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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 54 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY HUGHES, DINNIMAN, FARNESE, BOSCOLA, BLAKE,  
SANTARSIERO, FONTANA, BREWSTER, SABATINA, SCHWANK, BAKER,  
STREET, HAYWOOD, K. WARD, COSTA AND YUDICHAK, MARCH 25, 2019

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INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, MARCH 25, 2019

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the week of March 25 through 29, 2019, as "Higher  
2 Education Affordability Week" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Recently the Institute for Higher Education Policy  
4 (IHEP) found that 70% of American colleges are unaffordable for  
5 lower-income and middle-income students who are unwilling or  
6 unable to take out student loans; and

7 WHEREAS, There are almost 1,500 colleges and universities  
8 nationwide where the majority of students who borrowed using  
9 Federal loans are making interest-only payments on their loans  
10 or no payments at all; and

11 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania ranks the highest in average student  
12 debt by state with \$36,193, according to LendEDU; and

13 WHEREAS, One of the most important steps we can take is to  
14 reduce or eliminate student debt; and

15 WHEREAS, Prospective students, families and taxpayers alike  
16 are increasingly concerned about the rising cost of higher  
17 education in this Commonwealth; and

1       WHEREAS, In the past 10 years, college prices rose 45%, while  
2 incomes have decreased by 7%, according to the Lumina  
3 Foundation; and

4       WHEREAS, Pennsylvania's public officials understand the  
5 importance of saving for higher education and the difficulties  
6 of saving that students and parents face; and

7       WHEREAS, Knowledge of the availability of student financial  
8 aid to help finance a postsecondary education has been shown to  
9 vary across demographic groupings; and

10       WHEREAS, The TAP 529 and the Keystone Scholars program can  
11 provide different methods of saving for higher education; and

12       WHEREAS, Fluctuating appropriations and enrollment levels in  
13 combination with increasing administrative costs have caused  
14 unprecedented fiscal pressure for colleges and universities; and

15       WHEREAS, Colleges and universities are significant economic  
16 enterprises contributing to the cultural, educational and  
17 financial success and stability of the regions in which they are  
18 located; and

19       WHEREAS, Higher education is a critical mechanism for  
20 socioeconomic advancement and economic mobility in our society;  
21 and

22       WHEREAS, All residents of this Commonwealth benefit from the  
23 skills and education gained by students at our institutions of  
24 higher education; and

25       WHEREAS, The future of this Commonwealth depends in part on  
26 the ability of public and private institutions of higher  
27 education to continue to fulfill their missions; therefore be it

28       RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the week of March 25  
29 through 29, 2019, as "Higher Education Affordability Week" in  
30 Pennsylvania to further educate Commonwealth residents on

1 financing the costs of postsecondary education.