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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1908 Session of  
1997

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INTRODUCED BY BARD, WILT, GEIST, STEELMAN, CORRIGAN,  
C. WILLIAMS, TIGUE, RAMOS, BELARDI, STURLA AND ITKIN,  
OCTOBER 9, 1997

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, OCTOBER 9, 1997

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AN ACT

1 Providing for mandated community service as a requirement for  
2 graduation for all public high school students in this  
3 Commonwealth.

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

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Community  
8 Service Learning Act.

9 Section 2. Legislative intent.

10 It is the intent of the General Assembly by this act to  
11 provide high school students with an enhanced sense of the  
12 importance of volunteer activity and good citizenship which come  
13 from service contributions to their respective communities.

14 Section 3. Definitions.

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

18 "Community service." Unpaid work performed for the benefit

1 of a community.

2 "Community service learning." A structural learning  
3 experience involving community service with planned time periods  
4 for preparation, action and reflection.

5 "Credit." The locally determined numerical award given to a  
6 student for the successful demonstration or successful  
7 completion of established learning outcomes for a required  
8 course of study.

9 "Department." The Department of Education of the  
10 Commonwealth.

11 "Secretary." The Secretary of Education of the Commonwealth.  
12 Section 4. Community Service Learning Program.

13 (a) Establishment.-- Each board of school directors shall  
14 appoint a committee of teachers, administrators, parents and,  
15 wherever possible, representatives of volunteer organizations to  
16 develop and implement for each public high school under their  
17 jurisdiction a community service learning program which shall be  
18 completed as a prerequisite for graduation from high school.  
19 Community service learning activities shall be designed to meet  
20 the needs of others in the school or community and to enhance  
21 the student's personal growth, career exploration, understanding  
22 of community and citizenship, social science skills and  
23 communication skills.

24 (b) Content of program.--The board of school director's  
25 appointed committee shall recommend a community service learning  
26 program which will address, at a minimum, all of the following:

27 (1) The community service learning program shall consist  
28 of at least 20 hours of individual student-performed  
29 community service performed during the student's junior or  
30 senior year in high school.

1           (2) Preliminary training in volunteerism for student  
2 participants conducted, when possible, by organizations  
3 experienced in such training.

4           (3) Supervision of the student volunteers to ensure  
5 appropriate placement and adequate learning opportunity.

6           (4) Integration of academic learning with the service  
7 experience.

8           (5) The award of an appropriate level of credits toward  
9 graduation with a required minimum equivalent to 20 hours of  
10 service.

11          (6) A student shall not receive compensation for  
12 community service or substitute employment for service  
13 activity.

14          (7) Such other factors as the board of school directors  
15 deems necessary to establish and implement a successful  
16 community service learning program.

17       (c) Joint and cooperative activities.--A school district may  
18 provide joint or cooperative community service learning  
19 activities with another school district or an institution of  
20 higher education.

21       (d) Duty of secretary.--The secretary shall, upon the  
22 request of the board of school directors having supervision over  
23 any high school, provide any technical assistance which may be  
24 necessary to aid a district in the planning and implementation  
25 of its youth community service program.

#### 26 Section 4. Implementation.

27       (a) Plan.--The community service learning program will be  
28 submitted to the secretary no later than June 1, 2000. The plan  
29 submitted to the secretary shall be recommended by a committee  
30 appointed by the board of school directors. The plan cannot

1 become effective unless it is approved by the school board.

2 (b) Graduation classes to be affected.--Local school  
3 districts shall begin implementation of the community service  
4 learning program with the school year beginning in the year 2000  
5 for all students who are expected to graduate in the year 2004.

6 Section 5. Effective date.

7 This act shall take effect immediately.