AN ACT

Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An act relating to the public school system, including certain provisions applicable as well to private and parochial schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the laws relating thereto," in preliminary provisions, providing for homeless youth at institutions of higher education; and, in fostering independence through education, providing for housing priority.

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

Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding sections to read:

Section 130. Homeless Youth at Institutions of Higher Education.--(a) Each institution of higher education that maintains student housing facilities shall give priority for housing to current and former homeless youth. The following shall apply:

(1) Each institution of higher education that maintains student housing facilities open for occupation during school
breaks or on a year-round basis shall give first priority to current and former homeless youth for residence in the housing facilities that are open for uninterrupted year-round occupation and provide housing to current and former homeless youth at no extra cost during academic or campus breaks and next give priority to current and former homeless youth for housing that is open for occupation during the most days in the calendar year.

(2) Each institution of higher education shall develop a plan to ensure that current and former homeless youth can access housing resources as needed during and between academic terms, including during academic and campus breaks, regardless of whether the campus maintains student housing facilities.

(b) An institution of higher education shall develop a rapid rehousing program to assist current and former homeless youth enrolled at the institution of higher education to provide navigation services on the institution of higher education's campus to conduct outreach and assessment and connect current and former homeless youth with housing and other related services.

(c) An institution of higher education shall designate a staff member who is employed in the financial aid office, or another appropriate office or department as determined by the institution of higher education, to serve as a homeless youth liaison. The homeless youth liaison shall be responsible for understanding the financial aid process and identifying services available and appropriate for current and former homeless youth enrolled at the institution of higher education. The homeless youth liaison shall assist current and former homeless youth in applying for and receiving Federal and State financial aid and
other available services.

(d) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, an institution of higher education may grant resident status to a student who resides in this Commonwealth and is nineteen (19) years of age or under at the time of enrollment, regardless of how long the student has lived in this Commonwealth, if the student is determined to be a homeless youth at any time during the four (4) years immediately preceding the student's enrollment.

(e) An institution of higher education shall provide tuition waivers for current and former homeless youth. The following shall apply:

(1) A current or former homeless youth shall be exempt from paying any tuition at an institution of higher education, regardless of the current or former homeless youth's receipt of a scholarship or grant if:

(i) The current or former homeless youth is enrolled at the institution of higher education on or before the date that the current or former homeless youth reaches twenty-five (25) years of age.

(ii) The current or former homeless youth is enrolled as a candidate in a degree program.

(iii) The current or former homeless youth has filed for Federal and State financial aid.

(2) If a current or former homeless youth receives a scholarship or grant for postsecondary education and is enrolled before the recipient reaches twenty-five (25) years of age as a candidate in a degree program at an institution of higher education, the scholarship or grant shall be applied to the tuition for the current or former homeless youth before applying...
a waiver under this section to the tuition.

(3) A current or former homeless youth who is exempt from tuition under this subsection shall continue to be exempt until the earlier of:

(i) five (5) years after first enrolling as a candidate for a degree program at an institution of higher education; or

(ii) the date that the current or former homeless youth is awarded a degree.

(4) On or before June 1 of each year, an institution of higher education shall report to the department on the aggregate and disaggregate number of current or former homeless youth who:

(i) Received a tuition exemption under this subsection during the prior academic year.

(ii) Received a tuition exemption under this subsection at any point during the current or former homeless youth's enrollment at the institution of higher education.

(iii) Earned a degree from the institution of higher education during the prior academic year.

(5) On or before September 1 of each year, the department shall:

(i) Compile the reports received under paragraph (3).

(ii) Submit the compilation of reports to the General Assembly.

(f) For purposes of this section, a student who is verified as a former homeless youth under subsection (g) shall retain that status for a period of six (6) years from the date of admission to an institution of higher education.

(g) As used in this section, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:
"Department." The Department of Education of the Commonwealth.

"Homeless youth." An individual under twenty-five (25) years of age, who has been verified, in the case of a former homeless youth, at any time during the twenty-four (24) months immediately preceding the receipt of the student's application for admission by an institution of higher education, as an unaccompanied youth, under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Public Law 100-77, 101 Stat. 482), by at least one of the following:

(1) A homeless assistance program, as defined by the Department of Human Services.

(2) The director, or the director's designee, of a Federal TRIO program or a Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs program.

(3) A financial aid administrator.

(4) A designated homeless youth liaison or McKinney-Vento coordinator in a school district or the Department of Education.

"Institution of higher education." As defined in section 118(c).

Section 2602.1-K. Housing priority.

(a) Housing.--Each institution of higher education that maintains student housing facilities open for occupation during school breaks or on a year-round basis shall give first priority to individuals eligible under section 2602-K(c) for residence in the housing facilities that are open for uninterrupted year-round occupation and provide housing to individuals eligible under section 2602-K(c) at no extra cost during academic or campus breaks and next give priority to individuals eligible under section 2602-K(c) for housing that is open for occupation.
during the most days in the calendar year.

(b) Plans.—Each institution of higher education shall
develop a plan to ensure that individuals eligible under section
2602-K(c) can access housing resources as needed during and
between academic terms, including during academic and campus
breaks, regardless of whether the campus maintains student
housing facilities.

Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.