
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 16 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY HUGHES, FARNESE, HAYWOOD AND LEACH,
FEBRUARY 1, 2019

REFERRED TO LAW AND JUSTICE, FEBRUARY 1, 2019

A RESOLUTION

1 Establishing a task force on law enforcement practices and
2 procedures used in response to large scale demonstrations,
3 protests and other acts of civil disobedience.

4 WHEREAS, The United States is currently engaged in a national
5 debate on law enforcement policies and practices; and

6 WHEREAS, High-profile incidents of use of force by law
7 enforcement have led to numerous demonstrations and protests in
8 recent months; and

9 WHEREAS, Several of these demonstrations and protests have
10 turned violent; and

11 WHEREAS, These violent demonstrations and protests have
12 resulted in millions of dollars in property damage, numerous
13 arrests, physical injuries and, in some cases, death; and

14 WHEREAS, Law enforcement responses to large-scale but
15 otherwise peaceful acts of civil disobedience have the potential
16 to escalate already charged atmospheres; and

17 WHEREAS, The people of this Commonwealth have a
18 constitutional right to assemble peacefully; and

1 WHEREAS, Law enforcement has a duty and responsibility to
2 protect the general public from acts of violence, including
3 riots and militant protests; and

4 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth has an obligation to assist law
5 enforcement in developing best practices to ensure that large-
6 scale demonstrations do not become violent; therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That the Senate establish a task force on law
8 enforcement policies and procedures for responding to large-
9 scale demonstrations; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the task force be comprised of six members of
11 the Senate, three appointed by the President pro tempore of the
12 Senate and three appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;
13 and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the task force direct the Joint State
15 Government Commission to establish an advisory committee
16 consisting of the following members:

17 (1) The Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police or the
18 commissioner's designee.

19 (2) The Attorney General or the Attorney General's
20 designee.

21 (3) The Adjutant General or the Adjutant General's
22 designee.

23 (4) The Director of Homeland Security or the director's
24 designee.

25 (5) The police commissioner of a city of the first class
26 or the commissioner's designee.

27 (6) The chief of police of a city of the second class or
28 the chief's designee.

29 (7) A representative of the Pennsylvania Municipal
30 League, to be selected by the Joint State Government

1 Commission, upon the recommendation of the governing body of
2 the Pennsylvania Municipal League.

3 (8) A representative of the County Commissioners
4 Association of Pennsylvania, to be selected by the Joint
5 State Government Commission, upon the recommendation of the
6 governing body of the County Commissioners Association of
7 Pennsylvania.

8 (9) Three incumbent chiefs of police from municipal
9 police departments within this Commonwealth, to be selected
10 by the Joint State Government Commission, upon the
11 recommendation of the governing body of the Pennsylvania
12 Chiefs of Police Association.

13 (10) An incumbent chief of police of a university or
14 campus police department within this Commonwealth, to be
15 selected by the Joint State Government Commission and
16 approved by the task force.

17 (11) A current or former Federal law enforcement officer
18 with experience handling protests and other forms of civil
19 disobedience, to be selected by the Joint State Government
20 Commission and approved by the task force.

21 (12) A current or former member of the United States
22 Department of Justice Civil Rights Division with experience
23 investigating, litigating or prosecuting claims of civil
24 rights violations, to be selected by the Joint State
25 Government Commission and approved by the task force.

26 (13) An attorney or legal educator specializing in the
27 field of civil rights or constitutional law, to be selected
28 by the Joint State Government Commission and approved by the
29 task force.

30 (14) Two representatives of the Pennsylvania Chapter of

1 the National Association for the Advancement of Colored
2 People, to be appointed by the Joint State Government
3 Commission, upon the recommendation of the governing body of
4 the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Association for the
5 Advancement of Colored People.

6 (15) Two representatives of the Pennsylvania Chapter of
7 the American Civil Liberties Union, to be appointed by the
8 Joint State Government Commission, upon the recommendation of
9 the governing body of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the
10 American Civil Liberties Union.

11 (16) A representative of the Pennsylvania District
12 Attorneys Association, to be appointed by the Joint State
13 Government Commission, upon the recommendation of the
14 governing body of the Pennsylvania District Attorneys
15 Association.

16 (17) A representative of the Public Defenders
17 Association of Pennsylvania, to be selected by the Joint
18 State Government Commission, upon the recommendation of the
19 governing body of the Public Defenders Association of
20 Pennsylvania.

21 (18) A representative of the Pennsylvania State Troopers
22 Association, to be selected by the Joint State Government
23 Commission, upon the recommendation of the governing body of
24 the Pennsylvania State Troopers Association.

25 (19) A representative of the Pennsylvania State Lodge
26 Fraternal Order of Police, to be selected by the Joint State
27 Government Commission, upon the recommendation of the
28 governing body of the Pennsylvania State Lodge Fraternal
29 Order of Police.

30 (20) A representative of the Pennsylvania Sheriffs'

1 Association, to be selected by the Joint State Government
2 Commission, upon recommendations of the governing body of the
3 Pennsylvania Sheriffs' Association;

4 and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police
6 serve as chairperson of the advisory committee; and be it
7 further

8 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, working
9 with the advisory committee, conduct a thorough and
10 comprehensive study of existing State and local law enforcement
11 policies and procedures for responding to acts of civil
12 disobedience, including training and response programs, crowd
13 control tactics, the use of less-than-lethal force, the issues
14 set forth in this resolution and other related issues as
15 determined by the Joint State Government Commission; and be it
16 further

17 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, working
18 with the advisory committee, review the following to identify
19 the best law enforcement practices for responding to acts of
20 civil disobedience and the causes of escalation from peaceful
21 demonstration to violent protest and develop recommendations
22 best suited for law enforcement agencies in this Commonwealth:

23 (1) Proposals and policies of other states.

24 (2) Policies currently in place at law enforcement
25 agencies in this Commonwealth and other states.

26 (3) Other resources on the issues of civil disobedience
27 and law enforcement practices;

28 and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission
30 establish a process by which interested members of the public

1 can make suggestions and have input; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the task force recommend changes to State law,
3 practices, policies and procedures relating to law enforcement
4 responses to acts of civil disobedience that are necessary to
5 ensure the rights and safety of demonstrators, law enforcement
6 and the general public; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission issue a
8 report of the task force's findings and recommendations to the
9 Senate within 12 months of the adoption of this resolution.