

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 123 Session of 1997

INTRODUCED BY MOWERY, SALVATORE, HART, TOMLINSON, JUBELIRER, AFFLERBACH, THOMPSON, MUSTO, KASUNIC, RHOADES, HELFRICK, DELP AND PICCOLA, JANUARY 21, 1997

SENATOR TILGHMAN, APPROPRIATIONS, RE-REPORTED AS AMENDED, JUNE 3, 1997

AN ACT

1 ~~Providing for a feasibility study relating to the establishment of a Pennsylvania Science Partnership Program.~~ <—
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3 ~~The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:~~

4 ~~(1) A well trained and well educated work force is essential to the economic well being of this Commonwealth.~~

6 ~~(2) Many of the fastest growing sectors of the economy are in areas which require technical competence and an educational background that includes a solid foundation in the chemical, physical, biological and earth sciences.~~

10 ~~(3) Many schools in this Commonwealth do not have the financial resources to provide their students with the advanced science curriculum needed for the workplaces and high technology industries of the 21st century. Sharing resources is a cost effective and proven method of ensuring that all of this Commonwealth's school children have access to a high quality science curriculum that provides hands on experience with modern and sophisticated scientific and~~
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1 ~~technical equipment.~~

2 PROVIDING FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY RELATING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT
3 OF A PENNSYLVANIA SCIENCE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM. <—

4 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS AND DECLARES AS FOLLOWS:

5 (1) A WELL-TRAINED AND WELL-EDUCATED WORK FORCE IS
6 ESSENTIAL TO THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THIS COMMONWEALTH.

7 (2) MANY OF THE FASTEST GROWING SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY
8 ARE IN AREAS WHICH REQUIRE TECHNICAL COMPETENCE AND AN
9 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND THAT INCLUDES A SOLID FOUNDATION IN
10 THE CHEMICAL, PHYSICAL, BIOLOGICAL AND EARTH SCIENCES.

11 (3) SHARING RESOURCES IS A COST-EFFECTIVE AND PROVEN
12 METHOD OF ENSURING THAT ALL OF THIS COMMONWEALTH'S SCHOOL
13 CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS TO A HIGH-QUALITY SCIENCE CURRICULUM
14 THAT PROVIDES HAND-ON EXPERIENCE WITH MODERN AND
15 SOPHISTICATED SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT TO PREPARE
16 STUDENTS FOR THE HIGH TECHNOLOGY DEMANDS OF THE 21ST CENTURY.

17 (4) Significant opportunities exist for collaboration
18 between the basic education and higher education systems of
19 this Commonwealth to enhance the education of this
20 Commonwealth's school children.

21 (5) Students need the opportunity to learn science by
22 practicing science. This Commonwealth must graduate students
23 who are more scientifically literate and who are better able
24 to pursue careers and jobs in fields that require such
25 literacy.

26 (6) Teachers who are the only physics or chemistry
27 teacher in their school need not work in isolation.

28 (7) Teachers require greater opportunities for
29 professional development in science, including training to
30 incorporate new science equipment into the teaching

1 curricula.

2 (8) It is therefore the intent of the General Assembly
3 and the purpose of this act to direct the Department of
4 Education to examine the feasibility of establishing the
5 Pennsylvania Science Partnership Program to provide enhanced
6 educational opportunities in the fields of science to this
7 Commonwealth's school children, especially children attending
8 schools that do not have the financial resources to provide
9 an enriched science curriculum.

10 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
11 hereby enacts as follows:

12 Section 1. Definitions.

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

16 "Department." The Department of Education of the
17 Commonwealth.

18 "Higher education institution." Any public or private two-
19 year or four-year or higher postsecondary institution in this
20 Commonwealth that has been accredited at the college level by an
21 accrediting agency recognized by the United States Secretary of
22 Education, or equivalent.

23 Section 2. Reports.

24 The department shall file a report with the Governor and with
25 the chairman AND MINORITY CHAIRMAN of the Education Committee of <—
26 the Senate and the chairman AND MINORITY CHAIRMAN of the <—
27 Education Committee of the House of Representatives on the
28 feasibility of establishing a Pennsylvania Science Partnership
29 Program by January 1, 1998. The report shall describe the types
30 of science partnerships created in selected communities of this

1 Commonwealth, to be determined by the Secretary of Education. At
2 a minimum, programs of this type in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and
3 at Juniata College and Lebanon Valley College shall be examined.
4 The department shall consider the benefits of the partnership
5 and the involvement of school districts, higher education
6 institutions and science museums. The department shall survey
7 school districts to determine the number of elementary and
8 secondary education students participating in various science
9 programs, a detailed breakdown of the costs of these programs
10 and the impact of the programs on the level of scientific
11 knowledge of school children.

12 Section 3. Effective date.

13 This act shall take effect immediately.