
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 1083 Session of
2018

INTRODUCED BY NEILSON, HENNESSEY, READSHAW, BRIGGS, CHARLTON,
BIZZARRO, THOMAS, DONATUCCI, VITALI, KINSEY, BURNS, HILL-
EVANS, DIGIROLAMO, J. McNEILL, KAUFFMAN, CORBIN, MILLARD,
JAMES, STURLA, BARRAR, GODSHALL, YOUNGBLOOD, B. O'NEILL,
ROEBUCK, DRISCOLL, SOLOMON, CALTAGIRONE AND WATSON,
SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the life and legacy of Harold FitzGerald "Gerry"
2 Lenfest for his contributions to Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, From childhood, Harold FitzGerald "Gerry" Lenfest
4 was an entrepreneurial force who grew to be not only an astute
5 businessman but a guiding philanthropic force of Philadelphia's
6 educational, cultural and media landscape; and

7 WHEREAS, Born May 29, 1930, in Jacksonville, Florida, and
8 raised primarily on his family's farm in Hunterdon County, New
9 Jersey, Gerry Lenfest came from humble beginnings; and

10 WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest's naval architect father entered him
11 into Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania; and

12 WHEREAS, True to his industrious nature, Gerry Lenfest worked
13 as a roughneck in North Dakota, a farm hand and aboard a ship
14 that carried oil between Venezuela and Europe upon graduation
15 from Mercersburg Academy; and

1 WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest later attended and graduated from
2 Washington and Lee University with a degree in economics before
3 joining the Navy, where he rose to captain and served in the
4 Navy Reserve for 24 years; and

5 WHEREAS, While in the Navy Reserve, Gerry Lenfest attended
6 and graduated from Columbia Law School; and

7 WHEREAS, In 1965, Gerry Lenfest began his career in the
8 communications industry by serving as counsel for Walter
9 Annenberg and Triangle Publications, Inc., and later went on to
10 serve as editorial director, publisher and president of cable
11 for Seventeen Magazine; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1974, Gerry Lenfest started his first business,
13 Lenfest Communications when he bought two cable systems from
14 Annenberg; and

15 WHEREAS, After selling his company, Gerry Lenfest and his
16 wife, Marguerite, made the impactful decision to give their
17 entire fortune to charity; and

18 WHEREAS, By providing the single-largest donation to the
19 Museum of the American Revolution and encouraging others to
20 support the museum, Gerry Lenfest showed his dedication to
21 honoring both his fellow veterans, past and present, and the
22 history of our nation; and

23 WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest was also dedicated to preserving
24 Philadelphia's future by investing in the city's media
25 institutions; and

26 WHEREAS, Being a champion of free speech and the free press,
27 Gerry Lenfest purchased the Philadelphia Media Network (PMN),
28 publisher of Philly.com and the long-established, Pulitzer
29 prize-winning Inquirer and Daily News, with his friend and
30 business partner Lewis Katz; and

1 WHEREAS, Upon Lewis Katz's death, Gerry Lenfest donated PMN
2 to the Institute for Journalism in New Media, renamed the
3 Lenfest Institute for Journalism in 2016; and

4 WHEREAS, David Boardman, chair of the Lenfest Institute for
5 Journalism and dean of Temple University's Klein College of
6 Media and Communication, said "His vision of local journalism as
7 an essential public trust - as worthy of philanthropic and
8 community support as hospitals and libraries - has been
9 groundbreaking"; and

10 WHEREAS, Gerry and Marguerite Lenfest together gave more than
11 \$1.3 billion to 1,100 organizations through the Lenfest
12 Foundation and jointly accepted the Philadelphia Award in 2009
13 and the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy in 2017; and

14 WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest elevated Philadelphia's art community
15 by both supporting and serving as chairman of the board to the
16 Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Curtis Institute of Music;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Continuously committed to the advancement of his
19 fellow man, Gerry Lenfest entrusted his vision of excellence to
20 his partners, invested in his employees and supported
21 educational institutions such as Marguerite's alma mater, Wilson
22 College, and his alma maters, served as vice chairman of Temple
23 University's board of trustees and established the Lenfest
24 Scholarship Program for students from rural Pennsylvania; and

25 WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest was, as historian David McCullough
26 described, "A devoted Philadelphian if ever there was one. His
27 love of that city and its history, and his willingness to be not
28 only generous with his philanthropy but to work hard to attain a
29 worthy objective, is something we could all take a lesson from
30 on how to go about life"; and

1 WHEREAS, On Sunday, August 5, 2018, at the age of 88, Gerry
2 Lenfest passed away, survived by his wife, children, two
3 sisters, a brother and four grandchildren; and

4 WHEREAS, Gerry Lenfest's life-long contribution as a leader
5 and philanthropist are worthy of honor and recognition; and
6 therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor Harold
8 FitzGerald "Gerry" Lenfest for his contributions to
9 Pennsylvania.