
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 163 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY KINSEY, TOOHL, BULLOCK, DEAN, HENNESSEY, MURT,
BAKER, READSHAW, DRISCOLL, DAVIS, WARD, IRVIN, SCHLEGEL
CULVER, WARREN, YOUNGBLOOD, SCHWEYER, FRANKEL, SOLOMON,
D. COSTA, O'NEILL, STURLA, MACKENZIE, MILLARD, THOMAS,
McNEILL, BIZZARRO, DiGIROLAMO, SCHLOSSBERG, GOODMAN, DEASY,
LONGIETTI, MARSICO AND NEILSON, MARCH 20, 2017

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
MARCH 20, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of March 2017, as "Disabilities Awareness
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On October 27, 1955, the Pennsylvania General
4 Assembly passed the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, which
5 prohibited discrimination in the areas of employment, housing,
6 and public accommodations on the basis of race, color, familial
7 status, religious creed, ancestry, handicap or disability, age,
8 sex and national origin; and

9 WHEREAS, On September 26, 1973, the Congress of the United
10 States passed the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which was the
11 precursor to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act
12 of 1990, and prohibited the Federal Government, as an employer,
13 from discriminating against qualified individuals with
14 disabilities; and

15 WHEREAS, On July 26, 1990, President George H. W. Bush signed

1 the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) into law,
2 which served as the world's first comprehensive civil rights law
3 for individuals with disabilities; and

4 WHEREAS, According to the Centers for Disease Control and
5 Prevention, nearly 1 in 5 individuals, or approximately 56.7
6 million individuals in the United States have a disability; and

7 WHEREAS, In this Commonwealth, approximately 9.5%, or an
8 estimated 1.2 million residents under 65 years of age have a
9 disability; and

10 WHEREAS, According to data obtained from the 2014 American
11 Community Survey, the prevalence of disability in this
12 Commonwealth by race was 11% among whites, 15.7% among those of
13 Hispanic or Latino origin, 15.8% among black or African
14 Americans, 20.7% among individuals of other races and 28.9%
15 among Native Americans; and

16 WHEREAS, According to United States Census data, the economic
17 consequences of having a disability in America are compelling;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Approximately 41.1% of Americans with a disability
20 are employed as compared to 79.1% of nondisabled Americans; and

21 WHEREAS, This presents a quality-of-life issue as in 2014 the
22 poverty rate of working-age individuals with disabilities in
23 this Commonwealth was estimated to be 28.5% as compared to 10.3%
24 for working-age individuals without a disability; and

25 WHEREAS, According to the American Academy of Pediatrics,
26 childhood disability rates are trending upwards and have
27 increased by 16% between 2001 and 2011, which underscores our
28 need as policymakers to ensure that the current legal
29 protections that are in place are fully and consistently
30 enforced; and

1 WHEREAS, Although the act of fostering awareness about the
2 issue of our Commonwealth's disabled population is important,
3 the real objective lies in ensuring that Pennsylvanians with
4 disabilities are provided the dignity, respect and
5 accommodations that they deserve; and

6 WHEREAS, The purpose of this resolution is to recognize the
7 prevalence of the systemic inequities that exist within our
8 society pertaining to the treatment of our residents with
9 disabilities, as well as acknowledge the many invaluable efforts
10 that have been made throughout the history of our nation to
11 institute much needed civil protections for all Americans;
12 therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
14 month of March 2017 as "Disabilities Awareness Month" in
15 Pennsylvania; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage all
17 Pennsylvanians to learn more about the many unique challenges
18 confronting this Commonwealth's residents who are disabled and
19 assume the task of fostering a greater degree of awareness and
20 education regarding this critically important subject.