

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 447 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY MURT, KINSEY, BAKER, BIZZARRO, R. BROWN, V. BROWN,
CALTAGIRONE, D. COSTA, DIGIROLAMO, DONATUCCI, LONGIETTI,
MATZIE, McNEILL, MILLARD, NEILSON, PICKETT, READSHAW, ROEBUCK
AND SCHWEYER, AUGUST 15, 2017

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
AUGUST 15, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of October 2017 as "Lifesharing Awareness
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Approximately 1,600 individuals with intellectual
4 disabilities receive lifesharing services in this Commonwealth
5 each year; and

6 WHEREAS, Lifesharing involves having an individual with an
7 intellectual disability share his or her life with supportive
8 people who form a caring household; and

9 WHEREAS, Lifesharing may happen in a provider's home or the
10 home of the individual with an intellectual disability, and
11 lifesharing may be offered by a couple, a single person or a
12 family; and

13 WHEREAS, The purpose of lifesharing is to enrich the lives of
14 individuals with intellectual disabilities by matching them with
15 an individual or a family who has chosen to open their home and
16 hearts; and

1 WHEREAS, Lifesharing is a mutual experience, not a
2 hierarchical one; and

3 WHEREAS, Lifesharing provides a place to live for individuals
4 with intellectual disabilities in which they can develop close
5 and committed personal relationships; and

6 WHEREAS, Lifesharing, formerly known as Family Living, has
7 been provided in this Commonwealth for more than 30 years; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1982, a pilot lifesharing program officially
9 began with Threshold Rehabilitation Services, Inc., an agency
10 located in Reading; and

11 WHEREAS, Lifesharing became a viable living arrangement for
12 individuals with intellectual disabilities; and

13 WHEREAS, By 1997, lifesharing was available in every county
14 in this Commonwealth; and

15 WHEREAS, Individuals with intellectual disabilities who live
16 with foster parents through children and youth services are able
17 to continue living in those homes through lifesharing when they
18 reach 21 years of age in order to provide consistency and
19 continuity of care; and

20 WHEREAS, Data comparison from a Statewide independent
21 monitoring of residential services from 2007 through 2010
22 indicates that lifesharing participants consistently had the
23 highest level of consumer satisfaction with where they live; and

24 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has a significant waiting list for
25 individuals with intellectual disabilities requesting
26 residential services due to the aging of caregivers and an aging
27 population in need of support; and

28 WHEREAS, Current models of support, such as intermediate care
29 facilities similar to institutions and home-based and community-
30 based services, require 24-hour staffing and may be

1 unsustainable; and

2 WHEREAS, Lifesharing costs less than both of these models
3 while providing more individualized support; and

4 WHEREAS, An average lifesharing budget is approximately
5 \$45,000 per year compared to a community or group home budget of
6 approximately \$150,000 per year; and

7 WHEREAS, According to the United States Census Bureau's
8 statistics in 2005, by the year 2030, the number of caregivers
9 available to care for nearly 75 million individuals 65 years of
10 age or older will be vastly insufficient; and

11 WHEREAS, Our work force cannot keep pace with the demand:
12 there will not be enough workers to care for the baby boomers;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Lifesharing may be an option for many of these
15 individuals; and

16 WHEREAS, Lifesharing affords individuals with intellectual
17 disabilities opportunities for increased community
18 participation, potential for long-term relationships and the
19 ability to assume new social roles; and

20 WHEREAS, Lifesharing providers are advocates, friends and
21 mentors who share their homes with individuals with intellectual
22 disabilities and help them engage in community life, learn new
23 skills and make friends and good life choices that will lead to
24 satisfying, safe and productive lives; and

25 WHEREAS, It is important to educate the public about
26 lifesharing and to ensure that individuals with intellectual
27 disabilities are provided with information so that they may
28 choose lifesharing as a viable living arrangement; therefore be
29 it

30 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the

1 month of October 2017 as "Lifesharing Awareness Month" in
2 Pennsylvania.