

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 090523)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing the Committee on Legislative Oversight to hold public hearings to examine current issues affecting veterans in the Philadelphia area and to coordinate with the Veterans' Advisory Commission and veterans' organizations to identify and implement programs to address specific needs and concerns.

WHEREAS, There are approximately 190,000 veterans in the Philadelphia area, and 12% of Pennsylvanians are veterans of the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's Veterans' Advisory Commission was established in 1957, pursuant to City Council Resolution Number 123; and

WHEREAS, The Commission's mission is to acquaint veterans with available benefits and to assist veterans in their dealings with City departments and agencies; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania alone has over 60,000 female veterans, unfortunately many of the issues that they face are not discussed or addressed thoroughly; and

WHEREAS, Additional coordination between the Veterans' Advisory Commission, veterans' organizations, and the City could facilitate greater access to services and programs to improve the quality of life for veterans; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 30 percent of the homeless population in Philadelphia are veterans, which is higher than the national average of 23 percent. Many of these individuals live with lingering effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, Nationwide only 25% of homeless veterans have received VA homeless services due to lack of funding and lack of public awareness of the programs available. In addition, 45% of homeless veterans state that the primary issue they face is finding and maintaining jobs, while 37% say their primary concern is finding and maintaining affordable housing; and

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 090523 continued

WHEREAS, A coordinated effort is needed to provide these individuals with secure housing and nutritional meals, drug and alcohol counseling, mental health counseling, employment services, and personal development; and

WHEREAS, Improving access to education and expanding educational programs that relate to career training would also enhance the quality of life for veterans; and

WHEREAS, Due to the decline in available educational benefits and increased cost of education, not as many veterans are able to take advantage of existing programs. In 1980, over 1 million veterans nationwide gained services from various veterans' education benefits programs. In 2000, this number decreased to 288,000; and

WHEREAS, The overall lack of affordable health care is also an issue affecting veterans. While there are programs available to veterans, there is still close to 2 million veterans nationwide that lack health care coverage. This total increases to 6 million when family members of veterans are included; and

WHEREAS, Due to costs, 26.5 percent of uninsured veterans reported that they had failed to get needed care, 31.2 percent had delayed care, 49.1 percent had not seen a doctor within the past year and nearly 66 percent failed to receive preventative care; and

WHEREAS, Drug and alcohol addition rates are far higher for veterans than non service civilians and CNN has cited that the suicide risk is double for male United States veterans when compared to that of other Americans; and

WHEREAS, Enhancing the coordination of services and benefits for veterans will help improve the overall quality of life for those who have served this country; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That authority be given to the Committee on Legislative Oversight to hold public hearings to examine current issues affecting veterans in the Philadelphia area and to coordinate with the Veterans' Advisory Commission to identify and implement programs to address specific needs and concerns.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 090523 continued

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 090523 continued

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the eighteenth of June, 2009.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Kenney, Blackwell, DiCicco and Green

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Kenney, Blackwell, DiCicco, Green, Greenlee, Goode, Clarke, Jones, Miller, Sanchez, Krajewski, Rizzo, O'Neill and Reynolds Brown