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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 415 Session of  
1996

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INTRODUCED BY KENNEY, OLIVER, J. TAYLOR, ADOLPH, DURHAM AND  
KELLER, JUNE 25, 1996

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, JUNE 25, 1996

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A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Department of Health to suspend changes to the State  
2 Health Plan relating to open heart surgery.

3 WHEREAS, The Department of Health convened a task force to  
4 make recommendations for changes to the criteria used in  
5 evaluating the need for new open heart surgery programs in this  
6 Commonwealth; and

7 WHEREAS, The task force acted without the opportunity to  
8 review the latest relevant material on the national trends in  
9 open heart surgery; and

10 WHEREAS, The Department of Health has published new criteria  
11 that would allow for the approval of 11 new open heart surgery  
12 programs in this Commonwealth; and

13 WHEREAS, The number of Pennsylvania open heart surgery  
14 programs per resident is approximately twice the number of  
15 programs per resident of nearby states, including New York and  
16 New Jersey; and

17 WHEREAS, The number of programs per resident in this

1 Commonwealth is greater than the number per resident in  
2 California, a state that the Cardiology Roundtable uses as an  
3 example of a state with far too many programs; and

4 WHEREAS, More than one-fourth of all programs in this  
5 Commonwealth operate at less than the recommended utilization  
6 level; and

7 WHEREAS, No single program approved for open heart surgery in  
8 this Commonwealth since 1989 has reached the minimum recommended  
9 utilization level of the current State Health Plan; and

10 WHEREAS, The approval of all unnecessary open heart surgery  
11 programs can endanger the lives and health of citizens of this  
12 Commonwealth who need this medical procedure; and

13 WHEREAS, The approval of unnecessary open heart surgery  
14 programs increases the cost of medical care for Pennsylvanians;  
15 therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge the  
17 Department of Health to immediately suspend its actions to  
18 implement any changes to the open heart surgery chapter of the  
19 State Health Plan until such time as the House of  
20 Representatives shall have the opportunity to conduct a thorough  
21 and impartial review of the necessity for new open heart surgery  
22 programs in this Commonwealth. This review shall be conducted by  
23 a select committee of seven members, to be appointed by the  
24 Speaker of the House of Representatives, four members to be  
25 recommended by the Majority Leader of the House of  
26 Representatives and three members to be recommended by the  
27 Minority Leader of the House of Representatives. This select  
28 committee shall report to the House of Representatives by  
29 November 30, 1996.