

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

## HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 23 Session of  
2023

INTRODUCED BY D. MILLER, McCLINTON, PIELLI, N. NELSON, FREEMAN,  
HOHENSTEIN, WAXMAN, MADDEN, PROBST, HILL-EVANS, RABB, KINSEY,  
HOWARD, SANCHEZ, KENYATTA, SCHLOSSBERG, D. WILLIAMS, KHAN,  
CIRESI, VITALI, KINKEAD AND HADDOCK, MARCH 8, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, MARCH 8, 2023

## A RESOLUTION ◀

1 Recognizing March 18, 2023, as "Public Defender Day" in  
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, March 18, 2023, marks the 60th anniversary of the  
4 United States Supreme Court decision in *Gideon v. Wainwright*;  
5 and

6 WHEREAS, The Court unanimously ruled that the Sixth Amendment  
7 to the Constitution of the United States guaranteed every person  
8 the right to an attorney, regardless of the person's ability to  
9 afford one or the severity of the person's alleged crime; and

10 WHEREAS, The ruling spurred nationwide efforts to recruit and  
11 train legal defense attorneys for the purpose of providing a  
12 public defense; and

13 WHEREAS, These efforts were built on the legacy of Clara  
14 Shortridge Foltz, who first presented her vision for public  
15 defense in 1893; and

16 WHEREAS, Public defenders serve to give a voice to the

1 otherwise voiceless in our society at their most desperate  
2 moments; and

3 WHEREAS, In order to best serve this purpose, public  
4 defenders must have access to the same resources as the  
5 prosecution; and

6 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania remains the only state in the nation  
7 that provides zero State funding for public defender offices;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, The lack of resources strains even the best  
10 attorneys and negatively impacts the quality of a legal defense;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Despite ongoing challenges, public defenders  
13 continue to show up and give their all to their clients;  
14 therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize March ◀  
16 18, 2023, as "Public Defender Day" in Pennsylvania and honor the  
17 hard and selfless work of public defenders across this  
18 Commonwealth.