

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 293 Session of 2024

INTRODUCED BY M. MACKENZIE, R. MACKENZIE, BANTA, D'ORSIE, DALEY, GLEIM, GREINER, GUENST, JAMES, JOZWIAK, KAUFFMAN, KRUPA, MARCELL, MENTZER, MOUL, PICKETT, SCHEUREN, STAATS, TWARDZIK AND GILLEN, JANUARY 31, 2024

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, JANUARY 31, 2024

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating October 14, 2024, as "William Penn Day" in
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, William Penn, the founder of this Commonwealth, was
4 born in London, England, on October 14, 1644; and

5 WHEREAS, The Province of Pennsylvania was acquired by William
6 Penn from King Charles II of England in payment of a debt the
7 king owed his father, Admiral Sir William Penn, for which
8 William Penn received a charter from King Charles II, dated
9 March 4, 1681; and

10 WHEREAS, William Penn had initially decided to name the land
11 "Sylvania," which in Latin means "woods," and to which King
12 Charles II added the prefix "Penn" to the name in honor of
13 William Penn's father; and

14 WHEREAS, William Penn invited people of diverse nationalities
15 and creeds to join with him in a "Holy Experiment"; and

16 WHEREAS, His own prayers were that Pennsylvania might become
17 "the seed of a nation"; and

1 WHEREAS, Shortly after landing in Pennsylvania, William Penn
2 brokered the Treaty of Shackamaxon, commonly referred to as
3 Penn's Treaty; and

4 WHEREAS, Penn's Treaty was historic not just in its
5 occurrence, but in the mutual respect shown between Penn and
6 Native American tribes; and

7 WHEREAS, The famous French historian, philosopher and writer
8 Voltaire noted that Penn's Treaty was the only treaty with
9 Native Americans "never sworn to or broken"; and

10 WHEREAS, Many of the liberties and rights that we enjoy today
11 can be traced to William Penn's efforts; and

12 WHEREAS, William Penn had strong faith in a representative
13 form of government, public education without regard to race,
14 creed, gender or ability to pay and respect for the civil
15 liberties of all persons; and

16 WHEREAS, William Penn initiated the first call for a "united
17 states" in his 1697 "A Plan for Union for the English Colonies
18 in America"; and

19 WHEREAS, William Penn established the first constitutions,
20 including religious liberty and tolerance, self-government and
21 taxation only through representation, in modern history; and

22 WHEREAS, On October 28, 1701, William Penn's third revision
23 to Pennsylvania's Constitution was adopted, "Charter of
24 Privileges"; and

25 WHEREAS, The "Charter of Privileges" so firmly established
26 and grounded Pennsylvania as a keystone to the other colonies
27 that it evolved into the outline and later adoption of our
28 American liberties, the Constitution of the United States; and

29 WHEREAS, In 1751, the General Assembly commissioned a foundry
30 in England to forge a bell to properly commemorate and celebrate

1 the 50th anniversary of William Penn's "Charter of Privileges";
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Today that bell, the Liberty Bell, is celebrated as
4 one of the United States' most famous symbols of American
5 independence; and

6 WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United
7 States and writer of the Declaration of Independence, duly
8 recognized William Penn's indelible influence upon the United
9 States and stated that he was, without doubt, "the greatest
10 lawgiver the world has produced"; and

11 WHEREAS, Public Law 98-516, a joint resolution, which became
12 law on October 19, 1984, declared that William Penn and his
13 wife, Hannah Callowhill Penn, are honorary citizens of the
14 United States; and

15 WHEREAS, In the ceiling of the State Capitol's Rotunda, a
16 composite of three separate letters written in 1681 by William
17 Penn, remind us of how Pennsylvania became the "Birthplace of
18 Freedom" and the "Birthplace of America" when he stated that
19 "There may be room there for such a Holy Experiment. For the
20 nations want a precedent and my God will make it the seed of a
21 nation. That an example may be set up to the nations. That we
22 may do the thing that is truly wise and just"; and

23 WHEREAS, The State Museum contains a permanent exhibit
24 entitled "Memorial Hall" which is dedicated to the vision of
25 Pennsylvania's founder William Penn; therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate October
27 14, 2024, as "William Penn Day" in Pennsylvania to honor the
28 life and legacy of William Penn; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives proudly proclaim
30 that William Penn is an inseparable and indispensable part of

1 Pennsylvania's history.