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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 137 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY MATZIE, READSHAW, D. COSTA, KULIK, CALTAGIRONE,  
BAKER, BOBACK, DIGIROLAMO, HENNESSEY, MURT, WARD, FREEMAN,  
DRISCOLL, GREINER, LONGIETTI, KINSEY, MILLARD, CONKLIN,  
WATSON, RYAN, JAMES, SCHLOSSBERG, DONATUCCI, SCHLEGEL CULVER,  
NEILSON, GABLER, ROEBUCK, SCHWEYER, BIZZARRO, GROVE, THOMAS,  
PASHINSKI AND GILLEN, MARCH 9, 2017

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
MARCH 9, 2017

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating March 14, 2017, as "Charter Day" in Pennsylvania.

2 WHEREAS, On March 4, 1681, King Charles II of England granted  
3 William Penn a charter for land in the New World to make up for  
4 a large debt that the king owed to Penn's father; and

5 WHEREAS, William Penn had initially decided to name the land  
6 "Sylvania," which in Latin means "woods," to which King Charles  
7 II added the prefix "Penn" in honor of William Penn's father,  
8 Admiral Sir William Penn; and

9 WHEREAS, Admiral Penn had served England as a rear admiral  
10 and vice admiral of Ireland, a vice admiral of England, a  
11 general in the First Anglo-Dutch War and great captain commander  
12 under the Duke of York; and

13 WHEREAS, William Penn wrote a Frame of Government of  
14 Pennsylvania that established a democratic system containing  
15 full freedom of religion, fair trials featuring independent

1 juries, assemblies consisting of elected representatives of the  
2 people and a separation of powers in the government, all ideas  
3 that later formed the crux of the Constitution of the United  
4 States; and

5 WHEREAS, William Penn described Pennsylvania as his "holy  
6 experiment" and from it he hoped a nation based on justice would  
7 grow; and

8 WHEREAS, William Penn's charter exists as the formal  
9 beginning of the colony and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,  
10 and through it, William Penn established the first example of  
11 democracy in what would become the United States of America; and

12 WHEREAS, Our citizens benefit from learning more about the  
13 overall history of this Commonwealth from its founding and how  
14 the principles of governance within the Commonwealth date back  
15 to the beliefs of William Penn; and

16 WHEREAS, The history of Pennsylvania exists as a kaleidoscope  
17 of stories and people, with each area of this Commonwealth  
18 having multiple stories of history involving key characters and  
19 events that create and establish Pennsylvania's heritage; and

20 WHEREAS, The act of July 28, 1953 (P.L.676, No.210) provides  
21 for the observance of March 14 each year as "Charter Day" and  
22 urges the residents of this Commonwealth, the public schools and  
23 other educational institutions and patriotic, religious,  
24 historical and veterans' organizations to observe the  
25 anniversary of the execution of the royal charter by King  
26 Charles II; and

27 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission,  
28 the Pennsylvania State Archives and the State Historical Records  
29 Advisory Board each works to inform our residents about the  
30 Commonwealth's heritage, including sponsoring an annual "Charter

1 Day" event in the State Museum of Pennsylvania; and

2 WHEREAS, This free event includes a presentation of the 1681  
3 charter as well as information about Penn's Great Law of 1682,  
4 the 1698 William Penn family bible, a William Penn reenactor,  
5 stories of Pennsylvania history and other programs; and

6 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has 23 other State historic sites and  
7 museums and numerous other historical organizations that  
8 continue to operate, largely thanks to the assistance of  
9 volunteers and other groups that have donated their money, time  
10 and other resources so that residents can remain well informed  
11 about the fabric of this Commonwealth's history; therefore be it

12 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate March  
13 14, 2017, as "Charter Day" in Pennsylvania; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the residents, schools, other educational  
15 institutions and patriotic, religious, historical and veterans'  
16 groups be urged to participate with any and all "Charter Day"  
17 activities sponsored by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum  
18 Commission, the Pennsylvania State Archives, the State  
19 Historical Records Advisory Board, the 23 other State historic  
20 sites and museums or those offered by any of the many other  
21 historical organizations within this Commonwealth; and be it  
22 further

23 RESOLVED, That the volunteers and other residents who keep  
24 history alive through their support and work for the  
25 Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Pennsylvania  
26 State Archives, the State Historical Records Advisory Board, the  
27 23 other State historic sites and museums or through the  
28 numerous other historical organizations within this Commonwealth  
29 be honored for their efforts.