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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 195 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY A. HARRIS, P. COSTA, CALTAGIRONE, MILLARD, ROZZI,  
KULIK, FREEMAN, W. KELLER, V. BROWN AND O'BRIEN,  
MARCH 31, 2017

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, MARCH 31, 2017

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A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 Urging Congress to normalize relations with the Cuban government  
2 and lift the current embargo and other trade barriers with  
3 the Republic of Cuba.

4 WHEREAS, For more than five decades, the United States has  
5 maintained, through the most comprehensive set of economic  
6 sanctions levied against any nation, a strict embargo with the  
7 Republic of Cuba; and

8 WHEREAS, Through various Federal acts, regulations and  
9 presidential orders, the embargo places significant restrictions  
10 and prohibitions on American-Cuban relationships, notably trade,  
11 travel and financial transactions; and

12 WHEREAS, United States laws and regulations make American  
13 exports to Cuba difficult and burdensome, if not outright  
14 prohibited; and

15 WHEREAS, Under provisions of the Trade Sanctions Reform and  
16 Export Enhancement Act of 2000 and export regulations of the  
17 Department of Commerce, United States food and agricultural  
18 entities are legally permitted to export to Cuba, but doing so

1 requires prior permission from the Department of Commerce and  
2 compliance with numerous Federal export regulations; and

3 WHEREAS, Despite the ability to legally export, financial  
4 restrictions limit the ability of American entities to  
5 competitively serve the market, allowing international  
6 competitors to capitalize from potential United States market  
7 share; and

8 WHEREAS, Relaxing restrictions and prohibitions on United  
9 States exports to Cuba will present new opportunities to grow  
10 Pennsylvania's and our nation's agricultural sector and create  
11 jobs in rural communities across the United States; and

12 WHEREAS, Currently, Cuba imports \$2 billion annually in  
13 agricultural products to feed Cuba's people, who may benefit  
14 from Pennsylvania's agriculture industry, the leading industry  
15 of this Commonwealth; and

16 WHEREAS, Historical, cultural and commercial ties exist  
17 between Pennsylvania and Cuba; and

18 WHEREAS, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Matanzas, Cuba, are  
19 sister cities; and

20 WHEREAS, Many opportunities are opening with regard to trade  
21 with Cuba, which will benefit Pennsylvania manufacturing,  
22 agriculture and other industries, and small businesses; and

23 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania with its world class port and close  
24 proximity to Cuba is well positioned to ship products to the  
25 Cuban market; and

26 WHEREAS, The Republic of Cuba, home to more than 11 million  
27 consumers in close proximity to the United States, is a logical  
28 target for expanded United States food and agricultural exports;  
29 and

30 WHEREAS, Normalizing trade relations between the United

1 States and Cuba will enhance Cuban citizens' access to  
2 affordable food while providing the United States farm and  
3 business community with new market access opportunities; and

4 WHEREAS, Normalized trade will drive growth in both countries  
5 and allow farmers, ranchers and food companies in the United  
6 States to efficiently contribute to the food security needs of  
7 the Cuban citizenry; and

8 WHEREAS, Ending the American embargo against Cuba will boost  
9 the Cuban economy and lead to an improved quality of life for  
10 the Cuban people; and

11 WHEREAS, Through congressional action, breaking down the  
12 barriers between Americans and Cubans will expand diplomatic  
13 relations, travel, partnerships and trade, allowing all citizens  
14 the opportunity to discover and reconnect on mutual interests,  
15 benefiting Cubans and Americans alike; therefore be it

16 RESOLVED (the Senate concurring), That the General Assembly  
17 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the  
18 United States to normalize relations with the Cuban government  
19 and lift the current embargo and other trade barriers with the  
20 Republic of Cuba; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to  
22 the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the  
23 United States House of Representatives and the members of the  
24 Pennsylvania congressional delegation.