

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 840 Session of  
2008

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INTRODUCED BY FRANKEL, BENNINGTON, COSTA, DeLUCA, DERMODY,  
GERGELY, KORTZ, KOTIK, LEVDANSKY, MAHER, MARKOSEK, MUSTIO,  
PETRONE, PRESTON, RAMALEY, READSHAW, M. SMITH, TURZAI,  
VULAKOVICH, WAGNER, WALKO, WHEATLEY AND J. WHITE,  
JULY 2, 2008

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON URBAN AFFAIRS, JULY 2, 2008

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## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the responsibility of the Commonwealth to examine  
2 and prescribe for governance of Allegheny County and units of  
3 government located therein; and establishing a select  
4 committee to consider the future of governance.

5 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth established Allegheny County in  
6 1788; and

7 WHEREAS, The General Assembly enacted law permitting the  
8 adoption of Home Rule by Allegheny County; and

9 WHEREAS, A Home Rule Charter was approved by the voters of  
10 Allegheny County in the election held in May 1998; and

11 WHEREAS, The Allegheny County electorate chose a County  
12 Executive and County Council initially in November 1999 and the  
13 Home Rule Charter went into effect in January 2000; and

14 WHEREAS, The Allegheny County Home Rule Charter was amended  
15 by a referendum approved by voters in May 2005 to eliminate  
16 seven elected row offices, including Coroner, Jury  
17 Commissioners, Prothonotary, Clerk of Courts, Register of Wills

1 and Recorder of Deeds; and

2 WHEREAS, There are 130 municipalities situate within the 731  
3 square miles comprising Allegheny County, and each has its own  
4 governmental structure; and

5 WHEREAS, The City of Pittsburgh is, by far, the largest of  
6 these municipalities; and

7 WHEREAS, The Chief Executive of Allegheny County and the  
8 Mayor of the City of Pittsburgh created the Citizens Advisory  
9 Committee on the Efficiency and Effectiveness of City-County  
10 Government in October 2006; and

11 WHEREAS, That committee issued a report in May 2008 entitled  
12 "Government for Growth: Forging a Bright Future - Built on  
13 Unity, Efficiency, Equity, and Equality - for the People of  
14 Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh," that considered  
15 government reform as a means of more broadly advancing regional  
16 progress; and

17 WHEREAS, That report specifically presented three  
18 recommendations:

19 (1) The County Chief Executive and Mayor should further  
20 intensify existing efforts to achieve higher levels of  
21 efficiency and effectiveness through functional cooperation.

22 (2) The city and county should enter into a formal  
23 "cooperation compact," both to ensure that efforts to partner  
24 in the delivery of services are pursued most effectively in  
25 the short-term and to ensure that such efforts remain a long-  
26 term priority that also will be respected by successor  
27 administrations.

28 (3) At the earliest appropriate time, the question of  
29 whether or not the governments of the City of Pittsburgh and  
30 Allegheny County should be consolidated, as a key step in

1       forging unity of leadership and fostering higher levels of  
2       regional growth, should be placed before the voters;  
3   and

4       WHEREAS, The City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County are  
5   already enabled but not required under their home rule charters  
6   and Commonwealth statutes to pursue the first two  
7   recommendations to great lengths without further action by the  
8   Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

9       WHEREAS, The House of Representatives wishes to consider the  
10   future of governance of Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh  
11   and other units of government situate in Allegheny County;  
12   therefore be it

13       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives, recognizing the  
14   importance of the future of governance of Allegheny County and  
15   units of government situated therein, direct the Speaker of the  
16   House of Representatives to appoint a select committee on  
17   governance in and of Allegheny County; and be it further

18       RESOLVED, That the select committee be composed of nine  
19   members of the majority party and five members of the minority  
20   party and include the majority and minority chairmen of the  
21   Urban Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives; and be  
22   it further

23       RESOLVED, That the select committee be composed of House  
24   members from the 22nd, 23rd, 28th, 30th, 34th, 35th, 36th, 38th,  
25   40th, 42nd, 44th and 45th districts; and be it further

26       RESOLVED, That the select committee elect a chairman from  
27   among its members; and be it further

28       RESOLVED, That the select committee may consider prospects  
29   for the future of governance of Allegheny County, the City of  
30   Pittsburgh, other municipalities and units of government located

1   therein; and be it further

2       RESOLVED, That the committee may hold hearings and take  
3   testimony in this Commonwealth and make its investigations at  
4   such places as it deems necessary and that each member of the  
5   committee have power to administer oaths and affirmations to  
6   witnesses appearing before the committee; and be it further

7       RESOLVED, That the commission be staffed by the Legislative  
8   Office for Research Liaison, who may solicit assistance from its  
9   university partners in the Pittsburgh area; and be it further

10      RESOLVED, That the ordinary and reasonable expenses incurred  
11   by the select committee be paid from accounts under the control  
12   of the Chief Clerk; and be it further

13      RESOLVED, That the committee make a report to the House of  
14   Representatives on its activities, findings and recommendations  
15   as the committee deems necessary.