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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 620 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY JOZWIAK, JAMES, KAUFFMAN, DeLUCA, ZABEL AND  
GILLEN, NOVEMBER 22, 2019

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, NOVEMBER 22, 2019

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A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a  
2 study regarding identifying and evaluating all categories of  
3 individuals in this Commonwealth authorized to exercise  
4 arrest or other police powers.

5 WHEREAS, The safety of the public in this Commonwealth is one  
6 of paramount importance, and to that end the role of  
7 professional, efficient and well-trained police is essential;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania State Police, the Office of  
10 Attorney General, municipal police, sheriffs and other  
11 traditional law enforcement agencies honorably labor to fulfill  
12 this function; and

13 WHEREAS, Throughout the history of this Commonwealth, these  
14 traditional law enforcement agencies have been supplemented by  
15 other individuals authorized to exercise arrest or other police  
16 powers; and

17 WHEREAS, The range of categories of other individuals  
18 authorized to exercise arrest and other police powers is broad,  
19 including public servants, such as wildlife conservation

1 officers and constables, and private individuals authorized with  
2 arrest or other police powers, including humane society police  
3 officers and transportation agency police; and

4 WHEREAS, The categories of individuals authorized to exercise  
5 arrest or other police powers in current law include forest  
6 rangers, fire wardens, cemetery watchmen and horticultural  
7 exhibit police, among others; and

8 WHEREAS, The laws establishing these nontraditional  
9 categories of individuals authorized to exercise arrest or other  
10 police powers may be obsolete, benefit from consolidation with  
11 traditional law enforcement agencies or require updated training  
12 requirements; and

13 WHEREAS, Policymakers in this Commonwealth would benefit from  
14 a complete accounting of all those individuals presently  
15 authorized to exercise arrest or other police powers in this  
16 Commonwealth, as well as a description of the scope of those  
17 powers and the training requirements associated with each;  
18 therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint  
20 State Government Commission to conduct a study regarding  
21 identifying and evaluating all categories of individuals in this  
22 Commonwealth authorized to exercise arrest or other police  
23 powers; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That for each category identified, the study shall  
25 determine:

26 (1) the legal authority, including statutory, regulatory  
27 or common law, authorizing the exercise of arrest or other  
28 police powers;

29 (2) the appointing authority, if any;

30 (3) the qualifications for hiring or appointment, as

1 appropriate;

2 (4) the in-service training requirements;

3 (5) the scope of jurisdiction and arrest or other police  
4 powers authorized;

5 (6) whether the carrying and use of firearms or other  
6 deadly force is authorized; and

7 (7) the qualifications and training required relating to  
8 the carrying and use of firearms or other deadly force;

9 and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the study shall determine, to the extent  
11 possible, the number of individuals serving within each category  
12 during the last five years for which data is available; and be  
13 it further

14 RESOLVED, That the study shall evaluate and make  
15 recommendations regarding whether any category identified has  
16 become obsolete or may be consolidated with one or more other  
17 categories to achieve efficiencies and enhance public safety;  
18 and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the study shall be completed by November 30,  
20 2020.