

(This Joint Resolution No. 1 was passed for the first time at the Legislative Session of 2002 as Joint Resolution No. 1 and for the second time at the Legislative Session of 2003 and was approved by the electorate November 5, 2003.)

No. 2003-1

A JOINT RESOLUTION

SB 55

Proposing separate amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, further providing for rights of accused in criminal prosecutions and for judicial administration.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby resolves as follows:

Section 1. The following separate amendments to the Constitution of Pennsylvania are proposed in accordance with Article XI:

(1) That section 9 of Article I be amended to read:

§ 9. Rights of accused in criminal prosecutions.

In all criminal prosecutions the accused hath a right to be heard by himself and his counsel, to demand the nature and cause of the accusation against him, to [meet the witnesses face to face] *be confronted with the witnesses against him*, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and, in prosecutions by indictment or information, a speedy public trial by an impartial jury of the vicinage; he cannot be compelled to give evidence against himself, nor can he be deprived of his life, liberty or property, unless by the judgment of his peers or the law of the land. The use of a suppressed voluntary admission or voluntary confession to impeach the credibility of a person may be permitted and shall not be construed as compelling a person to give evidence against himself.

(2) That section 10(c) of Article V be amended to read:

§ 10. Judicial administration.

* * *

(c) The Supreme Court shall have the power to prescribe general rules governing practice, procedure and the conduct of all courts, justices of the peace and all officers serving process or enforcing orders, judgments or decrees of any court or justice of the peace, including the power to provide for assignment and reassignment of classes of actions or classes of appeals among the several courts as the needs of justice shall require, and for admission to the bar and to practice law, and the administration of all courts and supervision of all officers of the Judicial Branch, if such rules are consistent with this Constitution and neither abridge, enlarge nor modify the substantive rights of any litigant, nor affect the right of the General Assembly to determine the jurisdiction of any court or justice of the peace, nor suspend nor alter any statute of limitation or repose. All laws shall be suspended to the extent that they are inconsistent with rules prescribed under these provisions. *Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, the*

General Assembly may by statute provide for the manner of testimony of child victims or child material witnesses in criminal proceedings, including the use of videotaped depositions or testimony by closed-circuit television.

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Section 2. (a) Upon the first passage by the General Assembly of these proposed constitutional amendments, the Secretary of the Commonwealth shall proceed immediately to comply with the advertising requirements of section 1 of Article XI of the Constitution of Pennsylvania and shall transmit the required advertisements to two newspapers in every county in which such newspapers are published in sufficient time after passage of these proposed constitutional amendments.

(b) Upon the second passage by the General Assembly of these proposed constitutional amendments, the Secretary of the Commonwealth shall proceed immediately to comply with the advertising requirements of section 1 of Article XI of the Constitution of Pennsylvania and shall transmit the required advertisements to two newspapers in every county in which such newspapers are published in sufficient time after passage of these proposed constitutional amendments. The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall submit the proposed constitutional amendments under section 1 to the qualified electors of this Commonwealth as separate ballot questions at the first primary, general or municipal election occurring at least three months after the proposed constitutional amendments are passed by the General Assembly.