

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 691

Session of  
1973

INTRODUCED BY HASKELL, WRIGHT, M. E. MILLER, GLEASON,  
D. S. HAYES AND SCIRICA, APRIL 2, 1973

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, APRIL 2, 1973

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of November 25, 1970 (No.230), entitled "An act  
2 codifying and compiling a part of the law of the  
3 Commonwealth," defining certain terms with reference to the  
4 age of majority in the "Statutory Construction Act of 1972,"  
5 and, with certain exceptions, further providing for extending  
6 the basic civil and contractual rights to persons 18 years of  
7 age.

8 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
9 hereby enacts as follows:

10 Section 1. The definitions of "Adult," "Majority" and  
11 "Minor" of section 1991 of Title 1, act of November 25, 1970  
12 (No.230), known as the "Consolidated Pennsylvania Statutes,"  
13 amended December 6, 1972 (No.290), are amended to read:

14 § 1991. Definitions.

15 The following words and phrases, when used in any statute  
16 finally enacted on or after September 1, 1937, unless the  
17 context clearly indicates otherwise, shall have the meanings  
18 ascribed to them in this section:

19 \* \* \*

20 "Adult." [An] When used in any law heretofore or hereafter

1 enacted, an individual [21] 18 years of age or over.

2 \* \* \*

3 "Majority." When used in any law heretofore or hereafter  
4 enacted, when used in reference to age, means of the age of [21]  
5 18 years or over.

6 \* \* \*

7 "Minor." [An] When used in any law heretofore or hereafter  
8 enacted, an individual under the age of [21] 18 years.

9 \* \* \*

10 Section 2. In furtherance of the general purpose intended by  
11 the enactment in 1971 and 1972 of various specific acts making  
12 the age of majority 18, the General Assembly finds and declares  
13 and by this act intends, pending the revision and amendment of  
14 the many other statutory provisions involved, to:

15 (1) Extend to persons 18 years of age and older the basic  
16 civil and contractual rights and obligations heretofore  
17 applicable only to persons 21 years of age or older, including,  
18 but not limited to, the right to contract, sue, be sued and  
19 defend civil actions, apply for and be appointed to public  
20 employment, apply for and be granted a license or authority to  
21 engage in a business, occupation or profession subject to State  
22 regulation, serve on juries, marry, divorce, adopt children,  
23 attend and participate in horse race meetings and pari-mutuel  
24 betting and other legalized games and gaming, sell, act as an  
25 incorporator, registered agent or director of a corporation,  
26 consent to medical and surgical treatment, execute a will, and  
27 to inherit, purchase, mortgage or otherwise encumber and convey  
28 property, real, personal and mixed.

29 (2) Abolish the right of a person between the ages of 18 and  
30 21 years to disaffirm and be relieved of contractual obligations

1 by reason of age.

2 Section 3. The General Assembly by this act does not intend  
3 to:

4 (1) Effect the release from confinement or transfer from one  
5 institution to another of a person attaining age 18 rather than  
6 21 years.

7 (2) Affect the right of a court to exercise its discretion  
8 in not sentencing a person between 18 and 21 years of age to a  
9 State correctional institution.

10 (3) Affect the right of a court to jurisdiction over a  
11 person under 21 years of age who committed an act of delinquency  
12 before reaching the age of 18 under the "Juvenile Act" of  
13 December 6, 1972 (No.333).

14 (4) Alter the right of persons under 20 years of age to be  
15 eligible for enrollment in public schools.

16 (5) Alter the provisions of section V, act of March 27, 1713  
17 (1 Sm.L.76, Ch.CXCVI) or section IV, act of March 26, 1785 (2  
18 Sm.L.299, Ch.MCXXXIV), with respect to the time within which a  
19 person under 21 years of age on the effective date of this act  
20 may commence an action or make an entry under a cause or right  
21 accrued prior to said date.

22 Section 4. Except with respect to the exceptions set forth  
23 in section 3 of this act, every person 18 or more years of age  
24 shall in all other matters and for all other purposes be deemed  
25 to be an adult and, notwithstanding any other provision of law  
26 to the contrary, shall have the same legal capacity to act and  
27 the same powers and obligations as a person 21 or more years of  
28 age. Except as herein otherwise provided, every act or action of  
29 any such person shall be as valid, binding and enforceable by or  
30 against such person as if, at the time such act or action was

1 performed or undertaken, such person was 21 or more years of age  
2 and no act or action by any such person performed or undertaken  
3 on or after the effective date of this act shall be subject to  
4 disaffirmance because of minority.

5 Section 5. This act shall take effect immediately.