
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 1045 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY COOK-ARTIS, KIRKLAND, KINSEY, SCHLOSSBERG, COHEN,
SIMS, MAHONEY, YOUNGBLOOD, WHEATLEY, BULLOCK AND THOMAS,
OCTOBER 6, 2016

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, OCTOBER 6, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Governor to establish a commission on the social
2 inequalities and status of African-American men and boys in
3 this Commonwealth.

4 WHEREAS, President Barack Obama unveiled My Brother's Keeper
5 in 2014, a White House initiative whose purpose is to combat the
6 difficult social conditions facing minority men and young men in
7 the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, Quality of life indicators related to African-
9 American men and boys suggest that this population is
10 disproportionately represented at the negative end of the scale;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, African-American young men and boys are less likely
13 to learn to read and perform math at an early age and are more
14 likely to be punished and expelled from school than other
15 students; and

16 WHEREAS, This same demographic is less likely to graduate
17 from high school and more likely to be unemployed and
18 underemployed and are far more likely to become trapped in the

1 criminal justice system; and

2 WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of this Commonwealth that
3 serious efforts be undertaken to identify and develop successful
4 approaches for moving African-American men and boys toward the
5 positive end of the scale; and

6 WHEREAS, The tendency to address problems related to an
7 identified group only in the context of the total population
8 often leads to the continuation and escalation of social
9 inequalities; and

10 WHEREAS, By closing the educational achievement gap between
11 white males and African-American men of employment age, African-
12 American men would earn as much as \$170 billion more annually,
13 the national weekly earnings of all workers would increase by
14 3.6% and GDP would expand by 1.8%; and

15 WHEREAS, There are several state-level commissions or task
16 forces devoted to the concerns of African-American men and boys,
17 among them are Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Alabama,
18 Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North
19 Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Maryland, Texas,
20 Missouri, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota,
21 Arizona, California, Colorado, Oregon, Washington and the
22 District of Columbia; and

23 WHEREAS, A coordinated strategy needs to be developed for
24 implementing measures designed to yield positive results for
25 African-American men and boys; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge Governor Tom
27 Wolf to establish a commission on the social inequalities and
28 status of African-American men and boys in this Commonwealth;
29 and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the commission focus on the policy areas of

1 criminal justice, health, education, employment and
2 strengthening families; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the commission recommend, in annual reports to
4 the Governor and the General Assembly, specific legislative or
5 executive action in these areas to improve the lives of African-
6 American men and boys.