City of Philadelphia

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

(Resolution No. 240759)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing the Committee on Technology and Information Services to hold hearings exploring the current status of Artificial Intelligence technologies and how Philadelphia can prepare for their impact on the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

WHEREAS, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a set of computer technologies that can perform tasks mimicking human technologies, automating the process of repetitive learning and discovery through data. These technologies have become a popular tool to analyze large datasets, automate human tasks, and offer new capabilities to government agencies and private organizations and industries throughout Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, AI has multiple subtypes and applications. Predictive AI forecasts outcomes based on input data, often using historical data to make predictions. In contrast, Generative AI is a subfield of artificial intelligence which uses machine learning and deep learning techniques to generate "seemingly new" human-like content, such as text, images, audio, and video. Large Language Models (LLMs), like ChatGPT, are an example of Generative AI. LLMs are deep learning models programmed to understand and generate natural language and are accessible to any consumer regardless of technical skill; and

WHEREAS, Predictive and Generative AI technologies have many applications for municipal government, which Philadelphia has used or may consider utilizing. In particular, Predictive AI has proven useful for data analytics applications in the municipal sphere. For example, Philadelphia has tested smart streetlights to monitor the condition of Philadelphia streets, and used sensors on municipal vehicles to identify any cracks and unevenness in the road. Philadelphia has also explored using AI to identify individuals for police investigation through facial recognition and license plate identification technologies; and

WHEREAS, SEPTA has similarly utilized Predictive AI technologies to enhance their operations, such as outfitting cameras with AI to detect the presence of guns on platforms; and outfitting buses with AI-enhanced cameras to detect and ticket those cars which are obstructing bus lanes; and

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WHEREAS, In contrast, the expansion of some applications of AI, particularly Generative AI tools that replicate human language, images, and audio, has resulted in concerns about the impact on employment and the economy. The advent of algorithm-based AI applications for job search and job candidate screening tools raises concerns for job seekers. In addition, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, about 18% of the jobs in Philadelphia are at high risk of automation, with women, young people, and black communities disproportionately impacted; and

WHEREAS, Some Predictive AI models have been seen to reinforce social biases and further discrimination. For example, predictive models that use health costs as an approximation of individual health perceive Black patients as less needing healthcare. In addition, mounting evidence suggests that predictive policing tools lead to an unequal treatment of Americans of color by law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Generative AI has been directly linked to the spread of disinformation concerning elections. For example, during the 2024 New Hampshire primary, an AI robocall impersonating President Joe Biden encouraged voters to stay home, influencing voter turnout; and

WHEREAS, The environmental impacts of AI show unprecedented use of water and energy. One estimate from March 2024 found that if Google were to integrate AI into every search, its electricity usage would increase by 29 billion kilowatt hours per year; and

WHEREAS, To become the 21st-Century technological hub Philadelphia is capable of being, it must work with the numerous companies that are already harnessing AI in Philadelphia. These companies are already expanding healthcare coverage, monitoring and upkeeping the conditions of services and products, and understanding patterns in both groups' and individuals' behavior more coherently; and

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has recognized the impact of AI, particularly Generative AI, on its residents and has sought to create a governance structure and guidance for AI within state government, doing so through the establishment of a state AI governing board and establishing a partnership with OpenAI, the parent company of ChatGPT; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia does not currently have public policies regarding the use of Generative AI for City government. Given the implications of the technology for the City workforce, government services, and how residents interact with their government, the City requires broad guidance on the utilization of Generative AI at an enterprise level, which all departments can look to for direction; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby authorize the Committee on Technology and Information Services to hold hearings exploring the current status of Artificial Intelligence technologies and how Philadelphia can prepare for their impact on the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

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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 twelfth day of September, 2024

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
INTERIM CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Landau

Sponsored by: Councilmember Landau, Councilmembers, Phillips, Jones, Brooks, Driscoll, Squilla, Bass and Ahmad