

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 390 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY PASHINSKI, THOMAS, WATSON, FREEMAN, VAZQUEZ, MILLARD, READSHAW, BULLOCK, SCHLOSSBERG, DeLISSIO, WARREN, V. BROWN, TOOHIL, KORTZ, SAMUELSON, ROTHMAN, DOWLING, ENGLISH, BARBIN AND MICCARELLI, JUNE 13, 2017

AS AMENDED, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 17, 2018

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to study the
2 trend of grandfamilies in Pennsylvania and report its
3 findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

4 WHEREAS, Grandfamilies, or kinship families, are families in
5 which children reside with and are being raised by grandparents,
6 other extended family members and adults with whom they have a
7 close family-like relationship, including godparents and close
8 family friends; and

9 WHEREAS, In Pennsylvania, more than 195,000 children are
10 living with their grandparents; and

11 WHEREAS, More than 88,000 Pennsylvania grandparents are
12 householders responsible for their grandchildren who live with
13 them, and of these households nearly 29,000 do not have the
14 child's parents present in the home; and

15 WHEREAS, Nearly one-third of grandparents raising
16 grandchildren are 60 years of age or older, nearly 60% are in
17 the work force and nearly 20% are living in poverty; and

1 WHEREAS, For every child in foster care with relatives, there
2 are 20 children being raised in grandfamilies outside of the
3 foster care system; and

4 WHEREAS, Grandfamilies provide the State with significant
5 savings by keeping children out of the foster care system; and

6 WHEREAS, Forty percent of children in foster care with
7 relatives are there because of parental drug or alcohol abuse;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Grandparents face unique emotional, legal, health
10 and economic challenges when they unexpectedly find themselves
11 in the position of raising a second family, yet they find little
12 support; therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
14 State Government Commission to submit a report on grandfamilies
15 that identifies:

16 (1) The number of children being raised in grandfamilies
17 from 2011 through 2016 and a comparison with the number of
18 children being placed in foster care.

19 (2) The average length of time children remain in
20 grandfamilies.

21 (3) The reasons children are placed in the care of
22 grandparents and great-grandparents.

23 (4) The impact parental drug or alcohol abuse has on
24 children being raised in grandfamilies.

25 (5) The economic impact raising children has on
26 grandfamilies, including how it affects the earning ability
27 and retirement savings of grandparents.

28 (6) The impact of grandfamilies on the Commonwealth's
29 foster care system, including how much grandfamilies save the
30 Commonwealth in foster care costs.

1 (7) Emotional, social and legal challenges facing
2 grandfamilies.

3 (8) The behavioral and emotional outcomes of children
4 placed with grandparents or great-grandparents.

5 (9) The number of parents successfully reunited with
6 their children after placement with grandparents or great-
7 grandparents as compared with the number of parents
8 successfully reunited with their children after placement
9 with foster families;

10 and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the report include recommendations on how to
12 connect grandfamilies with services and information, including
13 the creation of a Statewide website within an appropriate State
14 agency; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission develop
16 the report in collaboration with all of the following:

17 (1) THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES OF THE <--
18 COMMONWEALTH.

19 (2) THE DEPARTMENT OF AGING OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

20 ~~(1)~~ (3) Residents who have raised their grandchildren or <--
21 other minor relatives.

22 ~~(2)~~ (4) Residents who have been raised by their <--
23 grandparents.

24 ~~(3)~~ (5) The NEPA Intergenerational Coalition. <--

25 ~~(4)~~ (6) A family law expert; <--

26 and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the commission report its findings and
28 recommendations, including proposed legislation and programs, to
29 the General Assembly within one year of the adoption of this
30 resolution.