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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1282 Session of 2019

INTRODUCED BY MEHAFFIE, PICKETT, ROTHMAN, MARKOSEK, MILLARD AND MULLINS, APRIL 25, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, APRIL 25, 2019

AN ACT

Designating the amethyst as the official State gemstone of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and designating celestine as the official State mineral of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Findings and declarations.

The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

(1) Pennsylvania is well known for a variety of vast deposits of minerals, including quartz, which is mined in this Commonwealth.

(2) Amethyst is a vibrant, purple gemstone and the most beautiful type of quartz.

(3) Amethyst appropriately represents Pennsylvania because it is found in Delaware County, Pennsylvania, and has a captivating beauty.

(4) Amethyst is the focal point of the crown worn by the winner of the Miss Pennsylvania pageant.

(5) The Miss Pennsylvania crown and the amethyst

gemstones featured in the crown have many unique connections to Pennsylvania.

(6) The Miss Pennsylvania crown was commissioned by the Pennsylvania Jewelers Association and handmade by Pennsylvania resident and jeweler Jim Seitzer.

(7) The Miss Pennsylvania crown is encrusted with 92 carats of amethyst donated by jewelers throughout Pennsylvania.

(8) The Miss Pennsylvania crown has a design which is inspired by the keystone shape to pay homage to Pennsylvania's nickname, "The Keystone State."

(9) Pennsylvania is nicknamed "The Keystone State" because Pennsylvania was the middle colony of the original 13 American colonies.

(10) Accordingly, a 37-carat amethyst gemstone in the shape of a keystone is at the center of the Miss Pennsylvania crown.

(11) The official State plant of Pennsylvania is the Penngift Crownvetch, commonly known as the "Purple Crown."

(12) It is fitting that Pennsylvania be represented by the beauty of the attractive purple blooms of the "Purple Crown" and the radiant purple amethyst gemstones of the "Purple Crown" worn by Miss Pennsylvania.

(13) Celestine was first discovered in Bellwood, near Frankstown, Blair County, Pennsylvania, in 1791 by Andreas Gotthelf Schutz, a visiting naturalist from Freiberg, Germany. In 1797, Martin Klaproth, the leading chemist in Germany of his time, determined the chemical composition of celestine as strontium sulfate. Abraham Gottlob Werner, a founding father of the sciences of mineralogy and physical

geology, offered the name and physical description in 1798. The first crystal structure of celestine was published in 1925 by R. W. James and W. A. Wood.

(14) Celestine derives its name from Latin *caelestis*, meaning "heavenly," in allusion to the beautiful sky-blue color of the first specimen from this Commonwealth. Celestine grows as large, clear crystals that can be faceted into gems. With the same brilliance as topaz, celestine crystals are lovely gemstones.

(15) Celestine has been found in Bellwood, Blair County; East Salem, Juniata County; Lime Bluff, Lycoming County; Meckley's Quarry, Northumberland County; Allenport, Huntingdon County; and Faylors Middle Creek Quarry, Mifflin County.

(16) Celestine is a major ore for strontium, whose compounds are responsible for the bright red flames in fireworks and road flares. Strontium salts also were employed for refining beet sugar and, during the long period when cathode-ray tubes dominated television technology, strontium was added to the glass to absorb X-rays for the protection of the viewer.

(17) Designating celestine as our State mineral will remind the residents of Pennsylvania that our Commonwealth boasts a rich natural history that is marked by a mineralogy of great beauty and diversity. This act will provide a positive experience to countless school children whose interest in Pennsylvania history and geology will be piqued.

Section 2. Official State gemstone.

Amethyst is hereby designated as the official State gemstone of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Section 3. Official State mineral.

Celestine, a mineral appearing as sky-blue or white orthorhombic crystals or in fibrous masses, is hereby selected, designated and adopted as the official State mineral of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Section 4. Effective date.

This act shall take effect immediately.