

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 51

Session of  
2007

INTRODUCED BY FRANKEL, BUXTON, CURRY, DePASQUALE, GOODMAN,  
JAMES, JOSEPHS, KULA, MANN, McGEEHAN, M. O'BRIEN, PAYTON,  
PETRONE, ROEBUCK, SIPTROTH, WALKO, WHEATLEY, GRUCELA, STURLA,  
MELIO, COHEN, WANSACZ, SCAVELLO, FREEMAN AND COSTA,  
JANUARY 30, 2007

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, JANUARY 30, 2007

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Prevention of Hate Activity Fund; and making an  
2 appropriation.

3 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

4 (1) In fiscal year 1998-1999, 340 incidents of hate  
5 activity and intergroup tension incidents were reported to  
6 the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

7 (2) One hundred fifty-eight incidents involving  
8 organized hate groups were reported to the Pennsylvania Human  
9 Relations Commission in fiscal year 1998-1999, an increase of  
10 36 incidents from the previous year.

11 (3) African-Americans were the sole targets in 101 (30%)  
12 of the tension incidents reported to the Pennsylvania Human  
13 Relations Commission in fiscal year 1998-1999. Jews were the  
14 sole targets in 50 (18%) of the total reported incidents.  
15 According to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission,  
16 hatred based on sexual orientation has been increasingly

1 evident through the literature and public speeches of white  
2 supremacist-organized hate groups, along with hatred based on  
3 skin color, religion and national origin. Other targets of  
4 reported hate activity included immigrants and persons with  
5 disabilities.

6 (4) Fifty-five percent of reported incidents involved  
7 criminal activity that included serious threat to personal  
8 safety, such as assault, terroristic threats, reckless  
9 endangerment, arson, kidnapping and attempted homicide.

10 (5) An important role of the Pennsylvania Human  
11 Relations Commission is monitoring and preventing hate crimes  
12 and other actions by hate groups.

13 (6) Most Pennsylvanians reject bigotry and intolerance.

14 (7) Communities around this Commonwealth have organized  
15 unity coalitions in an effort to prevent and combat hate  
16 activity.

17 (8) The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission is  
18 working to respond to and prevent intergroup tension and hate  
19 activities through direct assistance to communities and  
20 community-based groups, programs to improve police-community  
21 relations, technical assistance to school districts and  
22 higher education institutions and various types of community  
23 outreach and education initiatives.

24 (9) The Pennsylvania Human Relation Commission's current  
25 funding level does not allow it to invest sufficiently in  
26 combating hate crimes and tension incidents.

27 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
28 hereby enacts as follows:

29 Section 1. Short title.

30 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Prevention of

1 Hate Activity Act.

2 Section 2. Definitions.

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

6 "Commission." The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

7 "Fund." The Prevention of Hate Activity Fund established in  
8 section 3.

9 Section 3. Fund.

10 (a) Establishment.--There is hereby established a special  
11 fund in the State Treasury to be known as the Prevention of Hate  
12 Activity Fund.

13 (b) Purpose.--The commission shall use the fund to enhance  
14 its efforts to combat intergroup tension, ethnic intimidation  
15 crimes and hate group activities.

16 (c) Use of moneys.--Sums appropriated under this act may be  
17 used for the following:

18 (1) Direct assistance to communities and community-based  
19 groups.

20 (2) Training initiatives for law enforcement personnel.

21 (3) Technical assistance to school districts and higher  
22 education institutions.

23 (4) Outreach and informational activities directed to  
24 local governments, civic organizations, trade associations  
25 and other groups.

26 (5) Other activities related to the purpose of the fund.

27 Section 4. Appropriation.

28 The sum of \$1,000,000 is hereby appropriated to the  
29 Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission for the fiscal year  
30 2007-2008 to carry out this act.

1 Section 5. Effective date.

2 This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.