

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 452 Session of  
2000

INTRODUCED BY PERZEL, APRIL 11, 2000

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, APRIL 11, 2000

## A RESOLUTION

1 Amending House Resolution No. 303, adopted October 26, 1999,  
2 entitled "A resolution authorizing and directing the  
3 Subcommittee on Cities, Counties - First Class of the Urban  
4 Affairs Committee to conduct an investigation into the  
5 problems relating to school violence and possession of  
6 weapons in the Philadelphia School District," further  
7 providing for the report of the committee.

8 RESOLVED, That House Resolution No. 303, adopted October 26,  
9 1999, be amended to read:

## A RESOLUTION

10 Authorizing and directing the Subcommittee on Cities, Counties -  
11 First Class of the Urban Affairs Committee to conduct an  
12 investigation into the problems relating to school violence  
13 and possession of weapons in the Philadelphia School  
14 District.  
15

16 WHEREAS, Students, teachers and other school personnel  
17 possess a fundamental human right to teach and learn in a safe  
18 school environment; and

19 WHEREAS, It has been reported that there were 1,566 assaults  
20 on teachers, students and other school personnel in the

1 Philadelphia School District during the 1998-99 school year  
2 compared to 1,041 such assaults during the 1993-94 school year;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Nine hundred and five weapons were confiscated on  
5 Philadelphia School District property during the 1998-99 school  
6 year while only 15 students were actually expelled for weapons  
7 violations; and

8 WHEREAS, This expulsion rate for weapons violations is  
9 particularly troublesome in light of a State law which requires  
10 the expulsion of students who possess weapons on school property  
11 except in cases where the superintendent recommends leniency;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, An assistant principal at Bartram High School in  
14 Philadelphia was recently shot by a ninth grade student under  
15 circumstances where the school had failed to install a metal  
16 detector which had been delivered to Bartram earlier this year;  
17 and

18 WHEREAS, It has been reported that 12 other high schools were  
19 scheduled to receive metal detectors and X-ray machines but that  
20 only two of these machines are in operation; and

21 WHEREAS, There is a substantial concern that the Philadelphia  
22 School District has failed to establish an adequate system of  
23 alternative schools for disruptive students; and

24 WHEREAS, The concern about safety in the Philadelphia School  
25 District is reflected in the fact that the Philadelphia City  
26 Council has recently adopted a resolution demanding that school  
27 superintendent David Hornbeck appear before the council with a  
28 school safety plan; and

29 WHEREAS, It is apparent that the Philadelphia School District  
30 is failing in its duty to create a safe learning and teaching

1 environment for students and school personnel; and therefore be  
2 it

3 RESOLVED, That the Subcommittee on Cities, Counties - First  
4 Class of the Urban Affairs Committee is hereby authorized and  
5 directed to examine, investigate and make a complete study of  
6 any and all matters relating to the problems of violence,  
7 possession of weapons in the Philadelphia School District and  
8 the failure of the Philadelphia School District to effectively  
9 deal with the problem of weapons and violence in its schools;  
10 and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the subcommittee may hold hearings, take  
12 testimony and make its investigations at such places as it deems  
13 necessary in this Commonwealth. Each member of the subcommittee  
14 shall have the power to administer oaths and affirmations to  
15 witnesses appearing before the committee; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Urban Affairs Committee and the Education  
17 Committee assist the subcommittee to the fullest extent  
18 possible; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the subcommittee is authorized to hire or  
20 contract for such staff and services as it deems necessary,  
21 including, but not limited to, the hiring of counsel,  
22 investigators and media consultants, and the production and  
23 broadcasting of television commercials designed to advertise the  
24 pendancy and conduct of public hearings, the creation and  
25 operation of a school violence hotline, the videotaping of all  
26 public hearings, and the production, duplication and  
27 distribution to the subcommittee, city, school district  
28 officials, and members of the general public of edited or  
29 unedited video tapes summarizing the relevant testimony  
30 presented to the subcommittee, and all the expenses incurred or

1 authorized by the subcommittee shall be paid from accounts under  
2 the control of the Chief Clerk; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives intend this  
4 amendment to this fiscal authority of the subcommittee shall be  
5 retroactive to October 26, 1999; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the subcommittee shall report its findings  
7 together with its recommendations for remedial legislation or  
8 other appropriate action at the earliest practicable date to the  
9 House of Representatives.