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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 1057 Session of  
2018

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INTRODUCED BY KAUFER, COOK, PICKETT, READSHAW, MILLARD, NEILSON,  
RADER AND DALEY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2018

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, SEPTEMBER 17, 2018

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A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to  
2 conduct a study for the potential of a hyperloop system that  
3 would run from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Philadelphia,  
4 Pennsylvania, with a stop in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as  
5 well as a northeast extension that would operate between  
6 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and Wilkes-Barre/Scranton,  
7 Pennsylvania.

8 WHEREAS, People have been dreaming of high-speed travel in  
9 tubes, including in vacuum, for more than a century; and

10 WHEREAS, Elon Musk, the CEO of the aerospace firm SpaceX, as  
11 well as Tesla, first described his idea for the futuristic  
12 transportation system in August 2013; and

13 WHEREAS, The concept of a hyperloop seemed hypothetical at  
14 the time, but, a handful of states and firms are currently  
15 competing to develop the necessary technologies and to study the  
16 feasibility of this system; and

17 WHEREAS, While it is understood that many engineering and  
18 regulatory hurdles must be addressed before the technology is  
19 ready for paying customers, the Commonwealth cannot stand idly  
20 by as surrounding states put resources toward making this

1 hypothetical concept a reality; and

2 WHEREAS, In 2018, transportation agencies in the Columbus,  
3 Ohio, region and in Illinois announced they would cosponsor a  
4 \$1.2 million study of a hyperloop connecting Columbus, Ohio, to  
5 Chicago, Illinois, thus cutting the 350-mile journey to just 30  
6 minutes; and

7 WHEREAS, The hyperloop would also connect Columbus, Ohio, to  
8 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and

9 WHEREAS, It is the fourth public study of the transportation  
10 mode to be recently undertaken; and

11 WHEREAS, In 2017, Elon Musk, founder of The Boring Company,  
12 announced that his company received verbal government approval  
13 to build a hyperloop connecting New York City, New York, to  
14 Washington, DC, with a projected travel time of 29 minutes and  
15 planned stops in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Baltimore,  
16 Maryland; and

17 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth has a rich history in regards to  
18 transportation; and

19 WHEREAS, In 1791, the General Assembly approved a Statewide  
20 transportation plan, and one year later created the Philadelphia  
21 and Lancaster Turnpike Road Company; and

22 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Turnpike officially entered service  
23 in 1940 as the first of its kind, spanning just 160 miles from  
24 Carlisle, Pennsylvania, to Irwin, Pennsylvania; and

25 WHEREAS, In 2018, the Pennsylvania Turnpike spans 552 miles,  
26 serves an average of 550,000 motorists a day traveling a total  
27 of 5.7 billion miles annually; and

28 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Railroad also played a significant  
29 role in the development of this Commonwealth; and

30 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Railroad was established and

1 headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1846, and was  
2 the largest railroad by traffic and revenue in the United States  
3 for the first half of the 20th century; and

4 WHEREAS, At one time, the Pennsylvania Railroad was the  
5 largest publicly traded corporation in the world, with a budget  
6 larger than that of the United States Government and a workforce  
7 of about 250,000 individuals; and

8 WHEREAS, There has not been a major new form of  
9 transportation in 100 years, especially one that is ultrafast,  
10 on demand, direct, emission-free, energy-efficient and quiet,  
11 and has a smaller footprint than other high-speed transportation  
12 modes; and

13 WHEREAS, A growing global economy requires faster, cheaper,  
14 safer and more efficient transportation methods which tend to be  
15 more of a mix of expensive, slow and environmentally harmful;  
16 and

17 WHEREAS, These emergent transportation systems need to be  
18 studied to fully understand the capabilities and feasibility of  
19 each; and

20 WHEREAS, Hyperloop transportation has the capability to move  
21 freight and people quickly, safely, on demand and direct from  
22 origin to destination at two to three times faster than high-  
23 speed rail and magnetic levitation trains and 10 to 15 times  
24 faster than traditional rail via electric propulsion through a  
25 low pressure tube; and

26 WHEREAS, The hyperloop vehicle floats above the track using  
27 magnetic levitation and glides for long distances due to ultra-  
28 low aerodynamic drag; and

29 WHEREAS, Pods accelerate until they reach a speed where they  
30 levitate, like a boat moving along the water; and

1       WHEREAS, A series of vacuum pumps removes much of the tube's  
2 air, to the point where the atmosphere is similar to being  
3 200,000 feet above sea level; and

4       WHEREAS, While traditional trains are limited by friction,  
5 both against the air ahead and the ground beneath, hyperloop  
6 drastically reduces friction in both of these areas; and

7       WHEREAS, Companies such as Virgin Hyperloop One and Hyperloop  
8 Transportation Technologies have undertaken the challenge of  
9 turning a hyperloop into a reality; and

10       WHEREAS, The Commonwealth has an opportunity to further  
11 benefit from hyperloop technology by leveraging corporate and  
12 institutional talent and resources to participate in the  
13 research and development of the technology, and the supply chain  
14 needed to produce and construct hyperloop corridors; therefore  
15 be it

16       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize  
17 Pennsylvania's role as a leader in the field of transportation  
18 and direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to  
19 authorize to contract with an independent, third party which is  
20 currently involved in a similar study; and be it further

21       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the  
22 Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study for  
23 the potential of a hyperloop system that would run from  
24 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with a  
25 stop in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as well as a northeast  
26 extension that would operate between Harrisburg, Pennsylvania,  
27 and Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, Pennsylvania; and be it further

28       RESOLVED, That this contracted entity be a fully integrated  
29 professional and technical service firm positioned to design,  
30 build, finance and operate infrastructure assets around the

1 world for public and private sectors; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives authorize the  
3 Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to contract with an  
4 independent, third party, fully integrated professional and  
5 technical service firm that is currently involved in a similar  
6 study and is positioned to design, build, finance and operate  
7 infrastructure assets around the world for public and private  
8 sectors; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
10 or its contractor be authorized to assemble and subcontract with  
11 academic institutions in this Commonwealth that are  
12 acknowledged, recognized and capable leaders within the  
13 transportation industry; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the study examine the potential for a  
15 hyperloop system that would run from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania,  
16 to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with a stop in Harrisburg,  
17 Pennsylvania, as well as a northeast extension that would  
18 operate between Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and Wilkes-  
19 Barre/Scranton, Pennsylvania, while considering the geographical  
20 barriers to the most optimal route; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the study identify new economic and social  
22 opportunities for companies and citizens in this Commonwealth;  
23 and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the study develop findings and recommendations  
25 on the potential impact that a hyperloop system would have on  
26 the established rail and aviation systems throughout this  
27 Commonwealth; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
29 issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the House  
30 of Representatives within 18 months of the adoption of this

1 resolution.