

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1151 Session of
1993

INTRODUCED BY FREEMAN, JAROLIN, VAN HORNE, LAUGHLIN, ARGALL,
LEVANSKY, STABACK, STURLA, SURRA, BATTISTO, THOMAS, FARGO,
JOSEPHS AND STEELMAN, APRIL 19, 1993

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 19, 1993

AN ACT

1 Providing for environmental education programs, for further
2 duties of the Department of Education and the Department of
3 Environmental Resources and for the disposition of a portion
4 of certain fines and penalties.

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

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Environmental
9 Education Act.

10 Section 2. Declaration of policy.

11 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

12 (1) Section 27 of Article I of the Constitution of
13 Pennsylvania states that: "The people have a right to clean
14 air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural,
15 scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment.
16 Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common
17 property of all the people, including generations yet to
18 come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall

1 conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the
2 people."

3 (2) The State Board of Education has recognized the
4 study of the environment as an essential component of basic
5 education for graduating students. The regulations of the
6 board which pertain to curriculum identify the knowledge and
7 understanding of the environment as one of the goals of a
8 quality education.

9 (3) A quality education should provide each student with
10 knowledge of natural and human resources, an understanding of
11 geographic environments, knowledge of the interrelationships
12 and interdependence of natural and human systems, the
13 development of environmental problem solving and management
14 skills and knowledge of and appropriate uses of energy.

15 (4) The Department of Environmental Resources has a
16 responsibility to help the public understand the
17 environmental laws as well as the roles of individuals,
18 groups, institutions, industry and government in finding
19 solutions to this Commonwealth's environmental problems and
20 the prevention of new problems.

21 (5) The third week of October is recognized each year as
22 "Pennsylvania Environmental Education Week" as a means to
23 promote environmental education.

24 (6) The 20th Anniversary celebration of "Earth Day"
25 heralded the 1990's as the "Decade of the Environment." In
26 order to meet the challenges of this decade, citizens of this
27 Commonwealth will need the knowledge and skills to make
28 informed decisions as consumers and voters to help protect
29 the environment and prevent pollution.

30 (7) It is the policy of this Commonwealth that

1 environmental education is critically important to encourage
2 a citizenry which has the ability to help promote a healthy
3 environment and an understanding of the functioning of the
4 natural world and the necessity for environmental protection
5 and sound resource management.

6 Section 3. Legislative purpose.

7 It is the purpose of this act to:

8 (1) authorize and require the Department of Education
9 and the Department of Environmental Resources to develop and
10 implement environmental education programs for the citizens
11 of this Commonwealth;

12 (2) encourage the environmental education efforts of
13 other agencies where appropriate, including, but not limited
14 to, those of the county conservation districts, the
15 Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, the Game Commission,
16 the Pennsylvania Energy Office, the Department of
17 Agriculture, the Department of Commerce, the Department of
18 Community Affairs, the Department of General Services and the
19 Department of Transportation; and

20 (3) create and establish the Advisory Council on
21 Environmental Education within the Department of Education.

22 Section 4. Powers and duties of Department of Education.

23 The Department of Education shall have the following powers
24 and duties:

25 (1) To conduct a periodic evaluation of school-based
26 environmental education in this Commonwealth.

27 (2) To provide assistance, support and resource
28 information to educators and public and private education
29 agencies and organizations on environmental education
30 programs.

1 (3) To identify, recognize and establish awards for
2 exemplary environmental education curricula developed in
3 Commonwealth schools.

4 Section 5. Powers and duties of Department of Environmental
5 Resources.

6 The Department of Environmental Resources shall have the
7 following powers and duties:

8 (1) To conduct a periodic evaluation of the status of
9 environmental education taking place in the nonformal sector
10 (outside of the classroom) in this Commonwealth.

11 (2) To maintain an inventory of environmental education
12 materials, programs and resources available in Commonwealth
13 agencies.

14 (3) To use the department's environmental education
15 centers as outreach facilities to bring youth and adult
16 education programs into communities and schools, focusing on
17 environmental issues of importance to the Commonwealth.

18 (4) To provide such grants as the Secretary of
19 Environmental Resources after consultation with the Secretary
20 of Education shall, in his discretion, approve to the
21 following: public and private schools for youth environmental
22 education; conservation and education organizations and
23 institutions for the purposes of providing environmental
24 education training to teachers; county conservation
25 districts; and Bureau of State Parks Environmental Education
26 Program.

27 (5) To prepare a guidance document, in consultation with
28 the Secretary of Education, for administering the grants. The
29 department shall make the document available for public
30 review and comment by publication in the Pennsylvania

1 Bulletin.

2 Section 6. Environmental Education Report.

3 The Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Environmental
4 Resources shall prepare a periodic report to the Governor and
5 the General Assembly outlining environmental education programs
6 and achievements, highlighting new initiatives and recommending
7 future program needs.

8 Section 7. The Advisory Council on Environmental Education.

9 (a) Duties.--There is hereby created an Advisory Council on
10 Environmental Education within the Department of Education. The
11 advisory council shall:

12 (1) Make recommendations to the Secretary of Education
13 and the Secretary of Environmental Resources with respect to
14 the use of any funds used to support environmental education
15 activities.

16 (2) Advise and assist the Secretary of Education and the
17 Secretary of Environmental Resources in carrying out
18 environmental education activities.

19 (3) Advise and assist the Secretary of Education and the
20 Secretary of Environmental Resources in conducting a
21 continual evaluation of the trends and needs in environmental
22 education.

23 (4) Make recommendations to the Secretary of Education
24 and the Secretary of Environmental Resources to help foster
25 environmental education programs.

26 (5) Make recommendations to the Secretary of
27 Environmental Resources on the distribution of available
28 grant moneys.

29 (b) Composition.--Council membership shall consist of 13
30 persons, six appointed by the Secretary of Education, five

1 appointed by the Secretary of Environmental Resources, one
2 appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture and one appointed by
3 the Chancellor of the State System of Higher Education, and
4 shall represent a diversity of backgrounds, including basic and
5 higher education, industry, resource management, citizens and
6 public interest organizations.

7 (c) Appointment, terms and expenses.--The 13 council members
8 shall be appointed for five-year terms. The initial term of four
9 of the council members shall be for one year, the initial term
10 of four members shall be for three years, and the initial term
11 of the remainder shall be for five years. A member may be
12 appointed for more than one term and shall serve until a
13 successor has been appointed. Members shall not be compensated
14 but shall be reimbursed for actual expenses in accordance with
15 the rules of the Executive Board.

16 (d) Officers and bylaws.--The council shall convene at least
17 biannually, shall elect a chairperson and a vice chairperson to
18 serve a one-year term, and shall adopt bylaws for governing its
19 operations.

20 (e) Staff.--The Secretary of Education shall designate such
21 staff as may be necessary for the operation of the council.

22 Section 8. Funding.

23 An amount, not to exceed 5% of the moneys collected annually
24 from fines and penalties deposited in special funds or
25 restricted revenue accounts administered by the Department of
26 Environmental Resources, is hereby allocated, with the approval
27 of the Governor, to the Department of Environmental Resources to
28 promote environmental education as provided in this act. This
29 annual allocation amount shall be based upon the amounts
30 collected in the previous fiscal year.

1 Section 9. Effective date.

2 This act shall take effect immediately.