

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 169

Session of
1972

INTRODUCED BY MESSRS. FINEMAN, LAUDADIO, BERKES, RITTER,
GALLAGHER, PIEVSKY AND CROWLEY, JUNE 13, 1972

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, JUNE 13, 1972

In the House of Representatives, June 13, 1972

1 Many members of the bench who deal with matters relating to
2 the problems of children and youth and other citizens who deal
3 with such matters have become increasingly concerned about the
4 manner such problems are handled in Pennsylvania.

5 Most of the problems relate to delinquency, dependent and
6 neglected children and those in need of mental health services.

7 Presently, services for children who have such problems come
8 from a myriad of departments and agencies at both the State and
9 county levels of government resulting in confusion and
10 fragmentation in the delivery of such services.

11 Some examples of such confusion and fragmentation are as
12 follows:

13 (1) If a child is found delinquent, he may be sent to a
14 Youth Development Center or a Forestry Camp operated by the
15 Department of Public Welfare, or to the State Correctional
16 Institution at Camp Hill or Muncy, operated by the Department of
17 Justice. He may be placed on probation under the supervision of

1 a probation officer who reports to the court and who is an
2 employe of the county in which that court is located.

3 (2) The education programs at the Youth Development Centers
4 and Forestry Camps are generally operated by the Intermediate
5 Unit for the county in which the institution is located, which
6 in turn is an arm of the Department of Education.

7 (3) If one of these youngsters is enrolled in a program of
8 the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, he is in a program
9 operated by a bureau of the Department of Labor and Industry.

10 (4) If he is found to be dependent or neglected, he is
11 placed under the supervision of the county Child Welfare
12 Services agency which is operated partly by the local county and
13 partly by the Department of Public Welfare, and if one of these
14 same youngsters is found to be in need of mental health services
15 he may be under the supervision of a Child Welfare Services
16 worker or a probation officer until he is placed in a State
17 school and/or hospital or other mental health facility when he
18 then comes under the supervision of the Office of Mental Health
19 and Mental Retardation, Department of Public Welfare. If he
20 receives community mental health services he is under the
21 community mental health-mental retardation programs for which
22 counties are responsible.

23 (5) There are various delinquency prevention programs
24 including the establishment of community based services, group
25 living arrangements and pre-delinquency identification. In the
26 City of Pittsburgh, one such program is a Model Cities proposal
27 in which funding is from HUD and HEW through the Mayor's office
28 of the City of Pittsburgh to a specified Model Cities
29 neighborhood, with the possibility of other funds from LEAA
30 through the Governor's Justice Commission. There is also a State

1 Department of Public Welfare proposal being considered for other
2 neighborhoods in Allegheny County which would utilize OEO funds
3 through the DPW and its Regional office to the County. In both
4 instances the Juvenile Court is in the focal position.

5 (6) The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission which, among other
6 things, sets standards for probation officers and has recently
7 submitted to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania proposed rules
8 for Juvenile Court procedure, also operates the State grants to
9 various counties whose juvenile probation departments comply
10 with commission standards. The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission
11 falls within the Department of Justice.

12 As a result of such confusion and fragmentation, those who
13 are responsible for the administration of the various programs
14 are not informed when policy changes are made by the various
15 agencies involved.

16 The first step toward the solution to this confusion would be
17 a determination of all the various services offered to children
18 and youth having such problems and which agency and branch of
19 government is responsible therefor.

20 Secondly, a determination should be made of the feasibility
21 and advisability of the establishment of a new department which
22 would be solely responsible for the administration of all such
23 services to children and youth; therefore be it

24 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission is
25 directed to study all of the various services rendered to
26 children and youth by all levels of government relative to
27 problems relating to delinquency, dependent and neglected
28 children and those in need of mental health services to
29 determine who is responsible therefor; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the commission is directed to study the

1 feasibility and advisability of establishing a new department
2 which would be solely responsible for the administration of all
3 such services; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and
5 recommendations, together with drafts of legislation recommended
6 by it, to the General Assembly as soon as possible.