
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 160 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY INNAMORATO, GUZMAN, LEE, SCHLOSSBERG, KINSEY,
BENHAM, VITALI, MERSKI, McNEILL, D. WILLIAMS, SANCHEZ,
KENYATTA, KINKEAD, RABB, FITZGERALD, A. DAVIS, D. MILLER AND
HOHENSTEIN, DECEMBER 3, 2021

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON URBAN AFFAIRS, DECEMBER 3, 2021

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to study
2 evictions and eviction moratoriums and their impact on
3 health, well-being and mortality during the COVID-19
4 pandemic.

5 WHEREAS, On March 18, 2020, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court
6 issued an eviction and foreclosure moratorium and subsequently
7 extended that moratorium until it expired on June 1, 2020; and

8 WHEREAS, Governor Wolf signed an executive order that would
9 place a moratorium on new eviction and foreclosure filings from
10 May 7, 2020, to July 9, 2020, and the executive order was later
11 extended to August 31, 2020; and

12 WHEREAS, On September 4, 2020, the Centers for Disease
13 Control and Prevention (CDC) issued an Order under Section 361
14 of the Public Health Service Act to temporarily halt certain
15 residential evictions to prevent the further spread of COVID-19
16 between September 4, 2020, and December 31, 2020; and

17 WHEREAS, On December 28, 2020, President Trump signed the
18 Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, which extended the CDC

1 temporary halt on residential evictions through January 31,
2 2021; and

3 WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
4 moratorium was extended until June 30, 2021; and

5 WHEREAS, On August 3, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control
6 and Prevention announced a new order from President Biden
7 imposing a 60-day Federal moratorium on evictions due to the
8 high rate of transmission of the COVID-19 Delta strain to end on
9 October 3, 2021; and

10 WHEREAS, The United States Supreme Court ended the eviction
11 moratorium extension on August 26, 2021, when it rejected the
12 moratorium on the grounds that such a moratorium must be
13 specifically authorized by the United States Congress; and

14 WHEREAS, Between March 15, 2020, and July 31, 2021, the
15 Department of Labor and Industry received 2,479,835 unemployment
16 compensation claims; and

17 WHEREAS, Millions of Pennsylvanians experienced unemployment,
18 are currently unemployed or are experiencing underemployment,
19 which is drastically affecting their ability to pay rent,
20 mortgages and other life-sustaining bills; and

21 WHEREAS, According to the October 2021 Census Pulse Survey,
22 840,564 Pennsylvania households have either missed last month's
23 rent or mortgage payment or do not have confidence that they can
24 make next month's payment on time; and

25 WHEREAS, Thousands of Pennsylvanians have utility accounts
26 that are past due and have few options at bringing them current;
27 and

28 WHEREAS, As of October 15, 2021, this Commonwealth ranks 38th
29 in cases and 40th in deaths in the United States from COVID-19,
30 but has been as high as 7th in the nation; and

1 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth is facing a massive eviction event
2 that would drastically increase the number of homeless
3 Pennsylvanians, and thousands of families would face the
4 uncertainty of housing insecurity; and

5 WHEREAS, Numerous studies have documented a link between
6 evictions and increased COVID-19 infections and mortality, with
7 one such study finding at least one COVID-19 death for every 60
8 evictions; and

9 WHEREAS, With rising COVID-19 cases and the eviction
10 moratorium ending, millions of Pennsylvanians could be at risk
11 for illness or death; and

12 WHEREAS, Numerous reports have shown that housing
13 displacement and eviction prevention can be a key component of a
14 comprehensive strategy to control the pandemic by reducing
15 COVID-19 infection, transmission, illness, hospitalizations and
16 death and to address health inequity; and

17 WHEREAS, Reliable eviction information is needed as
18 Pennsylvania continues to deal with this crisis and to lessen
19 the impact of future crises in urban, suburban and rural areas
20 of this Commonwealth; therefore be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
22 State Government Commission to study evictions and eviction
23 moratoriums and their impact on health, well-being and mortality
24 during the COVID-19 pandemic; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission study
26 how Federal eviction and foreclosure moratorium policies,
27 potential changes to the Landlord and Tenant Act to protect
28 tenants during a declared disaster emergency, municipal
29 ordinances or other local temporary policies have impacted
30 tenants, landlords, public utilities, the courts and municipal

1 governments during the COVID-19 pandemic; and be it further
2 RESOLVED, That the study include recommendations to examine
3 the impact that evictions have on people of color, women,
4 families with children, people with disabilities and other
5 populations that could be disproportionately impacted by
6 evictions; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the study include reporting on the public
8 health impacts of the housing crisis and how it is affected by
9 COVID-19-related evictions; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the study include recommendations to the
11 General Assembly on changes to law that could decrease the
12 number of evictions in this Commonwealth, mitigate the impact of
13 evictions and ensure that Pennsylvanians have adequate housing
14 during the COVID-19 pandemic and future emergencies; and be it
15 further

16 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission issue a
17 report with its findings and recommendations within three months
18 of the passage of this resolution to all of the following:

19 (1) the Urban Affairs and Housing Committee of the
20 Senate;

21 (2) the Urban Affairs Committee of the House of
22 Representatives;

23 (3) the Judiciary Committee of the Senate; and

24 (4) the Judiciary Committee of the House of
25 Representatives;

26 and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission solicit
28 input from representatives of all aspects of the housing sector
29 to assist the Joint State Government Commission with its
30 findings and recommendations in the report.