

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 400 Session of
2014

INTRODUCED BY BREWSTER, JUNE 3, 2014

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, JUNE 3, 2014

A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Port Authority of
2 Allegheny County.

3 WHEREAS, Allegheny County has a history of public
4 transportation going back more than 150 years, including horse-
5 drawn carriages, horse-drawn and electric streetcars, buses and
6 funiculars; and

7 WHEREAS, Only two of the original 17 funiculars survive
8 today, the Duquesne and Monongahela Inclines; and

9 WHEREAS, By 1910, the Pittsburgh Railways Company was moving
10 more than 600,000 riders a day across more than 100 trolley
11 routes using 606 miles of track; and

12 WHEREAS, After World War II, the economic boom and increased
13 highway construction led to dwindling ridership due to the
14 increase in automobile ownership; and

15 WHEREAS, With 16 independent lines operating downtown and 21
16 others serving the suburbs in addition to Pittsburgh Railways,
17 Pittsburgh was home to the country's largest streetcar system by
18 the 1960s; and

1 WHEREAS, About one-half of the independent lines were either
2 losing money or breaking even because fares were unable to keep
3 pace with rising costs; and

4 WHEREAS, The citizens of Allegheny County, recognizing the
5 need for a strong public transit system and faced with a
6 declining, fragmented system, petitioned for a county-wide
7 public transportation system; and

8 WHEREAS, The General Assembly enacted legislation creating
9 the Port Authority of Allegheny County in 1956, giving it the
10 responsibility to study, plan and develop port facilities and
11 later to acquire privately owned transit facilities and own and
12 operate a public system of mass transit; and

13 WHEREAS, The Port Authority of Allegheny County officially
14 began its function as an authority on March 1, 1964, immediately
15 consolidating 33 independent transportation companies into one
16 system; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1965, the Port Authority of Allegheny County's
18 first full year of operation, ridership increased by nearly 10
19 million as the Port Authority expanded existing routes and
20 established new routes, expanding coverage to 730 square miles
21 of Allegheny County and sections of contiguous counties; and

22 WHEREAS, The Port Authority of Allegheny County continued to
23 increase ridership in spite of a declining population and
24 increasing automobile use, peaking during the oil crisis in 1980
25 with 112 million riders, helping citizens throughout the region
26 when gasoline prices rose exponentially; and

27 WHEREAS, The Port Authority of Allegheny County continued to
28 improve and expand its services throughout the following
29 decades, despite fluctuations in ridership, further expanding
30 into contiguous counties, adding park-and-ride lots, upgrading

1 the fleet of vehicles, planning for the future and working to
2 further develop a customer-focused, market-driven approach in
3 its services; and

4 WHEREAS, The Port Authority of Allegheny County continues to
5 modernize and adapt to new technologies and challenges,
6 including using hybrid buses, adding bicycle racks to buses and
7 allowing cyclists to take their bicycles onto railcars; and

8 WHEREAS, The Port Authority of Allegheny County also
9 preserves the area's rich history with the maintenance of the
10 two iconic funiculars, the Duquesne and Monongahela Inclines,
11 the latter of which is the oldest, continuously operating
12 funicular in the United States; and

13 WHEREAS, The Port Authority of Allegheny County offers
14 programs like the ACCESS paratransit program that helps senior
15 citizens and persons with disabilities utilize public
16 transportation; and

17 WHEREAS, The Port Authority of Allegheny County offers free
18 fares in its downtown zone, as well as in all zones for senior
19 citizens and reduced or free fares for persons with
20 disabilities, students and others ensuring access for the area
21 residents, regardless of age, income or ability; and

22 WHEREAS, Today, the Port Authority of Allegheny County
23 continues to offer a variety of services, including bus, light-
24 rail and funiculars, helping to connect the greater community as
25 it has for the past half-century; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the Senate commemorate the 50th anniversary of
27 the Port Authority of Allegheny County; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the Senate honor the Port Authority of
29 Allegheny County for the great role that it has played in
30 supporting the community and bringing its residents together.