

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 225 Session of
1999

INTRODUCED BY GEIST, ARGALL, BAKER, BARD, BATTISTO, BELFANTI,
CLARK, CLYMER, CORRIGAN, DALEY, DRUCE, GEORGE, GIGLIOTTI,
HALUSKA, HARHAI, HERSHEY, LAUGHLIN, LEH, MANN, MARSICO,
McILHATTAN, MELIO, S. MILLER, READSHAW, SATHER, SERAFINI,
SEYFERT, SHANER, B. SMITH, S. H. SMITH, SOLOBAY, STAIRS,
STERN, E. Z. TAYLOR, TIGUE, TRELLO, WILT, WOJNAROSKI,
YOUNGBLOOD, ZIMMERMAN, HESS AND MARKOSEK, JUNE 21, 1999

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
JUNE 21, 1999

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Department of Transportation to abandon its policy to
2 proceed with metric conversion.

3 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation as
4 well as all other transportation/highway departments in the
5 United States were previously required to convert to the metric
6 system of measurement for all federally funded projects by
7 September 30, 1996; and

8 WHEREAS, On November 28, 1995, President Clinton signed the
9 National Highway System (NHS) Bill into law as the National
10 Highway System Designation Act of 1995; and

11 WHEREAS, The National Highway System Designation Act of 1995
12 repealed the Federal mandate that all state departments of
13 transportation convert to metric by September 30, 1996, and, in
14 fact, specifically prohibited the United States Department of
15 Transportation from mandating metric conversion until the year

1 2000; and

2 WHEREAS, Congress in May of 1998 passed the Transportation
3 Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) Bill which struck down
4 the mandate requiring metric conversion by the states in the
5 year 2000 and gave states the option to continue metric
6 conversion or revert back to English units; and

7 WHEREAS, The members of the highway construction industry
8 conduct business with many private companies/firms and with
9 local governments which will continue the use of English units;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, All transportation-related projects constructed in
12 this Commonwealth are situated only within the State and are not
13 influenced by world trade or global markets; and

14 WHEREAS, The vast majority of people readily acknowledge that
15 dual units, metric and English:

16 (1) will be confusing, costly and prone to result in
17 errors;

18 (2) will require costly modifications to surveying
19 equipment, asphalt paving equipment, concrete paving
20 equipment, computer equipment, etc.; and

21 (3) will require an enormous amount of training for both
22 Department of Transportation and industry personnel;

23 and

24 WHEREAS, The above-referenced increased costs will ultimately
25 be included in contract costs which will not be in the public's
26 best interest; and

27 WHEREAS, English units continue to be the most prevalent
28 measure taught in our educational systems; and

29 WHEREAS, Metric conversion will have the most detrimental
30 effect on the smaller construction firms; and

1 WHEREAS, The Department of Transportation has stated that as
2 part of its total Quality Initiative and Baldrige Criteria
3 programs, which establish a comprehensive standard for assessing
4 organizational performance, the members of the highway
5 construction industry are its stakeholders and, in turn, their
6 opinions and recommendations should be carefully considered;
7 therefore be it

8 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge the
9 Department of Transportation to abandon its policy to proceed
10 with metric conversion unless metric conversion is later
11 mandated by Federal legislation; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be presented to the
13 Secretary of Transportation.