
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 470 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY MENSCH, DINNIMAN, BOSCOLA, BROWNE, GREENLEAF,
ARGALL, FARNESE, SCAVELLO, BREWSTER, RESCHENTHALER,
EICHELBERGER, FONTANA, COSTA AND YUDICHAK, OCTOBER 19, 2016

INTRODUCED AND ADOPTED, OCTOBER 19, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the week of October 23 through 29, 2016, as
2 "Pennsylvania German Heritage Week" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, There are communities of Pennsylvania Germans living
4 in many parts of the United States and Canada today; and

5 WHEREAS, The largest settlement is in Pennsylvania,
6 concentrated in the eastern part of this Commonwealth; and

7 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Germans, also called Pennsylvania
8 Deutsch, are descendants of early German immigrants to
9 Pennsylvania; and

10 WHEREAS, The first major emigration of Germans to America
11 resulted in the founding of the Borough of Germantown in
12 northwest Philadelphia County on October 6, 1683; and

13 WHEREAS, The German population arrived in droves, mostly
14 before 1800, to escape religious persecution in Europe and also
15 to seek a better life; and

16 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Germans maintained numerous
17 religious affiliations, with the greatest number being Lutheran

1 or Reformed, as well as many Anabaptists; and

2 WHEREAS, The Anabaptist religion promoted a simple lifestyle
3 and their adherents were known as Plain People or Plain Dutch
4 (Deutsch), as opposed to the Fancy Dutch (Deutsch) who tended to
5 assimilate more easily into the American mainstream; and

6 WHEREAS, Over time, the various dialects spoken by these
7 immigrants fused into a unique dialect known as Pennsylvania
8 German or Pennsylvania "Dutch" (Deutsch); and

9 WHEREAS, At one time, more than one-third of Pennsylvania's
10 population spoke this language, which also had an impact on the
11 local dialect of English; and

12 WHEREAS, Substantial Pennsylvania German literature, art and
13 architecture exist and many written records were adorned with
14 illuminated writing; and

15 WHEREAS, Articles such as pottery, furniture, needlework and
16 barns made use of decorative motifs, often of a highly artistic
17 nature; and

18 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania Germans have greatly contributed to the
19 culture of this Commonwealth; and

20 WHEREAS, Organized in 1891, the Pennsylvania German Society
21 has published abundant material relative to the history and
22 folklore of the Pennsylvania Germans; therefore be it

23 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the week of October 23
24 through 29, 2016, as "Pennsylvania German Heritage Week" in
25 Pennsylvania; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the Senate encourage participation in State
27 and local observances celebrating the contributions and history
28 of the Pennsylvania Germans to this Commonwealth.