

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 140 Session of
2011

INTRODUCED BY BRUBAKER, ERICKSON, FONTANA, ALLOWAY, SOLOBAY,
WASHINGTON, D. WHITE, SCHWANK, WAUGH, BREWSTER, MENSCH, YAW
AND YUDICHAK, JUNE 14, 2011

REFERRED TO ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY, JUNE 14, 2011

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to review
2 the Commonwealth's sewage facilities management program
3 authorized under the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act.

4 WHEREAS, It is important for the Commonwealth to have in
5 place a comprehensive program that guides the planning and
6 development of sewage facilities throughout this Commonwealth;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, A comprehensive sewage facilities planning,
9 oversight and enforcement program will ensure public health and
10 safety and a quality environment; and

11 WHEREAS, The General Assembly recognized the need for a
12 comprehensive sewage facilities management program and
13 consequently enacted the act of January 24, 1966 (1965 P.L.1535,
14 No.537), known as the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act, and
15 more commonly referred to as Act 537; and

16 WHEREAS, Act 537 has provided for the overall planning,
17 development and placement of various sewage management
18 facilities; and

1 WHEREAS, Act 537 has been the vehicle through which existing
2 sources of water pollution are identified and mitigated and new
3 sources of water pollution are prevented; and

4 WHEREAS, Over time, technology and circumstances have
5 dramatically changed the manner in which sewage facilities are
6 planned for, deployed and managed, especially since the
7 enactment of Act 537; and

8 WHEREAS, A comprehensive review and evaluation of the
9 implementation of Act 537 has not been undertaken; and

10 WHEREAS, A review could lead to recommendations for cost-
11 savings opportunities to the Commonwealth, local governments and
12 citizens and opportunities to increase the public health, safety
13 and environmental protections associated with Act 537; therefore
14 be it

15 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee
16 be directed to undertake a comprehensive review and evaluation
17 of the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act and prepare a report
18 of its findings which shall, at a minimum:

19 (1) determine the overall effectiveness of the act, its
20 accompanying regulations, guidance documents and policy
21 statements, in achieving the goals of protecting public
22 health and safety, preventing and eliminating pollution of
23 the waters of this Commonwealth and promoting intermunicipal
24 cooperation in the planning, implementation and
25 administration of sewage facilities;

26 (2) identify opportunities to streamline and make more
27 cost-effective processes associated with administering the
28 act at the State and local levels;

29 (3) review the process in which Department of
30 Environmental Protection permits or authorizes the use of

1 new onsite wastewater treatment technologies and make
2 recommendations to improve this process;

3 (4) review the process used to collect, account for and
4 disburse moneys received through fines and fees associated
5 with the program;

6 (5) identify the manner in which a high degree of
7 technical competency within local government administration
8 of the act is being facilitated by the Department of
9 Environmental Protection;

10 (6) evaluate the efficiency, including the costs and
11 benefits associated with the overall training and
12 certification program for local sewage enforcement officers;
13 and

14 (7) review the effectiveness of all grant and
15 reimbursement programs associated with the act and its
16 accompanying regulations, and the adequacy of funding
17 assistance provided by the Commonwealth;

18 and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee
20 make a report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate
21 within one year of the adoption of this resolution.