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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 504 Session of  
2024

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INTRODUCED BY WEBSTER, HILL-EVANS, RABB, HOHENSTEIN, PIELLI,  
CONKLIN, HOWARD, SANCHEZ, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, OTTEN, MADDEN,  
BOYD, SCHLOSSBERG AND KHAN, JULY 30, 2024

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY,  
JULY 30, 2024

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A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a  
2 study on the projected costs in Pennsylvania of climate  
3 change adaptation and resilience measures needed to mitigate  
4 the projected impacts of certain climate-change-related  
5 events.

6 WHEREAS, Weather and climate disasters, which can include  
7 events such as winter storms, wildfire events, tornado  
8 outbreaks, heat and cold wave events, tropical cyclones,  
9 droughts, flooding events and hail events, cause extreme damage  
10 across the United States every year; and

11 WHEREAS, Calendar year 2023 had the largest number of  
12 billion-dollar disasters in United States history; and

13 WHEREAS, In 2023, the cost of the damage caused by climate  
14 and weather disasters in the United States was at least \$92.9  
15 billion, with 28 separate weather and climate events costing at  
16 least \$1 billion each; and

17 WHEREAS, Increasing global temperatures are resulting in  
18 higher intensity and more frequent hurricanes, droughts and heat

1 waves and are changing precipitation patterns and the length of  
2 wildfire seasons; and

3 WHEREAS, Experts predict that the cost of climate change  
4 adaptations will cost Pennsylvanians at least \$15 billion by  
5 2040, which will stem from the need to adjust to increased  
6 precipitation and flooding, as well as the need to adapt to  
7 higher temperatures; and

8 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth's already-deteriorating  
9 infrastructure will experience exacerbated deterioration due to  
10 climate change; and

11 WHEREAS, Pennsylvanians who are low-income, rural or a part  
12 of vulnerable populations will be especially susceptible to the  
13 impact of climate change; and

14 WHEREAS, Climate change impacts vital Commonwealth  
15 industries, namely agriculture, with changing and intensifying  
16 weather patterns that threaten the livelihoods of farmers; and

17 WHEREAS, As current climate and weather disasters are already  
18 resulting in human migration, worsening climate change is  
19 predicted to increase human migration as the frequency of  
20 climate and weather disasters intensifies; and

21 WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the House of  
22 Representatives to be prepared for the consequences of climate  
23 change in order to successfully preserve and protect  
24 Pennsylvania's people, environment and infrastructure; and

25 WHEREAS, The Shared Socioeconomic Pathway and the  
26 Representative Concentration Pathway are climate modeling tools  
27 that can be used to predict how the climate might change in the  
28 future and how those changes could impact global society,  
29 demographics and economics; and

30 WHEREAS, With these tools, scientists can make predictions

1 about the potential cost of adapting to a planet heavily  
2 impacted by climate change; and

3 WHEREAS, Analyzing and evaluating climate risk will allow the  
4 House of Representatives to be better prepared for future severe  
5 weather events and the cost of climate change; therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint  
7 State Government Commission to conduct a comprehensive study on  
8 the projected costs in Pennsylvania of climate change adaptation  
9 and resilience measures and the cost of the impact of climate  
10 change on the public health and well-being of Pennsylvanians and  
11 the natural, built and social environments of Pennsylvania; and  
12 be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission study  
14 shall utilize either the Shared Socioeconomic Pathways or  
15 Representative Concentration Pathways as described by the  
16 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to study the climate  
17 change adaptation and resilience measures needed to mitigate the  
18 projected impacts for at least two different future scenarios;  
19 and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the study must identify what research, data,  
21 modeling, stakeholder engagement and other resources are needed  
22 in order to:

23 (1) Estimate costs for mid-century, late-century and  
24 end-of-century, using 2024 dollars as a baseline.

25 (2) Estimate costs related to hazards, including, but  
26 not limited to, precipitation and heat and the impacts of  
27 precipitation and heat on soil and lakes.

28 (3) Provide an analysis of the projected costs and  
29 impacts of additional hazards like flooding, drought, sea  
30 level rise, wildfires, high-wind events, extreme cold and

1 vector-borne illnesses.

2 (4) Provide analyses of how these hazards and impacts  
3 are experienced differently by Pennsylvanians based on  
4 demographics, including race, gender, ability and age, as  
5 well as economic status and geography.

6 (5) Identify methods for understanding and making  
7 decisions about the trade-offs between the financial and  
8 social costs to mitigate climate risks and the level of risk  
9 reduction achieved;

10 and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the study must also identify what research,  
12 data, modeling, stakeholder engagement and other resources are  
13 needed in order to estimate the costs of climate change impacts  
14 on:

15 (1) Pennsylvania's natural environment, including  
16 impacts on:

17 (i) Working lands and natural lands.

18 (ii) Water, including surface waters, tidal waters,  
19 rivers, drinking water and Lake Erie.

20 (iii) Air, including, but not limited to, surface  
21 temperature and air quality.

22 (iv) The biodiversity of this Commonwealth's biomes.

23 (2) This Commonwealth's built environment, including  
24 impacts on:

25 (i) Residential, commercial and public buildings.

26 (ii) Critical infrastructure, including the  
27 infrastructure that manages storm water, wastewater,  
28 drinking water, transportation, electricity, gas and  
29 communications technologies.

30 (3) This Commonwealth's social environment, including

1 impacts on:

2 (i) Human settlement and migration.

3 (ii) Statewide and regional economies, including  
4 impacts on industries like recreation, tourism,  
5 agriculture and forest products.

6 (iii) Public health, including impacts related to  
7 emergency response, asthma, heat exposure and vector-  
8 borne illnesses;

9 and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That, to prepare the study, the Joint State  
11 Government Commission shall engage subject-area experts and  
12 other stakeholders, as needed, to contribute to the study; and  
13 be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission issue a  
15 report with its findings and recommendations no later than 12  
16 months after the adoption of this resolution to the following:

17 (1) The President pro tempore of the Senate.

18 (2) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

19 (3) The Majority Leader and the Minority Leader of the  
20 Senate.

21 (4) The Majority Leader and the Minority Leader of the  
22 House of Representatives.

23 (5) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
24 Appropriations Committee of the Senate.

25 (6) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
26 Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives.

27 (7) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
28 Environmental Resources and Energy Committee of the Senate.

29 (8) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
30 Environmental Resources and Energy Committee of the House of

1 Representatives.

2 (9) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
3 Finance Committee of the Senate.

4 (10) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
5 Finance Committee of the House of Representatives.

6 (11) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
7 Health and Human Services Committee of the Senate.

8 (12) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
9 Health Committee of the House of Representatives.

10 (13) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
11 Transportation Committee of the Senate.

12 (14) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
13 Transportation Committee of the House of Representatives.