

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of October 2013 as "Lifesharing Awareness
2 Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Approximately 1,582 individuals with intellectual
4 disabilities receive Lifesharing services in this Commonwealth
5 each year; and

6 WHEREAS, Lifesharing involves having an individual with an
7 intellectual disability share his or her life with supportive
8 people who form a caring household; and

9 WHEREAS, Lifesharing may happen in a provider's home or
10 apartment or the individual's home or apartment, and Lifesharing
11 may be offered by a couple, a single person or a family; and

12 WHEREAS, The purpose of Lifesharing is to enrich the lives of
13 people with intellectual disabilities by matching those who
14 choose Lifesharing with an individual or a family who choose to
15 open their home and hearts; and

16 WHEREAS, Lifesharing is a mutual experience, not a hierarchal
17 one; and

1 WHEREAS, Lifesharing is providing a place to live for people
2 with intellectual disabilities in which they can develop close,
3 committed personal relationships; and

4 WHEREAS, Lifesharing services, formerly known as Family
5 Living, have been provided in this Commonwealth for the past 30
6 years; and

7 WHEREAS, In 1982, a pilot Lifesharing program officially
8 began with Thresholds, an agency located in Reading; and

9 WHEREAS, Lifesharing became a viable living option for
10 individuals with intellectual disabilities; and

11 WHEREAS, By 1997, Lifesharing spread to every county in this
12 State; and

13 WHEREAS, Individuals with intellectual disabilities who live
14 with foster parents through children and youth services are able
15 to continue living in that home under Lifesharing when they turn
16 21 in order to provide consistency and continuity of care to the
17 individual with a disability; and

18 WHEREAS, According to data comparison from a Statewide
19 independent monitoring of residential services from 2007 to
20 2010, Lifesharing participants consistently had the highest
21 level of consumer satisfaction with where they live; and

22 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has a significant waiting list for
23 individuals with intellectual disabilities requesting
24 residential services due to the aging of caregivers and an aging
25 population needing support; and

26 WHEREAS, Current models of support, such as intermediate care
27 facilities similar to institutions and home and community-based
28 services, may be unsustainable; and

29 WHEREAS, Lifesharing is less expensive than both of these
30 models, while providing more individualized support; and

1 WHEREAS, An average Lifesharing budget is approximately
2 \$45,000 per year compared to a community or group home budget of
3 approximately \$150,000 per year; and

4 WHEREAS, According to the United States Census Bureau's
5 statistics in 2005, by the year 2030, the United States will
6 have only 45,000,000 females between the ages of 25 and 44 to
7 care for nearly 75,000,000 individuals 65 years of age or older;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Our work force will not keep pace with the demand;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, There will not be enough workers to take care of the
12 baby boomers; and

13 WHEREAS, Lifesharing may be the answer for many of these
14 individuals; and

15 WHEREAS, Lifesharing affords individuals with intellectual
16 disabilities opportunities for increased community
17 participation, potential for long-term relationships and the
18 ability to assume new social roles; and

19 WHEREAS, Lifesharing providers are advocates, friends and
20 mentors who not only share their homes with people with
21 intellectual disabilities but help them engage in community
22 life, teach them new skills and also help them make friends and
23 good life choices that will lead to satisfying, safe and
24 productive lives; and

25 WHEREAS, It is important to educate the public about
26 Lifesharing and to ensure that people with intellectual
27 disabilities are provided with information so that they may
28 choose Lifesharing as a viable living option; therefore be it

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate the
30 month of October 2013 as "Lifesharing Awareness Month" in

1 Pennsylvania.