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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 977 Session of  
2020

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INTRODUCED BY McCLINTON, SCHLOSSBERG, T. DAVIS, HILL-EVANS,  
FREEMAN, DRISCOLL, ROZZI, ZABEL, HOWARD, SANCHEZ, KINSEY,  
MADDEN, TOOHIL, McNEILL, KIM, MALAGARI, GREEN, READSHAW,  
KORTZ, YOUNGBLOOD AND DEASY, AUGUST 28, 2020

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
AUGUST 28, 2020

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of September 2020 as "Choose Love and  
2 Compassion Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, We live in turbulent times in Pennsylvania and  
4 across the nation; and

5 WHEREAS, Gun violence continues to plague our streets; and

6 WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the loss of  
7 roughly 170,000 of our family members, friends and neighbors  
8 nationwide and has sickened millions more - with no end in  
9 sight; and

10 WHEREAS, The tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor  
11 and countless other persons of color have caused this country  
12 and the entire world to hold a mirror up to ourselves, determine  
13 who we are as a society and what we want for our children and  
14 demand racial justice once and for all; and

15 WHEREAS, Tensions in our communities are at a breaking point;  
16 and

1       WHEREAS, This is a critical moment for our nation and our  
2 Commonwealth; and

3       WHEREAS, Now is the moment to teach our young men and women  
4 the importance of love and compassion in daily life; and

5       WHEREAS, In Pennsylvania, schools may establish and implement  
6 a character education program to cover such topics as  
7 trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness and caring -  
8 traits that are needed for success in life; and

9       WHEREAS, The Office of Safe Schools and the Pennsylvania  
10 Commission on Crime and Delinquency have grant programs  
11 available to school entities to address safety and security,  
12 including the establishment of conflict resolution programs; and

13       WHEREAS, Elected officials should be encouraging schools to  
14 institute programs on the importance of character and evidence-  
15 based conflict resolution plans to teach the common values of  
16 love, honesty, empathy and understanding in our communities; and

17       WHEREAS, By stressing these important values, we can help  
18 stem the tide of violence in our schools and on our streets; and

19       WHEREAS, There are many different model programs that teach  
20 character development and conflict resolution in our schools,  
21 workplaces and communities; and

22       WHEREAS, The Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement teaches  
23 educators and their students how to choose love in any  
24 circumstance and is built upon a simple formula: courage, plus  
25 gratitude, plus forgiveness, plus compassion in action equals  
26 "Choosing Love"; and

27       WHEREAS, Scarlett Lewis started this movement after her young  
28 son was brutally murdered at Sandy Hook Elementary School in  
29 Newtown, Connecticut in 2012; and

30       WHEREAS, "Choose Love" is a community-led movement offering

1 free social and emotional learning to help people thoughtfully  
2 respond to any situation or circumstance and teach children how  
3 to manage their emotions, feel connected and have healthy  
4 relationships; and

5 WHEREAS, Originally geared toward schools, "Choose Love" has  
6 created extension programs to teach and help reinforce character  
7 values outside of school, including on athletic teams, at home  
8 and throughout communities; and

9 WHEREAS, "Teaching Tolerance" provides free resources to  
10 educators that emphasize social justice and antibias in schools;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, "Character Counts!" is a comprehensive student  
13 development program embracing academic, social and emotional  
14 skills and traits, including the development of core ethical  
15 traits - trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness,  
16 caring and citizenship; and

17 WHEREAS, Now more than ever, these programs should be  
18 replicated in schools, workplaces and communities throughout  
19 this Commonwealth; and

20 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives should be exploring all  
21 options to help stem the tide of violence in schools and  
22 communities throughout this Commonwealth, while at the same time  
23 preparing our young men and women for success later in life;  
24 therefore be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the  
26 month of September 2020 as "Choose Love and Compassion Month" in  
27 Pennsylvania to encourage the inclusion of character  
28 development, ethics and conflict resolution programs in our  
29 schools, workplaces and communities.