

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 32 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY WEBSTER, SCHLOSSBERG, MADDEN, SANCHEZ, HANBIDGE,
HILL-EVANS, DELLOSO, KINKEAD AND D. WILLIAMS, MARCH 10, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, MARCH 10, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a
2 study on the current utilization of poll workers, polling
3 places, voting compartments and voting machines to determine
4 the best course of action in order to minimize the time
5 investment required to vote and ensure that the average time
6 required to vote does not promote inequities based on
7 geography, economic status, race, gender or other relevant
8 factors.

9 WHEREAS, The United States conducts elections unlike any
10 other country in the world, empowering states to implement
11 elections by entrusting local officials in more than 10,000
12 jurisdictions to run elections; and

13 WHEREAS, In Pennsylvania, all elections are conducted in each
14 voting precinct by a district election board; and

15 WHEREAS, District election boards consist of a judge of
16 election, majority inspector of election and minority inspector
17 of election; and

18 WHEREAS, Poll workers are often volunteers who have received
19 only a few hours of training; and

20 WHEREAS, The act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), known as
21 the Pennsylvania Election Code, stipulates that election

districts may not contain more than 1,200 registered electors,
except for good cause shown, and requires each election district
to contain a polling place; and

WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Election Code requires that each
polling place have at least one voting compartment for every 200
registered qualified electors, or a fraction thereof, and have
no more than one machine for every 350 registered qualified
electors, or a fraction thereof, nor less than one machine for
every 600 registered qualified electors, or a fraction thereof;
and

WHEREAS, A combination of factors often leads to increased
wait times at polling places, discouraging individuals from
voting and disproportionately affecting poorer citizens with
less flexibility at work; and

WHEREAS, In 2018, Black and Latino voters waited in line for
11 minutes on average, compared to just 9 minutes on average for
white voters; and

WHEREAS, As the percentage of nonwhite voters in a precinct
increased, so did the time it took to cast a ballot; and

WHEREAS, In 2020, some voters saw major delays at polling
places, especially in majority-minority neighborhoods; therefore
be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
State Government Commission to conduct a study on the current
utilization of poll workers, polling places, voting compartments
and voting machines to determine the best course of action in
order to minimize the time investment required to vote and
ensure that the average time required to vote does not promote
inequalities based upon geography, economic status, race, gender
or other relevant factors; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission study
2 shall include, at a minimum, all of the following:

3 (1) A breakdown of the current utilization of poll
4 workers, polling places, voting compartments and voting
5 machines by county and by election district.

6 (2) The average wait time to vote by county.

7 (3) The average wait time to vote based upon geography,
8 economic status, race, gender and any other factor deemed
9 relevant by the Joint State Government Commission.

10 (4) What extent changes can be made at the county level
11 to minimize wait times for in-person voting.

12 (5) What extent changes can be made at the election
13 district level to minimize wait times for in-person voting.

14 (6) Recommendations for legislative or administrative
15 action to minimize wait times for in-person voting;

16 and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission be
18 authorized to request information from the Department of State
19 and the Secretary of the Commonwealth for the study on behalf of
20 the House of Representatives; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission be
22 authorized to request information from county boards of
23 elections for the study on behalf of the House of
24 Representatives; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission be
26 authorized to request information from district election boards
27 for the study on behalf of the House of Representatives; and be
28 it further

29 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission report
30 its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives

1 no later than one year after the adoption of this resolution.