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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 101 Session of  
2021

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INTRODUCED BY PARKER, HILL-EVANS, SCHLOSSBERG, HOHENSTEIN AND  
SANCHEZ, MAY 17, 2021

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, MAY 17, 2021

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A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study,  
2 analyze and report on the relationship between the use of  
3 social media and gun violence in this Commonwealth.

4 WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia is experiencing an epidemic  
5 of gun violence, increased murder rates and a significantly  
6 upward trend in homicides and shootings; and

7 WHEREAS, As of April 26, 2021, at least 161 people have been  
8 murdered in Philadelphia, a 34% increase over the same time in  
9 2020; and

10 WHEREAS, According to the Philadelphia Police Department,  
11 more than 499 people have been fatally shot during 2020; and

12 WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Police Department has become  
13 increasingly focused on monitoring social media activity, having  
14 noted the upward trend in violent confrontations posted and used  
15 to perpetuate, chronicle and escalate these events in real time;  
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Social media posts often include taunts and threats,  
18 boast about crimes committed and disclose an individual's

1 affiliation with street crews; and

2 WHEREAS, Though the inherent danger posed by social media is  
3 not fully known, the rate of public engagement with these  
4 platforms holds the potential to promote gun violence at a time  
5 when other crimes have markedly decreased; and

6 WHEREAS, Gun policy researchers at Temple University recently  
7 observed while a global pandemic has greatly reduced in-person  
8 interactions, social media virtually perpetuates grudges and  
9 grievances, often revealing the location of potential victims;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Publicly accessible video and photographs posted and  
12 disseminated widely on these platforms aid law enforcement in  
13 identifying suspects; and

14 WHEREAS, With the potential for 2021 to be the deadliest year  
15 for shootings in Philadelphia in decades, new and updated  
16 solutions must be identified and considered, such as social  
17 media partnerships, an advantageous resource in the fight  
18 against gun violence; therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the  
20 Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study, analyze and  
21 report on the relationship between the use of social media and  
22 gun violence in this Commonwealth; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee  
24 issue an initial report of its findings and recommendations to  
25 the General Assembly no later than six months after the adoption  
26 of this resolution, with the issuance of a final report no later  
27 than one year after the issuance of the initial report; and be  
28 it further

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives further urge all  
30 social media companies to take a proactive role in fighting the

- 1 gun violence epidemic nationwide by monitoring and removing
- 2 inciting posts from their platforms.