

# City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 250362)

### RESOLUTION

Resolution authorizing the Committee on Public Health and Human Services to hold a hearing on the policies of the Department of Health and Human Services regarding child welfare protections.

WHEREAS, The safety, well-being, and development of children are essential to the future of our community, and all children deserve to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) plays a critical role in safeguarding the welfare of children, particularly those who are at risk of abuse, neglect, or other forms of harm; and

WHEREAS, Since 2012, DHS has outsourced care for children involved in abuse and neglect investigations to private nonprofit organizations known as Community Umbrella Agencies (CUAs), with the goal of localizing services and improving care for children in need; and

WHEREAS, This goal has unfortunately not been met, as investigations reveal systemic breakdowns within the CUA network, leading to at least 70 lawsuits, 14 of which involve children who were killed while under the care of these agencies, and many more involving allegations of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia DHS system has allowed the CUA model to operate with significant failures, such as a lack of adequate oversight, unmanageable caseloads, high staff turnover, and inadequate resources, leading to unsafe conditions for vulnerable children; and

WHEREAS, The City's high foster care numbers, disproportionate to national averages, coupled with incidents of child fatalities and near fatalities, reflect ongoing failures that need immediate attention and reform; and

WHEREAS, DHS acknowledges keeping Social Security Benefits allocated to assist foster children and placing the money back into the City's general fund, leading to an average of an

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annual loss of roughly \$1.3 million, depriving an average of 380 children a year of their financial benefits; and

WHEREAS, The City Council has a responsibility to ensure DHS is operating effectively and efficiently to serve the best interests of Philadelphia's children; and

WHEREAS, The Council recognizes the need for continued collaboration with community stakeholders, child advocacy organizations, and experts to assess and improve child welfare services in Philadelphia, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby authorizes the Committee on Public Health and Human Services to hold hearings to review the practices, policies, and procedures of DHS regarding child welfare protections and the safety of children under its care.

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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 April, 2025.

Kenyatta Johnson  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Ahmad

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Phillips, Gauthier, Landau, Lozada, Young,  
Brooks, Harrity and Bass