
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2810 Session of
2008

INTRODUCED BY GRUCELA, CARROLL, CASORIO, CONKLIN, HARKINS,
DALEY, EVERETT, DeLUCA, KORTZ, HARHAI, McILHATTAN, HORNAMAN,
MYERS, HUTCHINSON, READSHAW, KOTIK, SHIMKUS, WALKO,
McILVAINE SMITH, J. WHITE, WOJNAROSKI, M. O'BRIEN AND
GALLOWAY, OCTOBER 3, 2008

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, OCTOBER 3, 2008

A JOINT RESOLUTION

1 Proposing integrated amendments to the Constitution of the
2 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, providing for a unicameral
3 General Assembly.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby resolves as follows:

6 Section 1. The following integrated amendments to the
7 Constitution of Pennsylvania are proposed in accordance with
8 Article XI:

9 (1) That sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13
10 of Article II be amended to read:

11 § 1. Legislative power.

12 The legislative power of this Commonwealth shall be vested in
13 a General Assembly, which shall consist of [a Senate and a House
14 of Representatives] 203 members.

15 § 2. Election of members; vacancies.

16 Members of the General Assembly shall be chosen at the

1 general election [every second year]. Their term of service
2 shall begin on the first day of December next after their
3 election. Whenever a vacancy shall occur [in either House], the
4 presiding officer [thereof] shall issue a writ of election to
5 fill such vacancy for the remainder of the term.

6 § 3. Terms of members.

7 [Senators] (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), members
8 shall be elected for the term of four years [and Representatives
9 for the term of two years].

10 (b) At the first general election after the adoption of the
11 amendment adding this subsection, members from odd-numbered
12 districts shall be elected for a term of two years, and members
13 from even-numbered districts shall be elected for terms of four
14 years.

15 § 4. Sessions.

16 The General Assembly shall be a continuing body during the
17 term for which its [Representatives] members are elected. It
18 shall meet at 12 o'clock noon on the first Tuesday of January
19 each year. Special sessions shall be called by the Governor on
20 petition of a majority of the members [elected to each House] or
21 may be called by the Governor whenever in his opinion the public
22 interest requires.

23 § 5. Qualifications of members.

24 [Senators] Members of the General Assembly shall be at least
25 25 years of age [and Representatives 21 years of age]. They
26 shall have been citizens and inhabitants of the State four
27 years, and inhabitants of their respective districts one year
28 next before their election (unless absent on the public business
29 of the United States or of this State), and shall reside in
30 their respective districts during their terms of service.

1 § 6. Disqualification to hold other office.

2 No [Senator or Representative] member of the General Assembly
3 shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to
4 any civil office under this Commonwealth to which a salary, fee
5 or perquisite is attached. No member of Congress or other person
6 holding any office (except of attorney-at-law or in the National
7 Guard or in a reserve component of the armed forces of the
8 United States) under the United States or this Commonwealth to
9 which a salary, fee or perquisite is attached shall be a member
10 of [either House] the General Assembly during his continuance in
11 office.

12 § 8. Compensation.

13 The members of the General Assembly shall receive such salary
14 and mileage for regular and special sessions as shall be fixed
15 by law, and no other compensation whatever, whether for service
16 upon committee or otherwise. No member of [either House] the
17 General Assembly shall during the term for which he may have
18 been elected, receive any increase of salary, or mileage, under
19 any law passed during such term.

20 § 9. Election of officers; judge of election and qualifications
21 of members.

22 [The Senate shall, at the beginning and close of each regular
23 session and at such other times as may be necessary, elect one
24 of its members President pro tempore, who shall perform the
25 duties of the Lieutenant Governor, in any case of absence or
26 disability of that officer, and whenever the said office of
27 Lieutenant Governor shall be vacant. The House of
28 Representatives] The General Assembly shall elect one of its
29 members as Speaker. [Each House] It shall choose its other
30 officers, and shall judge of the election and qualifications of

1 its members.

2 § 10. Quorum.

3 A majority of [each House] the General Assembly shall
4 constitute a quorum, but a smaller number may adjourn from day
5 to day and compel the attendance of absent members.

6 § 11. Powers of [each house] the General Assembly; expulsion.

7 [Each House] The General Assembly shall have power to
8 determine the rules of its proceedings and punish its members or
9 other persons for contempt or disorderly behavior in its
10 presence, to enforce obedience to its process, to protect its
11 members against violence or offers of bribes or private
12 solicitation, and, with the concurrence of two-thirds, to expel
13 a member, but not a second time for the same cause, and shall
14 have all other powers necessary for the Legislature of a free
15 State. A member expelled for corruption shall not thereafter be
16 eligible to [either House] the General Assembly, and punishment
17 for contempt or disorderly behavior shall not bar an indictment
18 for the same offense.

19 § 12. Journals; yeas and nays.

20 [Each House] The General Assembly shall keep a journal of its
21 proceedings and from time to time publish the same, except such
22 parts as require secrecy, and the yeas and nays of the members
23 on any question shall, at the desire of any two of them, be
24 entered on the journal.

25 § 13. Open sessions.

26 The sessions of [each House] the General Assembly and of
27 committees of the whole shall be open, unless when the business
28 is such as ought to be kept secret.

29 (2) That section 14 of Article II be repealed:

30 [§ 14. Adjournments.

1 Neither House shall, without the consent of the other,
2 adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than
3 that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.]

4 (3) That sections 15, 16 and 17(b) of Article II be amended
5 to read:

6 § 15. Privileges of members.

7 The members of the General Assembly shall in all cases,
8 except treason, felony, violation of their oath of office, and
9 breach or surety of the peace, be privileged from arrest during
10 their attendance at the sessions of [their respective Houses]
11 the General Assembly and in going to and returning from the
12 same; and for any speech or debate in [either House] the General
13 Assembly, they shall not be questioned in any other place.

14 § 16. Legislative districts.

15 The Commonwealth shall be divided into [50 senatorial and 203
16 representative] 203 legislative districts, which shall be
17 composed of compact and contiguous territory as nearly equal in
18 population as practicable. [Each senatorial district shall elect
19 one Senator, and each representative district one
20 Representative.] Unless absolutely necessary no county, city,
21 incorporated town, borough, township or ward shall be divided in
22 forming [either a senatorial or representative] a legislative
23 district.

24 § 17. Legislative Reapportionment Commission.

25 * * *

26 (b) The commission shall consist of [five] three members:
27 [four] two of whom shall be the majority and minority leaders of
28 [both the Senate and the House of Representatives] the General
29 Assembly, or deputies appointed by each of them, and a chairman
30 selected as hereinafter provided. No later than 60 days

1 following the official reporting of the Federal decennial census
2 as required by Federal law, the [four] two members shall be
3 certified by the [President pro tempore of the Senate and the
4 Speaker of the House of Representatives] General Assembly to the
5 elections officer of the Commonwealth who under law shall have
6 supervision over elections.

7 The [four] two members within 45 days after their
8 certification shall select the [fifth] third member, who shall
9 serve as chairman of the commission, and shall immediately
10 certify his name to such elections officer. The chairman shall
11 be a citizen of the Commonwealth other than a local, State or
12 Federal official holding an office to which compensation is
13 attached.

14 If the [four] two members fail to select the [fifth] third
15 member within the time prescribed, a majority of the entire
16 membership of the Supreme Court within 30 days thereafter shall
17 appoint the chairman as aforesaid and certify his appointment to
18 such elections officer.

19 Any vacancy in the commission shall be filled within 15 days
20 in the same manner in which such position was originally filled.

21 * * *

22 Section 2. (a) Upon the first passage by the General
23 Assembly of these proposed constitutional amendments, the
24 Secretary of the Commonwealth shall proceed immediately to
25 comply with the advertising requirements of section 1 of Article
26 XI of the Constitution of Pennsylvania and shall transmit the
27 required advertisements to two newspapers in every county in
28 which such newspapers are published in sufficient time after
29 passage of these proposed constitutional amendments.

30 (b) Upon the second passage by the General Assembly of these

1 proposed constitutional amendments, the Secretary of the
2 Commonwealth shall proceed immediately to comply with the
3 advertising requirements of section 1 of Article XI of the
4 Constitution of Pennsylvania and shall transmit the required
5 advertisements to two newspapers in every county in which such
6 newspapers are published in sufficient time after passage of
7 these proposed constitutional amendments. The Secretary of the
8 Commonwealth shall submit the proposed constitutional amendments
9 under section 1 to the qualified electors of this Commonwealth
10 as a single ballot question at the first primary, general or
11 municipal election which meets the requirements of and is in
12 conformance with section 1 of Article XI of the Constitution of
13 Pennsylvania and which occurs at least three months after the
14 proposed constitutional amendments are passed by the General
15 Assembly.