

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2739 Session of
2008

INTRODUCED BY HORNAMAN, KORTZ, MARSHALL, McILVAINE SMITH, MURT,
QUINN, ROCK, STABACK AND SWANGER, AUGUST 21, 2008

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, AUGUST 21, 2008

AN ACT

1 Providing for convening the General Assembly following the
2 general election.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Emergency
7 Legislative Sessions Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

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

12 "Act of terrorism." A violent act or an act that is
13 dangerous to human life, property or infrastructure that is
14 committed by an individual or individuals acting on behalf of a
15 foreign person or foreign interest and that appears to be part
16 of an effort to coerce a civilian population or to create chaos
17 within a society leading to influencing the policy or affecting

1 the conduct of any government by coercion.

2 "Emergency situation or circumstance." Social, economic or
3 biological conditions which threaten the continued operation of
4 government or the health, safety or lives of the residents of
5 this Commonwealth.

6 "Natural disaster." Any hurricane, tornado, storm, flood,
7 high water, earthquake, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, drought,
8 insect infestation, fire, explosion or other natural catastrophe
9 which results in substantial property damage, human suffering
10 and hardship or loss of life.

11 Section 3. Convening of General Assembly postelection.

12 (a) General rule.--The General Assembly shall not meet after
13 the date of the general election in an even-numbered year unless
14 one or more of the conditions in subsection (b) are met.

15 (b) Exceptions.--Following the date of the general election
16 in an even-numbered year, the General Assembly may be called
17 into session only if:

18 (1) the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the
19 House of Representatives in consultation with one another
20 determine jointly that convening the General Assembly is
21 warranted by either an emergency situation or circumstance,
22 an act of terrorism or a natural disaster; or

23 (2) the Governor has called the General Assembly into
24 extraordinary session pursuant to section 12 of Article IV of
25 the Constitution of Pennsylvania.

26 Section 4. Proclamation.

27 (a) Joint legislative proclamation.--Pursuant to section
28 3(b)(1), the President of the Senate in consultation with the
29 Majority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the
30 Senate and, if possible, the Speaker of the House of

1 Representatives in consultation with the Majority Leader of the
2 House of Representatives and the Minority Leader of the House of
3 Representatives, if possible, shall jointly issue a proclamation
4 identifying the nature of the act of terrorism, emergency
5 situation or circumstance or natural disaster justifying the
6 convening of the General Assembly and designating the subjects
7 of legislation to be considered, which shall be directly related
8 to the identified need for convening the emergency session.

9 (b) Dissemination.--The proclamation issued pursuant to
10 subsection (a) shall be communicated immediately to all members
11 of the General Assembly and, at a minimum, shall be distributed
12 to the news media correspondents located in the Capitol Building
13 and to other members of the news media identified jointly by the
14 Secretary of the Senate and Chief Clerk of the House of
15 Representatives.

16 Section 5. Emergency session.

17 Within 24 hours after issuance of a proclamation pursuant to
18 section 4(a), or within 24 hours after receiving communications
19 from the Governor pursuant to section 12 of Article IV of the
20 Constitution of Pennsylvania, the President of the Senate shall
21 reconvene the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
22 Representatives shall reconvene the House of Representatives.

23 Section 6. General limitation on legislation.

24 When the General Assembly is convened in emergency session
25 pursuant to this act, only legislation which relates directly to
26 legislation designated either in the proclamation of the
27 Governor calling such session or legislation jointly designated
28 by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
29 Representatives calling such session shall be considered.

30 Section 20. Effective date.

1 This act shall take effect immediately.