
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 664 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY DERMODY, SCHLOSSBERG, DALEY, FRANKEL, SHUSTERMAN,
BIZZARRO, MALAGARI, HARRIS, MURT, HILL-EVANS, HOHENSTEIN,
LONGIETTI, RABB, KENYATTA, KINSEY, McCLINTON, CALTAGIRONE,
READSHAW, BURNS, RAVENSTAHL, VITALI, SAMUELSON, ISAACSON,
ZABEL, INNAMORATO, FREEMAN, A. DAVIS, ULLMAN, DONATUCCI,
McNEILL, CIRESI, T. DAVIS, MILLARD, SCHWEYER, BRADFORD,
GALLOWAY, DeLUCA, O'MARA, DEASY, SAINATO, GOODMAN, HOWARD,
SOLOMON, NEILSON, YOUNGBLOOD, PASHINSKI, D. MILLER AND
HANBIDGE, JANUARY 15, 2020

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, JANUARY 15, 2020

A RESOLUTION

1 Supporting a complete and accurate 2020 census count.

2 WHEREAS, Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution of the
3 United States mandates that every person in the United States be
4 counted every 10 years, including adults, children, citizens,
5 immigrants or visitors; and

6 WHEREAS, Since 1790, the United States has conducted the
7 constitutionally mandated decennial census of its population;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, The primary purpose of the decennial census is to
10 secure an official count of people living in communities
11 nationwide, in order to determine the population of the United
12 States; and

13 WHEREAS, The official census count is used to determine the
14 number of seats that each state has in the United States House

1 of Representatives; and

2 WHEREAS, The census is also used by the Federal Government to
3 distribute billions of Federal funds to states and local
4 communities; and

5 WHEREAS, A complete and accurate census count determines the
6 amount of Federal funding each state receives, which is vital to
7 the financial stability of the Commonwealth; and

8 WHEREAS, This Federal funding provides our Commonwealth with
9 money for our schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other
10 infrastructure projects and vital programs, including Medicaid,
11 Medicare, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the
12 Children's Health Insurance Program and the Special Supplemental
13 Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children; and

14 WHEREAS, Based on census data, Pennsylvania receives
15 approximately \$26.8 billion annually in Federal funds, which
16 represents the fifth largest allocation in the nation and
17 equates to \$2,093 per person; and

18 WHEREAS, The decennial census also serves as an essential
19 policy tool for state government, county and local governments,
20 and businesses and industries; and

21 WHEREAS, From education and job creation, to housing and
22 emergency preparedness, data gathered from the census affects
23 nearly every aspect of our constituents' lives and our
24 communities, as it provides reliable and complete information
25 for research, decisionmaking and planning for both the public
26 and private sectors; and

27 WHEREAS, Businesses and industries use census data to develop
28 potential markets and decide where to locate or relocate, which
29 enhances economic development and creates jobs; and

30 WHEREAS, When Pennsylvania residents are not fully counted in

1 the census, the result is a significant loss of Federal funding
2 for vital programs; and

3 WHEREAS, The total estimated loss in Federal funds for
4 Pennsylvania based on the number of residents missed in the 2010
5 census was approximately \$222 million, the second highest loss
6 in the country; and

7 WHEREAS, Currently, Pennsylvania has 18 congressional
8 districts, the lowest since 1920, and is at risk of losing an
9 additional one or two congressional seats, which could limit the
10 impact the Commonwealth has on Federal policymaking; and

11 WHEREAS, According to the United States Census Bureau, the
12 2020 decennial census is the first to be completed mostly
13 online; and

14 WHEREAS, Under the United States Census Bureau's plan, 80% of
15 households are given the opportunity to submit their responses
16 via the Internet; and

17 WHEREAS, The United States Census Bureau estimates that 45%
18 of the households that receive the online census will complete
19 the census questionnaire online; and

20 WHEREAS, The United States Census Bureau is mailing the
21 traditional paper questionnaires to the remaining 20% of
22 households, specifically to households with little or no
23 Internet access and with older adults; and

24 WHEREAS, The move to an online census could result in an
25 undercount in both rural and urban communities across this
26 Commonwealth that do not have access to broadband or Internet
27 service or have difficulty accessing the Internet; and

28 WHEREAS, To achieve a complete and accurate census count in
29 this Commonwealth, the Governor established the Census 2020
30 Complete Count Commission tasked with coordinating the

1 Commonwealth's preparation for the census and recommending
2 policies focused on reaching hard-to-count populations and hard-
3 to-enumerate areas; and

4 WHEREAS, Based on previous participation rates, the
5 Commonwealth must make a concentrated and strategic effort to
6 reach hard-to-count populations in both rural and urban areas of
7 this Commonwealth to achieve a fair and full census count; and

8 WHEREAS, According to the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, the
9 2010 census response rate in Pennsylvania was 77% in rural
10 areas, which was identical to the 2000 response rate, and 78% in
11 urban areas, which was one percent below the 2000 response rate;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Rural counties in this Commonwealth may be at the
14 greatest risk of losing millions of dollars in Federal funding
15 that is designated specifically for rural areas, if their
16 populations are undercounted in 2020; and

17 WHEREAS, Too many Pennsylvania residents were not counted in
18 the previous decennial censuses and, as a result, Pennsylvania
19 lost two seats in the United States House of Representatives in
20 2000 and lost an additional seat in 2010; therefore be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives support a
22 complete and accurate 2020 census count; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
24 critical impact that a complete and accurate census count has on
25 this Commonwealth and the day-to-day lives of all
26 Pennsylvanians; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commit to making
28 every effort to ensure that all Pennsylvanians are counted; and
29 be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives strongly urge

1 county and local governments, businesses and industries,
2 colleges and universities, school entities and the media to
3 undertake activities to promote the importance of the census and
4 encourage all Pennsylvanians to participate in the 2020 census;
5 and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives encourage all
7 residents of this Commonwealth to educate themselves and their
8 families, friends and neighbors on the importance of a complete
9 and accurate census count and to submit their household's census
10 questionnaire by April 1, 2020, to ensure that all
11 Pennsylvanians are counted.