

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 624 Session of  
2003

INTRODUCED BY BEBKO-JONES, BELARDI, BELFANTI, BISHOP, BROWNE,  
BUXTON, CAPPELLI, CAWLEY, CIVERA, CORRIGAN, COSTA, COY, CRUZ,  
CURRY, DeWEESE, EACHUS, D. EVANS, GEORGE, GOODMAN, GORDNER,  
HARHAI, JAMES, JOSEPHS, LEVDANSKY, MANDERINO, MANN, McCALL,  
PISTELLA, ROONEY, STABACK, STURLA, TANGRETTI, THOMAS, TIGUE,  
TRUE, WASHINGTON AND YOUNGBLOOD, MARCH 3, 2003

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, MARCH 3, 2003

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), entitled  
2 "An act providing for and reorganizing the conduct of the  
3 executive and administrative work of the Commonwealth by the  
4 Executive Department thereof and the administrative  
5 departments, boards, commissions, and officers thereof,  
6 including the boards of trustees of State Normal Schools, or  
7 Teachers Colleges; abolishing, creating, reorganizing or  
8 authorizing the reorganization of certain administrative  
9 departments, boards, and commissions; defining the powers and  
10 duties of the Governor and other executive and administrative  
11 officers, and of the several administrative departments,  
12 boards, commissions, and officers; fixing the salaries of the  
13 Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and certain other executive  
14 and administrative officers; providing for the appointment of  
15 certain administrative officers, and of all deputies and  
16 other assistants and employes in certain departments, boards,  
17 and commissions; and prescribing the manner in which the  
18 number and compensation of the deputies and all other  
19 assistants and employes of certain departments, boards and  
20 commissions shall be determined," establishing the  
21 Pennsylvania Commission for Women.

22 WHEREAS, Over 50% of the population of Pennsylvania is  
23 female; and

24 WHEREAS, The need for a strong advocate for the rights of  
25 women in all areas of the Commonwealth is no less today than it

1 was upon creation of the Pennsylvania Commission for Women  
2 initially; and

3 WHEREAS, Further measures should be taken to increase State  
4 efforts to ensure that women have full and equal opportunity to  
5 serve in every capacity as citizens of the Commonwealth, free of  
6 gender discrimination; and

7 WHEREAS, Women must be educated to represent and protect  
8 themselves, their families and their children in Pennsylvania.

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

11 Section 1. The act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known  
12 as The Administrative Code of 1929, is amended by adding a  
13 section to read:

14 Section 309. Pennsylvania Commission for Women.--(a) The  
15 Pennsylvania Commission for Women is hereby established within  
16 the Governor's Office to perform the following duties and  
17 functions:

18 (1) Monitor women's educational and employment needs and  
19 opportunities.

20 (2) Promote job training, educational programs and upward  
21 mobility for women.

22 (3) Encourage the development of and access to funding for  
23 small business enterprises owned or operated by women.

24 (4) Promote women for appointed positions in State  
25 Government, the judicial system and local government.

26 (5) Issue a biennial report on programs affecting women that  
27 are administered by State agencies.

28 (6) Issue a biennial report on new State laws affecting  
29 women.

30 (7) Serve as a liaison between government and

nongovernmental groups and organizations whose purposes relate to the interests of women.

(8) Assist women's groups to institute local self-help activities designed to meet educational, employment and related needs.

(9) Serve as a data bank for collecting and disseminating information, using the Internet and other current technologies.

(10) Hold public hearings, informal hearings, meetings with advisory groups and conferences regarding any matter related to the accomplishment of its purposes.

(11) Propose legislation with the assistance of the General Assembly.

(12) Provide an annual report and recommendations for action to the Governor and to the General Assembly.

(13) Perform any other functions that it shall deem appropriate in furtherance of these responsibilities.

(b) The commission shall consist of seventeen (17) members to be appointed by the Governor. The Majority and Minority Leader of the Senate and the Majority and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives shall each provide a list to the Governor of four candidates and the Governor shall appoint two members of the commission from each list. The members shall, to the extent practicable, represent diverse geographic, racial and ethnic groups and shall have expertise in such fields as aging, health care, business, education, agriculture, public welfare, child care, insurance and finance, labor and corrections. At least half of the commissioners shall be female. The Governor shall, in consultation with the commission members, designate one commission member to serve as chairperson and one commission member to serve as vice-chairperson. The chairperson and vice-

1 chairperson shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The  
2 Governor shall, in consultation with the commission members,  
3 appoint an Executive Director of the commission who will serve  
4 at the pleasure of the Governor. The executive director shall  
5 report to the Governor and shall assist the commission members  
6 in implementing the purposes of this section. The executive  
7 director shall, with the approval of the Governor, employ such  
8 other persons as needed for the proper administration of the  
9 commission.

10 (c) Members shall be appointed for terms of two (2) years.  
11 All members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. Should  
12 a vacancy occur on the commission due to resignation, disability  
13 or death of a member, the Governor shall appoint a successor as  
14 expeditiously as possible and the successor shall serve the  
15 duration of the unexpired term. A successor so appointed may  
16 thereafter be reappointed.

17 (d) Members of the commission shall receive no compensation  
18 for their service except that such members may be reimbursed for  
19 actual travel and related expenses in accordance with  
20 Commonwealth policy.

21 (e) To implement the purpose of this section, the commission  
22 may request and receive from any department, division, board,  
23 bureau, commission or any other agency of the State or any  
24 political subdivision thereof or public authority, such  
25 cooperation, assistance, information and data needed to properly  
26 carry out its powers and duties.

27 (f) The Office of the Budget shall establish within the  
28 General Fund a restricted account for the deposit of gifts and  
29 private donations received from third parties for use by the  
30 commission.

1     (g) The commission shall meet quarterly and a majority of  
2     the commissioners serving at any time shall constitute a quorum.  
3     In addition, the commission may hold public hearings to evaluate  
4     the effectiveness of Commonwealth services and programs to  
5     female residents. The commission is authorized to establish  
6     subcommittees and rules and procedures for the effective  
7     implementation of its functions consistent with this section.  
8     Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.