
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 229 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY SCHLOSSBERG, CORBIN, SNYDER, BAKER, DONATUCCI,
SCHWEYER, BISHOP, DIGIROLAMO, THOMAS, J. HARRIS, KINSEY,
FRANKEL, MILLARD, CALTAGIRONE, SCHLEGEL CULVER, WHEELAND,
SCHREIBER, HARHART, SAMUELSON, McNEILL, McCARTER, D. COSTA,
BROWNLEE, C. PARKER, FREEMAN, ROSS, MARSICO, STAATS,
YOUNGBLOOD, MAJOR, MATZIE, WATSON, MAHONEY, COHEN AND MURT,
APRIL 10, 2015

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, APRIL 10, 2015

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the week of April 24 through 30, 2015, as "World
2 Immunization Week" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Immunizations are widely recognized as one of the
4 most successful and cost-effective public health tools available
5 for preventing disease and death; and

6 WHEREAS, According to the World Health Organization (WHO),
7 immunization can be credited with averting approximately two to
8 three million deaths per year; and

9 WHEREAS, However, infectious diseases continue to be the
10 leading cause of death in children and adolescents and one of
11 the leading causes in adults; and

12 WHEREAS, Worldwide, more than half of the 6.3 million deaths
13 in children under five years of age are due to diseases that are
14 preventable and treatable with simple, affordable interventions;
15 and

1 WHEREAS, In the United States, national immunization levels
2 are at or near record highs for most vaccines, which has led to
3 very low rates of vaccine-preventable diseases; and

4 WHEREAS, Nevertheless, the United States is experiencing a
5 resurgence in previously eradicated diseases, such as measles
6 which was declared eradicated in 2000; and

7 WHEREAS, The United States experienced more than 600 cases of
8 measles in 2014, the greatest number of cases since eradication,
9 attributable to groups of unvaccinated individuals and travelers
10 with measles bringing the disease to the United States; and

11 WHEREAS, According to the United States Department of Health
12 and Human Services, approximately 42,000 adults and 300 children
13 die annually in the United States from vaccine-preventable
14 diseases; and

15 WHEREAS, According to the Department of Health, every year in
16 this Commonwealth, more than 150,000 babies are born, each of
17 whom deserves routine immunizations by two years of age to
18 protect against 14 vaccine-preventable diseases; and

19 WHEREAS, While significant advances have been made in
20 interventions to prevent and treat most vaccine-preventable
21 diseases, those interventions are often unavailable to the
22 populations most in need; and

23 WHEREAS, In some countries immunization rates are stagnating
24 and even declining due to the great disparity that exists in the
25 availability of vaccines between industrialized and developing
26 countries; and

27 WHEREAS, According to the WHO, an estimated 21.8 million of
28 the world's children are still not immunized with basic
29 vaccines; and

30 WHEREAS, An inadequate supply of vaccines, lack of access to

1 health services, a shortage of accurate information about
2 immunization and insufficient political and financial support
3 prevent many of the world's children from being immunized; and

4 WHEREAS, Immunization coverage is a centerpiece in the design
5 and assessment of international developmental efforts; and

6 WHEREAS, The WHO's "World Immunization Week," celebrated in
7 the last week of April every year, is a global initiative that
8 aims to promote the use of vaccines to protect, or immunize,
9 people of all ages against disease; and

10 WHEREAS, The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization
11 (GAVI), a global network comprised of governments, bilateral
12 agencies, research and technical agencies, civil society
13 organizations, the WHO, UNICEF, the World Bank, the
14 pharmaceutical industry and the Bill and Melinda Gates
15 Foundation, have joined together to improve access to
16 sustainable immunization services and expand the use of all
17 existing safe and cost-effective vaccines; and

18 WHEREAS, Created in 2000, GAVI's mission is to save
19 children's lives and improve public health in the world's
20 poorest countries by increasing access to immunization and
21 making vaccinations more affordable; and

22 WHEREAS, Increased routine vaccinations for measles,
23 bacterial meningitis, tetanus, diphtheria, polio, pertussis,
24 yellow fever and rotavirus greatly improve with better
25 coordination and additional outside funding from groups like
26 GAVI; and

27 WHEREAS, Remarkable progress has been made in immunization in
28 several countries to ensure that every eligible individual is
29 immunized with all appropriate vaccines, irrespective of
30 geographical location, age, gender, disability, educational

1 level, socioeconomic level, ethnic group or work condition; and
2 WHEREAS, Maintaining high immunization rates protects the
3 entire community by interrupting transmission of disease-causing
4 viruses and bacteria; and

5 WHEREAS, A week profiling the importance of immunization in
6 this Commonwealth and highlighting the global immunization
7 campaign will increase public awareness and demand for
8 immunization in communities, thereby improving access to
9 vaccinations and reducing the burden of disease in our
10 communities; therefore be it

11 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
12 week of April 24 through 30, 2015, as "World Immunization Week"
13 in Pennsylvania; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge residents of
15 this Commonwealth to support the efforts, programs, services and
16 organizations that work across the globe to enhance public
17 awareness of the importance of immunization.