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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 37 Session of  
2021

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INTRODUCED BY STURLA, ROZZI, D. WILLIAMS, FREEMAN, HILL-EVANS,  
McNEILL, KINSEY, SAMUELSON, HERRIN, SANCHEZ, DELLOSO,  
WEBSTER, DeLISSIO, CIRESI AND DEASY, MAY 17, 2021

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON RULES, MAY 17, 2021

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A RESOLUTION

1 Amending House Rule 50, further providing for public hearings.

2 RESOLVED, That Rule 50 be amended to read:

3 RULE 50

4 Public Hearings

5 Each standing committee, subcommittee or select committee to  
6 which a proposed bill, resolution or any matter is referred  
7 shall have full power and authority to study said bill,  
8 resolution or other matter before it, as such committee, shall  
9 determine is necessary to enable it to report properly to the  
10 House thereon. To this end, a standing committee, subcommittee,  
11 or select committee, may as hereinafter provided, conduct public  
12 hearings. No standing committee, subcommittee or select  
13 committee shall hold any public hearings without prior approval  
14 by a majority vote of the members of the standing committee and  
15 the Speaker or the Majority Leader of the House. The Speaker or  
16 the Majority Leader of the House shall withhold approval of  
17 public hearings based only on budgetary consideration.

1       When a public hearing has been authorized as aforesaid, the  
2 chair of the standing committee, subcommittee chair, or select  
3 committee chair as the case may be, shall instruct the Chief  
4 Clerk to give written notice thereof to each House Member not  
5 less than five calendar days before the proposed hearings and  
6 post the same in or immediately adjacent to the House Chambers.  
7 Such notice, which shall contain the day, hour and place of the  
8 hearing and the number or numbers of bills or other subject  
9 matter to be considered at such hearing, shall also be given the  
10 supervisor of the news room, and to the news media. In addition,  
11 all provisions of 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open meetings),  
12 relative to notice of meetings shall be complied with.

13       Public hearings held by a standing committee shall be chaired  
14 by the chair of such committee, unless absent, in which case an  
15 acting chair shall be selected in the manner prescribed by these  
16 rules to serve. Public hearings held by standing subcommittees  
17 shall be chaired by the subcommittee chair thereof, but the  
18 chair of the parent standing committee, as an ex-officio member  
19 of the subcommittee, shall have the right to attend and  
20 participate in the hearing proceedings. In the absence of the  
21 subcommittee chair, an acting chair shall be appointed in the  
22 manner prescribed by these rules.

23       All public hearings shall be open to the public and  
24 reasonable opportunity to be heard shall be afforded to all  
25 interested parties who have requested an appearance before the  
26 committee. The majority and minority chairs shall be given equal  
27 opportunity to invite interested parties to provide testimony at  
28 the public hearing. In addition, it shall be the responsibility  
29 of the committee in conducting its hearing to request the  
30 presentation of testimony by any person who, in the opinion of

1 the committee, is qualified to present pertinent and important  
2 testimony.

3 Such committee shall, so far as practicable, request all  
4 witnesses appearing before it to file written statements of  
5 their proposed testimony. The chair shall have the right to fix  
6 the order of appearance and the time to be allotted to  
7 witnesses, provided that the invitees of the minority chair are  
8 allotted equal time as invitees of the majority chair.

9 Witnesses may submit brief pertinent statements in writing for  
10 inclusion in the record. The committee is the sole judge of the  
11 pertinency of testimony and evidence adduced at its hearings.

12 The chair, in presiding at such public hearings, shall  
13 preserve order and decorum, in and adjacent to his committee  
14 room while the hearing is being conducted and shall have the  
15 authority to direct the removal from the committee room of any  
16 person who fails to comply with order and decorum of the  
17 committee.

18 Proceedings of all public hearings shall be either  
19 stenographically or electronically recorded. The committee shall  
20 determine which parts of such recorded proceedings, if any,  
21 shall be transcribed and the distribution thereof. Except as  
22 hereinafter provided, no more than four copies of any transcript  
23 shall be made. Such stenographic or electronic records and at  
24 least one copy of any transcription shall be preserved by the  
25 Chief Clerk until authorized to dispose of same by an  
26 affirmative vote of three-quarters of the entire membership of  
27 the Rules Committee and shall be made available to any member  
28 upon written request for the purpose of copying or transcription  
29 at that member's expense. Any transcribed records and any  
30 reports of the committee shall be filed with the Chief Clerk or

1 his designee and shall be made available to any person in  
2 accordance with reasonable rules and regulations prescribed by  
3 the Chief Clerk. Upon payment of a reasonable cost to be  
4 determined by the Chief Clerk, a person may obtain a copy of  
5 such transcribed records or reports.

6 All written testimony and all transcribed testimony at  
7 committee hearings shall be posted on the Internet as soon  
8 thereafter as practicable.

9 The Chief Clerk shall not make payment of any expenses  
10 incurred as a result of a public hearing without the prior  
11 written approval of the Speaker or the Majority Leader of the  
12 House.