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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 439 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY SCHLOSSBERG, DeLUCA, LONGIETTI, MADDEN, PASHINSKI  
AND READSHAW, JULY 24, 2017

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND INDUSTRY, JULY 24, 2017

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A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to  
2 conduct a comprehensive study to determine and report on the  
3 potential impact of the ongoing retail collapse and the  
4 resultant closing of brick-and-mortar retail stores, malls  
5 and shopping centers on the work force and economy of this  
6 Commonwealth.

7 WHEREAS, Technological change impelled by new infrastructure  
8 and favorable tax policies have created a radical shift in the  
9 way Americans shop, resulting in an escalating number of  
10 displaced workers as the number of consumers shopping online  
11 increases and physical retail locations close; and

12 WHEREAS, Further shifts in consumer spending pose additional  
13 challenges to brick-and-mortar retail stores due to rising  
14 inflation and decreasing wage growth; and

15 WHEREAS, The failure of suburban malls and the shuttering of  
16 physical retail stores is projected to have an impact on the  
17 modern work force similar to that of the 20th-century decline of  
18 urban retail seen in American downtowns; and

19 WHEREAS, Statistics released by the United States Department  
20 of Labor reflect that the number of retail jobs have continued

1 to decline, losing nearly 100,000 workers since October 2016 and  
2 nearly 30,000 in March 2017 alone; and

3 WHEREAS, Low-skilled workers are facing the greatest impact  
4 due to the constant loss of jobs in the retail sector; and

5 WHEREAS, Alternative ways to reuse and repurpose vacated  
6 retail spaces must be identified to create jobs and revitalize  
7 communities; and

8 WHEREAS, Government plays a vital role in understanding the  
9 potential impact of the challenges faced as a result of the  
10 closing of retail stores and must work to staunch the current  
11 displacement of workers and the negative economic effects on the  
12 surrounding communities; therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
14 conduct a comprehensive study of the effects of the shuttering  
15 of physical retail locations on the work force and economy of  
16 this Commonwealth, with specific emphasis on retention of  
17 workers and the potential alteration of tax policies; and be it  
18 further

19 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
20 review the challenges and opportunities presented by the ongoing  
21 downfall of suburban retail stores, focusing on the economic  
22 impact of its decline, needs related to unemployment and  
23 displacement in the work force and the development of plans to  
24 revitalize vacated retail space; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
26 submit a report of its findings to the House of Representatives  
27 by December 31, 2018.