

Task Force and Advisory Committee
on Decedents' Estates Laws



Joint State Government Commission

1945 - 1985

SENATE RESOLUTION

Serial No. 46. (Not printed). Legislative Journal page 1123.

By Mr. WALKER.

**JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION TO MAKE
A STUDY OF DECEDENTS' ESTATE LAWS**

In the Senate, March 12, 1945.

Whereas, No revision of the decedents' estate laws of the Commonwealth has been made since 1917, but numberless amendments have been made and laws on subjects related thereto have been enacted, which render the true status of these laws uncertain and difficult of administration; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Joint State Government Commission is hereby requested, during the interim between the present session of the General Assembly and the regular biennial session of 1947, to study, revise and prepare for reenactment the Orphans' Court Partition Act, the Orphans' Court Act, the Revised Price Act, the Wills Act, the Register of Wills Act, the Intestate Act and the Fiduciaries Act, together with all of their supplements and amendments and all separate laws that should properly be incorporated therein, and to present them for the consideration of the General Assembly at its next session.

Adopted, March 13, 1945.

JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION
COMMITTEE ON DECEDENTS' ESTATES LAWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 28, 1945

Streamlining and modernization of the Decedents' Estates Laws, otherwise known as the Seven Sisters Act, was undertaken today by joint committees consisting of the Committee on Decedents' Estates Laws of the Joint State Government Commission of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania and an Advisory Committee appointed by the Joint State Government Commission.

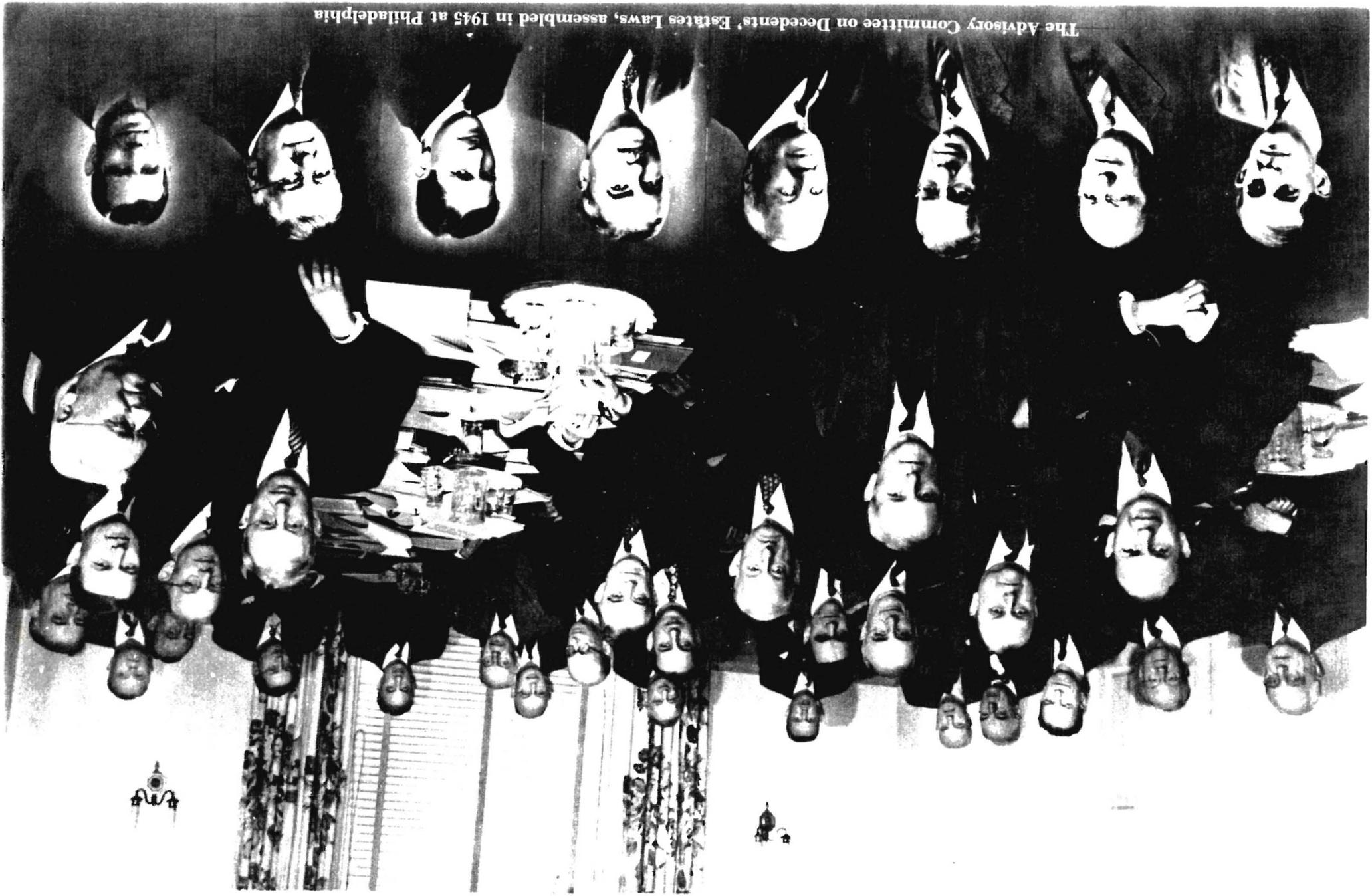
"Several hundred amendments to the Decedents' Estates Laws have been enacted since their adoption in 1917 and it is time that the laws were brought up to date, streamlined, and modernized," said Honorable Thomas H. Lee, Chairman of the Committee of the Joint State Government Commission.

Robert Brigham, of the Philadelphia County Bar, was elected Chairman of the Advisory Committee, and Shippen Lewis, of the Philadelphia County Bar, was elected Secretary.

The Pennsylvania Bar Association has been studying this subject for a number of years and has urged that the laws be revised in order that they may meet present conditions.

"We are moving in the right direction when we revise the laws so as to meet the present conditions," said Honorable John M. Walker, Vice Chairman of the Joint State Government Commission's Committee. "This is long overdue and I am very much impressed with the interest shown at this meeting today. Much was accomplished in laying the ground work," Senator Walker further stated.

The Advisory Committee on Decedents' Estates Laws, assembled in 1945 at Philadelphia



DECEDENTS' ESTATES LAWS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
1945-1985

Honorable Anthony R. Appel
Lancaster County
1971-1985

Robert W. Archbald, Esq.
Philadelphia
1945-1951

Richard J. Ashby Jr., Esq.
Lancaster
1983-

Thomas A. Beckley, Esq.
Harrisburg
1971-

Paul Bedford, Esq.
Wilkes-Barre
1945-1951

Honorable John C. Bell
The Supreme Court of
Pennsylvania
1945-1947

Honorable Hugh C. Boyle
Pittsburgh
1959-

Honorable W. Walter Braham
Lawrence County
1945-1979

Philip A. Bregy, Esq.
Philadelphia
1947-

Robert Brigham, Esq.
Philadelphia
1945-1951

Norman H. Brown, Esq.
Philadelphia
1971-1985

Paul E. Clouser, Esq.
Harrisburg
1971-

Reuben E. Cohen, Esq.
Philadelphia
1949-

William J. Copeland, Esq.
Pittsburgh
1971-1975

Robert F. Duguay
Harrisburg
1971-1982

Charles H. Ealy, Esq.
Somerset
1948-1949

William H. Eckert, Esq.
Pittsburgh
1945-1981

Robert C. Fernandez, Esq.
Norristown
1977-

Roland Fleer, Esq.
Norristown
1945-1975

Honorable Ethan A. Gearhart
Allentown
1945-1983

J. Frederick Gehr, Esq.
Hughesville
1971-

G. Donald Gerlach, Esq.
Pittsburgh
1975-

W. Pitt Gifford, Esq. Erie 1945-1961	Shippen Lewis, Esq. Philadelphia 1945-1951
George J. Hauptfuhrer Jr., Esq. Philadelphia 1971-	Honorable William W. Litke State College 1945-
Honorable Andrew Hourigan Luzerne County 1945-1951	Alan S. Loose, Esq. Mauch Chunk 1945-1972
William McC. Houston, Esq. Pittsburgh 1971-	Honorable J. Paul MacElree West Chester 1945-1971
James J. Humphreys III, Esq. Lancaster 1984-	Honorable Frederick A. Marx Reading 1945-1961
Honorable David G. Hunter Philadelphia County 1945-1961	Benjamin G. McFate, Esq. Oil City 1975-1983
A. J. White Hutton, Esq. Chambersburg 1945-1961	Ralph D. McKee, Esq. Pittsburgh 1945-1975
Frederick F. Jones, Esq. Erie 1971-1977	Richard G. Miller, Esq. Washington 1945-1949
David J. Kaufman, Esq. Philadelphia 1985-	Honorable Edmund S. Pawelec Philadelphia 1978-
William H. Latimer Jr., Esq. Pittsburgh 1975-1981	Richard L. Placey, Esq. Harrisburg 1985-
Honorable Mark E. Lefever Philadelphia County 1945-1973	Raymond M. Remick, Esq. Philadelphia 1945-1949
Robert P. Leiby Jr., Esq. Philadelphia 1975-	Honorable Karl E. Richards Harrisburg 1945-1961

William C. Ries, Esq.
Pittsburgh
1983-

William M. Robinson, Esq.
Pittsburgh
1945-1961

Honorable Edwin H. Satterthwaite
Bucks County
1971-1985

James G. Schmidt, Esq.
Philadelphia
1949-

Dean John J. Sciullo
Pittsburgh
1978-

Arthur M. Scully, Esq.
Pittsburgh
1945-1949

Clarence L. Shaver, Esq.
Somerset
1945-1961

Honorable Louis Sherman
Philadelphia
1977-1984

K. L. Shirk Jr., Esq.
Lancaster
1983-

M. Paul Smith, Esq.
Norristown
1947-

Boyd Lee Spahr, Esq.
Philadelphia
1945-1961

Thomas Stokes, Esq.
Philadelphia
1945-1951

J. Pennington Straus, Esq.
Philadelphia
1971-

Honorable Lee F. Swope
Harrisburg
1971-

Honorable Alfred L. Taxis
Montgomery County
1971-1985

Regina O. Thomas, Esq.
Philadelphia
1985-

Honorable Robert W. Tredinnick
Norristown
1985-

Honorable Thomas P. Trimble
Pittsburgh
1945-1951

Honorable Edward L. Van Roden
Media
1949-1972

Paul C. Wagner, Esq.
Philadelphia
1945-1979

Donald R. Waisel, Esq.
Harrisburg
1978-

Lenard Wolffe, Esq.
Philadelphia
1977-1978

C. Thomas Work, Esq.
Reading
1985-

Honorable A. Kirk Wrenshall
Washington
1945-1972

Honorable J. Colvin Wright
Superior Court of
Pennsylvania
1945-1978

Honorable Vincent X Yakowicz
New Cumberland
1971-

Honorable Paul R. Zavarella
Pittsburgh
1985-

Adolph L. Zeman, Esq.
Canonsburg
1945-1976

Robert L. Freedman, Esq., Consultant
Philadelphia
1982-

Richard L. Grossman, Esq., Consultant
Norristown
1971-

DECEDENTS' ESTATES LAWS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PUBLICATIONS
1945-1985

1946

Proposed Intestate Act of 1947
Proposed Wills Act of 1947

1947

Report: Decedents' Estates Laws of 1947

1949

Report: Decedents' Estates Laws of 1949

1951

Report: Decedents' Estates Laws of 1951

1955

Proposed Amendments to the Decedents' Estates Laws

1959

Proposed Inheritance and Estate Tax of 1959

1963

Inheritance and Estate Tax Act of 1961, as amended

1970

Proposed Adoption Act

1972

Proposed Probate, Estates and Fiduciaries Code

1973

Proposed Amendments: Probate, Estates and Fiduciaries Code:
Phase II

1974

Guardianship of the Mentally Retarded: A Subcommittee Report
on House Bill 1516 to the Judiciary Committee of the
House of Representatives

1975

Probate, Estates and Fiduciaries Code: Proposed Amendments
and Comments, 1975

1977

Probate, Estates and Fiduciaries Code: Proposed Amendments
and Comments, 1977

1979

Probate, Estates and Fiduciaries Code: Proposed Amendments and
Comments (1979): Including a Study of the Impact of Inheritance
Taxes on Decedents' Domicile

1980

Proposed Revision of Adoption Law and Codification into Pennsylvania
Consolidated Statutes, Title 23, Part III

1981

Probate, Estates and Fiduciaries Code: Proposed Amendments and
Comments, 1981 and Proposed Revision of Inheritance Tax Laws
and Codification of Chapter 17, Title 72, of the Pennsylvania
Consolidated Statutes

1983

Probate, Estates and Fiduciaries Code: Proposed Amendments and
Comments, 1983

1984

Report of the Subcommittee on Guardianships

1985

Probate, Estates and Fiduciaries Code: Proposed Amendments and
Comments, 1985

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the Joint State Government Commission Task Force and
2 Advisory Committee on Decedents' Estates Laws for their
3 contributions to the General Assembly for 40 years.

4 WHEREAS, The Joint State Government Commission Task Force and
5 Advisory Committee on Decedents' Estates Law has been primarily
6 responsible for the review, revision and codification of the
7 Commonwealth's decedents' estates laws since the task force and
8 advisory committee's creation in 1945; and

9 WHEREAS, Since its first meeting on November 28, 1945, the
10 task force and advisory committee have assisted the General
11 Assembly in providing probate laws which are modern, efficient
12 and responsive to the needs of the citizens of this
13 Commonwealth; and

14 WHEREAS, Many of the laws recommended by the task force and
15 advisory committee have received national attention and praise
16 and have been used as models by other states; and

17 WHEREAS, On November 28, 1985, the task force and advisory
18 committee is celebrating the 40th anniversary of its first

1 meeting; therefore be it

2 RESOLVED, That the Senate commend the task force and advisory
3 committee for the exemplary job it has done and express a deep
4 appreciation to all present and former members of the task force
5 and advisory committee for their contributions over the past 40
6 years.