
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 180 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY KITCHEN, COSTA, EICHELBERGER, TEPLITZ, BREWSTER,
SCHWANK, SABATINA, BARTOLOTTA, FONTANA, TARTAGLIONE, BOSCOLA,
DINNIMAN, AUMENT, GREENLEAF, HUTCHINSON, PILEGGI, MENSCH,
RAFFERTY, VULAKOVICH, YUDICHAK AND FARNESE,
SEPTEMBER 17, 2015

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, SEPTEMBER 17, 2015

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of
2 1965.

3 WHEREAS, Federal legislation known as the Voting Rights Act
4 was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on August 6,
5 1965, serving as one of the most important and far-reaching
6 pieces of civil rights legislation in the history of the United
7 States; and

8 WHEREAS, The Voting Rights Act (Public Law 89-110, 42 U.S.C.
9 § 1973 et seq.) became law during the height of the Civil Rights
10 Movement and was enacted in response to acts of violence against
11 voting rights activists, as well as the failure of some states
12 to implement effective voting rights legislation; and

13 WHEREAS, Not long after his election to the Presidency in
14 1964, President Johnson pushed for legislation to improve the
15 lives of every American, including stronger voting rights laws;
16 and

1 WHEREAS, It took less than five months for the historic piece
2 of legislation, introduced as S. 1564, to pass the Congress and
3 reach the President, the signing of which occurred during a
4 ceremony attended by Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil
5 rights leaders who strongly advocated for voting rights; and

6 WHEREAS, Once enacted, the legislation reinforced the right
7 of all Americans, particularly African Americans, to vote under
8 the guaranteed rights established by the Fourteenth and
9 Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States by
10 prohibiting racial discrimination in voting; and

11 WHEREAS, The act regulates the administration of elections
12 and specifically prohibits state and local governments from
13 implementing laws that result in discrimination against racial
14 minorities; and

15 WHEREAS, The law banned literacy tests or other mechanisms
16 that may be used to disenfranchise minorities from voting and
17 provided for more Federal oversight; and

18 WHEREAS, The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has been amended
19 several times over the last five decades to include additional
20 voting protections for disenfranchised groups such as non-
21 English speaking citizens; and

22 WHEREAS, The Voting Rights Act of 1965 resulted in the mass
23 enfranchisement of racial minorities in the United States, most
24 notably in the South, and gave all Americans the legal means to
25 challenge unfair and illegal voting restrictions; and

26 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth is committed to upholding laws and
27 voting rights of its citizenry regardless of race, color,
28 background or age; therefore be it

29 RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the 50th anniversary of
30 the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
2 the Department of State, which is charged, in part, with
3 administering the laws to provide for the fair and efficient
4 administration of voter registration and elections in this
5 Commonwealth.