
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2308 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY FREEMAN, JAMES, PROBST, HOWARD, KINSEY, SANCHEZ,
MADDEN, BRENNAN, HILL-EVANS, HADDOCK, SOLOMON, CEPEDA-
FREYTIZ, SAMUELSON, WARREN, D. WILLIAMS, GREEN, CIRESI, KHAN,
KENYATTA, KAZEEM, SMITH-WADE-EL AND WAXMAN, MAY 21, 2024

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, MAY 21, 2024

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Pennsylvania Poet Laureate and the Pennsylvania
2 Poet Laureate Nomination Committee; and providing for their
3 powers and duties.

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

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania
8 Poet Laureate Act.

9 Section 2. Definitions.

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

13 "Committee." The Pennsylvania Poet Laureate Nomination
14 Committee established by this act.

15 "Poet laureate." The Pennsylvania Poet Laureate established
16 by this act.

17 Section 3. Pennsylvania Poet Laureate.

1 (a) Establishment.--The Pennsylvania Poet Laureate is
2 established.

3 (b) Appointment.--The poet laureate shall be appointed by
4 the Governor from a list of individuals nominated by the
5 committee as provided in section 4.

6 (c) Term.--The poet laureate shall serve for a term of two
7 years.

8 (d) Duties.--The poet laureate shall:

9 (1) Give an official reading of a poem at the
10 inauguration of the Governor.

11 (2) Give an official reading of a poem at the biannual
12 opening of the legislative session upon request of the
13 President pro tempore of the Senate or Speaker of the House
14 of Representatives.

15 (3) Serve at official commemorations upon request of the
16 Governor.

17 (e) Reimbursement of expenses.--The poet laureate shall
18 serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for necessary
19 traveling and other expenses incurred in the performance of
20 official duties.

21 Section 4. Pennsylvania Poet Laureate Nomination Committee.

22 (a) Establishment.--The Pennsylvania Poet Laureate
23 Nomination Committee is established.

24 (b) Membership.--The committee shall include the following:

25 (1) The Secretary of Education or a designee.

26 (2) The chair of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts or
27 a designee.

28 (3) The State Librarian of the State Library of
29 Pennsylvania or a designee.

30 (4) A representative from a nonprofit organization whose

1 mission is to promote poetry or the humanities and is located
2 in this Commonwealth, appointed by the Governor.

3 (5) A representative from a college or university
4 department of English located in this Commonwealth, appointed
5 by the Governor.

6 (c) Duties.--The committee shall:

7 (1) Determine the qualifications of nominees for the
8 poet laureate.

9 (2) Solicit nominations and provide the Governor with a
10 list consisting of no more than three finalists.

11 (d) Reimbursement of expenses.--The members of the committee
12 shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for
13 necessary traveling and other expenses incurred in the
14 performance of their official duties.

15 Section 5. Effective date.

16 This act shall take effect in 60 days.