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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1085 Session of  
2021

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INTRODUCED BY BULLOCK, KRUEGER, SANCHEZ, HILL-EVANS, N. NELSON,  
ROZZI, SCHLOSSBERG, ISAACSON, HOHENSTEIN, LEE, STURLA,  
KINKEAD, DELLOSO, HOWARD, MADDEN, GUZMAN, WARREN, WEBSTER,  
SIMS, DEASY, INNAMORATO, A. DAVIS AND KINSEY, APRIL 5, 2021

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, APRIL 5, 2021

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AN ACT

1 Establishing the Joint Legislative Equity Committee and  
2 providing for composition and duties of members.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Joint  
7 Legislative Equity Committee Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

9 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
10 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "Committee." The Joint Legislative Equity Committee  
13 established under section 3.

14 "Gender identity." An individual's sense of being male,  
15 female or a different identification standard.

16 "Institutional policies." A rule, principle or practice  
17 proposed or implemented to better guide decisions or decision

1 making which leads to the development of procedures and  
2 protocols that dictate the execution of a policy.

3 Section 3. Establishment.

4 (a) Establishment.--The Joint Legislative Equity Committee  
5 is established to solicit input from members of the public,  
6 especially those individuals, stakeholders, groups or  
7 organizations with expertise related to racial, ethnic, sex and  
8 gender equity issues, in order to aid the committee in carrying  
9 out the duties under this act.

10 (b) Composition.--The committee shall consist of 18 members  
11 of the General Assembly who shall serve without compensation as  
12 follows:

13 (1) Five members shall be appointed by the President pro  
14 tempore of the Senate from among the majority party.

15 (2) Four members shall be appointed by the Minority  
16 Leader of the Senate from among the minority party.

17 (3) Five members shall be appointed by the Speaker of  
18 the House of Representatives from among the majority party.

19 (4) Four members shall be appointed by the Minority  
20 Leader of the House of Representatives from among the  
21 minority party.

22 (c) Term.--The term of each member of the committee shall  
23 run from the date of the member's appointment until 30 days  
24 after the convening of the next regular session of the General  
25 Assembly in odd-numbered years and until the member's successor  
26 is appointed and qualified. Appointments to the committee shall  
27 take effect 31 days after the convening of each regular session  
28 of the General Assembly in odd-numbered years. Any vacancy  
29 occurring in the committee shall be filled by the appointing  
30 power making the original appointment for the unexpired term.

1 (d) Organization and meetings.--The committee shall organize  
2 as soon as possible after the appointment of members 31 days  
3 after the convening of each regular session of the General  
4 Assembly in odd-numbered years, at the call of the President pro  
5 tempore of the Senate, by electing a chairperson, vice  
6 chairperson and secretary by majority vote of the committee. The  
7 secretary need not be a member of the committee.

8 (e) Powers and duties.--The committee shall have the same  
9 powers as other standing committees of the General Assembly. The  
10 committee shall:

11 (1) Upon request of a member of either chamber of the  
12 General Assembly, complete a racial, ethnic, sex and gender  
13 equity impact assessment for any legislation, including Rule  
14 29 resolutions under the General Operating Rules of the  
15 Senate and Rule 35 resolutions under the General Operating  
16 Rules of the House of Representatives, which are initially  
17 reported from either a standing committee of the Senate or a  
18 standing committee of the House of Representatives, but not  
19 both, to minimize unanticipated adverse consequences by  
20 utilizing resources that may have any of the following:

21 (i) A history of expertise and positive outcomes in  
22 racial, ethnic, sex or gender equity.

23 (ii) A deep understanding of ameliorating  
24 disproportionate outcomes and unintended costs.

25 (2) Convene committee meetings and public hearings on  
26 any matter relating to the functions, powers and duties of  
27 the committee.

28 (3) Identify institutional policies and actions that, in  
29 conjunction with public and private sector partners and  
30 stakeholders and in support of racial, ethnic, sex or gender

1 equity, can work to improve or achieve racial, ethnic, sex or  
2 gender equity.

3 (4) Review and make recommendations to align State  
4 statutes, regulations, policies, programs, services and  
5 budgetary priorities with the goal of racial, ethnic, sex and  
6 gender equity.

7 (5) Conduct a search for any interdepartmental gaps,  
8 inconsistencies and inefficiencies in the implementation or  
9 attainment of institutional policies and actions.

10 (6) Identify any new laws, regulations, programs,  
11 policies, services and budgetary priorities that are needed  
12 to ensure and promote desired conditions of racial, ethnic,  
13 sex and gender equity.

14 (7) Serve as an informational resource for the Senate  
15 and the House of Representatives.

16 (8) Perform other activities determined necessary to  
17 promote and achieve racial, ethnic, sex and gender equity,  
18 including public awareness, working with Commonwealth  
19 agencies, stakeholders, academic institutions and other  
20 individuals or groups concerned with the elimination of  
21 institutional policies, attitudes and cultural messages that  
22 reinforce differential outcomes by race, ethnicity, sex or  
23 gender identity.

24 Section 4. Effective date.

25 This act shall take effect immediately.