
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 61 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY STEFANO, MARCH 28, 2017

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, MARCH 28, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of March 2017 as "Spread the Word to End
2 the Word Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Individuals with intellectual and developmental
4 disabilities have unique gifts and talents to share with their
5 families, friends and communities; and

6 WHEREAS, Individuals with intellectual and developmental
7 disabilities enjoy sharing life experiences, including listening
8 to music, playing video games, watching the latest movies and
9 having fun, as well as working together toward athletic
10 excellence, mutually enriching one-to-one friendships and
11 contributing to society in many ways; and

12 WHEREAS, As much as 3% of the world's population, 200 million
13 people, have intellectual disabilities, the largest disability
14 population in the world; and

15 WHEREAS, The demeaning use of the words "retard" or
16 "retarded," also known as the "R-words," are common taunts or
17 may often unwittingly be used to denote behavior that is clumsy,
18 hapless and even hopeless, whether intentional or not; and

1 WHEREAS, These words conjure up a painful stereotype of
2 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, "Spread the Word to End the Word" is an ongoing
5 effort by Special Olympics, Best Buddies and other supporters to
6 inspire respect and acceptance through raising the consciousness
7 of society about how hurtful words and disrespect can be toward
8 individuals with intellectual disabilities; and

9 WHEREAS, Pennsylvanians can help eliminate the demeaning use
10 of these words from current youth vernacular, creating a more
11 accepting world for individuals with intellectual and
12 developmental disabilities and recognizing that these
13 individuals have unique gifts and talents to share; and

14 WHEREAS, Young people can raise awareness of the dehumanizing
15 and hurtful effects of the words "retard" or "retarded," also
16 known as the "R-words," encouraging others to think before they
17 speak; therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of March 2017
19 as "Spread the Word to End the Word Month" in Pennsylvania and
20 encourage all residents to work within their communities to
21 eliminate the use of the words "retard" and "retarded" and to
22 increase awareness, understanding and respect for individuals
23 with intellectual and developmental disabilities.