
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 11

Session of
1989

INTRODUCED BY O'PAKE, MELLOW, STAPLETON, AFFLERBACH, BODACK,
REGOLI, JONES, MUSTO, LYNCH, REIBMAN, ROSS AND SHAFFER,
FEBRUARY 3, 1989

REFERRED TO AGING AND YOUTH, FEBRUARY 3, 1989

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to update the
2 study concluded in 1975 of all services rendered to children
3 relative to problems of abuse, delinquency, dependency,
4 neglect and mental health.

5 WHEREAS, Many changes have occurred in the children's
6 services delivery system and in the dynamics of children's
7 issues since issuance of the 1975 Report of the Task Force on
8 Services to Delinquent, Dependent and Neglected Children; and

9 WHEREAS, The county offices of children and youth services
10 are the primary service providers for at-risk, abused,
11 dependent, neglected and delinquent children; and

12 WHEREAS, The Child Protective Services Law was enacted in
13 1975 to establish a separate system for the reporting and
14 investigating of child abuse, and to mandate that the counties
15 provide services to victims and their families, without
16 providing funding mechanisms; and

17 WHEREAS, The General Assembly passed Act 148 of 1976 to
18 provide a formula for the reimbursement to counties of costs

1 incurred in the provision of mandated services to children,
2 which formula was designed to provide incentives to development
3 of deinstitutionalized services; and

4 WHEREAS, The General Assembly reacted to escalating costs of
5 children's services by taking action in 1980-1981 to limit the
6 State's liability under Act 148 to the amount of funds
7 appropriated; and

8 WHEREAS, Many counties have since had to provide a financial
9 "overmatch" to pay annually for the costs of mandated children's
10 services, thus creating a hardship for county governments and
11 the taxpayers they serve, and placing at jeopardy the quality of
12 services provided to children; and

13 WHEREAS, The funding problem is exacerbated by the increasing
14 severity of child abuse cases, by the escalating incidence of
15 child sexual abuse cases, and by the liberal referral practices
16 of the juvenile courts and the county mental health offices to
17 the offices of children and youth services; and

18 WHEREAS, The mission of children and youth services, to serve
19 first those children most at-risk as abused, neglected and
20 delinquent, is diluted by unpredictable caseloads which include
21 truants, chronic runaways and adoptions; and

22 WHEREAS, There appears to be a need for a projected specific
23 program, including services and funding, for mentally ill
24 children which could be accessed by county children and youth
25 services; and

26 WHEREAS, All reasonable estimates indicate that the funding
27 crisis will continue to grow worse and thereby further
28 jeopardize the quality of children's services, if not the
29 children themselves; therefore be it

30 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission be

1 directed to study all of the various dynamics impacting on the
2 county offices of children and youth services to determine how
3 the competing interests of problem children can best be served;
4 and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the commission is directed to study the
6 funding of those services and propose a funding mechanism which
7 will insure that State-mandated services are appropriately
8 delivered with quality assurance; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That appropriate reorganization of services and
10 needed mandates be recommended, specifically as they relate to
11 the needs of mentally ill children; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the commission report its findings and
13 recommendations, together with drafts of legislation recommended
14 by it, to the General Assembly as soon as possible.