

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 482 Session of
1997

INTRODUCED BY HERMAN, SEMMEL, WALKO, WAUGH, FEESE, FICHTER,
MELIO, TIGUE, LYNCH, DIGIROLAMO, MAYERNIK, BELARDI, GEIST,
OLASZ, SAYLOR, RAYMOND, STERN, SCHULER, McCALL, D. W. SNYDER,
E. Z. TAYLOR, COLAFELLA, BATTISTO, BENNINGHOFF, McNAUGHTON,
HUTCHINSON, ROBERTS AND CIVERA, FEBRUARY 12, 1997

AS AMENDED ON THIRD CONSIDERATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
MARCH 9, 1998

AN ACT

1 Requiring the Department of Community and Economic Development
2 to maintain data regarding research and development affecting
3 the housing industry in this Commonwealth; and recognizing
4 and supporting the Pennsylvania Housing Research Center.

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 Housing
9 Research Act.

10 Section 2. Legislative findings.

11 The General Assembly finds as follows:

12 (1) In July 1988 the Housing Research Center was
13 established to provide training, research, technology
14 transfer, consulting and other services to this
15 Commonwealth's residential building industry and to ensure
16 the best technologically advanced and scientifically sound
17 building processes and a more knowledgeable and quality-

1 oriented home-building industry. To reflect the commitment of
2 the center to provide such services to this Commonwealth and
3 its residents, the name of the center was changed to the
4 Pennsylvania Housing Research Center (PHRC). The PHRC is
5 devoted exclusively to research aimed at improving the
6 quality of housing and the infrastructure needed to support
7 such housing. To date, this commitment has been strengthened
8 through partnerships with the home-building industry, the
9 Pennsylvania Electric Association, the Pennsylvania Energy
10 Office and the member firms of the Mid-Atlantic Building
11 Systems Council.

12 (2) Home building is a major economic force within this
13 Commonwealth, providing tens of thousands of jobs and
14 generating millions of dollars in tax revenues. To ensure
15 such economic contributions remain a strong and viable part
16 of this Commonwealth's economy and to ensure this
17 Commonwealth's residents have continuing employment
18 opportunities, the PHRC provides valuable services and advice
19 to State, national and international aspects of the housing
20 industry and is expanding into newly opening markets in
21 second and third world countries.

22 (3) The PHRC has gained national recognition for its
23 contributions to the education of young engineers, the
24 training of builders and the establishment and implementation
25 of outstanding research and development for housing consumers
26 and the home-building industry. It studies demographic
27 changes, technological developments and economic and social
28 trends. The PHRC serves as the focal point of informational
29 exchange through conferences, training courses and research
30 publications.

1 (4) To continue to effectively provide for this
2 Commonwealth's housing demands and the need for out-of-State
3 expansion of the housing industry, this Commonwealth needs
4 to:

5 (i) Support expansion of housing industry research
6 and development activities in this Commonwealth and
7 expansion of out-of-State and international export
8 opportunities to develop a competitive edge over other
9 states' expansion in those areas.

10 (ii) Develop and improve the product--a house, its
11 component parts and materials and the employees who
12 provide these--to provide a more affordable, better
13 quality and technologically advanced product to
14 homebuyers and homeowners.

15 (iii) Improve housing industry productivity.

16 (5) The PHRC conducts research projects that have been
17 identified, developed and approved in concert with this
18 Commonwealth's building community of builders, private
19 companies and utilities.

20 (6) BECAUSE ECONOMIC EXPANSION IN RURAL AREAS IS
21 DEPENDENT ON THE ADEQUATE PROVISION OF PUBLIC SEWER AND
22 WATER, THE PHRC CONDUCTS RESEARCH PROJECTS ON SEWER AND WATER
23 LINE EXTENSIONS INTO RURAL RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

24 Section 3. Definitions.

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

28 "Department." The Department of Community and Economic
29 Development of the Commonwealth.

30 "PHRC." The Pennsylvania Housing Research Center, originally

1 the Housing Research Center, a center which gathers and
2 disseminates information, conducts research and development
3 projects and makes other academically based contributions to the
4 housing industry of this Commonwealth.

5 Section 4. Recognition by department.

6 The department shall recognize the essential role PHRC
7 occupies in the growth of this Commonwealth's economy. The
8 department shall, in cooperation with PHRC, use the fruits of
9 PHRC's efforts to further meet the goals of the department.

10 Section 5. Information sharing.

11 The department and PHRC shall share any information which is
12 acquired by either and which affects the housing industry's role
13 in the economic growth of this Commonwealth. The goal of
14 information sharing shall be to ensure that this Commonwealth
15 develops and maintains global leadership status in the housing
16 industry.

17 Section 6. Data.

18 A copy of any data relevant to the provisions of this act and
19 acquired by either the department or PHRC shall be maintained by
20 the department.

21 Section 7. Annual report.

22 The department shall report annually to the appropriate
23 committee in the Senate and in the House of Representatives
24 regarding both economic and technological advancements, <—
25 INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPROVEMENT OF
26 INFRASTRUCTURE, made during the immediately preceding year by
27 this Commonwealth's housing industry. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALSO <—
28 REPORT ANNUALLY TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY
29 COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND
30 ENERGY COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING THE

1 EFFECTS OF SEWER AND WATER LINE EXTENSIONS INTO RURAL
2 RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

3 SECTION 8. EXPIRATION.

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4 THIS ACT SHALL EXPIRE JUNE 30, 2000.

5 Section & 9. Effective date.

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6 This act shall take effect in 60 days.