

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 155 Session of
1995

INTRODUCED BY L. I. COHEN, FARGO, BELARDI, SATHER, DENT,
LEDERER, JADLOWIEC, JAROLIN, BEBKO-JONES, MELIO, CAPPABIANCA,
STEIL, CALTAGIRONE, HORSEY, STISH, RAYMOND, B. SMITH,
READSHAW, HERMAN, TRELLO, PISTELLA, DeLUCA, J. TAYLOR,
RUBLEY, LYNCH, CORNELL, DiGIROLAMO, MASLAND, BISHOP, JOSEPHS,
BROWNE, ITKIN, BARD, BOSCOLA, LAUGHLIN, HARHART, YOUNGBLOOD
AND SERAFINI, MAY 10, 1995

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, MAY 10, 1995

A RESOLUTION

1 Establishing a select committee to study school crime and
2 violence.

3 WHEREAS, The public schools of this Commonwealth have the
4 responsibility for the education of our children, and such
5 education should occur in an atmosphere conducive to learning
6 and free of crime, fear and violence; and

7 WHEREAS, Trespassing, truancy, vandalism and property damage,
8 assaults and violations of drug control statutes are significant
9 problems for many public schools in this Commonwealth; and

10 WHEREAS, Many persons perceive that the juvenile justice
11 system is too lenient in dealing with serious juvenile
12 offenders, particularly those who commit an offense in violation
13 of school board policies; and

14 WHEREAS, Some students lack respect for authority and
15 parental guidance and control, and some schools lack parental

1 and community support; and

2 WHEREAS, School personnel are concerned about the threat
3 posed by the criminal behavior of some students, however, school
4 officials must manage such incidents with restraint, balancing
5 the rights of the perpetrators and the school community; and

6 WHEREAS, There is inconsistency among school districts
7 regarding the management of student disciplinary problems,
8 including the reporting of acts of crime and violence on school
9 property and at school-sponsored activities; therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives hereby establish
11 a select committee to study school crime and violence. The
12 committee shall consist of 11 members of the House of
13 Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker; six members of
14 the majority party and five members of the minority party; and
15 be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the select committee shall:

17 (1) Examine the policy implications of the various
18 issues related to suspensions, expulsions and other
19 disciplinary measures used by local school boards to address
20 student misconduct, particularly whether expelled school-age
21 children are subject to the compulsory school attendance
22 laws, and to what extent and under what conditions, if any,
23 are public schools obligated to provide an education to such
24 children.

25 (2) Monitor the use of in-school suspensions, short-term
26 and long-term suspensions, expulsions and other disciplinary
27 actions imposed by local school boards throughout the
28 Commonwealth vis-a-vis the availability of the pilot
29 alternative education programs.

30 (3) Consider ways in which schools may effectively

1 prevent and control criminal activity on school property,
2 successfully prosecute juvenile offenders and secure
3 increased parental involvement and community support.

4 (4) Review relevant Federal, State and case laws
5 pertaining to student conduct and school board disciplinary
6 actions to identify and apprise essential parties of any
7 pertinent changes to ensure compliance.

8 (5) Examine such related issues and recommend statutory
9 and policy changes as may be necessary to ensure an orderly
10 and safe school environment;

11 and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That all agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide
13 assistance upon request as the select committee may deem
14 appropriate; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the select committee shall make a report of
16 its findings and recommendations to the Governor and to the
17 House of Representatives not later than December 31, 1995.