

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 720 Session of 2010

INTRODUCED BY LONGIETTI, McCALL, SAMUELSON, ADOLPH, BEAR, BELFANTI, BOYLE, BRADFORD, BRENNAN, BROWN, BUXTON, CALTAGIRONE, CHRISTIANA, CIVERA, CLYMER, COHEN, CREIGHTON, CURRY, DeLUCA, DeWEESE, DONATUCCI, FLECK, FRANKEL, GABLER, GIBBONS, GINGRICH, GODSHALL, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HARHAI, HARHART, HARKINS, HELM, HORNAMAN, HUTCHINSON, JOHNSON, JOSEPHS, KILLION, KIRKLAND, KOTIK, LENTZ, MAHONEY, MAJOR, MANDERINO, MANN, MARSHALL, MARSICO, MATZIE, McILVAINE SMITH, MICOZZIE, MIRABITO, MUNDY, MURPHY, MURT, M. O'BRIEN, PALLONE, PICKETT, READSHAW, REED, REESE, REICHLEY, ROCK, ROEBUCK, ROSS, SANTARSIERO, SCAVELLO, SCHRODER, SEIP, M. SMITH, SOLOBAY, SONNEY, STURLA, TALLMAN, R. TAYLOR, TRUE, VULAKOVICH, WANSACZ, WATSON, WHEATLEY, YOUNGBLOOD, YUDICHAK, BAKER, STEVENSON, SIPTROTH AND McGEEHAN, APRIL 7, 2010

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 7, 2010

## A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to  
2 conduct a study of the Commonwealth's public school library  
3 services for students in kindergarten through grade 12,  
4 measuring and comparing access to print and electronic  
5 resources, professional support and instruction in the use of  
6 information and research among this Commonwealth's public  
7 school entities and evaluating how funding and resources are  
8 allocated for school library services in relation to student  
9 and community circumstances.

10 WHEREAS, Up-to-date school libraries include printed  
11 materials, computers and technology, video and audio materials,  
12 research tools and professional instruction and support for  
13 students; and

14 WHEREAS, Effective school libraries include a variety of  
15 instructional and educational programs designed to meet the

1 needs of all students, including gifted students, students with  
2 disabilities, English as a second language students, students in  
3 poverty and students from different racial and cultural  
4 backgrounds; and

5 WHEREAS, Students and teachers need high-quality school  
6 library services and related educational resources in order to  
7 meet this Commonwealth's academic standards for research and  
8 learning in all core academic subjects, specifically addressing  
9 competencies in Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System that  
10 require students to be able to "analyze and evaluate information  
11 from a variety of sources for relevance to the research  
12 question, topic or thesis"; and

13 WHEREAS, In a study of this Commonwealth's school libraries  
14 conducted in 1999-2000, a significant correlation between  
15 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment reading test scores of  
16 students and schools with quality school library programs and  
17 staffing proved the impact of school libraries on improved  
18 student achievement; and

19 WHEREAS, Similar studies in 19 other states conducted over  
20 the past 16 years have supported the findings of this  
21 Commonwealth's study and demonstrated the role that school  
22 libraries play in student learning; and

23 WHEREAS, The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has  
24 identified information, media and technology skills necessary  
25 "to ensure that students emerge from our schools with the skills  
26 needed to be effective citizens, workers and leaders in the 21st  
27 century"; and

28 WHEREAS, Not all of this Commonwealth's students attend a  
29 public school that has a school library, and this is  
30 particularly true in impoverished rural and urban communities

1 with larger numbers of at-risk children; and

2 WHEREAS, Access to and instruction by a certified school  
3 librarian is also nonexistent in many schools or limited in  
4 school districts where librarians serve in multiple buildings,  
5 thus reducing hours the school library is open and available to  
6 students and teachers; and

7 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth does not have any requirements for  
8 public schools to operate a school library or to have certified  
9 staffing, although the Public School Code does require school  
10 libraries and staffing for private schools; and

11 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth does not provide or require  
12 dedicated funding for school library services, such as New York,  
13 which provides \$6.25 per student for school library resources  
14 and, therefore, this Commonwealth is at a disadvantage compared  
15 to neighboring states, a disadvantage which results in school  
16 library resources and school library conditions that vary widely  
17 across this Commonwealth; therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
19 conduct a study of public school library resources and services  
20 in this Commonwealth for students in kindergarten through grade  
21 12, measuring and comparing funding, facilities, access to print  
22 and electronic resources, professional support and programming  
23 and instruction in the use of information and research among  
24 this Commonwealth's public schools and districts and evaluating  
25 how these elements are allocated in relation to student and  
26 community circumstances, such as poverty, disability, race and  
27 English language ability; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That, in addition, the study shall include an  
29 analysis of the following for this Commonwealth, measured and  
30 quantified, when possible, per student, per school, per district

1 and Statewide:

2 (1) The number of public schools without a centralized  
3 school library collection in the building under the  
4 administration of a certified school librarian assigned full  
5 time to that building.

6 (2) The ratio of certified school librarians to  
7 students.

8 (3) The assignment of other support staffs to work in  
9 school libraries, the number of such other staffs and their  
10 qualifications.

11 (4) The number of hours that students have access to the  
12 school library in their building per day.

13 (5) The amount of up-to-date and useful print and  
14 electronic resources to which students and teachers have  
15 access through school library services.

16 (6) The average age and condition of books and  
17 technology in school libraries.

18 (7) The amount of funding from all sources being spent  
19 annually over the past ten years for school library resources  
20 and services.

21 (8) The availability of up-to-date, functional,  
22 Internet-connected computers for student use in school  
23 libraries.

24 (9) The kinds of other library services and programs  
25 provided by school libraries to support students and  
26 teachers.

27 (10) Additional aspects of school libraries related to  
28 the overall purpose of this study;

29 and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the Department of Education, Commonwealth

1 libraries and the State Board of Education provide available  
2 support for this study as requested by the Legislative Budget  
3 and Finance Committee; and be it further

4       RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
5 request the assistance of the following organizations in  
6 conducting this study: the Education Committee of the Senate,  
7 the Education Committee of the House of Representatives, the  
8 Pennsylvania School Librarians Association, the Pennsylvania  
9 State Education Association and the Pennsylvania Federation of  
10 Teachers; and be it further

11       RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
12 provide recommendations necessary or desirable to improve and  
13 update public school library resources, services and facilities  
14 for all students in this Commonwealth, including recommendations  
15 for appropriate levels of resources, staffing and hours of  
16 access; and be it further

17       RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
18 provide recommendations necessary or desirable to provide all  
19 students with the school library resources, facilities, programs  
20 and instruction to enable them to become successful readers,  
21 learners, researchers and consumers and producers of  
22 information; and be it further

23       RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
24 provide recommendations necessary or desirable to address school  
25 library inequities or insufficiencies affecting disadvantaged  
26 students and communities; and be it further

27       RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
28 report to the House of Representatives the result of its study  
29 and recommendations regarding the status of this Commonwealth's  
30 school libraries and student access to them and file the report

1 with the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives no later  
2 than June 30, 2011.