City of Philadelphia

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

(Resolution No. 130733)

RESOLUTION

Calling on the Committee on Public Health and Human Services of the Council of the City of Philadelphia to hold hearings examining the startling level of poverty in the City of Philadelphia and the high rate of poverty among the City's municipal workforce, and identifying governmental policies that have contributed to this crisis.

WHEREAS, in the City of Philadelphia over 400,000 people are living in poverty, 200,000 of which are surviving on incomes that are less than half of the federal poverty level, and the City has a poverty rate of 27% with 13% living in deep poverty; and,

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's poverty rate has nearly doubled since 1970 and is 13 points higher than the U.S. national average; and,

WHEREAS, poverty affects certain populations more than others: 39% of children in Philadelphia live in poverty, along with 42% of Philadelphians of Hispanic or Latino heritage, 34% of African-Americans, 40% with any disability, 30% of the Asian population, and 42% of households lead by women; and,

WHEREAS, poverty is concentrated in certain sections of the city, especially in North and West Philadelphia where four zip codes have poverty rates over 45%

WHEREAS, of the nation's 25 largest cities, Philadelphia ranks 22nd in educational attainment and lower levels of education are strongly correlated to poverty: 38% of Philadelphians without a high school diploma live in poverty, while only 8% of college graduates do; and,

WHEREAS, the median household income in Philadelphia is $16,295 less than the national average and of the nation's 25 largest cities only Detroit's is lower; and unemployment in Philadelphia is 133% of the national average, with large sections of the city suffering from labor force participation that is below 65%; and,

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WHEREAS, even the City's municipal workforce is impacted by the high poverty rates in Philadelphia, as revealed in a recent report by Temple Professor Michael Bognanno, with 41.9% of DC33 and DC47 members living below the 2013 federal Health and Human Services poverty line for a family of four; moreover, under the Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure it is estimated that over 75% of DC33 and DC47 members live in poverty; and,

WHEREAS, the failure of members of DC33 and DC47 to receive a wage increase in recent years has resulted in a 21.2% increase in members falling below the poverty line for a family of four; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia has recently embarked on an ambitious effort to fight poverty, and has released the "Shared Prosperity Philadelphia" plan as an initial step towards improved coordination of public services impacting poverty and increasing available resources; and

WHEREAS, many government programs are nonetheless insufficient to alleviate the suffering of the working poor; given stringent limits to these programs, only 24.6% of DC33 are eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and not a single DC47 worker is, no members of DC33 or DC47 are eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program; therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA THAT, the Committee on Public Health and Human Services of the Council of the City of Philadelphia will hold hearings examining the startling level of poverty in the City of Philadelphia and the high rate of poverty among the City's municipal workforce, and identifying governmental policies that have contributed to this crisis.

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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 tenth day of October, 2013.

Darrell L. Clarke
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Quiñones Sánchez

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Quiñones Sánchez, Jones and Tasco