

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 31 Session of 2023

INTRODUCED BY HAYWOOD, DILLON, HUGHES, SAVAL, A. WILLIAMS, KEARNEY, FONTANA AND CAPPELLETTI, FEBRUARY 21, 2023

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, FEBRUARY 21, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the week of February 12 through 18, 2023, as
 2 "William Still Week" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, William Still was born October 7, 1821, in Shamong
 4 Township, New Jersey, before moving to Philadelphia in 1844; and

5 WHEREAS, William Still was an African-American abolitionist
 6 who, as chairman of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society's
 7 Vigilance Committee, orchestrated Underground Railroad
 8 activities in Philadelphia and across the country; and

9 WHEREAS, Between 1850 and 1855, in the wake of the Fugitive
 10 Slave Act, which required that Northern states assist in
 11 capturing escaped slaves, William Still and his wife Letitia
 12 sheltered hundreds of escapees in their Philadelphia home,
 13 including well-known figures like Harriet Tubman; and

14 WHEREAS, The enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law instilled
 15 fear among Underground Railroad operatives who destroyed the
 16 records of the escapees whom the operatives had given aid; and

17 WHEREAS, However, William Still continued to keep detailed
 18 accounts of the people who passed through Philadelphia en route

1 to Canada, even though the accounts implicated William Still in
2 unlawful activities putting his own safety and freedom in
3 jeopardy; and

4 WHEREAS, William Still is renowned for using these journals
5 to publish one of the only firsthand African-American penned
6 accounts of the movement, titled, *The Underground Railroad*; and

7 WHEREAS, William Still died on July 14, 1902; and

8 WHEREAS, In March 2018, the William Still House, located at
9 625 South Delhi Street in Philadelphia, was added to the
10 Philadelphia Register of Historic Places; and

11 WHEREAS, William Still once wrote, "The heroism and desperate
12 struggle that many of our people had to endure should be kept
13 green in the memory of this and coming generations"; therefore
14 be it

15 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the week of February 12
16 through 18, 2023, as "William Still Week" in Pennsylvania.