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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 456 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY FARRY, SAMUELSON, MURT, DIGIROLAMO, BIZZARRO,  
SCHMITT, MILLARD, LONGIETTI, POLINCHOCK, YOUNGBLOOD, KORTZ,  
HILL-EVANS, BURNS, SONNEY, READSHAW, MOUL, KIRKLAND, MADDEN,  
McCLINTON, CALTAGIRONE, SAYLOR, GAYDOS, DeLUCA, SAINATO,  
NEILSON, SCHLEGEL CULVER AND KIM, SEPTEMBER 3, 2019

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON AGING AND OLDER ADULT SERVICES,  
SEPTEMBER 3, 2019

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A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing September 23, 2019, as "National Falls Prevention  
2 Awareness Day" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, As of 2016, Pennsylvania has more than 2.2 million  
4 residents who are 65 years of age or older, which represents  
5 17.4% of Pennsylvania's total population, ranking Pennsylvania  
6 the fifth highest senior citizen population in the nation; and

7 WHEREAS, By the year 2040, it is estimated that more than 3.8  
8 million Pennsylvanians will be 65 years of age or older; and

9 WHEREAS, In the United States, falls are the leading cause of  
10 injury-related deaths among people who are 65 years of age or  
11 older; and

12 WHEREAS, Every six hours a senior citizen dies following a  
13 fall, and every week approximately 30 older Pennsylvanians die  
14 from fall-related injuries; and

15 WHEREAS, Every 11 minutes an older Pennsylvanian is  
16 hospitalized due to a fall-related injury; and

1       WHEREAS, In 2016, the number of Pennsylvanians 65 years of  
2 age or older who had fallen was approximately 2,385 per 100,000  
3 of the population; and

4       WHEREAS, In 2017, the costs for fall-related hospitalizations  
5 in Pennsylvania among people 65 years of age or older totaled  
6 more than \$3.37 billion, with an average cost for a fall-related  
7 hospitalization being \$61,211; and

8       WHEREAS, Falls are the most common cause of injuries,  
9 including hip fractures and head traumas, for older adults and  
10 can increase the risk of early death; and

11       WHEREAS, One out of four people who are 65 years of age or  
12 older falls at least once a year, with most falls occurring in  
13 his or her home while performing regular daily activities; and

14       WHEREAS, Falls are a threat to the health and independence of  
15 older adults and can significantly limit their ability to remain  
16 self-sufficient; and

17       WHEREAS, Falls are health risks that are largely preventable,  
18 and decreasing the incidence of falls will improve the  
19 socialization and function of older adults who have previously  
20 fallen and fear falling again; and

21       WHEREAS, The Department of Aging's evidence-based programs,  
22 Healthy Steps for Older Adults, has reduced medical costs by an  
23 average of \$840 for each participant and Healthy Steps in Motion  
24 has reduced fall incidents by approximately 28%; and

25       WHEREAS, Research shows that the evidence-based program A  
26 Matter of Balance, promoted by the Department of Health, has  
27 reduced medical costs by nearly \$1,000 a year for each  
28 participant; and

29       WHEREAS, The United States Preventive Services Task Force  
30 recommends exercise or physical therapy and vitamin D

1 supplementation to prevent falls in community-dwelling adults 65  
2 years of age or older who are at increased risk for falls; and

3 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Health and Human  
4 Services recommends that older adults get at least 150 minutes  
5 of moderate-intensity, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity,  
6 aerobic physical activity per week and engage in muscle-  
7 strengthening activities twice per week; and

8 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Health and Human  
9 Services recommends that older adults at risk of falling due to  
10 a recent fall or who have difficulty walking engage in balance-  
11 training activities three or more days per week; and

12 WHEREAS, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services  
13 requires Medicare recipients to receive a health care risk  
14 assessment during their annual wellness visit which includes  
15 fall risk and, if needed, be referred to counseling on falls  
16 prevention; and

17 WHEREAS, As the chance of falling increases with age, there  
18 is likely to be a higher rate of fall-related hospitalizations  
19 as this Commonwealth's aging population grows; therefore be it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize  
21 September 23, 2019, as "National Falls Prevention Awareness Day"  
22 in Pennsylvania.