

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 713 Session of 2025

INTRODUCED BY HOWARD, GUENST, T. DAVIS, MADDEN, WAXMAN, MAYES, CERRATO, SANCHEZ, MALAGARI, SHUSTERMAN, GREEN AND HANBIDGE, FEBRUARY 24, 2025

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, FEBRUARY 4, 2026

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the
2 Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in particular rights and
3 immunities, further providing for ~~declaration of policy, for~~ <--
4 ~~definitions and for scope of subchapter.~~

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 ~~Section 1. Section 8340.12(2) of Title 42 of the~~ <--
8 ~~Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, added July 17, 2024-~~
9 ~~(P.L.836, No.72), is amended to read:~~

10 ~~§ 8340.12. Declaration of policy.~~

11 ~~The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:~~

12 \* \* \*

13 ~~(2) It is in the public interest to encourage continued~~
14 ~~participation in matters of public significance, including~~
15 ~~disclosure of sexual offenses. This participation should not~~
16 ~~be chilled through abuse of the judicial process.~~

17 \* \* \*

18 ~~Section 2. The definition of "protected public expression"~~

1 ~~in section 8340.13 of Title 42, added July 17, 2024 (P.L.836,~~  
2 ~~No.72), is amended to read:~~

3 ~~§ 8340.13. Definitions.~~

4 ~~The following words and phrases when used in this subchapter~~  
5 ~~shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the~~  
6 ~~context clearly indicates otherwise:~~

7 ~~\* \* \*~~

8 ~~"Protected public expression." A person's:~~

9 ~~(1) communication in a legislative, executive, judicial~~  
10 ~~or administrative proceeding;~~

11 ~~(2) communication on an issue under consideration or~~  
12 ~~review in a legislative, executive, judicial or~~  
13 ~~administrative proceeding; [or]~~

14 ~~(3) exercise, on a matter of public concern, of the~~  
15 ~~rights of freedom of speech or of the press, the right to~~  
16 ~~assemble or petition or the right of association, guaranteed~~  
17 ~~by:~~

18 ~~(i) the First Amendment to the Constitution of the~~  
19 ~~United States; or~~

20 ~~(ii) section 7 or 20 of Article I of the~~  
21 ~~Constitution of Pennsylvania[.]; or~~

22 ~~(4) communication of an allegation of abuse, as defined~~  
23 ~~under 23 Pa.C.S. § 6102 (relating to definitions), or~~  
24 ~~allegation of sexual violence, as defined under section 62A03~~  
25 ~~(relating to definitions), provided the communication is not~~  
26 ~~malicious.~~

27 ~~\* \* \*~~

28 ~~Section 3. Section 8340.14(b) (5) of Title 42, added July 17,~~  
29 ~~2024 (P.L.836, No.72), is amended to read:~~

30 SECTION 1. SECTION 8340.14(B) (5) OF TITLE 42 OF THE

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1 PENNSYLVANIA CONSOLIDATED STATUTES IS AMENDED TO READ:

2 § 8340.14. Scope of subchapter.

3 \* \* \*

4 (b) Exclusions.--This subchapter does not apply to any of  
5 the following claims asserted in a civil action:

6 \* \* \*

7 (5) Arising under [any of the following:

8 (i) 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 61 (relating to protection from  
9 abuse).

10 (ii) Chapter 62A (relating to protection of victims  
11 of sexual violence or intimidation).

12 (iii) The] the act of May 17, 1921 (P.L.682,  
13 No.284), known as The Insurance Company Law of 1921.

14 \* \* \*

15 Section 4 2. This act shall take effect in 90 days.

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