

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2485 Session of
2010

INTRODUCED BY GEORGE, BISHOP, CALTAGIRONE, GEIST, HARKINS,
HORNAMAN, JOSEPHS, MCGEEHAN, MURT, M. O'BRIEN, THOMAS,
WATERS, WHITE AND YOUNGBLOOD, APRIL 30, 2010

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 30, 2010

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," providing for the Fast Track and Cost
6 Relief Pilot Program.

7 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

8 (1) A college education is critical for young people to
9 maximize their chances for successful, productive lives.

10 (2) Broad access to high-quality college education is
11 necessary for this Commonwealth to maintain its economic
12 competitiveness, and a college-educated citizenry benefits
13 this Commonwealth by preparing all students to be lifelong
14 learners and successful, contributing citizens in a world
15 economy and global society.

16 (3) Many Pennsylvania students and families face serious
17 challenges in financing postsecondary education, and reducing
18 degree completion time would afford an option for students
19 and families to economize on higher education.

(4) It is in the best interest of the Commonwealth to enact legislation that would establish a pilot program providing for three-year bachelor's degree programs at institutions of the State System of Higher Education.

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

Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding a section to read:

Section 2012.1-A. Fast Track and Cost Relief Pilot Program.--(a) The board shall:

(1) Establish and administer the Fast Track and Cost Relief Pilot Program that provides for three-year bachelor's degree programs in six (6) system institutions located in different geographical regions. The board shall design, implement and evaluate the program to serve as a model for full-scale implementation of the program.

(2) Establish guidelines for the program.

(3) Collaborate with the school districts to establish a seamless and expanded credit transfer system for high school students and other policies to facilitate student participation in the program.

(4) Identify and propose any necessary changes to academic courses of study, support services, financial aid and other policies and resources at system institutions to maximize opportunities for students to complete bachelor's degree programs in three (3) years.

(5) Identify potential costs of the program, including costs to students, the institutions and school districts, identify possible sources of external grant funding for the program and

1 propose a funding structure for the program.

2 (6) Investigate accreditation issues and Federal financial
3 aid rules that may be implicated by the program.

4 (7) Identify units at the system institutions that will
5 assume administrative responsibility for the program.

6 (b) The program shall begin with the fall academic semester
7 of 2010.

8 (c) The board shall present a report, recommendations and
9 timeline on full-scale implementation of the program to the
10 General Assembly on or before April 1, 2010.

11 (d) As used in this section, the term "program" shall mean
12 the Fast Track and Cost Relief Pilot Program.

13 Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.