

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION**No. 137** Session of
1995

INTRODUCED BY HALUSKA, REBER, GODSHALL, MICHLOVIC, DeWEESE,
READSHAW, FICHTER, LYNCH, BAKER, OLASZ, M. N. WRIGHT, MERRY,
ARGALL, RUBLEY, STABACK, BELARDI, COY, CARONE, VAN HORNE,
L. I. COHEN, GEIST, SHANER, MELIO, WALKO, CAPPABIANCA, ITKIN,
HORSEY, JAROLIN, TRELLO, HERMAN, DeLUCA, MIHALICH, JOSEPHS,
STERN, MILLER, BELFANTI, BOSCOLA AND COLAIZZO, MAY 3, 1995

AS AMENDED, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JUNE 19, 1995

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Tourism and Recreational Development Committee and
2 the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee jointly to
3 study, evaluate and make recommendations regarding the
4 establishment of overnight facilities and associated
5 amenities on Commonwealth-owned lands.

6 WHEREAS, Tourism is this Commonwealth's number two industry,
7 employing over 300,000 people and generating over \$17 billion in
8 direct and indirect traveler spending; and

9 WHEREAS, A large percentage of this job creation and
10 traveler spending has been centered in urban and suburban
11 regions of this Commonwealth to the exclusion of rural
12 communities, many of which possess abundant natural resources,
13 including ~~game lands~~, forest lands and State parks; and <—

14 WHEREAS, Thirty-seven million travelers visit this
15 Commonwealth's State parks annually, providing the potential for
16 significant job creation and millions of dollars in new rural
17 spending; and

1 WHEREAS, Many of our rural communities are unable to benefit
2 significantly from these Commonwealth-owned properties due to a
3 lack of lodging and other facilities necessary for overnight
4 stays; and

5 WHEREAS, As a direct result of this lack of infrastructure,
6 95% of the visitors to Pennsylvania's State parks are day
7 trippers, a fact which significantly lessens the economic impact
8 that these travelers have on local economies; and

9 WHEREAS, Studies have indicated that a large percentage of
10 park visitors would stay overnight if provided the opportunity;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, This is especially true of senior citizens,
13 individuals who are disabled, urban residents and working
14 couples; and

15 WHEREAS, Many of our bordering states and the Federal
16 Government have recognized the potential for economic
17 development and job creation by creating such facilities and
18 have permitted limited development of certain state and national
19 parks; and

20 WHEREAS, Extended-stay facilities would afford visitors a
21 special opportunity to learn about the historical and ecological
22 development of this Commonwealth, to study the rare and
23 endangered species unique to the area and to study the impact of
24 human activities on the diverse environments and ecosystems of
25 this Commonwealth; and

26 WHEREAS, Many of the current visitors to the State parks and
27 forests are not camping or tenting enthusiasts; and

28 WHEREAS, These visitors could be afforded the opportunity to
29 participate in natural outdoor activities; and

30 WHEREAS, Other states have found that these facilities can

1 be provided in harmony with the recreational, educational and
2 environmental preservation missions of government while
3 affording the opportunity for reasonable and responsible tourism
4 development without degradation of the state's unique natural
5 resources; therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the
7 Tourism and Recreational Development Committee and the
8 Environmental Resources and Energy Committee jointly to study,
9 evaluate and make recommendations regarding the establishment of
10 overnight facilities and associated amenities on Commonwealth-
11 owned lands and the impact of the same on tourism, the economy
12 and the environment; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, THAT THE COMMITTEES REVIEW THE CURRENT STATUS OF <—
14 DEVELOPMENT IN AND AROUND STATE PARK AND FOREST LAND AND WHETHER
15 SUCH DEVELOPMENT, AS IT MAY IMPACT ANY OR ALL PARKS AND FORESTS,
16 IS COMPLIMENTARY OR DETRIMENTAL TO THE CONTINUED USE OF THE
17 PARKS AND FORESTS FOR RECREATION, ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND
18 THE PRESERVATION OF THE NATURAL NATIVE FEATURES AND RESOURCES,
19 INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE PARKS AND
20 FORESTS; AND BE IT FURTHER

21 RESOLVED, THAT THE COMMITTEES SHALL STUDY AREAS IN PROXIMITY
22 TO STATE PARKS AND FORESTS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO
23 WHETHER ANY NEED FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF OVERNIGHT HOSPITALITY
24 FACILITIES CAN BEST BE ACCOMMODATED BY PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT
25 OFFSITE OR ONSITE OF STATE PARKS AND FORESTS. THE STUDY SHALL
26 ALSO INCLUDE OTHER STATES WHICH HAVE PROGRAMS TO PROHIBIT,
27 RESTRICT, LIMIT OR PERMIT PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OF PARK AND FOREST
28 LANDS; AND BE IT FURTHER

29 RESOLVED, That the committees may conduct studies, hold
30 hearings and take testimony at such places, within and without

1 this Commonwealth, as the committees deem necessary. Each member
2 of the committees shall have power to administer oaths and
3 affirmations to witnesses appearing before the committees; and
4 be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the expenses, NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000, incurred <—
6 by the committees in carrying out their responsibilities,
7 including, but not limited to, per diem and travel expenses
8 incurred by the members and regular staff, stenographic charges
9 and other incidental expenses, be paid from appropriate accounts
10 under control of the Chief Clerk; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Tourism and Recreational Development
12 Committee and the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee
13 shall make a joint report to the House of Representatives on
14 their activities, findings and recommendations on or before
15 October 1, 1996, and shall issue interim reports to the House of
16 Representatives as the committees may deem necessary.