
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 243 Session of
2002

INTRODUCED BY ROBBINS, BRIGHTBILL, EARLL, MOWERY, STOUT,
LEMMOND, DENT, ORIE, TOMLINSON, WAGNER, D. WHITE, MUSTO,
ERICKSON, KITCHEN, BOSCOLA, KUKOVICH, LOGAN, COSTA, RHOADES,
O'PAKE AND SCARNATI, JUNE 4, 2002

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, JUNE 4, 2002

A RESOLUTION

1 Declaring the week of July 22 through 28, 2002, as "Slovak
2 Heritage Week" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Large-scale Slovak immigration to the United States
4 began in the late 1870s, when Slovakia was a part of the Austro-
5 Hungarian empire administered by Hungary; and

6 WHEREAS, Between 1880 and the mid-1920s approximately 500,000
7 Slovaks immigrated to the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, Most Slovaks immigrated for economic reasons,
9 seeking employment in regions where major industries such as
10 steel manufacturing and coal mining needed unskilled labor; and

11 WHEREAS, Their emigration from Slovakia before World War I is
12 a story of success, garnering the respect of all Americans and
13 laying the groundwork for future generations; and

14 WHEREAS, Slovaks are one of the largest ethnic groups in
15 North America; and

16 WHEREAS, More than half of Slovak immigrants settled in this
17 Commonwealth; and

1 WHEREAS, The majority of the Slovak-American community today
2 is comprised of descendants of immigrants who arrived in the
3 late 19th and early 20th centuries; and

4 WHEREAS, Slovak Americans maintain aspects of their ethnic
5 heritage through religious and family traditions; and

6 WHEREAS, Stefan Banic, a Slovak born in Smolenice in the
7 Trnava region of the Austro-Hungarian empire, immigrated to the
8 United States in 1907 and settled near Greenville, Mercer
9 County; and

10 WHEREAS, Stefan Banic, who worked in the bituminous coal
11 mines near Greenville, obtained the first patent for a
12 parachute; and

13 WHEREAS, Although Stefan Banic obtained a patent for his
14 parachute, he donated it to the United States Government in
15 exchange for an honorary membership in the Army Air Corps; and

16 WHEREAS, Stefan Banic returned to Czechoslovakia after World
17 War I and died there in 1941; and

18 WHEREAS, The 11th Annual Stefan Banic Skydiving Festival and
19 3rd Annual Pennsylvania State Parachuting Championships are
20 being held July 26 through 28, 2002, at the Greenville Municipal
21 Airport; therefore be it

22 RESOLVED, That the Senate honor the memory of Stefan Banic
23 and encourage the preservation, study, celebration and sharing
24 of Slovak heritage; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Senate declare the week of July 22 through
26 28, 2002, as "Slovak Heritage Week" in Pennsylvania.