
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 96 Session of 2015

INTRODUCED BY MATZIE, PETRI, MAHONEY, GIBBONS, DeLUCA, KIM, BOBACK, HARHART, D. COSTA, DiGIROLAMO, HENNESSEY, KAUFFMAN, PASHINSKI, McCARTER, DONATUCCI, CALTAGIRONE, GRELL, DIAMOND, KOTIK, GINGRICH, READSHAW, LONGIETTI, MILLARD, THOMAS, KINSEY, KORTZ, FARINA, GOODMAN, WATSON, GILLEN, ROEBUCK AND MURT, FEBRUARY 23, 2015

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35, FEBRUARY 23, 2015

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing March 14, 2015, as "Charter Day" in Pennsylvania.

2 WHEREAS, On March 4, 1681, King Charles II of England granted
3 William Penn a charter for land in the New World to make up for
4 a large debt that the king owed to Penn's father; and

5 WHEREAS, William Penn had initially decided to name the land
6 "Sylvania," which in Latin means "woods" and to which King
7 Charles II added the prefix "Penn" to the name in honor of
8 William Penn's father, Admiral Sir William Penn, who had served
9 England as a rear admiral and vice admiral of Ireland, a vice
10 admiral of England, a general in the first Dutch War and great
11 captain commander under the Duke of York; and

12 WHEREAS, William Penn wrote a Frame of Government of
13 Pennsylvania that established a democratic system containing
14 full freedom of religion, fair trials featuring independent
15 juries, assemblies consisting of elected representatives of the

1 people and a separation of powers in the government, all ideas
2 that later formed the crux of the Constitution of the United
3 States; and

4 WHEREAS, William Penn therefore described Pennsylvania as his
5 "holy experiment" and from it, he hoped, a nation based on
6 justice would grow; and

7 WHEREAS, William Penn's charter exists as the formal
8 beginning of the colony and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and
9 through it William Penn established the first example of
10 democracy in what would become the United States of America; and

11 WHEREAS, Our citizens benefit from learning more about the
12 overall history of this Commonwealth from its founding until
13 today and how the principles of governance within the
14 Commonwealth date back to the beliefs of William Penn; and

15 WHEREAS, The history of Pennsylvania, from its founding by
16 William Penn onward, exists as a kaleidoscope of stories and
17 people with each area of this Commonwealth having multiple
18 stories of history involving key characters and events that
19 create and establish Pennsylvania's heritage; and

20 WHEREAS, The act of July 28, 1953 (P.L.676, No.210) provides
21 for the observance of March 14 of each year as Charter Day and
22 urges the people of this Commonwealth, the public schools and
23 other educational institutions and patriotic, religious,
24 historical and veterans' organizations to observe on that day
25 the anniversary of the execution of the Royal Charter by King
26 Charles II; and

27 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission,
28 the Pennsylvania State Archives and the State Historical Records
29 Advisory Board each works to inform our residents about the
30 Commonwealth's heritage, including sponsoring an annual Charter

1 Day event in the State Museum of Pennsylvania; and

2 WHEREAS, This free event has included a presentation of the
3 1681 Charter as well as information about Penn's Great Law of
4 1682, the 1698 William Penn Family Bible, a William Penn
5 reenactor, stories of Pennsylvania history and other programs;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has 23 other State historic sites and
8 museums and numerous other historical organizations that
9 continue to operate, largely thanks to the assistance of
10 volunteers and other groups that have donated their money, time
11 and other resources so that residents can remain well informed
12 about the fabric of this Commonwealth's history; therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate March
14 14, 2015, as "Charter Day" in Pennsylvania; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the residents, schools, other educational
16 institutions and patriotic, religious, historical and veterans
17 groups be urged to participate with any and all Charter Day
18 activities sponsored by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum
19 Commission, the Pennsylvania State Archives, the State
20 Historical Records Advisory Board, the 23 other State historic
21 sites and museums or those offered by any of the many other
22 historical organizations within this Commonwealth; and be it
23 further

24 RESOLVED, That the volunteers and other residents who keep
25 history alive through their support and work for the
26 Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Pennsylvania
27 State Archives, the State Historical Records Advisory Board, the
28 23 other State historic sites and museums or through the
29 numerous other historical organizations within this Commonwealth
30 be honored for their efforts.