
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 209 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY FONTANA, TEPLITZ, SABATINA AND KITCHEN,
OCTOBER 13, 2015

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, OCTOBER 13, 2015

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the week of October 18 through 25, 2015, as
2 "Homeless Children's Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, "Homeless Children's Awareness Week" will bring
4 attention to the growing problems and issues facing homeless
5 children throughout Pennsylvania and across the nation; and

6 WHEREAS, In 2014, on any given night in the United States,
7 more than 1.3 million children experienced homelessness
8 according to the United States Department of Education; and

9 WHEREAS, The Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
10 states that children are homeless if they lack a fixed, regular
11 and adequate nighttime residence; and

12 WHEREAS, Homelessness negatively impacts children's physical
13 health, emotional and behavioral development and academic
14 success; and

15 WHEREAS, Children are the fastest growing segment of the
16 homeless population; and

17 WHEREAS, The number of homeless students attending public
18 school in this Commonwealth increased by 18% between the 2012-

1 2013 and 2013-2014 school year, an increase of more than double
2 the national average of 8%, according to statistics reported by
3 the United States Department of Education; and

4 WHEREAS, During the 2013-2014 school year, nearly 23,000
5 school-age children and youth were reported as experiencing
6 homelessness, which made up about 1% of the total Pennsylvania
7 public school enrollment population for that year; and

8 WHEREAS, In Allegheny County alone, almost 3,000 children
9 were homeless during the 2013-2014 school year; and

10 WHEREAS, Youth experiencing homelessness face many obstacles,
11 such as losing treasured possessions and dealing with hunger and
12 sleep deprivation; and

13 WHEREAS, A homeless family's constant moving disrupts
14 children's education, causing them to be absent from school
15 frequently, which often results in low test scores and twice the
16 likelihood of repeating a grade; and

17 WHEREAS, The National Coalition for the Homeless cites
18 studies that show youth experiencing homelessness are set back
19 academically three to six months; and

20 WHEREAS, The national school dropout rate for homeless
21 children is 60% higher than a child who does not have that
22 experience during the school year; and

23 WHEREAS, For more than 16 years, the Homeless Children's
24 Education Fund has advanced the education of children and youth
25 experiencing homelessness in Allegheny County in an effort to
26 combat such statistics by providing educational programs and
27 services, acting as a trusted advocate, sharing expertise and
28 facilitating collaborative relationships that maximize the
29 collective impact among community partners; and

30 WHEREAS, Many events will take place during "Homeless

1 Children's Awareness Week" in Pittsburgh, including a story-
2 telling event, a performance art installation and a 5K and 10K
3 run/walk to raise awareness about children experiencing
4 homelessness; and

5 WHEREAS, Individuals and groups across this Commonwealth are
6 encouraged to create their own events during "Homeless
7 Children's Awareness Week" to raise awareness about the needs
8 and challenges of children and youth experiencing homelessness;
9 therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the week of October 18
11 through 25, 2015, as "Homeless Children's Awareness Week" in
12 Pennsylvania.