
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 748 Session of
2014

INTRODUCED BY SNYDER, DIGIROLAMO, KAVULICH, COHEN, KORTZ,
SCHLOSSBERG, HENNESSEY, DAVIS, HAGGERTY, KIRKLAND,
CALTAGIRONE, FREEMAN, READSHAW, LUCAS, SANKEY, MILLARD,
PASHINSKI, YOUNGBLOOD, NEUMAN, PAINTER, MATZIE, MCCARTER,
ROSS, BIZZARRO, FRANKEL AND O'NEILL, MARCH 31, 2014

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
MARCH 31, 2014

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing April 1, 2014, as "Mitchell Day" in Pennsylvania.

2 WHEREAS, John Mitchell is honored each year on April 1 by the
3 United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) for his service as the
4 fifth union president, his efforts to organize coal workers
5 throughout the United States and Canada and his role in
6 achieving an eight-hour workday for UMWA membership on April 1,
7 1898; and

8 WHEREAS, Mitchell was born in Braidwood, Illinois, in 1870,
9 and at an early age, left school to begin work as a miner in the
10 expanding coal industry; and

11 WHEREAS, Mitchell learned firsthand the harsh working
12 conditions experienced by coal miners and endeavored to improve
13 their economic and working conditions by establishing a central
14 organization unifying and providing meaningful representation;
15 and

1 WHEREAS, The UMWA was established in 1890, with Mitchell as a
2 founding member; and

3 WHEREAS, Mitchell held leadership roles in the UMWA and the
4 American Federation of Labor throughout his career and became
5 the fifth president of the UMWA, serving from 1898 until 1908;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, The UMWA was among the first to secure an eight-hour
8 workday, a hard-sought goal of many labor organizations during
9 the late 19th century, for their members by attaining a national
10 contract covering the majority of coal-producing states on April
11 1, 1898; and

12 WHEREAS, During his term as president Mitchell worked to
13 unite coal mine workers in Pennsylvania under the UMWA, an
14 effort which joined ethnically and culturally diverse workers,
15 overcoming existing language barriers and prejudices; and

16 WHEREAS, On October 29, 1902, Mitchell famously and
17 successfully negotiated an end to the Great Anthracite Coal
18 Strike of 1902, an event which required the intervention of
19 President Theodore Roosevelt and agreements to participate in
20 arbitration; and

21 WHEREAS, Throughout Mitchell's time with the UMWA, the
22 union's membership increased to nearly 300,000 members; and

23 WHEREAS, Because of his leadership and efforts made for coal
24 mine workers, Mitchell has been memorialized at regional events
25 by the UMWA workers and local communities throughout
26 Pennsylvania's bituminous and anthracite coal regions on April 1
27 and October 29 each year; and

28 WHEREAS, Today, Mitchell is remembered by the UMWA and labor
29 organizations for his skill and leadership in labor management
30 and conflict resolution and his contributions to important

1 reforms providing for an 8-hour workday, a 40-hour workweek,
2 better wages and safety protections; therefore be it

3 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives remember John
4 Mitchell for his contributions to workers in Pennsylvania and
5 throughout the United States and recognize April 1, 2014, as
6 "Mitchell Day" in Pennsylvania.