

# City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 020639)

## RESOLUTION

Authorizing the City Council Committee on Law and Government to hold public hearings addressing whether aggressive panhandling has changed in nature, degree, or frequency in recent years with consideration of whether a change in the provision of social services is required.

WHEREAS, Representatives of the Philadelphia Police Department report that complaints about violations of the Sidewalk Behavior Bill have dropped by 50% since 1995, and

WHEREAS, The Police also report that proper execution and enforcement of the Sidewalk Behavior Bill is an effective means to address the problem of citizens inappropriately requesting financial assistance from fellow citizens, and

WHEREAS, There are potentially misguided voices promoting criminalization of a socio-economic and/or health care problem, and

WHEREAS, Socio-economic and health care problems are far better dealt with through provision of social services and mental and physical health care services, as our experience has taught us that “community policing” works, and

WHEREAS, It is divisive to deride real needs of mentally and physically ill citizens, suggesting that court action against such citizens in the name of supporting the needs of City businesses and their customers is appropriate, and

WHEREAS, Real solutions to this problem, starting with an accurate description of its nature and scope from both the perspective of the individual requesting money and the businesses and the customers need to be calmly and deliberately developed, and

WHEREAS, Education programs asking citizens to alternately assist those asking for money work, and

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WHEREAS, Making legal changes which end up in panhandlers getting a court summons or a ticket will significantly erode the trust, which has been built up between the City of Philadelphia's sidewalk outreach teams and homeless citizens and panhandlers; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the City Council Committee on Law & Government is hereby authorized to hold a public hearing addressing whether aggressive panhandling has changed in nature, degree, or frequency, in recent years, with consideration of whether a change in the provision of social and health care services is warranted.

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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 seventeenth of October, 2002.

Anna C. Verna  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Marie B. Hauser  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Cohen and Blackwell

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Cohen, Blackwell, Kenney, Council President Verna, Reynolds Brown, Ortiz, Nutter, Goode, Rizzo, DiCicco, Clarke, Tasco and O'Neill