
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 159 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY GIRAL, SMITH-WADE-EL, WAXMAN, SANCHEZ AND
GALLAGHER, JUNE 23, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND INDUSTRY, JUNE 23, 2023

A RESOLUTION

1 Condemning elected members who believe that the mistreatment of
2 workers, including the elimination of water breaks in high-
3 temperature conditions, is acceptable.

4 WHEREAS, The recent passage of House Bill No. 2127 by the
5 Texas Legislature and its subsequent approval by Governor Greg
6 Abbott has eliminated local rules and ordinances mandating water
7 breaks for construction workers; and

8 WHEREAS, The elimination of these important regulations
9 undermines the safety and well-being of construction workers,
10 particularly in a state like Texas, where high temperatures pose
11 a serious health risk; and

12 WHEREAS, The supporters of this law argue that it will
13 eliminate a supposed patchwork of local rules and ordinances and
14 reduce burdensome regulations on businesses, but fail to
15 acknowledge the human cost of such measures; and

16 WHEREAS, Data from the United States Bureau of Labor
17 Statistics show that Texas has the highest number of heat-
18 related deaths among workers and these numbers are likely

1 underreported; and

2 WHEREAS, The impact of this law disproportionately affects
3 Latino construction workers who make up a significant portion of
4 the workforce in Texas; and

5 WHEREAS, Extreme heat waves are becoming increasingly
6 dangerous due to climate change and the elimination of mandated
7 water breaks further exacerbates the risks faced by workers; and

8 WHEREAS, Workers' unions and rights advocates have voiced
9 concerns regarding the potential increase in heat-related deaths
10 if water breaks are no longer mandated; and

11 WHEREAS, Proponents of House Bill No. 2127 suggest that
12 Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations
13 are sufficient to ensure worker safety, disregarding the fact
14 that OSHA does not have a national standard for heat-related
15 illnesses; and

16 WHEREAS, The former head of OSHA, David Michaels, contends
17 that local rules and ordinances are crucial for saving lives and
18 that without them, workers will be severely injured or killed;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, The elimination of local rules and ordinances does
21 not only affect the safety and well-being of workers, but also
22 undermines the power of local governments to protect and serve
23 their constituents; therefore be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives condemn elected
25 members who believe that the mistreatment of workers, including
26 the elimination of water breaks in high-temperature conditions,
27 is acceptable; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives express its deep
29 frustration and disappointment with elected members who have
30 supported and enacted legislation that eliminates critical

1 worker protections; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives call upon elected
3 members to recognize the importance of local regulations in
4 safeguarding workers and to reject any attempts to override
5 local rules and ordinances for the sake of supposed business
6 interests; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives stand united in
8 our commitment to advocate for the rights of workers and demand
9 better treatment, firmly believing that no worker should be
10 denied basic rights and protections in the pursuit of their
11 livelihoods.