

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 795 Session of
2004

INTRODUCED BY WANSACZ, BASTIAN, BEBKO-JONES, BELARDI, BELFANTI,
BROWNE, CORRIGAN, CURRY, DALEY, DeWEESE, FABRIZIO, RAYMOND,
FLEAGLE, GEORGE, GERGELY, GOOD, GOODMAN, HERMAN, JAMES,
KOTIK, LAUGHLIN, LEACH, MARKOSEK, PETRARCA, READSHAW, REED,
SCRIMENTI, SHANER, TIGUE, TRAVAGLIO, WALKO, WASHINGTON,
WOJNAROSKI AND YUDICHAK, JUNE 16, 2004

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, JUNE 16, 2004

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study
2 the feasibility of providing State premium assistance to
3 surviving spouses of State Employees' Retirement System
4 members who participated in the Retired Employee Health
5 Program through the Pennsylvania Employees Benefit Trust
6 Fund.

7 WHEREAS, State Employees' Retirement System members who are
8 eligible to participate in the Retired Employee Health Plan
9 (REHP) through the Pennsylvania Employees Benefit Trust Fund
10 receive fully State-subsidized or partially State-subsidized
11 health insurance for themselves and their dependents; and

12 WHEREAS, While surviving spouses may elect to continue their
13 health insurance coverage on the death of the State Employees'
14 Retirement System member under section 529 of The Administrative
15 Code of 1929, they are no longer eligible for State premium
16 assistance; and

17 WHEREAS, The average annual premium under the REHP can be as
18 high as \$683 a month; and

1 WHEREAS, Premiums for the REHP are subject to annual rate
2 increases and are expected to rise each year; and

3 WHEREAS, The sudden loss of assistance in paying health
4 insurance premiums can have a devastating impact on the ability
5 of surviving spouses to pay their premiums, particularly if they
6 have fixed or limited incomes; and

7 WHEREAS, Health insurance coverage is critical to ensuring
8 access to medical care and maintaining the physical and
9 financial well-being of families; therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the
11 Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to examine the
12 feasibility of providing State premium assistance to surviving
13 spouses of State Employees' Retirement System members who
14 participated in the Retired Employee Health Program through the
15 Pennsylvania Employees Benefit Trust Fund; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee
17 examine the practicability of providing premium assistance to
18 surviving spouses that is equal in amount to the premium
19 assistance provided while the State Employees' Retirement System
20 member was alive; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee
22 report its findings and recommendations to the House of
23 Representatives no later than three months following the
24 adoption of this resolution.