

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 568

Session of
1981

INTRODUCED BY KUSSE, SNYDER AND HELFRICK, MARCH 23, 1981

REFERRED TO LABOR AND INDUSTRY, MARCH 23, 1981

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of April 27, 1927 (P.L.465, No.299), entitled,
2 as amended, "An act to provide for the safety of persons
3 employed, housed, or assembled in certain buildings and
4 structures not in cities of the first class, second class,
5 and second class A, by requiring certain construction and
6 ways of egress, equipment, and maintenance; providing for the
7 licensing of projectionists, except in cities of the first
8 class and second class; requiring the submission of plans for
9 examination and approval; providing for the promulgation of
10 rules and regulations for the enforcement of this act;
11 providing for the enforcement of this act by the Department
12 of Labor and Industry and, in certain cases, by the chiefs of
13 fire departments in cities of the third class; providing
14 penalties for violations of the provisions of this act; and
15 repealing certain acts," further providing for ways of
16 egress.

17 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
18 hereby enacts as follows:

19 Section 1. Section 4, act of April 27, 1927 (P.L.465,
20 No.299), referred to as the Fire and Panic Act, amended January
21 14, 1952 (1951 P.L.1889, No.518), is amended to read:

22 Section 4. Ways of Egress.--From every floor of buildings,
23 enumerated in section two of this act, there shall be proper and
24 sufficient ways of egress and means of escape from fire and

1 panic: [Provided, That in all buildings hereafter erected, or
2 adapted for any of the purposes enumerated in section two of
3 this act, there shall be not less than two (2) ways of egress,
4 as remote from each other as possible, except that the
5 requirement for two means of egress shall not be applicable to
6 buildings two stories or less in height with an occupancy of not
7 more than three persons above the ground floor, when it is
8 determined by the department that adequate means of egress are
9 available to all occupants, and except that there may be one
10 means of egress of fire-resistive construction in the case of
11 tenement houses, apartment houses and apartment hotels not over
12 three stories in height, with not more than a gross area of
13 three thousand (3000) square feet on each floor between exterior
14 and fire walls, comprising a maximum of six (6) apartments,
15 under regulations which may be promulgated by the Department of
16 Labor and Industry: And further provided, That in every building
17 the department may require additional means of egress where, in
18 its judgment, the means of egress are not sufficient.

19 In buildings of more than one story, except in special
20 purpose buildings as defined by the department, all means of
21 egress shall be located inside the building, at least one of the
22 two required interior stairs shall be an enclosed stair tower of
23 fire-resistive construction and in addition thereto, there may
24 be used as a fire escape, a mechanically operated device
25 suitable for use as a means of escaping from windows, and which
26 shall consist of a steel cable lifebelt and mechanical brake,
27 which is automatically put into action by the presence of weight
28 at the end of the cable. Where the department finds, after
29 proper investigation, that, in buildings erected prior to the
30 passage of this act, the internal ways of egress herein provided

1 for cannot be installed, it may direct that such means of egress
2 be provided as will, in its judgment, to better advantage carry
3 out the intent and purpose of this section.] The Department of
4 Labor and Industry shall promulgate rules and regulations
5 concerning the proper and sufficient ways of egress and means of
6 escape from fire and panic from buildings enumerated in section
7 2. The Department of Labor and Industry may order fire walls,
8 smoke barriers, additional fireproofing, or the enclosure of
9 vertical openings, to be built in buildings already erected, or
10 which may hereafter be erected, where in its judgment the
11 erection of such fire walls, smoke barriers, additional
12 fireproofing, or the enclosure of vertical openings is necessary
13 to the reasonable safe protection of the occupants. The ways of
14 egress shall be free from obstruction, lighted, and ready for
15 instant use at all times. Fire escapes, now in use or hereafter
16 erected, shall [be pain at least once a year, and] be kept in
17 safe condition, and up to such standard requirements as may be
18 specified by the Department of Labor and Industry. [The means of
19 egress for special purpose buildings shall be approved by the
20 Department of Labor and Industry.]

21 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.