
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 91 Session of
2009

INTRODUCED BY J. EVANS, BAKER, BARRAR, BELFANTI, BOBACK, BOYD,
BRENNAN, CALTAGIRONE, DENLINGER, EVERETT, GEIST, GINGRICH,
GRUCELA, HARRIS, HELM, HESS, HORNAMAN, KORTZ, MELIO, MENSCH,
MICOZZIE, MOUL, MYERS, O'NEILL, PAYNE, PICKETT, SCAVELLO,
SIPTROTH AND K. SMITH, FEBRUARY 18, 2009

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 18, 2009

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 and
15 growing need for sign language interpreters and transliterators;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, The legislative bodies of 40 states have formally

1 recognized ASL as a foreign language; and

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

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

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

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