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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 572      Session of  
2008

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INTRODUCED BY J. EVANS, BELFANTI, BOYD, BRENNAN, COHEN, CONKLIN, CREIGHTON, DENLINGER, EVERETT, FLECK, FREEMAN, GEIST, GEORGE, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HARKINS, HELM, JOSEPHS, KOTIK, LEACH, MAJOR, MARSHALL, McILHATTAN, MENSCH, MOUL, MOYER, MURT, MYERS, NAILOR, D. O'BRIEN, O'NEILL, PARKER, PAYNE, PHILLIPS, PICKETT, PYLE, READSHAW, REICHLEY, SEIP, SONNEY, WOJNAROSKI AND SIPTROTH, FEBRUARY 1, 2008

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 1, 2008

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A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the institutions in higher education that receive State  
2 funding to recognize American Sign Language coursework for  
3 foreign language credit.

4 WHEREAS, The unique social, cultural and linguistic heritage  
5 of the hearing-impaired community and its substantial  
6 contribution to the enrichment and diversity of our society is  
7 important to this Commonwealth; and

8 WHEREAS, Over the past 20 years, a significant and growing  
9 body of scientific inquiry of American Sign Language (ASL) has  
10 been undertaken, with the result that ASL is now generally  
11 recognized as a separate language with its own grammar and  
12 syntax; and

13 WHEREAS, ASL is the third most communicated language in the  
14 United States, other than English, and there is a significant  
15 and growing need for sign language interpreters and  
16 transliterators; and

1       WHEREAS, The legislative bodies of 40 states have formally  
2 recognized ASL as a foreign language; and

3       WHEREAS, Learning and communicating with ASL contributes to a  
4 greater understanding of the social and cultural aspects of  
5 hearing impairment, the promotion of better communication  
6 between those with hearing and the hearing impaired and the  
7 advancement of the full inclusion and participation of people  
8 who are deaf and other persons with disabling conditions in  
9 every area of society; therefore be it

10       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge the  
11 institutions in higher education that receive State funding to  
12 recognize American Sign Language coursework for foreign language  
13 credit; and be it further

14       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives respectfully  
15 request that the presidents of the institutions in higher  
16 education that receive State funding confer and collaborate in  
17 providing for the inclusion of American Sign Language among the  
18 foreign language courses approved for foreign language credit at  
19 their respective institutions, as well as to determine ways and  
20 incentives in which institutions of higher education that  
21 receive State funding are encouraged to accept successfully  
22 completed coursework in American Sign Language for foreign  
23 language credit; and be it further

24       RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to  
25 the presidents of the institutions in higher education that  
26 receive State funding.