
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 406

Session of
1981

INTRODUCED BY LASHINGER, MAIALE, SALVATORE, PRATT, MACKOWSKI,
ALDEN, TELEK, FREIND AND E. Z. TAYLOR, FEBRUARY 3, 1981

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND WELFARE, FEBRUARY 3, 1981

AN ACT

1 Creating a temporary study commission to study groups which seek
2 to unduly exert control over children and youth.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Commission created.

6 A study commission is hereby created to conduct a study of
7 groups and individuals, operating within and outside of this
8 Commonwealth, which seek to unduly exert control over children
9 and youth which is hazardous and detrimental to their general
10 and mental health, freedom and life style and which seek to
11 induce, by undue pressure, children and youth to participate in,
12 or join, such groups or individuals through the use of
13 inappropriate suggestions, hypnosis, drugs, unethical physical
14 or social inducements and any other coercive or unacceptable
15 methods. The study commission shall further seek to specifically
16 identify groups and individuals by their characteristics, and
17 gather all relative information on the manner in which groups

1 and individuals seek to recruit and hold their members.

2 Section 2. Access to information.

3 The study commission may request and shall receive from any
4 State agency or any political subdivision assistance and data as
5 will enable it to properly carry out its activities. Nothing
6 shall prohibit State agencies or political subdivisions with
7 supplying the commission with information that is pertinent and
8 necessary to its inquiry unless such information is privileged
9 by law.

10 Section 3. Commission members.

11 The commission shall consist of the following members:

12 (1) Three members of the House of Representatives
13 appointed by the Speaker.

14 (2) Three members of the Senate appointed by the
15 President pro tempore.

16 (3) The Commissioner for Mental Health of the Department
17 of Public Welfare.

18 (4) The Deputy Secretary for Children, Youth and
19 Families of the Department of Public Welfare.

20 (5) The Secretary of Education.

21 (6) Two orphan's court judges of the courts of common
22 pleas appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

23 (7) One public defender appointed by the Governor.

24 (8) One district attorney appointed by the Governor.

25 (9) The Attorney General or his designee.

26 (10) Four members to be appointed by the Governor from
27 among the general public. Two members shall be selected from
28 among experts in the fields of psychology, psychiatry or
29 theology.

30 Section 4. Organization.

1 The commission shall hold meetings and hearings at the times
2 and places it designates to accomplish the purposes set forward
3 in this act. It shall also select a chairman and other officers
4 from its membership as it deems necessary.

5 Section 5. Expenses.

6 The members of the commission representing the general public
7 shall receive \$75 per day for each day spent on the business of
8 the commission and shall also receive reimbursement for their
9 reasonable expenses. The governmental members of the commission
10 shall receive no per diem compensation but shall be reimbursed
11 for their reasonable expenses.

12 Section 6. Facilities and staff.

13 The Department of General Services shall provide office space
14 and equipment necessary for the work of the commission. The
15 Governor and the presiding officers of the General Assembly
16 shall provide the necessary staff for the work of the
17 commission. Additional personnel may only be engaged by the
18 commission with the approval of the Governor and the presiding
19 officers.

20 Section 7. Volunteers and experts.

21 The commission may solicit volunteers or employ experts, as
22 it deems necessary and within the limitations of the
23 appropriation made available to it, who are knowledgeable in the
24 behavioral sciences or other disciplines who could provide
25 insight into the activities of the groups and individuals
26 specified in section 1. The commission may fix the compensation
27 of any employed experts with the approval of the Governor and
28 the presiding officers of the General Assembly.

29 Section 8. Report and findings.

30 The commission shall report its findings and recommendations

1 to the Governor and the General Assembly not later than June 15,
2 1982. The report shall include recommendations as to alternative
3 methods for protecting the children and youth of this
4 Commonwealth from the detrimental influence of the individuals
5 and groups specified in section 1, including necessary changes
6 in law.

7 Section 9. Publications.

8 The commission shall also cause to be published through the
9 Department of General Services booklets to provide the children
10 and youth of this Commonwealth with information and advice with
11 respect to groups and individuals as described in section 1. The
12 booklets shall be distributed and made available to any persons
13 or organizations requesting them for use in organized programs.

14 Section 10. Appropriation.

15 The sum of \$, or as much thereof as may be necessary,
16 is appropriated from the General Fund to the commission to pay
17 the expenses incurred by the commission.

18 Section 11. Effective and expiration dates.

19 The provisions of this act shall take effect immediately and
20 shall expire June 30, 1982.