in the levels of  
22 employment, production, and purchasing power;

23 (3) a review of the economic program of the Commonwealth and  
24 a review of economic conditions affecting employment in the  
25 Commonwealth or any considerable portion thereof during the  
26 preceding year and of their effect upon employment, production,  
27 and purchasing power; and

28 (4) a program for carrying out the policy of this act,  
29 together with such recommendations for legislation as he may  
30 deem necessary or desirable.

1 (b) The Governor may transmit from time to time to the  
2 General Assembly supplements to the economic report, each of  
3 which shall include such supplementary or revised  
4 recommendations as he may deem necessary or desirable. The  
5 economic report, and all supplementary reports shall, when  
6 transmitted to the General Assembly, be referred to the joint  
7 council.

8 Section 5. Council of Economic Advisors to the Governor.--  
9 There is hereby created in the Department of Commerce a Council  
10 of Economic Advisors. The council shall be composed of three  
11 members who shall be appointed by the Governor for five-year  
12 terms by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and each  
13 of whom shall be a person who, as a result of his training,  
14 experience, and attainments is exceptionally qualified to  
15 analyze and interpret economic developments, to appraise  
16 programs and activities of the Commonwealth to carry out the  
17 purposes of this act and to formulate and recommend Commonwealth  
18 economic policy to promote employment, production, and  
19 purchasing power under free competitive enterprise. The Governor  
20 shall designate one of the members of the council as chairman  
21 and one as vice-chairman, who shall act as chairman in the  
22 absence of the chairman. The members of the council shall serve  
23 without compensation but shall be reimbursed for their expenses  
24 incurred while attending sessions of the committee or while  
25 engaged on other committee business authorized by the council,  
26 and in going and coming from meetings of the committee or for  
27 travel and other council business when authorized by the  
28 council.

29 Section 6. Powers and Duties of the Council.--The council  
30 shall have the power and its duty shall be:

1       (1) To employ and fix the compensation of such specialists  
2 and other experts as may be necessary for the carrying out of  
3 its functions under this act, without regard to the civil  
4 service laws, and is authorized, subject to the civil service  
5 laws, to employ such other officers and employees as may be  
6 necessary for carrying out its functions under this act and fix  
7 their compensation.

8       (2) To assist and advise the Governor in the preparation of  
9 the economic report.

10      (3) To gather timely and authoritative information  
11 concerning economic developments and economic trends, both  
12 current and prospective to analyze and interpret such  
13 information in the light of policy declared in section 2 for the  
14 purpose of determining whether such developments and trends are  
15 interfering, or are likely to interfere, with the achievement of  
16 such policy, and to compile and submit to the Governor studies  
17 relating to such developments and trends.

18      (4) To appraise the various programs and activities of the  
19 Commonwealth in the light of the policy declared in section 2  
20 for the purpose of determining the extent to which such programs  
21 and activities are contributing, and the extent to which they  
22 are not contributing, to the achievement of such policy, and to  
23 make recommendations to the Governor.

24      (5) To develop and recommend to the Governor economic  
25 policies to foster and promote free competitive enterprise,  
26 avoid economic fluctuations or diminish the effects thereof, and  
27 maintain employment, production and purchasing power.

28      (6) To make and furnish such studies, reports and  
29 recommendations with respect to matters of economic policy and  
30 legislation as the Governor or the joint council may request.

1       (7) To make an annual report to the Governor in December of  
2 each year.

3       (8) To constitute such advisory committees and to consult  
4 with such representatives of industry, agriculture, labor,  
5 consumers, State departments, and agencies, and local  
6 governments and other groups as it deems advisable.

7       (9) Any department or agency of the State Government shall  
8 cooperate with the council to the fullest extent possible in  
9 providing such information as the council deems pertinent to the  
10 studies in which it is engaged.

11       Section 7. Joint Council on the Economic Report.--(a) There  
12 is hereby established a Joint Council on the Economic Report to  
13 be composed of seven members of the Senate, four from the  
14 majority and three from the minority, to be appointed by the  
15 President of the Senate, and seven members of the House of  
16 Representatives, four from the majority party and three from the  
17 minority party to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of  
18 Representatives. Members of the committee shall be appointed or  
19 reappointed during each regular session of the General Assembly  
20 and shall continue as members until the first Tuesday of January  
21 or the next odd-numbered year and until their representative  
22 successors shall be appointed, provided they continue to be  
23 members of the Senate or the House of Representatives. The term  
24 of office of such committee members as shall not continue to be  
25 members of the Senate or House of Representatives shall cease  
26 upon the convening of the next regular session of the  
27 Legislature after their appointment. The council has a  
28 continuing existence and may meet and conduct its business at  
29 any place within the Commonwealth during the sessions of the  
30 Legislature or any recess thereof and in the interim between

1 sessions.

2 (b) Vacancies in the membership of the joint council shall  
3 not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the  
4 functions of the joint council and shall be filled in the same  
5 manner as in the case of the original selection. The joint  
6 council shall select a chairman and vice-chairman from among its  
7 members.

8 Section 8. Powers and Duties of the Joint Council.--The  
9 joint council shall have the power and its duty shall be:

10 (1) To make a continuing study of matters relating to the  
11 economic report.

12 (2) To study means of implementing programs in order to  
13 further the policy of this act and as a guide to the several  
14 committees of the General Assembly dealing with legislation  
15 relating to the economic report.

16 (3) To file a report with the Senate and the House of  
17 Representatives, on or before May 1 of each year, beginning in  
18 1977, containing its findings and recommendations with respect  
19 to each of the main recommendations made by the Governor in the  
20 economic report, and to make such other reports and  
21 recommendations to the Senate and the House of Representatives  
22 as it deems advisable.

23 (4) To hold such hearings as it, or its duly authorized  
24 subcommittee, deems advisable, and, within the limitations of  
25 its appropriations, to appoint and fix the compensation of such  
26 experts, consultants, technicians, and clerical and stenographic  
27 assistants necessary to carry out its function, procure printing  
28 and binding, and to make such expenditures as it deems necessary  
29 and advisable.

30 Section 9. Appropriation.--The sum of \$100,000, or as much

1   thereof as may be necessary, is hereby specifically appropriated  
2   for the purposes of this act.

3       Section 10.   Effective Date.--This act shall take effect in  
4   90 days.