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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 466 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY THOMAS, SEPTEMBER 4, 2015

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, SEPTEMBER 4, 2015

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Establishing the 21st Century Cheyney University State  
2 Commission to study the academic and financial needs of  
3 Cheyney University of Pennsylvania and make recommendations  
4 to ensure its viability in the future.

5 WHEREAS, Cheyney University of Pennsylvania was founded in  
6 1837 as the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia; and

7 WHEREAS, Richard Humphreys, a Quaker philanthropist, set  
8 aside \$10,000, approximately one-tenth of his estate, to design  
9 and establish the Institute for Colored Youth, in order to  
10 educate descendants of the African race; and

11 WHEREAS, The Institute for Colored Youth successfully  
12 provided free classical education for qualified individuals; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1902, the school moved to George Cheyney's farm  
14 located 25 miles outside Philadelphia; and

15 WHEREAS, The school was renamed several times over the years,  
16 as Cheyney Training School for Teachers in 1914, Cheyney State  
17 Teachers College in 1951 and the Cheyney State College in 1959,  
18 before joining the State System of Higher Education in 1983 as  
19 Cheyney University of Pennsylvania; and

1 WHEREAS, Cheyney University is known as America's first  
2 institution of higher learning for African-American students;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Cheyney University has more than 30,000 graduates,  
5 including alumni such as Ed Bradley of "60 Minutes," Robert W.  
6 Bogle, the publisher and CEO of the Philadelphia Tribune, which  
7 is the oldest newspaper continuously owned and operated by an  
8 African American, Michael Coard, a nationally respected attorney  
9 and journalist, and Pedro Rivera, Secretary of Education of the  
10 Commonwealth; and

11 WHEREAS, Cheyney University's mission is to prepare  
12 confident, competent, reflective and visionary leaders and  
13 responsible citizens; and

14 WHEREAS, Cheyney University has a tradition of academic  
15 excellence while maintaining its historical commitment to  
16 opportunity and access for students of diverse backgrounds; and

17 WHEREAS, Cheyney University is facing academic and financial  
18 challenges that may render its future uncertain as an  
19 institution of higher education; and

20 WHEREAS, Many of the academic and financial challenges faced  
21 by the university stem from inadequate funding, capital needs  
22 and poor recruitment; therefore be it

23 RESOLVED (the Senate concurring), That the 21st Century  
24 Cheyney University State Commission be established to study the  
25 academic and financial needs of Cheyney University of  
26 Pennsylvania and make recommendations to ensure its viability in  
27 the future; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the 21st Century Cheyney University State  
29 Commission consist of 21 members who shall be appointed as  
30 follows within 25 days after the adoption of this resolution by

1 both chambers:

2 (1) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
3 Education Committee of the Senate and the chairperson and  
4 minority chairperson of the Education Committee of the House  
5 of Representatives or their designees.

6 (2) The Director of the Independent Fiscal Office or a  
7 designee.

8 (3) The Executive Director of the Legislative Budget and  
9 Finance Committee or a designee.

10 (4) The Chancellor of the State System of Higher  
11 Education or a designee.

12 (5) The chairperson of the Board of Governors of the  
13 State System of Higher Education or a designee.

14 (6) The Secretary of Education or a designee.

15 (7) The Secretary of the Budget or a designee.

16 (8) The President of Cheyney University of Pennsylvania  
17 or a designee.

18 (9) The chairperson of the Council of Trustees of  
19 Cheyney University of Pennsylvania or a designee.

20 (10) Nine individuals appointed by the Governor who  
21 represent the education, finance, business and workforce  
22 communities;

23 and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the 21st Century Cheyney University State  
25 Commission appoint a member to serve as the chairperson of the  
26 commission; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the 21st Century Cheyney University State  
28 Commission hold its first meeting within 45 days after the  
29 adoption of this resolution by both chambers, regardless of the  
30 status of the appointments under this resolution; and be it

1 further

2 RESOLVED, That the 21st Century Cheyney University State  
3 Commission hold meetings at the call of the chairperson; and be  
4 it further

5 RESOLVED, That the members of the 21st Century Cheyney  
6 University State Commission not receive compensation for their  
7 services but be reimbursed for all necessary travel and other  
8 reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the  
9 performance of their duties as members of the commission; and be  
10 it further

11 RESOLVED, That the General Assembly provide administrative  
12 support, meeting space and any other assistance required by the  
13 21st Century Cheyney University State Commission to carry out  
14 its duties under this resolution; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the 21st Century Cheyney University State  
16 Commission devise short-term and long-term plans to address the  
17 academic and financial needs of Cheyney University of  
18 Pennsylvania; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the 21st Century Cheyney University State  
20 Commission issue a report containing its findings and  
21 recommendations to the General Assembly no later than six months  
22 after the adoption of this resolution by both chambers.