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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 159 Session of  
2007

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INTRODUCED BY KENNEY, OLIVER, TRUE, MACKERETH, WATSON, KAUFFMAN, REICHLEY, GINGRICH, SONNEY, McILHATTAN, ROSS, BISHOP, KIRKLAND, MYERS, MANDERINO, McILVAINE SMITH, CURRY, CAPPELLI, NAILOR, SANTONI, CALTAGIRONE, PETRONE, FAIRCHILD, MANN, YUDICHAK, HERSHEY, HARHAI, SCAVELLO, GODSHALL, RAYMOND, R. STEVENSON, PYLE, EVERETT, RUBLEY, HARHART, J. EVANS, HUTCHINSON, W. KELLER, BELFANTI, M. SMITH, YOUNGBLOOD, KOTIK, PICKETT, PEIFER, SAYLOR, SOLOBAY, FABRIZIO, O'NEILL, LEVDANSKY, DALLY, PETRI, KULA, BOBACK, PETRARCA, GOODMAN, GRELL, MARKOSEK, HESS, GEIST, KORTZ, BOYD, MICOZZIE, HENNESSEY, JAMES, FREEMAN AND PRESTON, MARCH 22, 2007

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,  
MARCH 22, 2007

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A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a  
2 comprehensive study on the waiting list for community-based  
3 mental retardation services.

4 WHEREAS, Approximately 23,000 Pennsylvania citizens with  
5 mental retardation are on the waiting list for community-based  
6 mental retardation services; and

7 WHEREAS, Many of the individuals on the waiting list for  
8 community-based mental retardation services live with caregivers  
9 who are unable to continue to provide them with necessary care  
10 due to age, infirmity or other obligations; and

11 WHEREAS, Approximately 3,800 individuals are listed in the  
12 emergency category of the waiting list and need services  
13 immediately; and

1 WHEREAS, Approximately 9,100 individuals are listed in the  
2 critical category of the waiting list and will need services  
3 within one year; and

4 WHEREAS, Every month, 150 to 200 individuals are added to the  
5 waiting list; and

6 WHEREAS, Since 1999, Pennsylvania has enacted various funding  
7 initiatives to expand community-based mental retardation  
8 services to reduce the waiting list, but funding falls short of  
9 the amount needed to provide the necessary services for all  
10 individuals in the emergency and critical categories; and

11 WHEREAS, Upon reaching age 21, many young adults with mental  
12 retardation have aged out of the education system only to find  
13 there is no funding available for community-based services and  
14 to find themselves without support or services; therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint  
16 State Government Commission to establish an advisory committee  
17 to study the extent of the waiting list for community-based  
18 mental retardation services in Pennsylvania, including the  
19 underlying causes of the waiting list, strategies undertaken by  
20 other states to eliminate the waiting list and recommendations  
21 and actions of Federal, State and county governments to  
22 eliminate the waiting list; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the advisory committee be composed of  
24 approximately 12 members representing the Office of  
25 Developmental Programs of the Department of Public Welfare, the  
26 Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council, the Disability  
27 Rights Network of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Waiting List  
28 Campaign, Vision for Equality, Speaking for Ourselves, the Arc  
29 of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Association of Resources for  
30 People with Mental Retardation, Temple University's Institute on

1 Disabilities, the Pennsylvania Association of Rehabilitation  
2 Facilities, the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania  
3 and the Mental Health/Mental Retardation Program Administrators  
4 Association of Pennsylvania; and be it further

5       RESOLVED, That the advisory committee may include  
6 representatives from other community and government agencies  
7 involved in issues with community-based mental retardation  
8 services; and be it further

9       RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission report  
10 its findings to the House of Representatives six months after  
11 the date of adoption of this resolution.