

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 903 Session of
1999

INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, KUKOVICH, SCHWARTZ, COSTA, HART,
KASUNIC, O'PAKE, STOUT, TOMLINSON, WHITE AND WOZNIAK,
MAY 3, 1999

REFERRED TO STATE GOVERNMENT, MAY 3, 1999

AN ACT

1 Designating December 15 of each year as "Bill of Rights Day."

2 WHEREAS, On December 15, 1791, the Bill of Rights was
3 ratified by three-fourths of the states making the Bill of
4 Rights the first ten amendments to the Constitution of the
5 United States of America; and

6 WHEREAS, The Bill of Rights specifies the basic rights that
7 all Americans hold so dear:

8 ARTICLE I

9 Freedom of Religion, Speech and Press. Right of Petition.
10 Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of
11 religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging
12 the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the
13 people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for
14 a redress of grievances.

15 ARTICLE II

16 Right of People to Bear Arms. A well regulated Militia, being
17 necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the

1 people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

2 ARTICLE III

3 Quarters of Troops. No Soldier shall, in time of peace be
4 quartered in any house, without consent of the Owner, nor in
5 time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

6 ARTICLE IV

7 Persons and Houses to be Secure From Unreasonable Searches
8 and Seizures. The right of the people to be secure in their
9 persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable
10 searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants
11 shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or
12 affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be
13 searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

14 ARTICLE V

15 Trials for Crimes. Compensation for Private Property Taken
16 for Public Use. No person shall be held to answer for a capital,
17 or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or
18 indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land
19 or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in
20 time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject
21 for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or
22 limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a
23 witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or
24 property, without due process of law; nor shall private property
25 be taken for public use, without just compensation.

26 ARTICLE VI

27 Rights of Accused Persons in Criminal Prosecutions. In all
28 criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a
29 speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and
30 district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which

1 district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to
2 be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be
3 confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory
4 process for obtaining Witnesses in his favor, and to have the
5 Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

6 ARTICLE VII

7 Rights in Civil Suits. In Suits at common law, where the
8 value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of
9 trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury,
10 shall be otherwise reexamined in any Court of the United States,
11 than according to the rules of the common law.

12 ARTICLE VIII

13 Excessive Bail, Fines and Punishments Prohibited. Excessive
14 bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor
15 cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

16 ARTICLE IX

17 Reserved Rights of People. The enumeration in the
18 Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny
19 or disparage others retained by the people.

20 ARTICLE X

21 Powers not Delegated, Reserved to States and People. The
22 powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution,
23 nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States
24 respectively, or to the people;

25 and

26 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania, the birthplace of the Constitution of
27 the United States, was the eighth state to ratify the Bill of
28 Rights.

29 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
30 hereby enacts as follows:

1 Section 1. Bill of Rights Day.

2 In recognition of the Bill of Rights, the first ten
3 amendments to the Constitution of the United States of America,
4 which was ratified on December 15, 1791, December 15 of each
5 year is hereby designated as "Bill of Rights Day." The Governor
6 is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation each year
7 recognizing the significance of the Bill of Rights in our lives
8 and calling upon the people of this Commonwealth to commemorate
9 the day with appropriate ceremonies and educational activities.

10 Section 2. Effective date.

11 This act shall take effect immediately.