City of Philadelphia

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

(Resolution No. 070379)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing City Council's Committee on Technology and Information Services to hold hearings to examine and evaluate the feasibility of upgrading and expanding the City's community emergency notification system, otherwise known as Reverse 911.

WHEREAS, Police officers, firefighters, public safety providers, ambulance drivers, emergency medical technicians, emergency dispatchers, first response teams, and emergency responders provide a vital service to the citizens and visitors of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia emergency responders have assumed a heightened role since September 11, 2001 to protect the infrastructure of the city when fire, hazardous material releases, natural disasters, emergency medical situations, rescue challenges, and similar emergencies are encountered; and

WHEREAS, Equipping Philadelphia first responders with the technology, equipment, skills, services, and knowledge to mitigate the effects of emergency situations, criminal activities and natural disasters on the citizens of Philadelphia remain a high priority of the Philadelphia City Council; and

WHEREAS, In times of unforeseen events, the City's ability to maintain the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Philadelphia is contingent on its ability to equip first responders with the technology and equipment necessary to instantaneously alert the public of potential dangers, necessary evacuations and plans of action; and

WHEREAS, Upgrading and expanding Philadelphia's emergency notification system, otherwise known as Reverse 911, could provide the City's first responders with the technology needed to be more effective at immediately communicating with all citizens of the City in times of crisis; and

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WHEREAS, Community emergency notification systems launch emergency messages using a combination of database and Geographic Information System (GIS) computer mapping technologies to quickly target a precise geographic area of the county and saturate it with thousands of calls when an emergency occurs; and

WHEREAS, Community emergency notification systems identify neighborhoods or affected regions of a county of a fire, hazardous material releases, natural disasters, emergency medical situation, rescue challenge, or similar emergency and contacts local resident via telephone with a recorded message that concisely describes the emergency and details actions residents should take; and

WHEREAS, In addition to sending recorded voice messages, community emergency notifications systems can deliver text messages to wireless receivers, including digital pages in times of an emergency; and

WHEREAS, Community emergency notification systems offer a variety of optional modules that allow communities to custom-build a notification system to meet the exact needs of that community including, but not limited to, emergency evacuations, missing person alerts, natural disaster alerts, hazardous material leaks, search and rescue operations, crime prevention, wanted person alerts, neighborhood emergency incidents, special community notifications and homeland security; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That authority is given to the Committee on Technology and Information Services to conduct hearings to examine and evaluate the feasibility of upgrading and expanding the City's community emergency notification system and to make recommendations as to the implementation thereof.

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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 May, 2007.

Anna C. Verna
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Patricia Rafferty
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember O'Neill

Sponsored by: Councilmembers O'Neill, Tasco, Savage, DiCicco, Rizzo, Clarke, Campbell, Council President Verna, Councilmembers Kelly, Krajewski, Miller, Kenney, Blackwell, Greenlee, Goode, Ramos and Reynolds Brown