
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 172 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY HUGHES, TEPLITZ, FONTANA, SCHWANK, COSTA, BOSCOLA
AND HAYWOOD, SEPTEMBER 8, 2015

REFERRED TO LAW AND JUSTICE, SEPTEMBER 8, 2015

A RESOLUTION

1 Establishing a task force on law enforcement practices and
2 procedures used in response to large scale demonstrations,
3 protests and other acts of civil disobedience.

4 WHEREAS, The United States is currently engaged in a national
5 debate on law enforcement policies and practices; and

6 WHEREAS, High-profile incidents of use of force by law
7 enforcement have led to numerous demonstrations and protests in
8 recent months; and

9 WHEREAS, Several of these demonstrations and protests have
10 turned violent; and

11 WHEREAS, These violent demonstrations and protests have
12 resulted in millions of dollars in property damage, numerous
13 arrests, physical injuries and, in some cases, death; and

14 WHEREAS, Law enforcement responses to large-scale but
15 otherwise peaceful acts of civil disobedience have the potential
16 to escalate already charged atmospheres; and

17 WHEREAS, The people of this Commonwealth have a
18 constitutional right to assemble peacefully; and

1 WHEREAS, Law enforcement has a duty and responsibility to
2 protect the general public from acts of violence, including
3 riots and militant protests; and

4 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth has an obligation to assist law
5 enforcement in developing best practices to ensure that large-
6 scale demonstrations do not become violent; therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That the Senate establish a task force on law
8 enforcement policies and procedures for responding to large-
9 scale demonstrations; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the Task Force be comprised of six members of
11 the Senate, three appointed by the President pro tempore of the
12 Senate and three appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;
13 and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the task force direct the Joint State
15 Government Commission to establish an advisory committee
16 consisting of the following members:

17 (1) The Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police or the
18 commissioner's designee.

19 (2) The Attorney General or the Attorney General's
20 designee.

21 (3) The Adjutant General or the Adjutant General's
22 designee.

23 (4) The Director of Homeland Security or the director's
24 designee.

25 (5) The police commissioner of a city of the first class
26 or the commissioner's designee.

27 (6) The chief of police of a city of the second class or
28 the chief's designee.

29 (7) A representative of the Pennsylvania League of
30 Cities, to be selected by the Joint State Government

1 Commission, upon the recommendation of the governing body of
2 the Pennsylvania League of Cities.

3 (8) A representative of the Pennsylvania State
4 Association of County Commissioners, to be selected by the
5 Joint State Government Commission, upon the recommendation of
6 the governing body of the Pennsylvania State Association of
7 County Commissioners.

8 (9) Three incumbent chiefs of police from municipal
9 police departments within this Commonwealth, to be selected
10 by the Joint State Government Commission, upon the
11 recommendation of the governing body of the Pennsylvania
12 Chiefs of Police Association.

13 (10) An incumbent chief of police of a university or
14 campus police department within this Commonwealth to be
15 selected by the Joint State Government Commission and
16 approved by the task force.

17 (11) A current or former Federal law enforcement officer
18 with experience handling protests and other forms of civil
19 disobedience to be selected by the Joint State Government
20 Commission and approved by the task force.

21 (12) A current or former member of the United States
22 Department of Justice Civil Rights Division with experience
23 investigating, litigating or prosecuting claims of civil
24 rights violations, to be selected by the Joint State
25 Government Commission and approved by the task force.

26 (13) An attorney or legal educator specializing in the
27 field of civil rights or constitutional law, to be selected
28 by the Joint State Government Commission and approved by the
29 task force.

30 (14) Two representatives of the Pennsylvania Chapter of

1 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored
2 People, to be appointed by the Joint State Government
3 Commission, upon the recommendation of the governing body of
4 the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Association for the
5 Advancement of Colored People.

6 (15) Two representatives of the Pennsylvania Chapter of
7 the American Civil Liberties Union, to be appointed by the
8 Joint State Government Commission, upon the recommendation of
9 the governing body of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the
10 American Civil Liberties Union.

11 (16) A representative of the Pennsylvania District
12 Attorneys Association, to be appointed by the Joint State
13 Government Commission, upon the recommendation of the
14 governing body of the Pennsylvania District Attorneys
15 Association.

16 (17) A representative of the Public Defenders
17 Association of Pennsylvania, to be selected by the Joint
18 State Government Commission, upon the recommendation of the
19 governing body of the Public Defenders Association of
20 Pennsylvania.

21 (18) A representative of the Pennsylvania State Troopers
22 Association, to be selected by the Joint State Government
23 Commission, upon the recommendation of the governing body of
24 the Pennsylvania State Troopers Association.

25 (19) A representative of the Pennsylvania Fraternal
26 Order of Police, to be selected by the Joint State Government
27 Commission, upon the recommendation of the governing body of
28 the Pennsylvania Fraternal Order of Police;

29 and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police

1 serve as chairperson of the advisory committee; and be it
2 further

3 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, working
4 with the advisory committee, conduct a thorough and
5 comprehensive study of existing State and local law enforcement
6 policies and procedures for responding to acts of civil
7 disobedience, including training and response programs, crowd
8 control tactics, the use of less-than-lethal force, the issues
9 set forth in this resolution and other related issues as
10 determined by the Joint State Government Commission; and be it
11 further

12 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, working
13 with the advisory committee, review the following to identify
14 the best law enforcement practices for responding to acts of
15 civil disobedience and the causes of escalation from peaceful
16 demonstration to violent protest and develop recommendations
17 best suited for law enforcement agencies in this Commonwealth:

- 18 (1) Proposals and policies of other states.
- 19 (2) Policies currently in place at law enforcement
20 agencies in this Commonwealth and other states.
- 21 (3) Other resources on the issues of civil disobedience
22 and law enforcement practices;

23 and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission
25 establish a process by which interested members of the public
26 can make suggestions and have input; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the task force recommend changes to State law,
28 practices, policies and procedures relating to law enforcement
29 responses to acts of civil disobedience that are necessary to
30 ensure the rights and safety of demonstrators, law enforcement

1 and the general public; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission issue a
3 report of the task force's findings and recommendations to the
4 Senate within 12 months of the adoption of this resolution.