

MEMORANDUM

To: All Members of the House of Representatives

From: Representative John Galloway

Date: February 17, 2016

Subject: **Resolution: Designating March 2016 as “Ancient Order of Hibernians Month” in Pennsylvania**

In the near future, I will be introducing a resolution designating March 2016 as “Ancient Order of Hibernians Month” in Pennsylvania.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) is the oldest lay Catholic ethnic organization in the United States. It can trace its origins all the way back to the 16th century, when secret societies formed in Ireland to protect the Irish people and the Roman Catholic Church against discrimination during the Protestant Reformation. Pennsylvania was pivotal in the formation of the AOH in America, which occurred in 1836 when a group of miners from Schuylkill County, called the Hibernian Benevolent Society, met with Irish Catholics in New York City. Other divisions of the AOH began forming across the nation in the years to follow. The group’s mission was to assist Irish immigrants in America in finding jobs and social services, and to protect Catholic Church property.

Today, the AOH is the most broadly based Irish-American organization, with more than 80,000 members in America, Canada and Ireland, including more than 7,500 members in Pennsylvania. It aims to connect members with their ancestral homeland through the promotion of Irish heritage and culture, as well as the study of the Gaelic language. The AOH also donates millions of dollars annually to charitable causes.

Please join me in recognizing the storied past of the AOH, as well as its modern contributions to philanthropy and Irish heritage.