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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 522 Session of  
2011

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INTRODUCED BY MARSICO AND CALTAGIRONE, DECEMBER 12, 2011

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, DECEMBER 12, 2011

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A RESOLUTION

1 Establishing the Task Force on Child Protection.

2 WHEREAS, The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

3 (1) Recent events require a review of laws and  
4 procedures relating to the reporting of child abuse and the  
5 protection of the health and safety of children.

6 (2) A review of these laws and procedures will help to  
7 ensure that the Commonwealth is able to adequately protect  
8 its children.

9 (3) It is the responsibility of the Commonwealth to  
10 protect its citizens, particularly children.

11 (4) Therefore, the General Assembly shall establish a  
12 task force to conduct a thorough and comprehensive review to:

13 (i) ascertain any inadequacies relating to the  
14 mandatory reporting of child abuse; and

15 (ii) restore public confidence in the ability of the  
16 Commonwealth to protect the victims of child abuse;

17 therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That the Task Force on Child Protection be

1 established; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the task force consist of the following  
3 members, appointed within 25 days after the adoption of this  
4 resolution by both chambers:

5 (1) Six members knowledgeable and experienced in issues  
6 relating to child abuse or providing services to victims of  
7 child abuse as follows:

8 (i) Three members appointed by the President pro  
9 tempore of the Senate, in consultation with the Majority  
10 Leader and the Minority Leader of the Senate. A member  
11 under this subparagraph may be a member of the Senate.

12 (ii) Three members appointed by the Speaker of the  
13 House of Representatives, in consultation with the  
14 Majority Leader and the Minority Leader of the House of  
15 Representatives. A member under this subparagraph may be  
16 a member of the House of Representatives.

17 (2) Four members appointed by the Governor as follows:

18 (i) One member shall be a member of the general  
19 public.

20 (ii) One member shall be a member of a victim  
21 organization or a children and youth services  
22 organization who is directly involved in providing  
23 services to victims of child abuse.

24 (iii) One member experienced in the operation and  
25 interaction between a county children and youth agency  
26 and the Commonwealth.

27 (iv) A district attorney.

28 (3) The Secretary of Public Welfare or a designee who  
29 shall be an employee of the department. The designee shall be  
30 appointed in writing, and a copy shall be submitted to the

1 chairman of the task force;

2 and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Governor select the chairperson of the  
4 task force; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the task force conduct its business as  
6 follows:

7 (1) The physical presence of six members constitutes a  
8 quorum of the task force.

9 (2) Action of the task force shall be authorized or  
10 ratified by majority vote of its members.

11 (3) A member not physically present may participate by  
12 teleconference or video conference.

13 (4) The following shall apply:

14 (i) The task force shall meet as necessary but no  
15 fewer than five times prior to September 30, 2012.  
16 Additional meetings may be called by the chairperson as  
17 necessary.

18 (ii) The chairperson shall schedule a meeting upon  
19 written request of eight members of the task force.

20 (iii) The first meeting shall be convened within 45  
21 days.

22 (iv) The task force shall hold public hearings as  
23 necessary to obtain the information required to conduct  
24 its review.

25 (v) The Department of Public Welfare, the Joint  
26 State Government Commission and the Juvenile Courts  
27 Judges' Commission shall cooperate to provide  
28 administrative or other assistance to the task force.

29 (vi) Members shall not receive compensation but  
30 shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses

1           incurred in service of the task force;

2 and be it further

3       RESOLVED, That the task force have the following powers:

4           (1) To examine and analyze the practices, processes and  
5 procedures relating to the response to child abuse.

6           (2) To review and analyze law, procedures, practices and  
7 rules relating to the reporting of child abuse.

8           (3) To hold public hearings for the taking of testimony  
9 and the requesting of documents.

10          (4) The chairperson shall have the power to administer  
11 oaths and affirmations to witnesses appearing before the task  
12 force;

13 and be it further

14       RESOLVED, That the task force have the following duties:

15           (1) To accept and review written comments from  
16 individuals and organizations.

17           (2) To make, by November 30, 2012, a final report to the  
18 Governor, the Senate and the House of Representatives.

19           (3) Based on its review, the report under paragraph (2)  
20 shall include recommendations:

21               (i) To improve the reporting of child abuse.

22               (ii) To implement any necessary changes in State  
23 statutes and practices, policies and procedures relating  
24 to child abuse.

25               (iii) To train appropriate individuals in the  
26 reporting of child abuse.

27           (4) To make reports as follows:

28               (i) The task force may file status reports and  
29 updates with the Governor and the Senate and the House of  
30 Representatives as it deems appropriate.

1           (ii) A report under this paragraph shall be adopted  
2           at a public meeting.

3           (iii) A report under this paragraph shall be a  
4           public record under the act of February 14, 2008 (P.L.6,  
5           No.3), known as the Right-to-Know Law;

6           and be it further

7           RESOLVED, That the task force expire December 31, 2012.