

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL
No. 1260 Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY DALLY, BEBKO-JONES, CALTAGIRONE, CORRIGAN,
DENLINGER, GRUCELA, HERSHEY, JAMES, ROBERTS, SCAVELLO,
B. SMITH, E. Z. TAYLOR, WOJNAROSKI AND YOUNGBLOOD,
MARCH 31, 2005

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, MARCH 31, 2005

AN ACT

1 Designating polka music as the official folk music of the
2 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and designating the American
3 square dance as the official folk dance of the Commonwealth
4 of Pennsylvania.

5 WHEREAS, Polka music originated in Europe, stemming from
6 classical origins, and was brought to this country with many
7 groups of immigrants from Europe; and

8 WHEREAS, Polka music was transformed into a newer form of
9 music in the 1920s and 1930s and is still evolving; and

10 WHEREAS, Modern polka music has been a popular form of music
11 in this Commonwealth during the 20th century; and

12 WHEREAS, The "Pennsylvania Polka" is one of the most famous
13 and respected polkas heard throughout the United States; and

14 WHEREAS, Polka music is a main part of many major festivals
15 in this Commonwealth as demonstrated by the Polka Fireworks
16 Festival held at the Seven Springs Resort in Champion on the
17 July 4th weekend, the National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa
18 in Doylestown held in September and the most well-attended

1 festival in the United States with over one million people
2 attending in 1997, Musikfest in Bethlehem, all of which are
3 nationally renowned; and

4 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has numerous facilities specifically
5 used for polka music, such as Fiedor's Grove, simply known as
6 "The Grove" throughout the national polka community, located
7 near Mt. Pleasant, and Jolly Joe Timmer's Picnic Grove at Point
8 Phillips in Northampton County where dances are conducted
9 throughout the year; and

10 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is represented in the Polka Hall of
11 Fame by Walt Groller of Whitehall and Jolly Joe Timmer of
12 Bethlehem; and

13 WHEREAS, Some of the leading polka bands in the United States
14 are from Pennsylvania; and

15 WHEREAS, Polka music can be heard on many radio stations
16 throughout this Commonwealth; and

17 WHEREAS, Dancing to, listening to and performing polka music
18 is still and will continue to be a popular form of musical
19 expression with the residents of this Commonwealth; and

20 WHEREAS, Square dance is in itself representative of the
21 melting pot of our nation having been brought to this country by
22 our pioneers; and

23 WHEREAS, The ancestry of American square dance can be traced
24 as far back as 1450, as shown by its genealogical history, and
25 includes a multitude of dance forms from England, Germany,
26 Poland, Ireland, Scotland and Mexico; and

27 WHEREAS, Records in American history from 1651 show American
28 square dance has been danced through the years dating back to
29 the days of our first settlers; and

30 WHEREAS, Square dance offers fun and fellowship to both young

1 and old as well as the handicapped, with no restrictions as to
2 race, color or creed; and

3 WHEREAS, Due to the popularity of American square dance,
4 square dance federations have been formed in every state in the
5 United States and in most foreign countries; and

6 WHEREAS, Square dance is the American folk dance which
7 includes squares, rounds, contra, clogging, country western and
8 line dancing; and

9 WHEREAS, Since 1951 square dance enthusiasts have joined
10 together for a National Square and Round Dance Convention; and

11 WHEREAS, Since 1994 the Pennsylvania Square and Round Dance
12 Federation has sponsored annual State Square and Round Dance
13 Conventions in this Commonwealth.

14 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
15 hereby enacts as follows:

16 Section 1. Designation of official folk music of the
17 Commonwealth.

18 Polka music is hereby selected, designated and adopted as the
19 official folk music of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

20 Section 2. Designation of official folk dance of the
21 Commonwealth.

22 The American square dance is hereby selected, designated and
23 adopted in perpetuity as the official folk dance of the
24 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and added to the array of symbols
25 of our Commonwealth.

26 Section 3. Effective date.

27 This act shall take effect immediately.