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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 225 Session of  
2013

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INTRODUCED BY DEAN, HENNESSEY, SWANGER, YOUNGBLOOD, MACKENZIE,  
FREEMAN, NEILSON, STEPHENS, THOMAS, O'BRIEN, BRIGGS, HARHAI,  
DAVIS, STURLA, MILLARD, HAGGERTY, MICOZZIE, MULLERY, HESS,  
TOEPEL, KAVULICH, R. BROWN, O'NEILL, GROVE, D. COSTA,  
SANTARSIERO, MURT, CALTAGIRONE, MOUL, MARSICO, DEASY, DeLUCA,  
DENLINGER, MATZIE, GIBBONS, FARRY, PEIFER, BRADFORD, KORTZ  
AND PAINTER, APRIL 9, 2013

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, APRIL 9, 2013

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A RESOLUTION

1 Reestablishing a select committee to continue investigating and  
2 reviewing the interrelationship between all current sources  
3 of school district and local government tax revenue, with a  
4 focus on property taxes, the current system of Federal and  
5 State funding of school districts and other local government  
6 functions.

7 WHEREAS, Property taxes continue to burden Commonwealth  
8 homeowners and businesses and an overreliance on them, or any  
9 other single source of tax revenue, undermines the long-term  
10 sustainability of our school districts, our local governments,  
11 our communities and our State; and

12 WHEREAS, The level of property taxes and other local taxes  
13 appears to be directly related to the level of State support for  
14 public education and other local government functions; and

15 WHEREAS, The act of June 27, 2006 (1st Sp.Sess., P.L.1873,  
16 No.1), known as the Taxpayer Relief Act, placed limits on  
17 property tax increases and provided reductions for older

1 homeowners and others which addressed some aspects of the  
2 current property tax problems facing individuals and  
3 communities; and

4 WHEREAS, Many Pennsylvanians do not understand or agree on  
5 the basic facts, data and research related to this issue,  
6 without which policymakers cannot properly identify and  
7 implement effective long-term solutions to this problem; and

8 WHEREAS, School districts and local governments across this  
9 Commonwealth are under pressure from residents to lower property  
10 and other taxes, while also facing significant budget, revenue,  
11 infrastructure and pension challenges of their own; and

12 WHEREAS, House Resolution 774 of the 2011-2012 Legislative  
13 Session established a committee to study the issue of property  
14 taxes throughout this Commonwealth and make recommendations to  
15 the General Assembly on this issue; and

16 WHEREAS, The first recommendation issued by the committee was  
17 that the work of the committee was valuable and unfinished and  
18 that the committee should be reestablished in 2013; therefore be  
19 it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives reestablish a  
21 select committee to continue investigating, reviewing and making  
22 recommendations regarding:

23 (1) the relative level of all current sources of school  
24 district and local government tax revenue across this  
25 Commonwealth, with a focus on property taxes;

26 (2) the relationship between the level of tax revenue  
27 under paragraph (1) and the Federal and State funding of  
28 school districts and local governments, including the effect  
29 of State program funding cuts;

30 (3) the historical changes in the levels of tax revenue

1 and Federal and State funding of school districts and local  
2 governments, with a focus on the effects of these changes on  
3 public education and other local government functions and the  
4 impact of the Taxpayer Relief Act;

5 (4) any possible connections between these issues, other  
6 property tax issues, such as assessment and collection  
7 systems and other imminent State budget issues, including  
8 revenue shortfalls, unfunded mandates, State program funding  
9 cuts, infrastructure and pension issues, and tax reforms; and

10 (5) any potential budgetary, revenue and governance  
11 reforms necessary to address these matters;

12 and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the select committee monitor the progress of  
14 recommendations and legislation that comes from the effort of  
15 the select committee created under House Resolution 774 of  
16 2011-2012 and conduct further hearings and issue additional  
17 research-based recommendations; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Majority Leader of the House of  
19 Representatives appoint, within 15 days of passage of this  
20 resolution, the following members of the House of  
21 Representatives to the select committee:

22 (1) one member of the Education Committee;

23 (2) one member of the Finance Committee;

24 (3) one member of the Urban Affairs Committee;

25 (4) one member of the Local Government Committee;

26 (5) one member of the Environmental Resources and Energy  
27 Committee;

28 (6) one member of the Transportation Committee; and

29 (7) one additional member;

30 and be it further

1       RESOLVED, That the Minority Leader of the House of  
2 Representatives appoint, within 15 days of passage of this  
3 resolution, the following members of the House of  
4 Representatives to the select committee:

5           (1) one member of the Education Committee;

6           (2) one member of the Finance Committee;

7           (3) one member of the Urban Affairs Committee;

8           (4) one member of the Local Government Committee;

9           (5) one member of the Environmental Resources and Energy  
10 Committee; and

11           (6) one member of the Transportation Committee;

12 and be it further

13       RESOLVED, That the select committee select a chairman, hold  
14 hearings, take testimony and make its investigation at the  
15 places it deems necessary in this Commonwealth; and be it  
16 further

17       RESOLVED, That the select committee be empowered to call  
18 witnesses under the hand and seal of the chairman and  
19 instructing any person to appear before it to answer questions  
20 touching matters properly being inquired into by the committee  
21 and to produce books, papers, records, accounts, reports and  
22 documents as the committee deems necessary; and be it further

23       RESOLVED, That the Majority Leader and Minority Leader  
24 provide staffing and assistance to the select committee,  
25 including obtaining relevant data and other research; and be it  
26 further

27       RESOLVED, That the ordinary and reasonable expenses incurred  
28 by the select committee be paid from accounts under the control  
29 of the Chief Clerk; and be it further

30       RESOLVED, That the select committee submit periodic

1 recommendations and findings as it sees fit and a report of its  
2 findings together with its recommendations for any appropriate  
3 legislation or other action to the House of Representatives not  
4 later than November 30, 2014.