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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 545 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY BARRAR, BIZZARRO, BOBACK, BROWN, COX, DIGIROLAMO,  
FREEMAN, HARKINS, HENNESSEY, HERSHEY, HILL-EVANS, HOHENSTEIN,  
JAMES, KAUFFMAN, KNOWLES, KORTZ, LONGIETTI, MACKENZIE,  
MENTZER, MILLARD, B. MILLER, MURT, PICKETT, READSHAW, RYAN,  
SCHMITT, SONNEY, STAATS, TOEPEL, ZIMMERMAN AND SAINATO,  
OCTOBER 11, 2019

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, OCTOBER 11, 2019

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A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the 375th anniversary of William Penn's birth.

2 WHEREAS, William Penn, the founder of this Commonwealth, was  
3 born in London, England, on October 24, 1644; and

4 WHEREAS, The Province of Pennsylvania was acquired by William  
5 Penn from King Charles II of England in payment of a debt the  
6 king owed his father, Admiral Sir William Penn, for which  
7 William Penn received a charter from King Charles II, dated  
8 March 4, 1681; and

9 WHEREAS, William Penn invited people of diverse nationalities  
10 and creeds to join with him in a "Holy Experiment" where men  
11 might worship God according to their own light; and

12 WHEREAS, His own prayers were that Pennsylvania might become  
13 "the seed of a nation"; and

14 WHEREAS, William Penn had strong faith in a representative  
15 form of government, public education without regard to race,

1 creed, sex or ability to pay and respect for the civil liberties  
2 of all persons; and

3 WHEREAS, Many of the liberties and rights that we enjoy today  
4 can be traced to William Penn's efforts; and

5 WHEREAS, William Penn initiated the first call for a "united  
6 states" in his 1697 "A Plan for Union for the English Colonies  
7 in America"; and

8 WHEREAS, William Penn developed the first practical plan for  
9 world peace and a "united nations" in 1693, which was 252 years  
10 before the United Nations was established; and

11 WHEREAS, William Penn established the first constitutions,  
12 including religious liberty and tolerance, self-government and  
13 taxation only through representation, in modern history; and

14 WHEREAS, On October 28, 1701, William Penn's third revision  
15 to Pennsylvania's Constitution was adopted, "Charter of  
16 Privileges"; and

17 WHEREAS, The "Charter of Privileges" so firmly established  
18 and grounded Pennsylvania as a keystone to the other colonies  
19 that it evolved into the outline and later adoption of our  
20 American liberties, the Constitution of the United States; and

21 WHEREAS, In 1751, the General Assembly commissioned a foundry  
22 in England to forge a bell to properly commemorate and celebrate  
23 the 50th anniversary of William Penn's "Charter of Privileges";  
24 and

25 WHEREAS, On the bell were inscribed the prophetic words from  
26 Leviticus 25:10, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all  
27 the inhabitants thereof"; and

28 WHEREAS, Today that bell, the Liberty Bell, is celebrated as  
29 one of America's most famous symbols of American independence;  
30 and

1       WHEREAS, The Liberty Bell, fondly associated with the year  
2 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was read in  
3 Philadelphia, was actually created 25 years previous to the  
4 revolution in honor of William Penn and his great "Charter of  
5 Privileges" of 1701; and

6       WHEREAS, The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution  
7 of the United States were adopted in Philadelphia, and this  
8 nation was established there; and

9       WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United  
10 States and writer of the Declaration of Independence, duly  
11 recognized William Penn's indelible influence upon this American  
12 nation and stated that he was, without doubt, "the greatest  
13 lawgiver the world has produced"; and

14       WHEREAS, Woodrow Wilson, the 28th President of the United  
15 States, stated that, in speaking of the phenomenon in  
16 Pennsylvania, "America did not come out of New England";  
17 therefore be it

18       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the  
19 375th anniversary of William Penn's birth.