
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 189 Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, BRIGHTBILL, PICCOLA, O'PAKE, COSTA,
ROBBINS, C. WILLIAMS, M. WHITE, ARMSTRONG, BOSCOLA, PIPPY,
TARTAGLIONE, CONTI, WENGER, THOMPSON, LOGAN, PILEGGI,
RAFFERTY, FONTANA, ERICKSON, LEMMOND, WOZNIAK, EARLL, STACK
AND WONDERLING, OCTOBER 5, 2005

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, OCTOBER 5, 2005

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of October 2005 as "William Penn's Charter
2 of Privileges Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, In the ceiling of the State Capitol's Rotunda in
4 Harrisburg, a composite of three separate letters written in
5 1681 by William Penn, Pennsylvania's founder, remind us of how
6 Pennsylvania became the "Birthplace of Freedom" and the
7 "Birthplace of America" when he stated that:

8 There may be room there for such a Holy Experiment. For the
9 nations want a precedent and my God will make it the seed of
10 a nation. That an example may be set up to the nations. That
11 we may do the thing that is truly wise and just;

12 and

13 WHEREAS, Penn believed and legally contended for the
14 religious freedom for the common man; and

15 WHEREAS, Penn wrote in "The Great Case of Liberty of
16 Conscience," that man's pursuit of God could not be legislated

1 but was his inalienable right and the God-given gift of his own
2 conscience; and

3 WHEREAS, On June 1, 1680, Penn petitioned the King of England
4 for a grant of land in the New World; and

5 WHEREAS, On March 4, 1681, Penn was awarded and given full
6 governmental authority to Pennsylvania, the largest territory
7 owned entirely by any single British citizen in history, second
8 only in size to England itself; and

9 WHEREAS, Penn believed that good government flowed naturally
10 out of and through his trust in God, to whom he gave precedence
11 in his Constitution, and whom he believed was the heart of the
12 Holy Experiment, thereby creating a model for democracy where
13 the power of the government was free to the people under that
14 government, and where Freedom of Religion would be mandatory;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, Penn said, "Government seems to me a part of
17 religion itself"; and

18 WHEREAS, Known as "The First Frame of Government," Penn's
19 constitution was adopted by England on April 25, 1682, and thus
20 the seed of a new nation was planted; and

21 WHEREAS, While given this great tract in the New World, Penn
22 established an unparalleled precedence within his administration
23 and government by not assuming its rightful ownership without
24 first acknowledging and compensating the land's legal owner; and

25 WHEREAS, In 1683 Penn entered a mutual covenant of respect
26 and equality with Pennsylvania's existing native population,
27 thus demonstrating and proving, for nearly a century, the power
28 of the Holy Experiment; and

29 WHEREAS, Penn's commitment of unity, dignity and respect to
30 the indigenous people continued to establish him as an advocate

1 and champion for human rights, thus foreshadowing the groundwork
2 for the Bill of Rights; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1689 England established the Board of Trade to
4 try to provide a more unified defense from its American Colonies
5 against a probable invasion by France; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1696, having foreseen the blueprint for a new
7 nation, Penn appeared before the board and was the first to
8 reason that if England were to put such a demand on the colonies
9 that perhaps a more permanent American union would be necessary
10 to accomplish their goal; and

11 WHEREAS, Penn declared to England that their efforts might
12 best be served if a continental congress were established among
13 the colonies where each colony's strength could best be
14 represented; and

15 WHEREAS, England, however, took no action on Penn's request;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, On October 28, 1701, England adopted Penn's fourth
18 revision to Pennsylvania's Constitution, "Charter of
19 Privileges"; and

20 WHEREAS, The "Charter of Privileges" so firmly established
21 and grounded Pennsylvania as a keystone to the other colonies
22 that it evolved into the outline and later adoption of our
23 American liberties, the Constitution of the United States; and

24 WHEREAS, In 1751 the Pennsylvania General Assembly
25 commissioned a foundry in England to forge a bell to properly
26 commemorate and celebrate the 50th anniversary of Penn's
27 "Charter of Privileges"; and

28 WHEREAS, On the bell were inscribed the prophetic words from
29 Leviticus 25:10, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all
30 the inhabitants thereof"; and

1 WHEREAS, Today that bell, the Liberty Bell, is celebrated as
2 one of America's most famous symbols of American Independence;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, The Liberty Bell, fondly associated with the year
5 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was read in
6 Philadelphia, was actually created 25 years previous to the
7 revolution in honor of William Penn and his great "Charter of
8 Privileges" of 1701; and

9 WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United
10 States and writer of the Declaration of Independence, duly
11 recognized William Penn's indelible influence upon this American
12 nation and stated that he was, without doubt, "the greatest
13 lawgiver the world has produced"; and

14 WHEREAS, Woodrow Wilson, America's 28th President of the
15 United States, stated that, in speaking of the phenomenon in
16 Pennsylvania, "America did not come out of New England"; and

17 WHEREAS, October 28, 2005, marks the 304th anniversary of
18 William Penn's "Charter of Privileges," the forerunner of the
19 Constitution of the United States; therefore be it

20 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of October 2005
21 as "William Penn's Charter of Privileges Month" in Pennsylvania.