

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 571 Session of 2009

INTRODUCED BY SIPTROTH, BRADFORD, BRENNAN, BRIGGS, CALTAGIRONE, CONKLIN, D. COSTA, CUTLER, DEASY, DeLUCA, DRUCKER, FAIRCHILD, GIBBONS, GOODMAN, GROVE, HARHAI, HENNESSEY, HORNAMAN, KORTZ, KOTIK, LENTZ, MAHONEY, MAJOR, MARKOSEK, MATZIE, METZGAR, MILNE, MURT, READSHAW, REICHLEY, SCAVELLO, K. SMITH, SOLOBAY, STABACK, SWANGER, TALLMAN, VULAKOVICH, WAGNER, WANSACZ, WATERS, YUDICHAK, ROAE AND BEAR, DECEMBER 15, 2009

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, DECEMBER 15, 2009

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a
2 comprehensive study of the current number of legislative
3 districts within this Commonwealth, proposals to amend the
4 Constitution of Pennsylvania to reduce the size of the
5 General Assembly and the potential impact of the proposed
6 reduction on cost, constituent services, work performed by
7 members and staff, legislative effectiveness and efficiency
8 and representation of constituent interests.

9 WHEREAS, Under section 16 of Article II of the Constitution
10 of Pennsylvania, this Commonwealth is divided into 50 senatorial
11 and 203 representative districts; and

12 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is the sixth most populous state and
13 ranks seventh in constituents per senatorial district and
14 fourteenth in constituents per representative district in the
15 nation; and

16 WHEREAS, Many Pennsylvanians have expressed support for
17 reducing the number of legislative districts in this
18 Commonwealth; and

1 WHEREAS, Several bills proposing to amend the Constitution of
2 Pennsylvania to reduce the size of the General Assembly have
3 been introduced; and

4 WHEREAS, These bills vary greatly in the scope of proposed
5 reductions to the size of the General Assembly, ranging from
6 radical to modest reductions; and

7 WHEREAS, Data have been collected to show the amount
8 Commonwealth taxpayers currently spend on the General Assembly,
9 including its members, staff and other operational support; and

10 WHEREAS, Various interested parties have used this data to
11 suggest a savings by reducing the size of the General Assembly,
12 but there has been no comprehensive study of potential savings
13 and other issues related to downsizing the General Assembly; and

14 WHEREAS, It is necessary to collect appropriate and
15 applicable information on the potential impact of legislative
16 downsizing given the significant effect a reduction in the size
17 of the General Assembly would have on the Commonwealth's
18 government and residents; therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
20 State Government Commission to conduct a comprehensive study of
21 the current number of legislative districts within this
22 Commonwealth, proposals to amend the Constitution of
23 Pennsylvania to reduce the size of the General Assembly and the
24 potential impact of the proposed reduction on cost, constituent
25 services, work performed by members and staff, legislative
26 effectiveness and efficiency and representation of constituent
27 interests; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission review
29 and analyze information relating to the Commonwealth
30 specifically and to other state legislatures generally when

conducting the study; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission review and consider information relating to the following questions when analyzing the current number of legislative districts within this Commonwealth and proposals to reduce the size of the General Assembly and when making recommendations regarding the proposed downsizing of the legislature:

(1) Whether a reduction in the size of the General Assembly would result in a cost savings for Pennsylvania taxpayers.

(2) Whether a reduction in the size of the General Assembly would lead to an increase or a decrease in the size of the staff complement.

(3) How a reduction in the size of the General Assembly affects constituent services and the ability of legislators to effectively represent constituent interests.

(4) Whether there is an optimal size for a representative district and a senatorial district in this Commonwealth.

(5) How a reduction in the size of the General Assembly affects the legislative process;

and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than December 1, 2010.