

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 139 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY McILHINNEY, BREWSTER, RESCHENTHALER, MENSCH AND
SCARNATI, JUNE 12, 2017

REFERRED TO STATE GOVERNMENT, JUNE 12, 2017

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Urging Congress to normalize relations with the Cuban government
2 and lift the current embargo and other trade barriers with
3 the Republic of Cuba.

4 WHEREAS, For more than five decades, the United States has
5 maintained, through the most comprehensive set of economic
6 sanctions levied against any nation, a strict embargo with the
7 Republic of Cuba; and

8 WHEREAS, Through various Federal acts, regulations and
9 presidential orders, the embargo places significant restrictions
10 and prohibitions on American-Cuban relationships, notably trade,
11 travel and financial transactions; and

12 WHEREAS, United States laws and regulations make American
13 exports to Cuba difficult and burdensome, if not outright
14 prohibited; and

15 WHEREAS, Under provisions of the Trade Sanctions Reform and
16 Export Enhancement Act of 2000 and export regulations of the
17 Department of Commerce, United States food and agricultural
18 entities are legally permitted to export to Cuba, but doing so

requires prior permission from the Department of Commerce and compliance with numerous Federal export regulations; and

WHEREAS, Despite the ability to legally export, financial restrictions limit the ability of American entities to competitively serve the market, allowing international competitors to capitalize from potential United States market share; and

WHEREAS, Relaxing restrictions and prohibitions on United States exports to Cuba will present new opportunities to grow Pennsylvania's and our nation's agricultural sector and create jobs in rural communities across the United States; and

WHEREAS, Currently, Cuba imports \$2 billion annually in agricultural products to feed Cuba's people, who may benefit from Pennsylvania's agriculture industry, the leading industry of this Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Historical, cultural and commercial ties exist between Pennsylvania and Cuba; and

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Matanzas, Cuba, are sister cities; and

WHEREAS, Many opportunities are opening with regard to trade with Cuba, which will benefit Pennsylvania manufacturing, agriculture and other industries, and small businesses; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania with its world class port and close proximity to Cuba is well positioned to ship products to the Cuban market; and

WHEREAS, The Republic of Cuba, home to more than 11 million consumers in close proximity to the United States, is a logical target for expanded United States food and agricultural exports; and

WHEREAS, Normalizing trade relations between the United

1 States and Cuba will enhance Cuban citizens' access to
2 affordable food while providing the United States farm and
3 business community with new market access opportunities; and

4 WHEREAS, Normalized trade will drive growth in both countries
5 and allow farmers, ranchers and food companies in the United
6 States to efficiently contribute to the food security needs of
7 the Cuban citizenry; and

8 WHEREAS, Ending the American embargo against Cuba will boost
9 the Cuban economy and lead to an improved quality of life for
10 the Cuban people; and

11 WHEREAS, Through congressional action, breaking down the
12 barriers between Americans and Cubans will expand diplomatic
13 relations, travel, partnerships and trade, allowing all citizens
14 the opportunity to discover and reconnect on mutual interests,
15 benefiting Cubans and Americans alike; therefore be it

16 RESOLVED (the House of Representatives concurring), That the
17 General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the
18 Congress of the United States to normalize relations with the
19 Cuban government and lift the current embargo and other trade
20 barriers with the Republic of Cuba; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
22 the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
23 United States House of Representatives and the members of the
24 Pennsylvania congressional delegation.