
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 830 Session of 2018

INTRODUCED BY HEFFLEY, HENNESSEY, DUSH, SONNEY, NEILSON,
MACKENZIE, DiGIROLAMO, READSHAW, MILLARD, KAVULICH, WARD,
O'NEILL, BARBIN, CORBIN, SCHLEGEL CULVER, V. BROWN, KINSEY,
YOUNGBLOOD, MURT, LONGIETTI, HAHN, JOZWIAK, SAYLOR, EVERETT,
MARSICO, WATSON, KLUNK AND DRISCOLL, APRIL 16, 2018

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
APRIL 16, 2018

A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the 200th anniversary of the founding of the
2 Borough of Jim Thorpe, formerly known as Mauch Chunk.

3 WHEREAS, Mauch Chunk, now known as the Borough of Jim Thorpe,
4 is nestled in the beautiful Lehigh Gorge, surrounded by Mount
5 Pisgah, Bear Mountain and Flagstaff Mountain, along the wilds of
6 the Lehigh River; and

7 WHEREAS, Mauch Chunk was founded in 1818 by Josiah White and
8 Erskine Hazard with a lease and later purchase of coal lands
9 with a grant of authority from the Pennsylvania General Assembly
10 establishing the town; and

11 WHEREAS, The founders of Mauch Chunk turned their attention
12 to improving the navigation of the Lehigh River by means of a
13 system of bear trap locks, which shaped the course of the
14 Industrial Revolution in Pennsylvania and contributed to
15 innovation in transportation, manufacturing and the use of
16 natural resources; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1827, the switchback railway in the area was
2 built on an old wagon road to carry the coal from Summit Hill to
3 the Lehigh River and eventually carried tourists on what is said
4 to have been the first roller coaster; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1843, Carbon County was established from parts of
6 Northampton County and Monroe County, and Mauch Chunk was named
7 the county seat; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1846, Mauch Chunk was incorporated as a borough;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, The Delaware, Lehigh, Schuylkill and Susquehanna
11 Railroad, later named the Lehigh Valley Railroad, was authorized
12 by the Pennsylvania General Assembly to run from Mauch Chunk to
13 Easton; and

14 WHEREAS, As the reach of the Lehigh Valley Railroad grew
15 during the golden age of the Industrial Revolution, it carried
16 not only coal but travelers from Philadelphia and New York to
17 Mauch Chunk, whose beauty drew them to the area; and

18 WHEREAS, Mauch Chunk became a major tourist destination,
19 second only to Niagara Falls; and

20 WHEREAS, Mauch Chunk was home to millionaire philanthropist
21 Asa Packer, builder of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, a member of
22 the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, a member of the
23 United States House of Representatives and founder of Lehigh
24 University; and

25 WHEREAS, Asa Packer was also instrumental in the development
26 of the architectural landscape of Mauch Chunk, the mansions on
27 Packer Hill, Stone Row on historic Race Street and St. Mark's
28 Episcopal Church; and

29 WHEREAS, Mauch Chunk was central to the labor movement for
30 mine workers as the location of one of the trials of members of

1 the Molly Maguires, an Irish immigrant labor organization, and
2 the location of subsequent hangings at the Carbon County Jail in
3 1877; and

4 WHEREAS, As industry grew, declined and evolved, so did Mauch
5 Chunk, once a supply center and shipping point for many large
6 collieries and railroad shops; and

7 WHEREAS, Mauch Chunk was home to other industries, including
8 silk mills, tanneries and dress and purse factories; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1954, Mauch Chunk and East Mauch Chunk voted to
10 merge and rename itself Jim Thorpe after the legendary Olympic
11 athlete, who is now laid to rest there; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1977, the Old Mauch Chunk Historic District,
13 comprised of Broadway and Race Streets, was listed on the
14 National Register of Historic Places; and

15 WHEREAS, Four years later in 1981, the Borough of Jim Thorpe
16 was the first to take advantage of the State's Main Street
17 downtown revitalization program, which helped to restore
18 historically significant Victorian-era buildings on Broadway
19 Street; and

20 WHEREAS, Today, the beauty of the past, both natural and
21 architectural, continue to sustain the Borough of Jim Thorpe
22 with a strong and growing tourism industry; and

23 WHEREAS, The Borough of Jim Thorpe is consistently ranked on
24 national media "best" lists and recognized among the most fun,
25 most beautiful, most romantic and best adventure towns to visit;
26 and

27 WHEREAS, The Borough of Jim Thorpe has been called the
28 "Switzerland of America" due to its picturesque and breathtaking
29 scenery, location in the mountains and architecture; and

30 WHEREAS, The Borough of Jim Thorpe serves as the county seat

1 of Carbon County; and

2 WHEREAS, The Borough of Jim Thorpe is teeming with history,
3 romance and family fun, where visitors can enjoy the walkable
4 downtown accommodations, shops, restaurants, pubs, wine-tasting,
5 museums, train rides and live entertainment, along with all of
6 the outdoor adventure which one would expect to find in the
7 Pocono Mountains; and

8 WHEREAS, The Jim Thorpe Tourism Agency, in cooperation with
9 the Mauch Chunk Museum and Cultural Center, is celebrating the
10 history of the town and its people with reunions, special
11 events, tours and exhibits, a bicentennial Victorian ball, an
12 Old Home Week picnic, fireworks and oral history and
13 genealogical projects; therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commemorate the
15 200th anniversary of the founding of the Borough of Jim Thorpe,
16 formerly known as Mauch Chunk.