

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 349 Session of 2009

INTRODUCED BY REED, BEYER, CREIGHTON, DENLINGER, EVERETT, FLECK, GEIST, GIBBONS, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HALUSKA, HARKINS, LONGIETTI, MCGEEHAN, MILLARD, D. O'BRIEN, PICKETT, RAPP, REICHLEY, ROCK, SCAVELLO, SIPTROTH, K. SMITH, STABACK AND SWANGER, FEBRUARY 10, 2009

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 10, 2009

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Older Pennsylvanian Higher Education Program;
2 and permitting institutions of higher education to offer
3 higher education courses to older adults without charge of
4 tuition.

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

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Older
9 Pennsylvanian Higher Education Program Act.

10 Section 2. Legislative intent.

11 It is the intent of the General Assembly to establish an
12 optional higher education program that:

13 (1) Provides older Pennsylvanians with the opportunity
14 to enroll in higher education courses at an institution of
15 higher education located in this Commonwealth.

16 (2) Permits an older adult to attend higher education
17 courses on a space-available basis for the purpose of

1 receiving credit, noncredit, certification, degree or
2 enrichment as determined by the institution of higher
3 education.

4 (3) Encourages strong partnerships between institutions
5 of higher education and communities, as well as providing
6 older adults with the opportunity to learn new skills and
7 enrich their lives with stimulating and intellectual
8 discussions.

9 (4) Creates an interactive opportunity for both the
10 older adult and traditional student populations to expand
11 their horizons and demonstrate the true definition of "life-
12 long learners" by learning from each other.

13 Section 3. Definitions.

14 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
15 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
16 context clearly indicates otherwise:

17 "AAA." An area agency on aging which acts as the local
18 representative of the Department of Aging.

19 "Institution of higher education." Any of the following:

20 (1) A community college operating under Article XIX-A of
21 the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the
22 Public School Code of 1949.

23 (2) A university within the State System of Higher
24 Education under Article XX-A of the act of March 10, 1949
25 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949.

26 (3) The Pennsylvania State University.

27 (4) The University of Pittsburgh.

28 (5) Temple University.

29 (6) Lincoln University.

30 (7) Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

1 (8) The Pennsylvania College of Technology.

2 (9) Any accredited private or independent college or
3 university.

4 "Older adult." A resident of this Commonwealth who is 60
5 years of age or older and has been a resident of this
6 Commonwealth for at least 90 days.

7 "Program." The Older Pennsylvanian Higher Education Program.

8 "Service area." The county or multicounty area serviced by
9 an area agency on aging.

10 "Tuition free." No charge for tuition is assessed to a
11 participating older adult enrolled in an institution of higher
12 education course. For purposes of this definition, tuition does
13 not include any additional fees or surcharges that are required
14 for enrollment in a particular course or in addition to the
15 traditional student tuition.

16 Section 4. Older Pennsylvanian Higher Education Program.

17 The Older Pennsylvanian Higher Education Program is
18 established to authorize institutions of higher education to
19 develop a program for older adults to enroll in higher education
20 courses tuition free.

21 Section 5. Program guidelines.

22 An institution of higher education may, at its option,
23 participate in the program. Each institution of higher education
24 that participates in the program shall promulgate specific
25 guidelines regarding procedures and administration of the
26 program, including, but not limited to, the following:

27 (1) Admitting participating older adults.

28 (2) Determining the availability of higher education
29 courses.

30 (3) Determining if the program will be for credit,

1 noncredit, certification, degree or enrichment.

2 (4) Disseminating to the local AAA a complete program
3 description and technical assistance that explains the
4 process of admission and availability of enrolling in higher
5 education courses offered by the higher education
6 institution.

7 (5) Coordinating with the local AAA to publicize and
8 advertise the program.

9 (6) Outlining course rules and responsibilities for
10 participating older adults.

11 Section 6. Effective date.

12 This act shall take effect immediately.