



Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee

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Summary Senate Bill 1256, P.N. 1775

Prime Sponsor: Senator Ward

Summary

- Creates the Heritage Areas Program Act.
- Establishes the Heritage Areas Program within the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to identify, protect, develop, enhance and promote the historic, recreational, natural, cultural and scenic resources of the Commonwealth.
- The department shall allocate any funds appropriated to the department for the program for the following purposes:
 1. Management, administration, operation and marketing of heritage areas.
 2. Planning, implementation, technical assistance and educational projects and programs related to heritage areas.
 3. Development, construction, rehabilitation, repair, acquisition, preservation and enhancement of lands, buildings and other structures related to heritage areas.
 4. Protection, documentation, interpretation and promotion of the cultural, natural, scenic, recreational and historic resources of heritage areas.
 5. Establishment of partnerships and coalitions of governmental and nongovernmental agencies and organizations to assist heritage areas with the implementation of management action plans.
 6. Any other activities deemed appropriate by the department.
- The department shall allocate all funds appropriated annually by the General Assembly for the program in equal amounts to each State-designated heritage area.
- Establishes the Heritage Partnerships Advisory Committee to provide cooperation and coordination among other Commonwealth agencies, commissions and organizations to promote heritage areas in this Commonwealth., which consists of the following members:
 1. Seven members appointed by the Governor as follows:

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- Secretary of DCNR or designee, who shall chair the committee and appoint a vice-chairman.
 - Secretary of DCED or designee
 - Secretary of Transportation or designee
 - One member from the PA Historical and Museum Commission
 - One member from a heritage area
 - One member from the Center for Rural PA
 - One member from Preservation Pennsylvania.
2. Four members of the General Assembly as follows:
- Chairman and minority chairman of the Community, Economic, and Recreational Development Committee of the Senate.
 - Chairman and minority chairman of the Tourism and Recreational Development Committee of the House of Representatives.
- The committee shall provide the following:
 1. Expertise on a program and issue related to a member's respective agency or organization as it relates to the program.
 2. Assistance in obtaining additional funds through grants and loans available from the Federal Government, Commonwealth agencies and other sources.
 3. Coordination of funding of an application for a project and program to maximize the leveraging of State funds and the efficiency of State spending.
 4. Technical assistance and guidance to the department and each heritage area.

Effective Date

- This act shall take effect immediately.