

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 301 Session of 2024

INTRODUCED BY MATZIE, PICKETT, JAMES, SANCHEZ, GALLAGHER,
GREINER, HILL-EVANS, MALAGARI, McNEILL, KHAN, NEILSON,
HARKINS, CIRESI, DALEY, R. MACKENZIE, JOZWIAK, KAUFFMAN AND
O'MARA, JANUARY 31, 2024

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, JANUARY 31, 2024

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating March 10, 2024, as "Charter Day" and Pennsylvania's
2 343rd birthday in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On March 4, 1681, King Charles II of England granted
4 William Penn a charter for land in the New World to make up for
5 a large debt that the king owed to Penn's father; and

6 WHEREAS, William Penn had initially decided to name the land
7 "Sylvania," which in Latin means "woods," to which King Charles
8 II added the prefix "Penn" in honor of William Penn's father,
9 Admiral Sir William Penn; and

10 WHEREAS, Admiral Penn had served England as a rear admiral
11 and vice admiral of Ireland, a vice admiral of England, a
12 general in the First Anglo-Dutch War and great captain commander
13 under the Duke of York; and

14 WHEREAS, William Penn wrote a Frame of Government of
15 Pennsylvania that established a democratic system containing
16 full freedom of religion, fair trials featuring independent
17 juries, assemblies consisting of elected representatives of the

1 people and a separation of powers in the government, all ideas
2 that later formed the crux of the Constitution of the United
3 States; and

4 WHEREAS, William Penn described Pennsylvania as his "holy
5 experiment" and from it he hoped a nation based on justice would
6 grow; and

7 WHEREAS, William Penn's charter exists as the formal
8 beginning of the colony and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
9 and through it, William Penn established the first example of
10 democracy in what would become the United States of America; and

11 WHEREAS, Our residents benefit from learning more about the
12 overall history of this Commonwealth from its founding and how
13 the principles of governance within the Commonwealth date back
14 to the beliefs of William Penn; and

15 WHEREAS, The history of Pennsylvania exists as a kaleidoscope
16 of stories and people, with each area of this Commonwealth
17 having multiple stories of history involving key characters and
18 events that create and establish Pennsylvania's heritage; and

19 WHEREAS, "Charter Day" and Pennsylvania's birthday are
20 typically observed by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum
21 Commission on the second Sunday of March, which in 2024 is March
22 10; and

23 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
24 encourages visits to all of its sites in celebration of "Charter
25 Day" and Pennsylvania's 343rd birthday; and

26 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission,
27 the Pennsylvania State Archives and the State Historical Records
28 Advisory Board each work to inform Commonwealth residents about
29 our Commonwealth's heritage through special activities,
30 including sponsoring an annual "Charter Day" event in the State

1 Museum of Pennsylvania; and

2 WHEREAS, This free event includes a presentation of the 1681
3 charter as well as Pennsylvania's copy of a joint resolution of
4 Congress proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the
5 United States extending the right of suffrage to women and
6 Pennsylvania's joint resolution for ratification of the 19th
7 Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, stories of
8 Pennsylvania and other programs; and

9 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has 23 other State historic sites and
10 museums and numerous other historical organizations that
11 continue to operate, largely thanks to the assistance of
12 volunteers and other groups that have donated their money, time
13 and other resources so that residents can remain well informed
14 about the fabric of this Commonwealth's history; therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate March
16 10, 2024, as "Charter Day" and Pennsylvania's 343rd birthday in
17 Pennsylvania; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the residents, schools, other educational
19 institutions and patriotic, religious, historical and veterans'
20 groups be urged to participate with any and all "Charter Day"
21 activities sponsored by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum
22 Commission, the Pennsylvania State Archives, the State
23 Historical Records Advisory Board, the 23 other State historic
24 sites and museums or those offered by any of the many other
25 historical organizations within this Commonwealth; and be it
26 further

27 RESOLVED, That the volunteers and other residents who keep
28 history alive through their support and work for the
29 Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Pennsylvania
30 State Archives, the State Historical Records Advisory Board, the

1 23 other State historic sites and museums or through the
2 numerous other historical organizations within this Commonwealth
3 be honored for their efforts.