



SPONSOR: Rep. Keeley & Rep. Bolden & Rep. Brady & Rep. J. Johnson & Rep. Mitchell & Rep. Potter & Sen. McDowell & Sen. Marshall & Sen. Henry
Reps. Barbieri, Baumbach, Bennett, Briggs King, Carson, Collins, Dukes, Gray, Heffernan, Hensley, Hudson, Jaques, Q. Johnson, Kenton, Kowalko, Longhurst, Lynn, Matthews, Miro, Mulrooney, Osienski, Outten, Paradee, Peterman, Ramone, Schwartzkopf, B. Short, D. Short, M. Smith, Smyk, Spiegelman, Viola, K. Williams, Wilson, Yearick; Sens. Blevins, Bonini, Bushweller, Cloutier, Ennis, Hall-Long, Hocker, Lavelle, Lawson, Lopez, McBride, Peterson, Pettyjohn, Poore, Richardson, Simpson, Sokola, Townsend

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2

ESTABLISHING THE WILMINGTON PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGIES COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A RAPID, INTENSIVE, AND COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OF POLICIES TO REDUCE VIOLENT CRIME IN DELAWARE'S LARGEST CITY.

1 WHEREAS, Wilmington is a vibrant and diverse city of proud residents, strong neighborhoods, and a thriving arts
2 community; and

3 WHEREAS, as home to some of the biggest banks and best respected law firms in the world, Wilmington's
4 business community is the envy of cities many times its size; and

5 WHEREAS, in many respects, Delaware's largest city is showing encouraging signs of growth—more people are
6 working in Wilmington than before the recession, four new middle and high schools are opening in the city this year, and
7 more than 500 residential units will be constructed in Wilmington over the next two years; and

8 WHEREAS, despite these encouraging signs, violent crime remains a pervasive problem that has the potential to
9 destroy communities, inhibit economic growth, and stifle efforts to help Wilmington reach its potential as a world-class
10 city; and

11 WHEREAS, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Wilmington ranks third in violence among 450
12 cities of its size, and sixth among all cities having a population of more than 50,000; and

13 WHEREAS, over the past decade, the City of Wilmington has averaged 118 shooting victims per year, reaching a
14 record-high of 154 shooting victims in 2013; and

15 WHEREAS, in 2014 alone, there were 127 shooting victims and 23 shooting deaths in the City of Wilmington;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, the General Assembly strongly believes that a healthy, vibrant Wilmington is in the best interests of
18 every Delawarean, and the well-being of our state is tied directly to the fate of our largest city; and

19 WHEREAS, through initiatives like the U.S. Department of Justice's Violence Reduction Network (VRN), the
20 federal High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program, and other initiatives, the City has taken the lead in a
21 variety of citywide and multijurisdictional efforts to help stem the tide of violence in Wilmington; and

22 WHEREAS, notwithstanding the good-faith efforts of a variety of partners within and outside the city, Wilmington
23 would benefit from a comprehensive strategy with respect to violent crime, and neither the city nor the state can afford to
24 delay these efforts.

25 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the 148th General Assembly of the
26 State of Delaware, the Senate concurring therein, with the approval of the Governor, that:

27 1. The Wilmington Public Safety Strategies Commission is hereby established to conduct a rapid, intensive, and
28 comprehensive examination of public safety strategies in the City of Wilmington. The general purposes of the Commission
29 are:

- 30 a. To examine which public safety strategies work and which strategies do not—not only within the City
31 of Wilmington, but regionally and nationally as well;
- 32 b. To better coordinate existing public safety strategies at the local, county, state, and federal levels; and
- 33 c. To recommend effective, data-driven public safety policies that could be implemented immediately to
34 mitigate Wilmington's unacceptably high rate of violent crime.

35 2. The Commission shall be comprised of the following members:

- 36 a. The Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, who shall serve as co-chair;
- 37 b. The Director of Public Safety for New Castle County, who shall serve as co-chair;
- 38 c. A representative of the City of Wilmington, appointed by the Mayor of Wilmington;
- 39 d. The Attorney General or a designee appointed by the Attorney General;
- 40 e. A representative of the Governor's Office, who shall be appointed by the Governor;
- 41 f. Two (2) community representatives, who shall be appointed by the Governor;
- 42 g. A representative of Wilmington's business community, who shall be appointed by the Governor; and
- 43 h. A retired officer of the Wilmington Police Department, who shall be appointed by the Governor.

44 3. Staff assistance to the Commission shall be provided by one or more outside consultants having significant
45 expertise in the area of effective local and regional public safety strategies. Such expertise may include but not be limited to
46 data-driven policing strategies; partnerships among local, state, and regional law enforcement agencies; community

47 policing; and similar policies. In connection herewith, the Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security is
48 authorized to retain, employ, and contract for the services of such consultants, research, and technical personnel as shall be
49 necessary to provide staff assistance to the Commission.

50 4. In accordance with the general purposes described in paragraph 1 above, topics to be considered by the
51 Commission may include, but shall not be limited to:

- 52 a. An analysis of crime data in and around the City of Wilmington;
- 53 b. A review of the existing organizational structure and deployment strategies of the Wilmington Police
54 Department;
- 55 c. The development of policing districts or other geographic areas of accountability;
- 56 d. An examination of effective public safety strategies in other jurisdictions, with an emphasis on nearby
57 municipalities that have recently achieved success in reducing violent crime;
- 58 e. A review of existing operational and monetary resources provided by state, county, and federal
59 agencies, with a view toward ensuring such resources are sufficient, well-coordinated, and effective; and
- 60 f. Obtaining input from community and business leaders regarding possible recommendations of the
61 Commission and their potential impact.

62 5. The Commission shall submit a Report and Recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly as
63 soon as possible, but in no event later than March 31, 2015. Such Report and Recommendations may include the topics
64 described in paragraph 4 above, or on such other topics as the Commission may consider.

65 6. With respect to the administration of oaths and the production of witnesses and records, any proceeding of the
66 Commission shall be considered a hearing of the General Assembly for purposes of 29 *Del.C.* § 705. The Commission may
67 designate records of the Board confidential and exempt from public disclosure in accordance with Delaware's Freedom of
68 Information Act, 29 *Del.C.* §§ 10001 *et seq.*

SYNOPSIS

Despite the good-faith efforts of city, county, state, and federal law enforcement and other officials, Wilmington's violent crime rate remains unacceptably high. This Joint Resolution establishes the Wilmington Public Safety Strategies Commission to conduct a rapid, intensive, and comprehensive examination of public safety strategies in the City of Wilmington.

The 9-member Commission will be co-chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security and the New Castle County Director of Public Safety, and staff assistance will be provided by an outside consultant having significant public safety expertise. The Commission will submit a Report and Recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly as soon as possible, but in no event later than March 31, 2015.