

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 135 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, PILEGGI, ARMSTRONG, ORIE, ROBBINS,
FONTANA, BOSCOLA, FERLO, RAFFERTY, ERICKSON, D. WHITE, FUMO,
WONDERLING AND STACK, JUNE 11, 2007

REFERRED TO JUDICIARY, JUNE 11, 2007

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to establish a
2 task force and advisory committee to study the distribution
3 and use of methadone, including the diversion of methadone
4 from its proper and legal uses, and to make a report to the
5 Senate on the distribution and use of methadone, including
6 recommendations for changes in State law and regulations.

7 WHEREAS, Methadone is used to detoxify opiate addicts,
8 including individuals addicted to heroin, because it suppresses
9 withdrawal symptoms and reduces cravings by blocking the high
10 associated with heroin; and

11 WHEREAS, The National Institute on Drug Abuse found that
12 among outpatients receiving methadone, weekly heroin use
13 decreased by 69%, criminal activity decreased by 52% and full-
14 time employment increased by 24%; and

15 WHEREAS, While the advantages of methadone treatment are well
16 documented, the diversion of methadone from its proper and legal
17 uses is a serious problem because this powerful drug can become
18 available for sale on the street; and

19 WHEREAS, Methadone abuse is dangerous because the drug stays

1 in an individual's system for longer than many other narcotics,
2 often more than two days; and

3 WHEREAS, The Food and Drug Administration has warned
4 physicians about the risk of accidental overdoses or dangerous
5 interactions with other drugs if patients get too much methadone
6 too often; and

7 WHEREAS, According to the National Center for Health
8 Statistics, methadone was mentioned in 3,849 of the 30,308 drug
9 poisoning deaths reported for 2004, a 29% increase from the
10 previous year; therefore be it

11 RESOLVED, That the Senate direct the Joint State Government
12 Commission to establish a bipartisan task force consisting of
13 two members appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate
14 and two members appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;
15 and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the task force create an advisory committee of
17 individuals with expertise in the distribution and use of
18 methadone, including representatives of the medical, drug
19 treatment and criminal justice communities; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the task force and advisory committee study
21 the distribution and use of methadone, including the diversion
22 of methadone from its proper and legal uses, and make a report
23 to the Senate on the distribution and use of methadone,
24 including recommendations for changes in State law and
25 regulations.