

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 250876)

RESOLUTION

Recognizing October 11 and 12, 2025, as Blindness Awareness Weekend in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Blindness and vision impairment affects many people all around the world. The World Health Organization estimates that there are over 285 million visually impaired people, 245 million with low vision and 39 million totally blind people. More than 53,000 adults in Philadelphia are visually impaired; and

WHEREAS, There are many causes of vision impairment and blindness, including cataracts, glaucoma, diabetes, retinal diseases, and surgical complications. By age 65, over 90 percent of people will develop cataracts, and in the United States more than ten million people live with retinal disease. Many cases of vision loss go undocumented due to fear, stigma, or lack of education about eye conditions and available resources; and

WHEREAS, Children and college students with low vision are often overlooked in receiving proper services and resources. While braille is a powerful tool for literacy, it is not consistently taught across the United States, creating barriers to equal access in education and employment. Access technology such as audio devices, screen readers, and email communication is essential for participation in education, employment, and community life, yet many individuals lack the training and support to use these tools; and

WHEREAS, Black people are five times more likely to develop glaucoma, which tends to occur earlier and progress faster in Black patients compared to their white peers; and

WHEREAS, Blindness Awareness Weekend, hosted by Love Zion Baptist Church, is an important event magnifying the voices of visually impaired people and providing opportunities for supportive services, education, and dialogue. The event was founded by Esther Gillyard, Ms. Blind Diva of Pennsylvania, and Stacie Leap, Board Leader of the National Federation of the Blind of Pennsylvania and President of its Parent Division, with support from Dr. Clarence E. Wright, Pastor of Love Zion Baptist Church, who opened the church doors to host this historic event. Critical partners supporting blindness independence include the National Federation of the

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Blind of Pennsylvania, including both the Greater Philadelphia Chapter and the Keystone Chapter; and

WHEREAS, The weekend will include a Meet the Blind Panel and Resource Fellowship on Saturday, October 11, and a blind led Worship Service and fellowship meal on Sunday, October 12. These events will uplift the voices and lived experiences of blind Philadelphians, provide tangible support, and celebrate their resilience and contributions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby recognizes October 11 and 12, 2025, as Blindness Awareness Weekend in the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That three Engrossed copies of this resolution be presented to Love Zion Baptist Church and its Greater Philadelphia and Keystone Chapters and as evidence of the admiration and respect of this 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 ninth day of October, 2025.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Brooks

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Brooks, Gilmore Richardson, Gauthier,
Thomas, Landau, Harrity, O'Rourke, Driscoll and Squilla