

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 653 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY MATZIE, GIBBONS, CHRISTIANA AND MARSHALL,
JANUARY 25, 2016

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
JANUARY 25, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the 100th anniversary of the awarding of Old Economy
2 Village to the Commonwealth.

3 WHEREAS, Old Economy Village is the historic home of a
4 community of German immigrants who began migrating from the
5 city-state of Wurttemberg beginning in 1803, due to religious
6 persecution; and

7 WHEREAS, These immigrants, who followed the preaching of
8 Johann Georg Rapp and dubbed themselves Harmonists, endeavored
9 to establish an entrepreneurial-based community in Butler
10 County; and

11 WHEREAS, Although the Harmonists originally settled and
12 established the towns of Harmony, Butler County, in 1804, and
13 New Harmony, located in the Indiana Territory, in 1814, the
14 Harmonists later returned to Butler County in 1824 and
15 established their third and final settlement, Economy; and

16 WHEREAS, The Harmony Society began as an agricultural-based
17 community but quickly industrialized, adding textile and grist

1 mills; and

2 WHEREAS, The Harmonists later turned to investing and enjoyed
3 a period of relative prosperity until the 1890s; and

4 WHEREAS, The Harmony Society officially dissolved on December
5 15, 1905; and

6 WHEREAS, A lengthy legal battle ensued after a joint
7 resolution passed by the General Assembly provided that the
8 abandoned land would be requisitioned by the Commonwealth; and

9 WHEREAS, On February 3, 1916, the Court of Common Pleas of
10 Beaver County awarded six acres of land in the town of Economy
11 to the Commonwealth; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1917, the Harmony Society Historical Association
13 was founded and began providing historic tours to the public;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, In 1919, the association entered into a contract
16 with the Pennsylvania Historical Commission; and

17 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
18 formally opened Old Economy Village to the public on May 26,
19 1921, to an audience of nearly 5,000 people; and

20 WHEREAS, In February 1972, *National Geographic* featured an
21 educational insert that highlighted Old Economy's live-in
22 program for school children; and

23 WHEREAS, Old Economy Village has undergone several extensive
24 restorations through the years and has continued to be of great
25 historical importance and a favored tourist destination; and

26 WHEREAS, Old Economy Village is designated as a National
27 Historic Landmark and is listed on the National Register of
28 Historic Places; therefore be it

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
30 100th anniversary of the awarding of Old Economy Village to the

1 Commonwealth.