

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 169 Session of
1999

INTRODUCED BY DRUCE, STAIRS, COLAFELLA AND ROBINSON, MAY 4, 1999

AS AMENDED, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MAY 10, 1999

A RESOLUTION

1 Establishing the Commission on Postsecondary Education for the
2 Twenty-First Century.

3 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth annually provides more than \$1.6
4 billion to support higher education institutions in Pennsylvania
5 and the student financial aid programs administered by the
6 Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency; and

7 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives believes that adequate
8 access to postsecondary education programs continues to be
9 unavailable to many Pennsylvania residents because of barriers
10 which include, but are not limited to, financial issues; and

11 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth and its residents place great value
12 on the opportunity for all residents to pursue educational
13 programs beyond the high school level; and

14 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives is concerned that the
15 public funds appropriated to support higher education
16 institutions and students in Pennsylvania promote:

17 (1) access to postsecondary education programs of their
18 choice for all residents of this Commonwealth;

1 (2) effective and high-quality academic programs which
2 serve the needs of students and this Commonwealth; and

3 (3) the efficient operation of public higher education
4 institutions;

5 and

6 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives is concerned about the
7 effectiveness of State government to utilize the public policy
8 tools at its disposal, including the appropriations process and
9 the Master Plan for Higher Education developed periodically by
10 the State Board of Education, to address these issues; and

11 WHEREAS, The 1998 report of the Subcommittee on Higher
12 Education of the Committee on Education of the House of
13 Representatives, pursuant to House Resolution No. 379 of 1998,
14 made several recommendations to address these issues, including
15 the recommendation for the establishment of a "blue-ribbon
16 commission"; and

17 WHEREAS, Such a blue-ribbon commission would build on and
18 expand the work of the Subcommittee on Higher Education as well
19 as facilitate a collaborative approach among public officials,
20 representatives of higher education and other community leaders
21 to develop additional recommendations on these issues for
22 consideration by the General Assembly, the Governor, the State
23 Board of Education and the higher education community; therefore
24 be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives establish a
26 Commission on Postsecondary Education for the Twenty-First
27 Century to:

28 (1) continue to study the issue of postsecondary
29 education costs, especially the efficiency of the current
30 system of funding higher education and the ability of that

1 system to ensure that postsecondary education is affordable
2 to the residents of this Commonwealth;

3 (2) make recommendations to the Senate, the House of
4 Representatives and the Governor regarding efficient use of
5 State appropriations for postsecondary education and other
6 necessary legislative changes; and

7 (3) provide recommendations to the State Board of
8 Education and the Department of Education regarding the
9 development of a State Master Plan for Higher Education and
10 other necessary regulatory changes;

11 and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the commission, in its study of postsecondary
13 education:

14 (1) explore and define priorities for postsecondary
15 education with particular attention to the efficiency and
16 effectiveness of the current system to meet the goals of the
17 public interest to be served, including:

18 (i) the impact of emerging technology on the
19 delivery of postsecondary education services and
20 programs;

21 (ii) the identification of important cost drivers in
22 postsecondary education and any State resources which
23 control those cost drivers; and

24 (iii) the trend toward duplication of programs among
25 the various postsecondary institutions and the
26 established need for additional programs and advanced
27 degrees;

28 (2) review and recommend the realignment of current
29 State policy to support these priorities;

30 (3) study financial alternatives designed to serve the

1 priorities and make recommendations on those alternatives;

2 (4) study the needs of the Commonwealth and its agencies
3 for data and data analysis and recommend how these needs can
4 be met; and

5 (5) provide input to all parties related to the
6 preparation, adoption and implementation of the State Master
7 Plan for Higher Education;

8 and be if further

9 RESOLVED, That the commission consist of ~~11~~ 14 members

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10 appointed as follows:

11 (1) a member of the House of Representatives, appointed
12 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, who shall
13 serve as chairman;

14 (2) a member of the House of Representatives, appointed
15 by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, who
16 shall serve as vice chairman;

17 (3) the chairman of the Committee on Education;

18 (4) the minority chairman of the Committee on Education;

19 (5) the Secretary of Education or a designee;

20 (6) a member of the Governor's policy staff or budget
21 office, designated by the Governor;

22 (7) the chairman of the State Board of Education or a
23 designee;

24 (8) the chairman of the Pennsylvania Higher Education
25 Assistance Agency or a designee; ~~and~~

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26 (9) three members of the public not employed by or
27 holding membership on the governing body of a postsecondary
28 education institution, appointed by the Speaker of the House
29 ~~of Representatives~~; OF REPRESENTATIVES; AND

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30 (10) THREE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NOT EMPLOYED BY OR

1 HOLDING MEMBERSHIP ON THE GOVERNING BODY OF A POSTSECONDARY
2 EDUCATION INSTITUTION, APPOINTED BY THE MINORITY LEADER OF
3 THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES;

4 and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the commission may, with the approval of the
6 Majority Leader AND THE MINORITY LEADER of the House of <—
7 Representatives, contract with outside agencies for research
8 work and data base development related to the study, from the
9 amounts appropriated to the House of Representatives; and be it
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That the commission prepare and publish an interim
12 report on its study by October 31, 1999; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the commission commence its work upon the call
14 of the commission member appointed by the Speaker of the House
15 of Representatives, but in no case later than May 31, 1999, and
16 conclude its task no later than November 30, 2000; and be it
17 further

18 RESOLVED, That the commission have the authority to adopt, by
19 majority vote of its membership, rules of operation and rules
20 relating to the conduct of its study.