
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 357 Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY SHAPIRO AND BIRMELIN, JUNE 21, 2005

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, JUNE 21, 2005

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Establishing the Katie Elise Lambert Commission on Child Safety
2 in this Commonwealth.

3 WHEREAS, Sadly and suddenly, the life of three and a half-
4 year old Katie Elise Lambert of Abington, Pennsylvania, was
5 cruelly taken on January 21, 2005, when an unanchored wardrobe
6 cabinet fell on top of her; and

7 WHEREAS, Each year, the lives of many innocent children like
8 Katie Elise Lambert are tragically ended because of
9 unintentional injury-related deaths; and

10 WHEREAS, Unintentional injuries are a major public health
11 problem in the United States, causing an estimated 91,000 deaths
12 each year; and

13 WHEREAS, In 2001, the National Center for Health Statistics
14 placed unintentional injuries as the leading cause of death for
15 all individuals between the ages of 1 and 34; and

16 WHEREAS, Unintentional injuries are responsible for more
17 child deaths in one year than homicide, suicide, congenital

1 anomalies, cancer, heart disease, respiratory illness and HIV
2 combined; and

3 WHEREAS, The National SAFE KIDS Campaign reported that 5,526
4 children in the United States died from unintentional injuries
5 in 2001. Shockingly, 45% of these deaths occurred in the home;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Unintentional injuries disproportionately affect
8 poor children and children under the age of four; and

9 WHEREAS, The leading cause of unintentional injury-related
10 death and disabilities, including motor vehicle crashes,
11 residential fires, alcohol-impaired driving and falls, with very
12 young children primarily at risk for injuries and death in the
13 home caused by suffocation, drowning, firearms, choking,
14 poisoning, fallen furniture and improperly secured major
15 appliances; and

16 WHEREAS, The American Association of Poison Control Centers
17 reports that accidental death from exposure to hazardous
18 household substances occurs mainly among children and youth; and

19 WHEREAS, The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates
20 that 8,000 to 10,000 people, predominantly children, are injured
21 each year as the result of tipping furniture, often occurring
22 when children climb onto, fall against or pull themselves up on
23 items such as shelves, bookcases, dressers, bureaus, desks,
24 chests, television stands and television sets; and

25 WHEREAS, It is estimated that the incidence and severity of
26 unintentional injury-related death and disability can be reduced
27 through a combination of education, enactment and enforcement of
28 legislation and regulations and program evaluation; and

29 WHEREAS, To reduce further tragedy and lessen unintentional
30 injury-related death and disability in this Commonwealth,

1 current laws must be strengthened, proven strategies that have
2 an impact on reducing unintentional injuries must be implemented
3 in all communities, and research on this topic must continue;
4 therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, (the Senate concurring), That the General Assembly
6 establish the Katie Elise Lambert Commission on Child Safety;
7 and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That the commission consist of 18 members who shall
9 be residents of this Commonwealth; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
11 Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, President pro
12 tempore of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the Senate
13 shall each appoint four members to the commission; and be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That of the members to the commission appointed by
16 the Speaker of the House of Representatives, one shall be the
17 Chairman of the Children and Youth Committee of the House of
18 Representatives or the chairman's designee; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That of the members to the commission appointed by
20 the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, one shall
21 be the Minority Chairman of the Children and Youth Committee of
22 the House of Representatives or the chairman's designee; and be
23 it further

24 RESOLVED, That of the members to the commission appointed by
25 the President pro tempore of the Senate, one shall be the
26 Chairman of the Aging and Youth Committee of the Senate or the
27 chairman's designee; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That of the members to the commission appointed by
29 the Minority Leader of the Senate, one shall be the Minority
30 Chairman of the Aging and Youth Committee of the Senate or the

1 chairman's designee; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the members of the commission appointed by the
3 Speaker of the House of Representatives, Minority Leader of the
4 House of Representatives, President pro tempore of the Senate
5 and the Minority Leader of the Senate shall include, if
6 possible, a parent or representative of a child severely injured
7 or deceased due to an unintentional injury-related death or
8 disability; a board-certified pediatrician acquainted in matters
9 regarding unintentional injury; a member of a county child death
10 review team; a child safety advocate whose work promotes the
11 prevention of childhood injury; and a product and safety expert
12 in the manufacturing industry; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Governor shall appoint two members to the
14 commission who have an interest in child safety and one of the
15 members shall be the Secretary of Health or the Secretary's
16 designee; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the members of the commission be appointed
18 within 15 days of the date of the adoption of this resolution;
19 and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Speaker of the House of Representatives
21 call the initial meeting of the commission within ten days of
22 the appointment of the members, at which meeting the members of
23 the commission shall elect from their membership a chairman; and
24 be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the commission may hold hearings, take
26 testimony and make its investigations at such places as it deems
27 necessary within this Commonwealth and that each member of the
28 commission shall have the power to administer oaths and
29 affirmations to witnesses appearing before the commission; and
30 be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the members of the commission shall receive no
2 compensation for their services but shall be allowed their
3 actual and necessary expenses incurred in their capacity with
4 the commission; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the commission be provided staff support by
6 the Joint State Government Commission; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the commission prepare and submit to the House
8 of Representatives, the Senate and the Governor a report of its
9 findings no later than November 30, 2006; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the purpose of the final report shall be to
11 review existing Pennsylvania laws and regulations to determine
12 their impact on preventing unintentional injuries and recommend
13 reforms and policy proposals to strengthen existing laws and
14 regulations to reduce preventable deaths; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the final report shall contain findings and
16 recommendations to achieve this goal, including, but not limited
17 to, the following subjects:

18 (1) Statistics outlining the primary causes of
19 unintentional injury-related deaths and disabilities to
20 children.

21 (2) Individual behaviors and practices that can reduce
22 the risk of childhood injuries and make others aware of
23 possible injury hazards in the home.

24 (3) Recommendations to raise the awareness to parents
25 and other concerned citizens of the looming threat of
26 unintentional injuries to their children.

27 (4) Suggestions pediatricians and other health care
28 providers can provide to patients during routine health
29 visits regarding safety practices in their homes to prevent
30 unintentional injuries.

1 (5) Information on the cost-effectiveness of strategies
2 to reduce injuries to children to better inform public debate
3 on the merits of these interventions.

4 (6) Feasibility of laws making it mandatory that warning
5 labels be applied to all assembled and ready-to-assemble
6 furniture.