
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1611 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY RABB, MADDEN, SCHLOSSBERG, McCARTER, RAVENSTAHL,
SOLOMON, FREEMAN, FRANKEL, SAPPEY, CIRESI, WARREN, DeLUCA,
D. MILLER, DALEY, HILL-EVANS, KAUFER, OTTEN AND McCLINTON,
JUNE 11, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY,
JUNE 11, 2019

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 27 (Environmental Resources) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, providing for Plastic Pollution Task
3 Force and for its powers and duties.

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

6 Section 1. Title 27 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated
7 Statutes is amended by adding a chapter to read:

8 CHAPTER 67

9 PLASTIC POLLUTION TASK FORCE

10 Sec.

11 6701. Short title of chapter.

12 6702. Findings.

13 6703. Definitions.

14 6704. Establishment.

15 6705. Membership.

16 6706. Meetings.

17 6707. Powers and duties.

1 6708. Report.

2 6709. Expiration.

3 § 6701. Short title of chapter.

4 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the Plastic
5 Pollution Task Force Act.

6 § 6702. Findings.

7 The General Assembly finds that:

8 (1) Over the years, plastic pollution has taken a toll
9 on the environmental well-being of this Commonwealth.

10 (2) Both marine and terrestrial wildlife have been
11 affected by the rise of plastic pollution.

12 § 6703. Definitions.

13 The following words and phrases when used in this chapter
14 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
15 context clearly indicates otherwise:

16 "Department." The Department of Environmental Protection of
17 the Commonwealth.

18 "Secretary." The Secretary of Environmental Protection of
19 the Commonwealth.

20 "Task force." The Plastic Pollution Task Force established
21 under section 6704 (relating to establishment).

22 § 6704. Establishment.

23 The Plastic Pollution Task Force is established within the
24 department.

25 § 6705. Membership.

26 The task force shall consist of the following members:

27 (1) The secretary, or a designee, who shall serve as the
28 chairperson of the task force.

29 (2) The Secretary of Health, or a designee.

30 (3) Three members of the public appointed by the

1 Governor as follows, who shall be appointed within 30 days of
2 the effective date of this section:

3 (i) One member of this Commonwealth's business
4 community with expertise, knowledge or experience in
5 plastic recycling and disposal.

6 (ii) One member of this Commonwealth's academic
7 community with expertise, knowledge and experience in
8 environmental protection, ecology or plastic pollution
9 mitigation.

10 (iii) One member from a national or Statewide
11 environmental organization with expertise, knowledge or
12 experience in environmental protection, ecology or
13 plastic pollution mitigation.

14 § 6706. Meetings.

15 (a) General rule.--The first meeting shall be convened
16 within 45 days of the effective date of this section and the
17 following shall apply:

18 (1) The physical presence of a majority of the members
19 shall constitute a quorum.

20 (2) Action of the task force must be authorized by a
21 majority vote of members.

22 (3) A member not physically present may participate by
23 teleconference or videoconference.

24 (4) The chairperson shall schedule a meeting upon
25 written request of a three-fifths majority of the members.

26 (b) Public meetings.--The task force shall hold public
27 hearings as necessary to obtain information.

28 (c) Cooperation between departments.--The department and the
29 Department of Health shall cooperate to provide administrative
30 or other assistance to the task force.

1 (d) Reimbursement.--Members may not receive compensation but
2 shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses
3 incurred in the service of the task force.

4 § 6707. Powers and duties.

5 The task force shall have the following powers and duties:

6 (1) To study the most efficient means of reducing
7 plastic pollution in this Commonwealth and its waters.

8 (2) To develop uniform policies for the State and local
9 government units to address plastic pollution and for a
10 coordinated response to the threat posed by plastic pollution
11 to this Commonwealth's ecological and environmental
12 resources.

13 (3) To hold public hearings for the taking of testimony
14 and the requesting of documents.

15 (4) Through its chairperson, to administer oaths and
16 affirmations to witnesses appearing before the task force.

17 (5) To issue a final report, no later than one year
18 after the effective date of this section, to the Governor,
19 the Senate and the House of Representatives. In addition to
20 any information that the task force deems appropriate, the
21 report shall include recommendations regarding the following:

22 (i) Reducing the amount of plastic entering the
23 waste stream.

24 (ii) Reducing and removing existing plastic
25 pollution.

26 (iii) Addressing microplastic pollution in the
27 waterways of this Commonwealth.

28 (iv) Restoring ecosystems that have been damaged by
29 plastic pollution to ecosystems' natural condition.

30 (v) Estimating the resources necessary for the

1 implementation of the policies suggested in the report.

2 (vi) Specific legislative recommendations and
3 regulatory action and model ordinances that are necessary
4 to implement the recommendations in the report.

5 (vii) Establishing State and local programs to
6 mitigate plastic pollution, provide financial and market
7 tools and educational programs that may be employed to
8 help reduce plastic pollution and develop other tools or
9 resources the task force deems effective to combat
10 plastic pollution in this Commonwealth.

11 § 6708. Report.

12 The report made under this act shall be:

13 (1) approved at a public meeting in accordance with
14 section 6706 (relating to meetings); and

15 (2) a public record under the act of February 14, 2008
16 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the Right-to-Know Law.

17 § 6709. Expiration.

18 The task force shall expire 30 days after issuing the final
19 report under section 6707(5) (relating to powers and duties).

20 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.