

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 051162)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing the Committee on Public Health and Human Services to conduct hearings to investigate the policies and procedures of the City's Medical Examiner's Office with regards to identifying missing persons.

WHEREAS, As of June 30, 2005, in the City of Philadelphia, 2675 Juveniles, 719 adults were reported missing and of that number, 393 juveniles, 100 adults are still missing; and

WHEREAS, In the City of Philadelphia there are numerous John/Jane Doe cases still open; and

WHEREAS, Unisha "Neicey" Jefferson vanished from a North Philadelphia corner over two years ago; and

WHEREAS, A pathologist at the City's Medical Examiner's Office read a story in the Philadelphia Inquirer about the Jefferson/Johnson Family attending the Missing Persons Awareness Conference on November 5, 2005 and information from the article reminded this pathologist that a body had been found a few blocks from where Unisha Jefferson went missing; and

WHEREAS, X-Rays provided by the family led to the discovery that a body that had been in the Medical Examiner's Office for over two years was in fact Unisha "Neicey" Jefferson; and

WHEREAS, The typical procedure when a body is found is to take it to the Medical Examiner's Office where attempts are made to identify through fingerprints or dental records but in cases where the body is too badly decomposed for fingerprints or dental records, no direct identification can be made; and

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WHEREAS, This year, Pennsylvania passed a law requiring the state police to test samples of unidentified remains when requested by local coroners or medical examiners; and

WHEREAS, The federal government also provides free DNA testing of unidentified remains and DNA testing for family members of missing persons; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the Committee on Public Health and Human Services is hereby authorized to conduct hearings to investigate the policies and procedures of the City's Medical Examiner's Office with regards to identifying missing persons.

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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 first of December, 2005.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Ramos, Tasco, Reynolds Brown and Mariano

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Ramos, Tasco, Reynolds Brown, Mariano, Miller, Goode, Krajewski, Rizzo, DiCicco, Blackwell, Kenney, Kelly and Nutter