

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 139 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY KEARNEY, KANE, HAYWOOD, COSTA, SAVAL, CAPPELLETTI,
CULVER AND VOGEL, AUGUST 25, 2025

REFERRED TO AGING AND YOUTH, AUGUST 25, 2025

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a
2 study on the feasibility of establishing a registry for those
3 who abuse individuals considered to be vulnerable
4 populations.

5 WHEREAS, Vulnerability refers to the degree to which a
6 population or individual is susceptible to harm or neglect or
7 influenced by inherent risk factors; and

8 WHEREAS, Vulnerable populations are groups and communities at
9 a higher risk for poor physical, psychological or social health,
10 creating barriers intensified by social, economic, political and
11 environmental components; and

12 WHEREAS, Illness and disability can also influence the
13 vulnerability of a population; and

14 WHEREAS, Vulnerable populations include those reliant upon
15 others for their daily care, including children, adults with
16 disabilities and seniors; and

17 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth currently investigates and
18 maintains a registry of abuses for children for their protection
19 and does not currently maintain protective registries of abuses

1 for adults with disabilities and seniors; therefore be it

2 RESOLVED, That the Senate direct the Joint State Government
3 Commission to conduct a study on the feasibility of establishing
4 a registry for those who abuse individuals considered to be
5 vulnerable populations; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, as part
7 of the study, evaluate the effectiveness of registries and
8 whether any less onerous solutions exist to accomplish the goal
9 of keeping vulnerable populations safe; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, as part
11 of the study, examine the possibility and impact of creating a
12 combined registry of abuses for the protection of these
13 vulnerable populations, as well as improving, maintaining and
14 creating individual registries of abuse for these vulnerable
15 populations, including:

16 (1) Examining the manner in which a combined registry
17 passes constitutional limitations, including:

18 (i) The investigation approach or evidentiary
19 standard for registry placement.

20 (ii) For confirmed and or substantiated incidences,
21 the length of time an individual shall be required to
22 register for the registry and how long an incidence
23 impacts employment screenings or hiring.

24 (iii) Determining when an individual should
25 be placed on a registry.

26 (iv) The structure of the investigation process.

27 (v) The management of appeals.

28 (vi) Examining how information on the registry is
29 accessed by employers and other entities and how to
30 ensure that access to the registry is appropriately

1 confined to balance reputational harms with protecting
2 vulnerable populations.

3 (2) The treatment of registrants by potential employers
4 relating to prohibitions on certain employment due to a
5 substantiated claim of abuse.

6 (3) How registry placement affects access to State or
7 local assistance programs such as the Medicaid exclusion
8 list.

9 (4) Examining other states that maintain an individual
10 or combined registry.

11 (5) Determining who will manage the combined registry.

12 (6) Determining how a combined registry impacts staffing
13 and hiring for impacted employers.

14 (7) Determining the defined costs for an additional and
15 necessary review officers for an individual or combined
16 registry;

17 and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, as part
19 of the study and to assist in developing findings and
20 recommendations, seek input from representatives and advocates
21 from all aspects of the human services sector and continuum of
22 care comprised of the following members:

23 (1) Representatives from various State agencies,
24 including:

25 (i) The Attorney General or a designee.

26 (ii) The Secretary of Aging or a designee.

27 (iii) The Secretary of Human Services or a designee.

28 (iv) The Secretary of Health or a designee.

29 (v) The Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police or
30 a designee.

1 (vi) The Deputy Secretary of Adult Protective
2 Services or a designee.

3 (vii) The Deputy Secretary of the Office of
4 Developmental Programs or a designee.

5 (viii) The Deputy Commissioner from the Bureau of
6 Records and Identification or a designee.

7 (2) Representatives from various stakeholders
8 representing those with disabilities, including:

9 (i) A representative from a group that provides
10 support to children and adults with autism or
11 intellectual disability in this Commonwealth.

12 (ii) A representative from a group that promotes the
13 human rights of individuals with intellectual and
14 developmental disabilities and actively supports their
15 full inclusion and participation in the community.

16 (iii) A representative from a group that empowers
17 individuals with disabilities and their families to seek
18 quality and satisfaction in their lives as well as equal
19 access to supports and services.

20 (iv) A representative of the class protected by any
21 individual registry.

22 (v) A representative from a group that focuses on
23 reducing trauma and supporting individuals in the court
24 system with an autism spectrum disorder.

25 (3) Representatives from various stakeholders
26 representing seniors, including:

27 (i) A representative from a group that coordinates
28 and offers services that help seniors remain in their
29 homes at the regional and local levels in this
30 Commonwealth.

1 (ii) A representative from a group that identifies
2 and addresses elder justice issues, including abuse and
3 neglect, guardianship and access to justice affecting
4 this Commonwealth's seniors.

5 (iii) A representative from a group of expert
6 advocates that act as a voice for seniors by bringing
7 issues and interests of seniors to the Governor, the
8 General Assembly and the Secretary of Aging.

9 (iv) A representative from a group that makes
10 suggestions about rules and funding for long-term care
11 services.

12 (4) Representatives from various stakeholders
13 representing children, including:

14 (i) A representative from a group that provides
15 forensic interviews and forensic medical evaluations of
16 child victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

17 (ii) A representative from a group that provides
18 legal representation and social services advocacy to
19 children who have experienced abuse or neglect.

20 (iii) A county children and youth administrator.

21 (iv) A representative from a group that studies
22 questions and problems that affect children and makes
23 recommendations concerning legislation relating to the
24 interests of the children.

25 (v) A representative from a group that addresses
26 concerns related to complaints of abuse of children in
27 congregate care facilities.

28 (5) Representatives from various stakeholders
29 representing the legal impacts of a registry, including:

30 (i) A representative from a group that provides free

1 civil legal assistance to low-income individuals.

2 (ii) A representative from a group that provides
3 support to district attorneys in this Commonwealth.

4 (iii) A representative from a group that recognizes,
5 reports and responds to the needs of seniors and adults
6 with disabilities who are the victims of abuse, neglect
7 or exploitation.

8 (iv) A representative from a group that secures a
9 fair justice system and ensures high-quality legal
10 representation for individuals facing loss of life,
11 freedom or family.

12 (v) A representative from a group that works to
13 eliminate all forms of sexual violence and to advocate
14 for the rights and needs of victims of sexual assault.

15 (vi) A representative from a group that provides
16 free and confidential direct services to victims and
17 survivors of domestic violence and their children.

18 (6) Representatives from various stakeholders
19 representing potential and already impacted employers,
20 including:

21 (i) A representative from a group that represents
22 the labor, policy and professional interests of public
23 school teachers and education support professionals,
24 staff in State institutions of higher education, nurses
25 in health care facilities, retired educators and college
26 students preparing to become teachers.

27 (ii) A representative from a group that provides
28 affordable, community based, person-centered care and
29 services in high quality, State licensed personal care
30 homes and assisted living residences throughout this

1 Commonwealth.

2 (iii) A representative from a group that educates
3 and advocates on behalf of vulnerable residents, their
4 caregivers and their providers of long-term care
5 throughout this Commonwealth.

6 (iv) A representative from a group that provides
7 independent living services for people with disabilities.

8 (v) A representative from a group that promotes,
9 advocates, supports and connects senior centers across
10 the Commonwealth.

11 (vi) A representative from a group that offers
12 mental health, drug and alcohol, intellectual and
13 developmental disabilities, children's, brain injury,
14 medical rehabilitation and physical disabilities and
15 aging services, through all settings and levels of care.

16 (vii) A representative from a group that advocates
17 and collaborates to improve professional standards for
18 home and community-based care and ensures access to
19 quality home health care throughout this Commonwealth.

20 (viii) A representative from a group that provides
21 support and assistance to county mental health and
22 developmental disability administrators.

23 (ix) A representative from a group that provides
24 support to organizations that provide services to
25 individuals with an intellectual disability and their
26 families.

27 (7) Any other representatives deemed appropriate by the
28 Joint State Government Commission;

29 and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission issue a

1 report with its findings and recommendations, including any
2 proposed statutory or regulatory changes, no later than one year
3 after the adoption of this resolution; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission submit
5 the report to all of the following:

6 (1) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
7 Aging and Youth Committee of the Senate.

8 (2) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
9 Aging and Older Adult Services Committee of the House of
10 Representatives.

11 (3) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
12 Children and Youth Committee of the House of Representatives.

13 (4) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
14 Health and Human Services Committee of the Senate.

15 (5) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
16 Health Committee of the House of Representatives.

17 (6) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the
18 Human Services Committee of the House of Representatives.