



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

RESOLUTION NO. 240717

Introduced September 5, 2024

Councilmember Brooks

RESOLUTION

Authorizing a task force to advance recommendations and coordinate initiatives to ensure that all people in Philadelphia are able to exercise their fundamental right to bodily autonomy and reproductive freedom.

WHEREAS, Access to safe and affordable reproductive healthcare is a human right; and

WHEREAS, In a radical political decision, the US Supreme Court stripped away long-standing constitutional protections for reproductive rights; and extremist lawmakers across the country are enacting a multitude of dangerous and cruel restrictions on fundamental bodily rights; and

WHEREAS, The state of Pennsylvania for decades has imposed medically unnecessary and stigmatizing barriers to abortion care, including a ban on insurance coverage of abortion care for patients using Medicaid, a mandatory waiting period, state scripted “counseling” designed to dissuade patients from terminating their pregnancies, a requirement for parental consent or a court order for minors seeking care, and many onerous regulations on providers that have no bearing on patient health or safety; and

WHEREAS, In the face of these looming threats, City Council and Mayor Parker have worked to allocate millions of additional dollars to help Philadelphians access reproductive care, but more needs to be done to ensure all can receive the healthcare and support they need; and

WHEREAS, The denial of reproductive care can have immense socioeconomic effects, particularly for those already facing economic difficulties, leading to significantly higher rates of bankruptcies, evictions, and court judgments; and

WHEREAS, The mortality rate among Black people who are pregnant is already four times higher than the rate for those who are white, with Black women making up 73% of pregnancy-related deaths in one recent study, and studies show that abortion bans only increase this unjust divide; and

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WHEREAS, Comprehensive reproductive health care encompasses access to abortion and contraception, as well as access information and services related to uterine, menstrual, and sexual health, which are critical for the overall well-being and autonomy of individuals who menstruate; and

WHEREAS, Access to quality uterine, menstrual, and sexual health care is essential for preventing and managing conditions such as endometriosis, fibroids, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), and other reproductive health issues that significantly impact individuals' quality of life, mental health, and economic stability; and

WHEREAS, The stigma and lack of education surrounding uterine, menstrual, and sexual health issues can lead to inadequate care, misdiagnosis, and a lack of understanding about these conditions, which disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color, exacerbating existing health disparities; and

WHEREAS, Reproductive health and freedom also include access to healthcare for trans and nonbinary Philadelphians, including gender-affirming care; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is facing a surge of out-of-state patients seeking reproductive healthcare services, particularly abortion, due to bans in their home states, straining the limited resources of providers and advocates in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Local providers of reproductive healthcare and those seeking this care routinely face death threats, bomb scares, online and in-person harassment, physical threats, and abuse by increasingly emboldened anti-abortion extremists; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia recognizes the need for inclusive reproductive healthcare that addresses the full spectrum of reproductive health needs, including menstrual equity, ensuring that all individuals have access to menstrual products, education, and medical care regardless of their economic status; and

WHEREAS, Comprehensive reproductive health education that includes uterine, menstrual and sexual health is critical in empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their health and well-being, and in promoting bodily autonomy and gender equality; and

WHEREAS, It is critical that we do all we can to protect those who seek, provide, and support reproductive care, and to expand access to this care; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Shall continue and deepen its efforts to fund and expand access to reproductive healthcare, particularly for those who cannot afford services or are denied the ability to use their insurance to cover costs, and to support organizations providing critical reproductive health services.

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FURTHER RESOLVED, That additional and concerted efforts shall be made to safeguard providers, helpers, and patients from harassment and violence in order to protect the safety and well-being of those who bravely provide crucial reproductive services in Philadelphia, and to ensure those seeking abortions can do so freely and safely.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a comprehensive educational campaign is needed to accurately inform Philadelphians about their rights, and about how and where they can access safe and confidential reproductive healthcare including contraception and abortion services, including support with funding.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Philadelphia commits to promoting education, access, and support for uterine, menstrual and sexual health care, and to ensuring that all Philadelphians have the resources and information they need to manage their reproductive health comprehensively and with dignity.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City shall include uterine, menstrual and sexual health care as a priority in its public health initiatives, collaborating with healthcare providers, educational institutions, and community organizations to provide accurate information, accessible services, and resources for menstrual equity.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Philadelphia authorizes the creation of a Task Force to advance recommendations and coordinate initiatives to protect and expand reproductive rights and abortion access in each of the aforementioned areas of priority, consisting of representatives from: the Philadelphia City Council; the Offices of Neighborhood and Community Engagement; Immigrant Affairs; People with Disabilities; and LGBT Affairs, including the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, the Philadelphia Law Department, the Office of the Deputy Managing Director for Health and Human Services, Office of Domestic Violence Strategies, and any additional relevant city offices and departments as determined by the Mayor's Administration ; and key community stakeholders especially those with lived experiences and expertise relevant to this work.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall convene within 30 days of its creation and shall meet regularly. The Task Force will hold at least one public meeting in order to receive feedback and provide updates on its progress.

FINALLY RESOLVED, That all City Departments, Agencies, Boards, and Commissions shall cooperate with the Task Force, and provide any data it may require. Other public entities, along with the private sector, are encouraged to support and cooperate with the Task Force.

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