

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 32 Session of 2011

INTRODUCED BY B. BOYLE, K. BOYLE, BRADFORD, BRENNAN,
CALTAGIRONE, D. COSTA, DeLUCA, FABRIZIO, FREEMAN, GEORGE,
GOODMAN, HESS, JOSEPHS, W. KELLER, KORTZ, McGEEHAN, MULLERY,
M. O'BRIEN, SANTONI AND STURLA, JANUARY 24, 2011

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, JANUARY 24, 2011

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the lack of due process in the 1876-1878 trials of
2 several alleged members of the Molly Maguires and
3 memorializing the Governor to issue an order acknowledging
4 the same.

5 WHEREAS, From 1876 to 1878, several alleged members of the
6 Molly Maguires in Carbon, Columbia, Northumberland and
7 Schuylkill Counties were tried, convicted and sentenced to jail
8 or hanged; and

9 WHEREAS, Agents and employees of the Philadelphia and Reading
10 Railroad and Coal and Iron Company, the Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre
11 Coal and Iron Company and the Lehigh Valley Railroad conducted
12 the investigation, arrest and prosecution of these individuals;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Special prosecuting attorneys were used who were on
15 the payrolls of railroad and mining companies, jury selection
16 was conducted in a manner which ensured ethnic bigotry and bias,
17 the trial judges were closely connected with the railroad and
18 mining companies which instigated the investigations and trials,

witnesses were intimidated to commit perjury against the
defendants, and entrapment was used to accumulate evidence; and

WHEREAS, To say that due process and constitutional rights
were lacking in these trials would be an understatement; and

WHEREAS, As a result of these trials, Barney Boyle, Kate
Boyle, Patrick Butler, John Campbell, Dennis Canning, Patrick
Dolan, Christopher Donnelly, Neil Dougherty, James Duffy, John
Gibbons, Bridget Hyland, Michael Lawler, Charles McAllister,
Patrick McKenna, Ned Monaghan, John Morris, Michael O'Brien,
Patrick O'Donnell, Francis O'Neil and John O'Neil were sentenced
to imprisonment; James Boyle, Alexander Campbell, James Carroll,
John Donahue, Michael J. Doyle, Thomas Duffy, Edward Kelly, Hugh
McGehan, Thomas Munley and James Roarity were hanged in 1877;
Dennis Donnelly, Thomas Fisher, Patrick Hester, John Kehoe,
Peter McHugh and Patrick Tully were hanged in 1878; and Martin
Bergin, James McDonnell, Peter McManus and Charles Sharpe were
hanged in 1879; and

WHEREAS, History does not question that coal miners were
treated menially and unfairly by coal mine owners, that miners
and owners struggled over the meager working conditions and that
occasional crimes were committed by some members of the Molly
Maguires and by nonmembers against coal mine owners; and

WHEREAS, History also does not question the fundamental
unconstitutionality of the trials, since it is well documented
that a private corporation initiated the investigation through a
private, hired detective agency; a private police force arrested
the alleged offenders; and coal company attorneys prosecuted
them; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
lack of due process in the 1876-1878 trials of several alleged

1 members of the Molly Maguires; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives memorialize the
3 Honorable Thomas W. Corbett, Governor of the Commonwealth, to
4 issue an order acknowledging the same.