

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 240026)

RESOLUTION

Recognizing January as Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, and commending the Pennsylvania National Cervical Cancer Coalition–NW Philadelphia Chapter Leader, Angela “The Survivor Diva” Reese for her work promoting awareness about cervical cancer

WHEREAS, almost all cervical cancers (99%) are linked to infection with high-risk human papillomaviruses (HPV), an extremely common virus transmitted through sexual contact; more than 42 million Americans are currently infected with HPV types that cause disease; and

WHEREAS, about 13 million Americans, including teens, become infected each year with HPV which can cause cervical cancer and other HPV associated cancers and conditions; and

WHEREAS, the American Cancer Society estimates for 2023 that about 13,960 American women will be diagnosed with new cases of invasive cervical cancer and about 4,310 will die from cervical cancer; and

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that, “All women are at risk for cervical cancer.” Cervical cancer occurs most often in women over the age of 30; and

WHEREAS, cervical cancer most often affects women in the prime of life; and

WHEREAS, cervical cancer disproportionately impacts vulnerable Black, Hispanic, American Indian groups of women and women from low-income households lacking access to health care and proven life-saving tools; and

WHEREAS, Attitudinal barriers exist towards screening exams; and

WHEREAS, Cervical cancer is mainly caused by long-lasting infection with certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV is a common virus that is passed from one person to another during sexual intercourse; and

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WHEREAS, most women having cervical cancer show no signs or symptoms in the early stages, but cervical cancer can have a major impact on a woman's reproductive function if found in the later stages; and

WHEREAS, Treatments used to fight cervical cancer can cause debilitating and life changing physical, mental, and overall psychosocial health aftereffects; and

WHEREAS, when found early, cervical cancer is highly treatable and associated with long survival and good quality of life; and

WHEREAS, most importantly, the disease is preventable with vaccination, appropriate screening and effective follow-up treatment of precancerous conditions; and

WHEREAS, Organizations such as the National Cervical Cancer Coalition, the World Health Organization, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention emphasize the importance of early detection in treating cervical cancer with regular Pap tests for prevention; and

WHEREAS, The Pap test and the HPV test can be done in a doctor's office or clinic. Most insurance plans cover preventive services, including the Pap test, without a copay. However, many people with a low income or without health insurance may be unaware of the resources available or may be unable to access them; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is one of the five counties in Pennsylvania with the highest rates of deaths from cervical cancer, (3.6 per 100,000); and

WHEREAS, from 2012 to 2016 in Philadelphia, there were 437 new cases of cervical cancer. For every 100,000 women, 11 cases were reported. Over those years, 159 women died of cervical cancer. For every 100,000 women in Philadelphia, 4 died of cervical cancer; and

WHEREAS, In Philadelphia in 2016, the rate of new cervical cancer cases was higher among Hispanic women at 11.3 cases per 100,000 women than Black (11 cases), White (10.2 cases), and Asian/Pacific Islander (8 cases); and

WHEREAS, according to the American Cancer Society, screening rates for cervical cancer are lower in Philadelphia than in other areas of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, 21.7 percent of Philadelphia's residents live below the poverty line with decreased access to care and higher rates of illness and death; and

WHEREAS, an increase in cancer screening rates would allow for many cancers to be avoided and for many cancers to be diagnosed at an earlier stage; and

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WHEREAS, without increased awareness surrounding these prevention measures and with continued barriers to adequate medical care, many people will continue to suffer from preventable cases of cervical cancer; and

WHEREAS, regular cervical cancer screening tests are effective in detecting the disease early when it can be effectively treated; and

WHEREAS, early, effective treatment of pre-cancerous conditions prevents pre-cancerous cells from advancing on to become invasive cancer; and

WHEREAS, cervical cancer vaccines are available that—together with screening tests provide a formidable and effective means of preventing this disease; and

WHEREAS, increasing awareness among patients, parents, guardians, representatives/legislators, and healthcare providers alike regarding the best use of these prevention tools is a key component in safe-guarding women's health; and

WHEREAS, cervical cancer is a preventable and treatable public health problem that we can end through vaccination, screening, and early treatment, yet one woman dies every 2 minutes from this disease in the world; and

WHEREAS, support of the health bill, H.R. 1550: PREVENT HPV Cancers Act of 2021 or Promoting Resources to Expand Vaccination, Education, and New Treatments for HPV Cancers Act Of 2021, supports efforts to increase HPV vaccination rates and otherwise prevent and treat cervical cancer and other cancers associated with that virus. Specifically, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) must educate the public about HPV vaccinations. The CDC must consult with the National Academy of Medicine, Health Departments, and other stakeholders on this effort; and

WHEREAS, WHO's Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer, which launched November 17, 2020 outlines three key steps: vaccination, screening and treatment. Successful implementation of all three could reduce more than 40% of new cases of the disease and 5 million related deaths by 2050; and

WHEREAS, simple, cost-effective health interventions exist, we must protect and amplify the impact of existing U.S. investments in global health by integrating cervical cancer prevention and treatment into existing programs; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted many parts of our lives, and produced new deficits in cervical cancer detection, so there is new urgency to getting these recommended screenings scheduled before a cancer can spread and becomes less treatable. Everyone is encouraged to maintain their scheduled screenings, doctors' appointments, and treatments without delay while observing coronavirus measures; and

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WHEREAS, 2023 marked the 32nd anniversary of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer early Detection Program, which provides free screenings to low-income, uninsured, and underinsured women in every State, as well as many Tribal organizations and Territories; and

WHEREAS, Angela Reese, fourteen-year survivor living with disabilities resulting from cancer treatments has dedicated her life after cancer to promoting awareness and prevention, reducing stigma and advocating through publishing Angela Reese’s THESUR-VIVORDIVA.COM digital media resource for cervical cancer awareness and disabilities inclusion excellence while giving leadership to the Pennsylvania National Cervical Cancer Coalition —NW Philadelphia Chapter; and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania National Cervical Cancer Coalition – NW Philadelphia Chapter has implemented a social media campaign to bring awareness to cervical cancer prevention during the month of January - National Cervical Cancer Awareness Month; in addition to partnering in programming with other NCCC Chapters across the country, the Global Initiative Against HPV and Cervical Cancer (GIAHC), medical experts and stakeholders to further disseminate information regarding this preventable cancer to communities disproportionately diagnosed; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes January as Cervical Health Awareness Month and commends the Pennsylvania National Cervical Cancer Coalition- NW Philadelphia Chapter and Angela “The Survivor Diva” Reese for their work promoting awareness about cervical cancer. Philadelphia City Council encourages all our citizens to recognize that cervical cancer is preventable, and to encourage and support the women in our lives in taking charge of their health and availing themselves of the tests and vaccines that have proven so effective in preventing cervical cancer. As we support the fighters, admire the survivors, and honor the taken, know that we have the means to eliminate this disease; it is incumbent on all of us to insure we have the will to do so.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this Resolution be presented to the Pennsylvania National Cervical Cancer Coalition- NW Philadelphia Chapter and Angela “The Survivor Diva” Reese, further evidencing the sincere respect of this legislative body.

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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 twenty-fifth day of January, 2024.

KENYATTA JOHNSON
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Gilmore Richardson

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Lozada, Phillips, Bass, Gauthier, Thomas, Harrity, O'Rourke and Driscoll