
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 97 Session of
2023

INTRODUCED BY BULLOCK, KRUEGER, BURGOS, HILL-EVANS, HOHENSTEIN,
MADDEN, SANCHEZ, HOWARD, PARKER, KINSEY, KINKEAD AND
N. NELSON, MARCH 7, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, MARCH 7, 2023

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Joint Legislative Equity Committee.

2 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

3 hereby enacts as follows:

4 Section 1. Short title.

5 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Joint
6 Legislative Equity Committee Act.

7 Section 2. Definitions.

8 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
9 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
10 context clearly indicates otherwise:

11 "Committee." The Joint Legislative Equity Committee
12 established under section 3(a).

13 "Gender identity." An individual's sense of being male,
14 female or a different identification standard.

15 "Institutional policies." A rule, principle or practice
16 proposed or implemented to better guide decisions or decision
17 making which leads to the development of procedures and

1 protocols that dictate the execution of a policy.

2 Section 3. Joint Legislative Equity Committee.

3 (a) Establishment.--The Joint Legislative Equity Committee
4 is established to solicit input from members of the public,
5 especially individuals, stakeholders, groups or organizations
6 with expertise related to racial, ethnic, sex and gender equity
7 issues, in order to aid the committee in carrying out the duties
8 under this act.

9 (b) Composition.--The committee shall consist of 18 members
10 of the General Assembly who shall serve without compensation as
11 follows:

12 (1) Five members shall be appointed by the President pro
13 tempore of the Senate from among the majority party.

14 (2) Four members shall be appointed by the Minority
15 Leader of the Senate from among the minority party.

16 (3) Five members shall be appointed by the Speaker of
17 the House of Representatives from among the majority party.

18 (4) Four members shall be appointed by the Minority
19 Leader of the House of Representatives from among the
20 minority party.

21 (c) Term and vacancy.--The term of each member of the
22 committee shall run from the date of the member's appointment
23 until 30 days after the convening of the next regular session of
24 the General Assembly in odd-numbered years and until the
25 member's successor is appointed and qualified. Appointments to
26 the committee shall take effect 31 days after the convening of
27 each regular session of the General Assembly in odd-numbered
28 years. A vacancy occurring in the committee shall be filled by
29 the appointing authority making the original appointment for the
30 unexpired term.

1 (d) Organization and meetings.--The committee shall organize
2 as soon as possible after the appointment of members at the call
3 of the President pro tempore of the Senate, by electing a
4 chairperson, vice chairperson and secretary by majority vote of
5 the committee. The secretary need not be a member of the
6 committee.

7 (e) Powers and duties.--The committee shall have the same
8 powers as other standing committees of the General Assembly. The
9 committee shall:

10 (1) Upon request of a member of either chamber of the
11 General Assembly, complete a racial, ethnic, sex and gender
12 equity impact assessment for any legislation, including Rule
13 29 resolutions under the General Operating Rules of the
14 Senate and Rule 35 resolutions under the General Operating
15 Rules of the House of Representatives, which are initially
16 reported from either a standing committee of the Senate or a
17 standing committee of the House of Representatives, but not
18 both, to minimize unanticipated adverse consequences by
19 utilizing resources that may have any of the following:

20 (i) A history of expertise and positive outcomes in
21 racial, ethnic, sex or gender equity.

22 (ii) A deep understanding of ameliorating
23 disproportionate outcomes and unintended costs.

24 (2) Convene committee meetings and public hearings on
25 any matter relating to the functions, powers and duties of
26 the committee.

27 (3) Identify institutional policies and actions that, in
28 conjunction with public and private sector partners and
29 stakeholders and in support of racial, ethnic, sex or gender
30 equity, can work to improve or achieve racial, ethnic, sex or

1 gender equity.

2 (4) Review and make recommendations to align State
3 statutes, regulations, policies, programs, services and
4 budgetary priorities with the goal of racial, ethnic, sex and
5 gender equity.

6 (5) Conduct a search for any interdepartmental gaps,
7 inconsistencies and inefficiencies in the implementation or
8 attainment of institutional policies and actions.

9 (6) Identify any new laws, regulations, programs,
10 policies, services and budgetary priorities that are needed
11 to ensure and promote desired conditions of racial, ethnic,
12 sex and gender equity.

13 (7) Serve as an informational resource for the Senate
14 and the House of Representatives.

15 (8) Perform other activities determined necessary to
16 promote and achieve racial, ethnic, sex and gender equity,
17 including public awareness, working with Commonwealth
18 agencies, stakeholders, academic institutions and other
19 individuals or groups concerned with the elimination of
20 institutional policies, attitudes and cultural messages that
21 reinforce differential outcomes by race, ethnicity, sex or
22 gender identity.

23 Section 4. Effective date.

24 This act shall take effect immediately.