City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 250339

Introduced April 10, 2025

Councilmember Thomas

RESOLUTION

Authorizing the Committee on Education to create a taskforce investigating the current state of higher education as this pillar of the Philadelphia regional economy and cultural landscape undergoes generational change.

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia area has historically been known as a City of eds and meds, creating a virtual major city inside the City and the region with 120,000 students inside the City and nearly 300,000 in the metro area; and

WHEREAS, As the US ages, there are notably fewer kids of college age and college attendance levels seem to have plateaued; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia area has historically had a range of smaller religiously affiliated institutions and specialty colleges; and

WHEREAS, As the economics of higher education have challenged smaller schools, we have seen what appears to be the start of a wave of mergers and outright closures, like the mergers Jefferson and Saint Joseph University have recently undertaken, the closure of University of the Arts and Cabrini University, and the announced closure of Rosemont College; and

WHEREAS, Recent changes and uncertainty caused by federal actions and proposals being floated have added additional pressures to a sector amid wholesale change; and

WHEREAS, It is hard to overestimate how intertwined the fate of the City and region are with the higher education sector, it defines who we are from Big 5 rivalries to anchors in our neighborhoods, to beloved cultural institutions and where we are, born, educated, employed and cared for; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby authorizes the Committee on Education to create a taskforce investigating the current state of higher

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education as this pillar of the Philadelphia economy and cultural landscape undergoes generational change.