
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 371 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY DINNIMAN, FONTANA, FARNESE, MARTIN, MENSCH AND
PHILLIPS-HILL, SEPTEMBER 18, 2020

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, SEPTEMBER 18, 2020

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of September 2020 as "International
2 Underground Railroad Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania was a strategic and historic location
4 of freedom through the Underground Railroad; and

5 WHEREAS, Thousands of men and women risked their own freedom
6 to help freedom seekers escape bondage; and

7 WHEREAS, People such as Basil Biggs, Thomas and Frances
8 Scroggins Brown, Lucinda Bryant, Charles C. Burleigh, Martin R.
9 Delany, Robert Douglass, Jr., James Forten, William C.
10 Goodridge, Francis Ellen Watkins Harper, Dr. Francis J. LeMoyne,
11 Lucretia Mott, William Nesbit, William Parker, John Peck, Robert
12 Purvis, Sarah Forten Purvis, Dr. William Rutherford, Abraham
13 Shadd, Stephen Smith, Thaddeus Stevens, William Still, John
14 Vashon, Albert Vosburgh, William Whipper, John Greenleaf
15 Whittier, Lewis Woodson and others devoted their lives to this
16 cause; and

17 WHEREAS, The American Anti-Slavery Society was an interracial
18 organization dedicated to the entire abolition of slavery in the

1 United States; and

2 WHEREAS, The American Anti-Slavery Society was founded in
3 Philadelphia in 1833; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1851, freedom seekers and abolitionists defended
5 freedom at Christiana in Lancaster County; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1838, when Black men were deprived of their
7 established right to vote in this Commonwealth, African
8 Americans in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia and their allies in the
9 General Assembly advocated for the restoration of
10 enfranchisement 32 years before the ratification of the 15th
11 Amendment to the Constitution of the United States restored
12 voting rights, thus showing that Pennsylvanians valued and
13 advocated for civil and human rights; and

14 WHEREAS, The Underground Railroad traced across Pennsylvania
15 with lecturers and a series of safe houses, agents, conductors
16 and stations, in a clandestine network that helped freedom
17 seekers realize freedom in Pennsylvania and elsewhere; and

18 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth should show appreciation for the
19 inspiring efforts of the people of Pennsylvania and all those
20 from around the world who have committed themselves to document
21 and share the Underground Railroad through the Pennsylvania
22 Civil War Sesquicentennial and Quest for Freedom programs that
23 connected Underground Railroad sites across this Commonwealth,
24 the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad
25 Network to Freedom program that lists 51 sites and centers in
26 Pennsylvania, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and
27 Cultural Organization's Sites of Memory designations; and

28 WHEREAS, Commonwealth agencies, institutions and
29 organizations such as the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum
30 Commission, Department of Community and Economic Development,

1 and the 14 Frederick Douglass Institutes across the Pennsylvania
2 State System of Higher Education continue to educate young
3 people about Pennsylvania's role and leadership; and

4 WHEREAS, "International Underground Railroad Month" provides
5 an opportunity for worldwide open dialogue that illuminates the
6 hopes that arise from freedom for all people; therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of September
8 2020 as "International Underground Railroad Month" in
9 Pennsylvania; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the Senate honor all those who have fought and
11 continue to fight for the freedom of all peoples.