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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 763 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY ROZZI, KINSEY, DAVIS, BURNS AND O'BRIEN,  
MARCH 24, 2016

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, MARCH 24, 2016

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A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the district attorneys of the respective counties to  
2 request that the Office of Attorney General investigate the  
3 Roman Catholic dioceses of Pennsylvania for evidence of the  
4 sexual abuse of children and recommend any legislative  
5 remedies the office deems appropriate in order to ensure that  
6 child victims of sexual abuse find justice.

7 WHEREAS, There is an international, national and Statewide  
8 epidemic of children being sexually abused by clergy and  
9 subsequent efforts to cover up the abuse by the Roman Catholic  
10 Church; and

11 WHEREAS, The Investigating Grand Jury of September 26, 2001,  
12 in the Court of Common Pleas, First Judicial District of  
13 Pennsylvania, Criminal Trial Division, released a report finding  
14 that over the previous 35 years more than 120 priests serving  
15 the Archdiocese of Philadelphia had been accused of sexually  
16 abusing hundreds of adolescents and younger children; and

17 WHEREAS, The report also found that, with rare exceptions,  
18 the Archdiocese of Philadelphia did not report these accusations  
19 to public authorities, and the archdiocesan managers as a whole  
20 did not prevent the sexual abuse of children by priests and kept

1 the discovery of the abuse from occurring; and

2 WHEREAS, The Investigating Grand Jury of September 17, 2003,  
3 in the Court of Common Pleas, First Judicial District of  
4 Pennsylvania, Criminal Trial Division, released a report  
5 documenting child sexual abuse by at least 63 different priests  
6 in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia victimizing hundreds of  
7 children and that archdiocese officials at the highest levels  
8 received reports of abuse and chose not to conduct any  
9 meaningful investigation of those reports; and

10 WHEREAS, The report further found that archdiocese officials  
11 left dangerous priests in place or transferred them to different  
12 parishes as a means of concealment, that they never alerted  
13 parents of the dangers posed by these offenders, that they  
14 intimidated and retaliated against victims and witnesses who  
15 came forward about abuse, that they manipulated "treatment"  
16 efforts in order to create a false impression of action and that  
17 they did many of these things in a conscious effort to simply  
18 avoid civil liability; and

19 WHEREAS, The Investigating Grand Jury XXIII in the Court of  
20 Common Pleas of Philadelphia County, Trial Division, released a  
21 report on January 21, 2011, urging the criminal prosecution of  
22 five additional priests and church employees for sexually  
23 abusing children and found that the procedures implemented by  
24 the archdiocese in response to prior abuses purportedly to help  
25 victims were in fact designed to help the abusers and the  
26 archdiocese; and

27 WHEREAS, The 37th Statewide Investigating Grand Jury released  
28 a report on March 1, 2016, which documented child sexual abuse  
29 by at least 50 different priests or religious leaders within the  
30 Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown victimizing hundreds of children

1 and the subsequent efforts by the diocese to cover up the abuses  
2 and avoid public scandal rather than protect the well-being of  
3 innocent children; and

4 WHEREAS, This resolution is not an indictment of the Roman  
5 Catholic religion or the Roman Catholic Church, but an effort to  
6 deliver justice to abused children and to rid the Roman Catholic  
7 Church of the men who hijacked it for their own grotesque  
8 desires; therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge the district  
10 attorneys of the respective counties to request that the Office  
11 of Attorney General investigate the Roman Catholic dioceses of  
12 Pennsylvania for evidence of the sexual abuse of children; and  
13 be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives request that the  
15 Office of Attorney General recommend any legislative remedies  
16 the office deems appropriate in order to ensure that child  
17 victims of sexual abuse find justice.