
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 629 Session of
2014

INTRODUCED BY NEILSON, KOTIK, READSHAW, MILLARD, HAGGERTY,
FARINA, MIRABITO, BIZZARRO, BISHOP, COHEN, DIGIROLAMO,
KINSEY, VEREB, BOBACK, K. BOYLE, CALTAGIRONE, HARKINS,
HENNESSEY, THOMAS, MAJOR, KORTZ, MCNEILL, DONATUCCI, ROSS,
KAVULICH, ROEBUCK, PARKER, D. COSTA, MILNE, GINGRICH, ROCK,
YOUNGBLOOD, KIRKLAND, MURT, WATSON, SANTARSIERO, MAHONEY AND
PETRI, JANUARY 30, 2014

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
JANUARY 30, 2014

A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring Sister Francesca Onley, retiring president of Holy
2 Family University, for her service and dedication to the
3 university and the community during her tenure.

4 WHEREAS, Sister Francesca Onley, president of Holy Family
5 University, located on Frankford Avenue in Northeast
6 Philadelphia, announced her retirement to members of the
7 university community on January 13, 2014; and

8 WHEREAS, Sister Onley has been president of the university
9 for 32 years; and

10 WHEREAS, She carried on the tradition of a having a nun from
11 the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth serve as president of
12 Holy Family University, which has occurred since the college was
13 founded in 1954; and

14 WHEREAS, Sister Francesca Onley was born on March 4, 1933,
15 and raised in Mayfair, a neighborhood in Philadelphia, and

1 joined the order in 1950; and

2 WHEREAS, From 1953 to 1965, she was a member of the Nazareth
3 Academy Grade School faculty; and

4 WHEREAS, During that time, in 1959, she was a member of one
5 of the first graduating classes of what was then Holy Family
6 College, where she received a bachelor of arts degree in
7 education, business; and

8 WHEREAS, From 1965 to 1967, Sister Francesca Onley was a
9 member of the Nazareth Academy High School faculty and during
10 this time, in 1966, received a master of science degree in
11 secondary education, business from Marywood College in Scranton;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, From 1967 to 1972, she worked as assistant principal
14 and guidance counselor at Nazareth Academy High School and in
15 1972, became principal, a position she held until 1980; and

16 WHEREAS, From 1980 to 1981, she worked as the assistant to
17 the president at Holy Family University; and

18 WHEREAS, Sister Francesca Onley, PhD, CSFN, was inaugurated
19 as Holy Family University's fourth president and chief
20 administrative officer on November 22, 1981; and

21 WHEREAS, In 1986, she earned a PhD in higher education
22 administration from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Her entire education career has been spent in a few-
25 block radius in Northeast Philadelphia, but her work has taken
26 her to international locations in Eastern Europe, Africa and
27 Asia, as well as throughout the United States; and

28 WHEREAS, Sister Francesca Onley, at 80 years of age, is the
29 longest-tenured college president in the region; and

30 WHEREAS, Sister Francesca Onley is known around campus for

1 her down-to-earth ways and for her desire to expand the
2 university's reach; and

3 WHEREAS, Under her leadership, Holy Family University added
4 master and doctoral programs, became a university and
5 dramatically expanded enrollment, as well as constructed many
6 buildings, including the campus center in 1988, the university
7 building in Newtown in 1997, the education and technology center
8 in 2005 and the garden residence in 2006; and

9 WHEREAS, During her tenure, other university sites were also
10 launched, including a site in Bensalem in 2003 and a site in
11 south Philadelphia in 2007; and

12 WHEREAS, Sister Francesca Onley was also a member of the
13 International Association of University Presidents, as well as
14 Chair of the Commission on Disarmament Education, Conflict
15 Resolution and Peace; and

16 WHEREAS, As chair of the Commission on Disarmament Education,
17 Conflict Resolution and Peace, Sister Francesca Onley encouraged
18 university presidents in the association to launch and
19 strengthen peace education initiatives; and

20 WHEREAS, Through these myriad of accomplishments, Sister
21 Francesca Onley has demonstrated her commitment to higher
22 education and to the City of Philadelphia; therefore be it

23 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor Sister
24 Francesca Onley, retiring president of Holy Family University,
25 for her service and dedication to the university and the
26 community during her tenure; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Holy
28 Family University, 9801 Frankford Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19114.