

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 020613)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing the City Council's Committees on Public Safety and Public Health & Human Services to hold joint hearings to investigate the unmet needs of domestic violence victims in Philadelphia, the current response of Philadelphia agencies to domestic violence, and the full range of options to enhance that response through the implementation of a coordinated community response, and further authorizing the Committee to issue subpoenas and such other process as may be appropriate to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents in furtherance of the investigation to the full extent authorized by Section 2-401 of the Home Rule Charter.

WHEREAS, Domestic violence is a widespread problem, which affects thousands of families in Philadelphia and resulted in the deaths of at least 13 people in Philadelphia in 2001; and

WHEREAS, Battered women need a wide variety of services from the City of Philadelphia to keep them safe, including police protection, assistance from the courts and District Attorney, and housing, health, and family services; and

WHEREAS, Numerous Philadelphia agencies assist battered women, including the Police Department, the District Attorney's office, the Sheriff's Office, the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, the Office of Emergency Shelter Services, and a range of non-profit agencies but concern has been expressed about the lack of an effective system of communication and coordination among these agencies; and

WHEREAS, The Violence Against Women Office of the U.S. Department of Justice recommends that communities implement a coordinated community approach to address the diverse needs of battered women; and

WHEREAS, Other major cities, such as Boston, Chicago, Baltimore, and San Francisco, have implemented coordinated community responses to domestic violence and have improved the coordination and depth of services to survivors of domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia city government lacks a central office to coordinate the response of the many agencies involved in assisting and protecting battered women; and

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WHEREAS, There is a need to investigate the adequacy of available resources to meet the needs of victims of domestic violence and abuse; and

WHEREAS, The apparent absence of a coordinated response have resulted in the provision of fractured, inconsistent and inadequate services to domestic violence victims. A coordinated response would enable Philadelphia to identify and fill current gaps in services and to more effectively serve victims of domestic violence; now therefore

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Authorizes City Council's Committees on Public Safety and Public Health & Human Services to hold hearings to investigate the coordination and depth of response of Philadelphia agencies to battered women and all victims of domestic violence, and further authorizes the Committee to issue subpoenas and such other process as may be appropriate to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents in furtherance of the investigation to the full extent authorized by Section 2-401 of the Home Rule Charter.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the third of October, 2002.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Marie B. Hauser
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Ortiz, Tasco, Kenney, DiCicco, Miller and Nutter

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Ortiz, Tasco, Kenney, DiCicco, Miller, Nutter, Cohen, Blackwell, Rizzo, Clarke, Goode and Council President Verna