
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 695 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY MATZIE, SNYDER, BURNS, KULIK, KORTZ, KIM,
PASHINSKI, HILL-EVANS, SCHLOSSBERG, KINSEY, BIZZARRO,
BERNSTINE, SHUSTERMAN, COX, MACKENZIE, MURT, MILLARD,
LONGIETTI, PICKETT, FREEMAN, ROEBUCK, CIRESI, MENTZER,
B. MILLER, NEILSON, SCHLEGEL CULVER AND CONKLIN,
JANUARY 30, 2020

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, JANUARY 30, 2020

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating March 8, 2020, as "Charter Day" in Pennsylvania.

2 WHEREAS, On March 4, 1681, King Charles II of England granted
3 William Penn a charter for land in the New World to make up for
4 a large debt that the king owed to Penn's father; and

5 WHEREAS, William Penn had initially decided to name the land
6 "Sylvania," which in Latin means "woods," to which King Charles
7 II added the prefix "Penn" in honor of William Penn's father,
8 Admiral Sir William Penn; and

9 WHEREAS, Admiral Penn had served England as a rear admiral
10 and vice admiral of Ireland, a vice admiral of England, a
11 general in the First Anglo-Dutch War and great captain commander
12 under the Duke of York; and

13 WHEREAS, William Penn wrote a Frame of Government of
14 Pennsylvania that established a democratic system containing
15 full freedom of religion, fair trials featuring independent

1 juries, assemblies consisting of elected representatives of the
2 people and a separation of powers in the government, all ideas
3 that later formed the crux of the Constitution of the United
4 States; and

5 WHEREAS, William Penn described Pennsylvania as his "holy
6 experiment" and from it he hoped a nation based on justice would
7 grow; and

8 WHEREAS, William Penn's charter exists as the formal
9 beginning of the colony and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
10 and through it, William Penn established the first example of
11 democracy in what would become the United States of America; and

12 WHEREAS, Our residents benefit from learning more about the
13 overall history of this Commonwealth from its founding and how
14 the principles of governance within the Commonwealth date back
15 to the beliefs of William Penn; and

16 WHEREAS, The history of Pennsylvania exists as a kaleidoscope
17 of stories and people, with each area of this Commonwealth
18 having multiple stories of history involving key characters and
19 events that create and establish Pennsylvania's heritage; and

20 WHEREAS, "Charter Day" is typically observed by the
21 Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on the second
22 Sunday of March, which in 2020 is March 8; and

23 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
24 encourages visits to all of its sites in celebration of "Charter
25 Day"; and

26 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission,
27 the Pennsylvania State Archives and the State Historical Records
28 Advisory Board each works to inform Commonwealth residents about
29 our Commonwealth's heritage through special activities,
30 including sponsoring an annual "Charter Day" event in the State

1 Museum of Pennsylvania; and

2 WHEREAS, This free event includes a presentation of the 1681
3 charter as well as Pennsylvania's Act for the Gradual Abolition
4 of Slavery (1780) and our State's ratification of the 15th
5 Amendment to the United States Constitution (1869), which
6 ensured the right of Americans to vote, regardless of "race,
7 color or previous condition of servitude," stories of
8 Pennsylvania history and other programs; and

9 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has 23 other State historic sites and
10 museums and numerous other historical organizations that
11 continue to operate, largely thanks to the assistance of
12 volunteers and other groups that have donated their money, time
13 and other resources so that residents can remain well-informed
14 about the fabric of this Commonwealth's history; therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate March
16 8, 2020, as "Charter Day" in Pennsylvania; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the residents, schools, other educational
18 institutions and patriotic, religious, historical and veterans'
19 groups be urged to participate with any and all "Charter Day"
20 activities sponsored by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum
21 Commission, the Pennsylvania State Archives, the State
22 Historical Records Advisory Board, the 23 other State historic
23 sites and museums or those offered by any of the many other
24 historical organizations within this Commonwealth; and be it
25 further

26 RESOLVED, That the volunteers and other residents who keep
27 history alive through their support and work for the
28 Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Pennsylvania
29 State Archives, the State Historical Records Advisory Board, the
30 23 other State historic sites and museums or through the

1 numerous other historical organizations within this Commonwealth
2 be honored for their efforts.