

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 100 Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY ORIE, BOSCOLA, PILEGGI, PIPPY, WONDERLING,
WOZNIAK, RAFFERTY, RHOADES, D. WHITE, WAUGH AND LEMMOND,
APRIL 25, 2005

REFERRED TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT, APRIL 25, 2005

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to
2 investigate and make recommendations for the establishment
3 and administration of a voluntary, opt-in Statewide system
4 for health care and other employment-related benefits,
5 including and excluding pensions for purposes of comparison,
6 for uniformed and nonuniformed employees of local government
7 units.

8 WHEREAS, There has been extensive discussion in many public
9 and private forums of the potential risks and benefits of
10 consolidating certain functions of local government units within
11 this Commonwealth; and

12 WHEREAS, The debt of certain larger government units may
13 preclude their actual merger with surrounding municipalities;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Many local government units throughout this
16 Commonwealth struggle to meet their obligations to their
17 employees without limiting services to residents; and

18 WHEREAS, The continuing failure of local government units to
19 share provision of services and financing of employee benefits
20 is widely perceived as creating a risk for future tax increases;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, County, city, borough and township officials are
3 searching for ways to reduce taxpayer expenses without cutting
4 employee benefits or residential services; and

5 WHEREAS, In some regions of this Commonwealth, social
6 services and public health services are provided by one central
7 authority for many surrounding municipalities, thus providing
8 one model for consolidation; and

9 WHEREAS, It is unknown whether a group benefits purchasing
10 and financing system would save significant revenue; and

11 WHEREAS, It is unknown what type of group purchasing system
12 for health care and other employee benefits is the most cost
13 effective; and

14 WHEREAS, It is unknown which participation rates or other
15 financial thresholds are the most economically viable; and

16 WHEREAS, It is unknown what sort of Statewide plan would
17 reduce member expenses and standardize costs, benefits and
18 administrative policies; and

19 WHEREAS, It is unknown how many different ways local
20 governmental service and benefits are calculated; and

21 WHEREAS, It is unknown whether a Statewide system which
22 standardizes costs and benefits would reduce benefits or
23 increase contributions for some member employees; and

24 WHEREAS, It is unknown what percentage of employees of local
25 government units are represented through collective bargaining
26 agreements, what terms and conditions exist under those
27 agreements and when those agreements expire; and

28 WHEREAS, It is unknown what range of choices, participation
29 levels, contribution levels and benefits portability, including
30 transfer of assets and transfer of benefits, would encourage

1 maximum enrollment in a Statewide system; and

2 WHEREAS, It is unknown whether a Statewide system should be
3 administered through an existing State agency or through a newly
4 created administrative body and, if so, how the administrative
5 body should be constituted; therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That the Senate direct the Legislative Budget and
7 Finance Committee to commence a study to investigate existing
8 benefits models within and without this Commonwealth upon which
9 legislation might be drafted to create a voluntary, opt-in
10 Statewide system for group purchasing of health care and other
11 employee benefits for uniformed and nonuniformed employees of
12 local government units; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Senate direct the Legislative Budget and
14 Finance Committee to make recommendations on ways to establish
15 such a group benefits purchasing and financing system,
16 including, but not limited to, any necessary legislation; and be
17 it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee
19 submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the
20 Senate within one year of the adoption of this resolution.