

## No. 1992-65

## AN ACT

## HB 1492

Establishing a rural leadership training program; providing for rules and regulations; and imposing duties on the Department of Community Affairs.

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 Rural Leadership Training Act.*

Section 2. Legislative finding and declaration.

The General Assembly finds and declares that this Commonwealth has the largest rural population of any state in the nation. However, many rural communities in this Commonwealth rely on volunteer leadership to manage public affairs. The General Assembly recognizes that this dependence on volunteer leadership is the result of limited financial and instructional resources which serve to impede a rural community's ability to develop a pool of qualified leaders. *It is further recognized that qualified local leadership is needed to resolve the complicated economic and social problems of contemporary society. Accordingly, the General Assembly finds and declares that an educational program aimed at encouraging the development of a pool of qualified leaders will provide the local leadership essential to growth and will enable rural communities to effectively meet the challenges of the 21st century.*

Section 3. 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:

“Department.” The Department of Community Affairs of the Commonwealth.

“Program.” The Rural Leadership Training Program.

“Rural community.” A county, town, borough or township or other political subdivision which, according to the most recent United States Decennial Census, is classified as rural.

Section 4. Establishment of program.

There is hereby established, under the direction of the department, the *Rural Leadership Training Program for the purposes of providing leadership training to citizens of rural communities and advanced training to local elected officials to encourage and foster the development of community leaders in rural areas of this Commonwealth.*

Section 5. Rural Leadership Training Program.

(a) Requirements.—The department or a designee appointed by the department shall develop an educational program of sufficient scope and duration to provide a reasonable opportunity for the individual served to acquire the knowledge essential to developing the following:

(1) An understanding of the economic, political, cultural and social forces inherent to the public decision-making process.

(2) An understanding of the application of leadership skills, processes and strategies to resolve conflict.

(3) The ability to study community problems and issues from a broad economic, political, cultural and social perspective.

(4) An understanding of interpersonal relationships and group dynamics and their role in the public decision-making process.

(5) An understanding of contemporary social and economic problems and policy issues and how they affect public policy.

(6) An understanding of the budgetary concerns encountered by rural communities.

(7) An understanding of international relations and the world economy.

(8) An understanding of the legislative process and legislative procedure.

(b) Eligibility.—Any citizen who is a resident of a rural community or any official elected to public office in such a community may participate in the program. The department or a designee appointed by the department shall ensure that program participants are representative of the diverse social, economic and cultural composition of rural areas of this Commonwealth.

(c) Applications.—Any resident of a rural community or any person elected to public office in a rural community may submit an application for participation in the program at such time and in such manner as the department may prescribe.

#### Section 6. Duties of department.

The department shall administer the program and shall adopt and promulgate any rules, regulations or guidelines and may, by regulation, establish any fees necessary to accomplish the purposes of this act.

#### Section 7. Effective date.

This act shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED—The 26th day of June, A. D. 1992.

ROBERT P. CASEY