

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 250185)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing the Committee on Education to investigate federal DEI program rollbacks and their effects on Philadelphia's tax-exempt higher education institutions.

WHEREAS, Higher education institutions in Philadelphia, many of which are tax-exempt, receive significant benefits from their tax-exempt status, contributing to their ability to operate and expand their educational and community-based programs; and

WHEREAS, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs are integral to the mission of many higher education institutions, promoting an inclusive campus environment that enhances educational outcomes, fosters social justice, and ensures that all students, regardless of background, have access to resources and opportunities for success; and

WHEREAS, DEI programs address critical societal issues by supporting marginalized and underrepresented communities, fostering equitable access to education, and preparing students to engage in a diverse global society; and

WHEREAS, Some higher education institutions in Philadelphia have faced pressure from the federal government to roll back DEI programs or risk funding to their institution. The decision to roll back or reduce funding for DEI programs as part of cost-cutting measures, will harm the long-standing commitment to inclusivity and social responsibility; and

WHEREAS, These financial decisions are being made at a time when Philadelphia's higher education institutions benefit from substantial property tax exemptions, which many believe should reflect a reciprocal commitment to enhancing the public good, including support for DEI efforts that benefit all members of society, especially Philadelphians; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia residents and taxpayers are vested in ensuring that institutions benefiting from tax exemptions uphold their role in advancing public service, including maintaining programs that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within their campuses and in the broader community; and

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 250185 continued

WHEREAS, The rollback of DEI programs may have long-term detrimental effects on the educational experience, campus climate, and the broader social fabric of Philadelphia, especially among students of color and other marginalized groups who rely on these initiatives for support, mentorship, and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, The Committee on Education should hold hearings to investigate the return on investment of tax exempt higher education institutions in light of recent DEI program rollbacks; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby authorizes the Committee on Education to investigate federal DEI program rollbacks and their effects on Philadelphia's tax-exempt higher education institutions.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 250185 continued

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the sixth day of March, 2025.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Jones

Sponsored by: Council President Johnson, Councilmembers, Jones, Phillips, Gilmore Richardson, Gauthier, Landau, Lozada, Young, Harrity, O'Rourke, Driscoll, Squilla, Bass and Ahmad