

No. 2004-215

AN ACT

SB 1041

Providing for the continuation of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps volunteer program administered by the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Aging.

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

Section 1. Short title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps Act.

Section 2. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Departments.” The Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Aging of the Commonwealth.

“Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps.” The established Statewide network of county-based host organizations for older Pennsylvanians who implement environmental, educational, social and health programs benefiting their communities and the Commonwealth and additional host organizations in counties not yet served, as appropriate.

Section 3. Declaration of policy.

The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

(1) Pennsylvania has an active, talented and informed population of older residents who seek out activities and programs which contribute to the improvement of communities and individuals.

(2) Since 1997 the more than 20,000 active members of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps have used their expertise and interest in protecting the environment to pursue projects related to water quality monitoring, environmental education, restoration and protection of our environment and homeland security.

(3) The Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps program has been recognized by the United Nations, Renew America and other organizations as an innovative and unique program involving older citizens in creative ways to improve the environment and has been copied by many other states and countries around the world.

(4) Continuation and expansion of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps provides older citizens with effective opportunities to be involved in positive activities that not only contribute to the protection and restoration of Pennsylvania’s environment but provide significant benefits to those involved with this program.

Section 4. Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps.

(a) Continued support.—The departments shall continue funding and support and jointly administer the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps and its network of chapters throughout this Commonwealth for the purpose of maintaining and expanding opportunities for this Commonwealth's older citizens to be involved in volunteer projects relating to water quality monitoring, environmental education, restoration and protection of the environment and homeland security.

(b) Program components.—The Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps program shall include components that provide support for:

- (1) Equipment and supplies required for successful programs.
- (2) Networking and recognition opportunities.
- (3) Training required for successful program implementation.
- (4) Coordination and documentation, including by electronic means, of program activities.
- (5) Reimbursement of the volunteers and their host organizations for direct program expenses that support successful recruitment and mobilization of the volunteers.
- (6) Public education about the vitality and value of this Commonwealth's older citizens.

Section 5. Reporting requirements.

(a) Annual report.—The departments shall provide to the General Assembly an annual report on the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps program which includes information on:

- (1) the impact of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps on the achievement of the missions of the departments;
- (2) the cost-effectiveness of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps activities;
- (3) the staff support of the departments for the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps;
- (4) the State, regional and local partnerships established by the departments and the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps for the purpose of advancing departmental missions and the success of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps; and
- (5) projections for future volunteer engagement in the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps, its programs and the betterment of this Commonwealth's quality of life.

(b) Meeting with secretaries.—Representatives of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps program shall meet twice a year with the secretaries of the departments to provide information on accomplishments and challenges of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps program.

Section 6. Effective date.

This act shall take effect in 60 days.

APPROVED—The 30th day of November, A.D. 2004.

EDWARD G. RENDELL