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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 73 Session of  
2023

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INTRODUCED BY PARKER, HOHENSTEIN, KINSEY, SANCHEZ, MADDEN,  
KINKEAD, WAXMAN AND GREEN, APRIL 17, 2023

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, APRIL 17, 2023

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A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study,  
2 analyze and report on the relationship between gun violence  
3 and the use of social media in Pennsylvania.

4 WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia in recent years has  
5 experienced an epidemic of gun violence, increased murder rates  
6 and a significant upward trend in homicides and shootings; and

7 WHEREAS, As of December 28, 2022, there have been 1,797  
8 nonfatal and 471 fatal shooting victims and 514 homicides in  
9 2022 in the City of Philadelphia, according to the Philadelphia  
10 Office of the Controller; and

11 WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Police Department has become  
12 increasingly focused on monitoring social media activity, having  
13 noted the upward trend in violent confrontations being posted to  
14 social media, which is used to perpetuate, chronicle and  
15 escalate these events in real-time; and

16 WHEREAS, Social media has driven young people in particular  
17 to seek out tools and equipment like guns to commit acts of  
18 violence; and

1       WHEREAS, Social media posts often include threats, boast  
2 about crimes committed, disclose an individual's affiliation  
3 with street crews and make taunts and intimidations; and

4       WHEREAS, Though the inherent danger posed by social media is  
5 not fully known, the rate of public engagement with these  
6 platforms holds the potential to promote gun violence at a time  
7 when other crimes have markedly decreased; and

8       WHEREAS, Gun policy researchers at Temple University recently  
9 observed that while a global pandemic has greatly reduced in-  
10 person interactions, social media perpetuates grudges and  
11 grievances, often revealing the location of potential victims;  
12 and

13       WHEREAS, Publicly accessible video and photographs posted and  
14 disseminated widely on these platforms aid law enforcement in  
15 identifying suspects; and

16       WHEREAS, As deadly shootings in Philadelphia continue, new  
17 and updated solutions must be identified and considered, such as  
18 social media partnerships, which can be an advantageous resource  
19 in the fight against gun violence; therefore be it

20       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the  
21 Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study, analyze and  
22 report on the relationship between gun violence and the use of  
23 social media in Pennsylvania; and be it further

24       RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
25 issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the  
26 General Assembly no later than 18 months after the adoption of  
27 this resolution; and be it further

28       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives further urge all  
29 social media companies to take a proactive role in fighting the  
30 gun violence epidemic nationwide by monitoring and removing

1 posts that incite violence from their platforms.