

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 566 Session of
2024

INTRODUCED BY MUNROE AND T. DAVIS, OCTOBER 20, 2024

AS AMENDED, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OCTOBER 22, 2024

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating August 4, ~~2024~~ 2025, as "BAPS Day" in Pennsylvania. <--

2 WHEREAS, Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha
3 ("BAPS") is a worldwide Hindu denomination dedicated to
4 fostering faith, inspiring service and promoting better living;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, Today, there are BAPS followers in more than 20
7 countries in southern and eastern Africa, western Europe,
8 Australasia, Southeast Asia and North America; and

9 WHEREAS, His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj (1921-2016),
10 established the first BAPS Hindu temple, also known as a mandir,
11 in the United States on August 4, 1974, in New York City; and

12 WHEREAS, Over the last 50 years, BAPS in the United States
13 has become the largest BAPS fellowship outside of India with
14 more than 100 mandirs; and

15 WHEREAS, The eight BAPS mandirs in Pennsylvania are proud
16 examples of how houses of worship contribute to the well-being
17 of their congregants and local communities; and

18 WHEREAS, BAPS members in North America demonstrate its

1 teachings through an emphasis on the values of family, service,
2 culture, spirituality and youth development; and

3 WHEREAS, BAPS mandirs offer a welcoming and spiritual space
4 for thousands of families, as well as worship, fellowship,
5 communal meals, education and activities for young and old,
6 creating a true home for the faithful; and

7 WHEREAS, Following in the example of His Holiness Mahant
8 Swami Maharaj, the volunteers of BAPS have, time and again,
9 answered the call to serve, humbly, selflessly and
10 inspirationally; and

11 WHEREAS, BAPS members believe that "In the joy of others lies
12 our own," and strive to perform acts that celebrate the divinity
13 in all beings; and

14 WHEREAS, BAPS mandirs bring His Holiness Pramukh Swami
15 Maharaj's words "In the joy of others lies our own," to life
16 through support for those in need in a variety of community
17 efforts, such as health fairs, food drives and disaster relief
18 work; and

19 WHEREAS, In commitment to the Hindu tradition of celebrating
20 unity in diversity, BAPS members also invite visitors to all
21 BAPS mandirs by regularly hosting open houses and similar
22 events; and

23 WHEREAS, Approximately 2.5 million members and visitors seek
24 peace and spiritual solace at a BAPS mandir every year; and

25 WHEREAS, BAPS mandirs add to the rich tapestry of diversity
26 that makes America and this Commonwealth beautiful places to
27 call home; and

28 WHEREAS, The fifth BAPS spiritual successor, Pramukh Swami
29 Maharaj, believed that peaceful coexistence requires dialogue
30 among leaders of other cultures, religions and civic bodies; and

1 WHEREAS, BAPS mandirs have a storied history of helping
2 immigrants to the United States retain their connection to their
3 faith but fully embrace and join in American civic life; and

4 WHEREAS, In 2000, BAPS was granted General Consultative
5 Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council,
6 giving BAPS a role in formal United Nations deliberations; and

7 WHEREAS, Through cultural events and educational programs,
8 BAPS cultivates a sense of identity and pride by sharing rich
9 Hindu artistic, musical, dance, culinary and festival traditions
10 with its communities; and

11 WHEREAS, BAPS mandirs also offer youth activities that
12 encourage and mold young people to live lives of integrity and
13 character that reflect our highest ideals; and

14 WHEREAS, ~~2024 marks 50~~ 2025 WILL MARK 51 years of service and <--
15 faith in the United States for BAPS; and

16 WHEREAS, The BAPS mandirs in Pennsylvania hope to serve their
17 congregants and local communities with even greater zeal in the
18 next 50 years and beyond; therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate August
20 4, ~~2024~~ 2025, as "BAPS Day" in Pennsylvania. <--