
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 867 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY CUTLER, MAY 12, 2020

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, MAY 12, 2020

A RESOLUTION

1 Appointing a special committee to, in regard to the COVID-19
2 public health emergency, monitor and track the response of
3 the Commonwealth, identify issues, develop a recovery plan
4 and submit a report.

5 WHEREAS, A novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, entered the
6 United States in late January 2020 and has spread throughout the
7 states, including this Commonwealth; and

8 WHEREAS, On March 6, 2020, the Governor declared a disaster
9 emergency, citing a threat of imminent disaster that is of such
10 a magnitude and severity as to necessitate extraordinary
11 measures to protect the health, safety and life of this
12 Commonwealth's citizens; and

13 WHEREAS, The impact of COVID-19, including all the necessary
14 measures taken to mitigate the spread of the disease, has
15 severely disrupted the Commonwealth and its subdivisions and is
16 producing both short-term and long-term negative economic as
17 well as personal consequences; and

18 WHEREAS, In order to effectively manage the current disaster,
19 all branches of the Commonwealth's government must work

1 cooperatively to identify immediate and urgent issues, provide a
2 structure to catalog the Commonwealth's response to the disaster
3 emergency and create a forum to receive testimony, information
4 and recommendations from individuals, businesses and the health
5 care industry; and

6 WHEREAS, In addition to managing the existing public health
7 challenges of COVID-19, the Commonwealth will need a recovery
8 plan once the emergency subsides to address the innumerable
9 issues resulting from the disaster emergency, including the
10 impact to the economy; and

11 WHEREAS, The magnitude of the disaster necessitates
12 legislative oversight and participation, which may be
13 effectuated through the establishment of a special committee;
14 therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That the Speaker of the House of Representatives
16 appoint a special committee to do all of the following:

17 (1) Monitor and track the response by the Commonwealth
18 to the COVID-19 public health emergency, including all
19 actions taken under the authority of the declaration of
20 disaster emergency relating to the novel coronavirus known as
21 COVID-19.

22 (2) Identify issues of immediate public importance
23 relating to the COVID-19 public health emergency that require
24 executive, legislative or judicial action and make
25 recommendations to the proper branch in a timely fashion. The
26 committee shall report on such issues to the House of
27 Representatives not less than once per week.

28 (3) Develop and submit a recovery plan to the executive
29 branch, legislative branch and judicial branch of the
30 Commonwealth's government no later than October 15, 2020. The

1 recovery plan shall include a documented, structured approach
2 that describes how the Commonwealth and its political
3 subdivisions can expeditiously resume mission-critical
4 functions, including the restoration of housing,
5 transportation, education and other public services and
6 economic activity to levels equal to or better than their
7 predisaster states through a series of short-term,
8 intermediate and long-term strategies and actions. The
9 recovery plan may be based in part or in whole on the Federal
10 Emergency Management Agency's resources for recovery planning
11 and managing recovery.

12 (4) Make a final report no later than November 25, 2020,
13 documenting all of the following:

14 (i) Actions taken by executive agencies under the
15 declaration of disaster emergency relating to the novel
16 coronavirus known as COVID-19.

17 (ii) Legislative enactments made in response to the
18 COVID-19 public health emergency.

19 (iii) Judicial orders made in response to the COVID-
20 19 public health emergency.

21 (iv) A summary of actions undertaken by local
22 governments in response to the COVID-19 public health
23 emergency;

24 and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Speaker of the House of Representatives
26 appoint four members and the Minority Leader of the House of
27 Representatives appoint three members; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the Speaker of the House of Representatives
29 appoint the chair and secretary of the committee; and be it
30 further

1 RESOLVED, That the committee may hold hearings, take
2 testimony and make its investigations at the places the
3 committee deems necessary in this Commonwealth; and be it
4 further

5 RESOLVED, That the committee may issue subpoenas under the
6 hand and seal of its chair commanding any person to appear
7 before the committee and to answer questions touching matters
8 properly being inquired into by the committee and to produce
9 books, papers, records and documents as the committee deems
10 necessary; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That subpoenas may be served upon any person and
12 have the same effect as subpoenas issued out of the courts of
13 this Commonwealth and that a person that willfully neglects or
14 refuses to testify before the committee or to produce books,
15 papers, records or documents be subject to the penalties
16 provided by the laws of this Commonwealth; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That each member of the committee shall have the
18 power to administer oaths and affirmations to witnesses
19 appearing before the committee; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the committee report to the House of
21 Representatives on its activities, findings and recommendations
22 by November 19, 2020; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the expenses incurred by the committee in
24 carrying out its responsibilities, including per diem and travel
25 expenses incurred by members and regular staff, stenographic
26 charges and other incidental expenses be paid from appropriate
27 accounts under the control of the Chief Clerk and be in addition
28 to any other amount authorized for expenses for contractors,
29 consultants and staff; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That, by November 25, 2020, the chair cause a

1 record of all expenses incurred by the committee or its members
2 which are payable at Commonwealth expense to be filed with the
3 Chief Clerk.