

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 13 Session of 2021

INTRODUCED BY D. MILLER, PISCIOTTANO, GALLOWAY, KINSEY, ZABEL, HILL-EVANS, DELLOSO, A. DAVIS, HOHENSTEIN, DRISCOLL AND SCHLOSSBERG, JANUARY 11, 2021

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND INDUSTRY, JANUARY 11, 2021

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a
 2 comprehensive study on workforce development, economic and
 3 workforce transition and worker displacement and issue a
 4 report of its findings and recommendations to the House of
 5 Representatives.

6 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth has seen and borne the scars of
 7 fast-changing and large-scale economic transitions, most
 8 recently in the collapse of the steel industry in the 1980s; and

9 WHEREAS, The collapse of the steel industry ended tens of
 10 thousands of jobs, destroyed tax bases, shrank school
 11 enrollments, forced thousands of families to relocate, shut
 12 doors of countless businesses and, in some areas, led to a large
 13 increase of State resources to prop up school districts or
 14 develop larger human services networks to support people and
 15 families in need; and

16 WHEREAS, In an age of globalization and often imbalanced
 17 international trade deals, the coming economic wave of
 18 automation, combined with possible changes in green energy
 19 production and manufacturing, could seismically alter how

1 Pennsylvania workers, families, businesses and tax bases
2 operate, with an even quicker transition and deeper impact
3 likely to occur in the future; and

4 WHEREAS, It is imperative that Pennsylvania learn from its
5 past and strategically plan for its future by analyzing the
6 capability, fluidity and resources in its related State
7 departments and agencies as to whether they can appropriately
8 and effectively help navigate these challenges or whether a new
9 "Department of Economic and Workforce Transition" should be
10 created in order to better coordinate more seamlessly with
11 individuals, the business community, local governments and
12 needed support agencies to ease transition or minimize the
13 damages seen to occur in previous periods; and

14 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth must work with all industry
15 partners and stakeholders to develop bold and sound plans in
16 anticipation of movements in industry and workforce in order to
17 properly assist businesses, workers and communities to build and
18 sustain high-quality, well-paying jobs and thriving communities;
19 therefore be it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
21 State Government Commission to conduct a comprehensive study on
22 workforce development, economic and workforce transition and
23 worker displacement and issue a report of its findings and
24 recommendations to the House of Representatives; and be it
25 further

26 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission:

27 (1) conduct a comprehensive review and study of all
28 State departments, programs, offices, bureaus, committees and
29 councils, and specifically those under the Department of
30 Labor and Industry, such as the Rapid Response program, that

1 deal with workforce development, economic and workforce
2 transition and worker displacement, to determine the State's
3 capability and effectiveness as currently constituted in
4 assisting workers, families, communities and businesses in
5 navigating transitions in the current climate and over the
6 next 25 years in consideration of the forecasted changes in
7 this Commonwealth's economic needs;

8 (2) conduct a comprehensive review and study of data in
9 the possession of the Department of Human Services and the
10 Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs to understand what,
11 if any, correlation exists between increases in need and
12 unemployment or economic insecurity;

13 (3) conduct a comprehensive review and study of data and
14 information in the possession of the Department of Education
15 in relation to the impact of unstable tax bases on school
16 budgeting and programming, and to what degree economic
17 insecurity may have an impact on student achievement; and

18 (4) identify and communicate with any other government
19 or nongovernmental entity deemed necessary to conduct its
20 study under this resolution;

21 and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission prepare
23 a report of its findings and recommendations that shall, at a
24 minimum:

25 (1) summarize the impact that the collapse of the steel
26 industry had on Pennsylvania workers, families, businesses
27 and communities and detail the subsequent job losses, social
28 service needs, impact on tax rolls and the effectiveness of
29 subsequent retraining programs or other related support
30 initiatives on those most directly impacted;

1 (2) detail Pennsylvania industry sectors most likely at
2 risk of job or wage erosion as a result of further
3 globalization, trade deals, automation and possible changes
4 in energy production or manufacturing;

5 (3) analyze how Pennsylvania's current education system
6 aligns with the predicted employment needs of the future and
7 provide information on the amount of workforce that may need
8 to be retrained due to market forces and regulations, with
9 particular focus on needs, programs or methodologies that are
10 designed to improve workforce participation in historically
11 disadvantaged communities;

12 (4) identify all State programs, offices, bureaus and
13 personnel that deal with economic and workforce transition
14 issues, including existing staffing and funding levels, and
15 their ability to communicate internally and externally to
16 address the needs of an individual, family, business or local
17 government in dealing with current and future economic and
18 workforce transition issues;

19 (5) compile, after consultation with related government
20 staff, industry stakeholders and related union
21 representatives, a list of recommended actions that the
22 Commonwealth should consider in providing support to
23 individuals, families, businesses and communities dealing
24 with economic and workforce transition issues over the next
25 25 years;

26 (6) analyze the potential need or benefit for realigning
27 related State departments and agencies into a single
28 "Department of Economic and Workforce Transition," or other
29 structure, in order to streamline and improve executive
30 action and performance and better maintain and grow

1 sustaining jobs for Pennsylvania families; and
2 (7) contain any information that the Joint State
3 Government Commission determines to be necessary;

4 and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission report
6 its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives
7 no later than one year after the adoption of this resolution.