

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 260088)

RESOLUTION

Recognizing and celebrating the women of All Of Us Or None Philadelphia, Why Not Prosper and SWAG for their efforts to address and fix laws that permit enslavement as a punishment for a crime, on the occasion of Black History Month.

WHEREAS, The United States Constitution's 13th Amendment, Section 1 states, "neither slavery; nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." This language explicitly permits enslavement as a punishment for crime, and has led to a legal infrastructure that permits inhumane treatment of incarcerated people, including inhospitable living conditions and unconscionable wages under threat of punishment that pay as little as \$0.23 per hour in Pennsylvania, or less than 3% of Pennsylvania's minimum wage; and

WHEREAS, Black, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islanders, and Indigenous people, and other people of color have been disproportionately affected by these laws and, at current, are of the highest incarceration rates across the nation and within the City of Philadelphia. Incarcerated people in Pennsylvania are subject to inhumane forced labor and exploitation of their bodies, including making license plates and clothing products and manufacturing and packaging products that benefit our own state agencies including the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Department of Health Care Services, and more; and

WHEREAS, The prison system and the counties that use prisons as economic anchor institutions have made billions off the labor of incarcerated people. For example, a 2005 audit of Pennsylvania Correctional Industries found that PCI received over \$19 million in profit during the audit period while paying incarcerated people almost nothing. Today, prison labor generates roughly \$1 billion in annual economic value for the corporations that exploit that labor; and

WHEREAS, It is clear that the Amendment 13 Section 1 language of the United States Constitution is not consistent with the current legislative, judicial, and executive intent of modern Pennsylvania law and fails to unequivocally prohibit the inhumane practice of slavery and involuntary servitude; and

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WHEREAS, We seek to remove outdated constitutional language that better reflects Pennsylvania's spirit and values as The City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection, freedom and liberties, and end the vestiges of slavery that continue to put Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islanders, and other people of color into involuntary servitude in Pennsylvania; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby recognizes and celebrates the women of All Of Us Or None Philadelphia, Why Not Prosper and SWAG for their efforts to address and fix laws that permit enslavement as a punishment for a crime, on the occasion of Black History Month.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That three Engrossed copies of this Resolution be presented to All Of Us Or None Philadelphia, Why Not Prosper and SWAG as evidence of the admiration and respect of this Council.

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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 fifth day of February, 2026.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Brooks

Sponsored by: Council President Johnson, Councilmembers Brooks, Phillips, Gauthier, Jones, Landau, Lozada, Young, O'Rourke, Driscoll, Squilla, Bass and Ahmad