

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 84

Session of
1997

INTRODUCED BY PETRONE, HENNESSEY, TIGUE, McCALL, LLOYD, STURLA,
BOSCOLA, SCRIMENTI, MELIO, ROONEY, WOGAN, STETLER, DEMPSEY,
READSHAW, MUNDY, ROBERTS, KENNEY, JAMES, M. N. WRIGHT,
J. TAYLOR, EGOLF, ROBINSON, LYNCH, PISTELLA, WALKO, PRESTON
AND BELFANTI, MARCH 12, 1997

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON RULES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
AS AMENDED, JUNE 3, 1997

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Urban Affairs Committee to inquire into the
2 practices of municipal authorities.

3 WHEREAS, The Municipality Authorities Act of 1945 permits any
4 county, city, borough, incorporated town, township or school
5 district of the Commonwealth, acting singly or jointly with one
6 or more other local governments, to organize an authority; and

7 WHEREAS, Today there ~~exists~~ EXIST over 2,000 active municipal <—
8 authorities in Pennsylvania; and

9 WHEREAS, Municipal authorities in Pennsylvania were devised
10 as a vehicle for accomplishing public purposes not possible or
11 practical through direct action of counties, municipalities and
12 school districts, as well as to insulate public services from
13 political abuses; and

14 WHEREAS, In recent years there have been ~~perceived~~ ALLEGED <—
15 problems ~~with actual or alleged~~ OF abuses by municipal <—
16 authorities in this Commonwealth; and

1 WHEREAS, There have also been concerns raised as to the
2 accountability of a municipal authority, its board members and
3 its employees to the municipality that created the authority and
4 the general public which ultimately pays for the authority's
5 expenditures; AND

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6 WHEREAS, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY PERIODICALLY REVISES AND
7 UPDATES MUNICIPAL CODES, SUCH AS THE SECOND CLASS TOWNSHIP CODE,
8 WHICH WAS REENACTED DURING THE 1995-1996 LEGISLATIVE SESSION,
9 AND THE THIRD CLASS CITY CODE, WHICH IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING
10 REVISED THIS LEGISLATIVE SESSION; AND

11 WHEREAS, THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION COMPLETED A
12 COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY OPERATIONS ACROSS
13 THE COMMONWEALTH AND ISSUED A REPORT OF THEIR FINDING AND
14 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY PURSUANT TO HOUSE
15 RESOLUTION NO. 354 OF 1992; AND

16 WHEREAS, THE SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE
17 LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE STUDIED THE NEED TO COMPREHENSIVELY
18 AMEND THE MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES ACT OF 1945 IN A SERIES OF JOINT
19 HEARINGS HELD IN THE SUMMER OF 1993; therefore be it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Urban
21 Affairs Committee to conduct an inquiry into the practices of
22 municipal authorities in Pennsylvania as well as to conduct a
23 thorough review of the Municipality Authorities Act and to
24 propose any changes to that act it deems appropriate; and be it
25 further

26 RESOLVED, That the committee may hold hearings ON CURRENT
27 PROBLEMS AS WELL AS ON PREVIOUSLY RECOMMENDED CHANGES AND, take
28 testimony and make its investigations at such places as it deems
29 necessary in this Commonwealth. ~~It may issue subpoenas under the~~
30 ~~hand and seal of its chairman commanding any person to appear~~

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1 ~~before the committee and to answer questions touching matters~~
2 ~~properly being inquired into by the committee and to produce~~
3 ~~such books, papers, records and documents as the committee deems~~
4 ~~necessary. The subpoenas may be served upon any person and shall~~
5 ~~have the same effect as subpoenas issued out of the courts of~~
6 ~~this Commonwealth. Any person who willfully neglects or refuses~~
7 ~~to testify before the committee or to produce any books, papers,~~
8 ~~records or documents shall be subject to the penalties provided~~
9 ~~by the laws of this Commonwealth in such case. Each member of~~
10 ~~the committee shall have power to administer oaths and~~
11 ~~affirmations to witnesses appearing before the committee; and be~~
12 ~~it further~~

13 RESOLVED, That the committee make a report of its findings
14 and recommendations to the full House of Representatives no
15 later than September 30, 1998.