

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 160537)

RESOLUTION

Respectfully urging the General Assembly to restore funding for human services programs to historic levels, and to put mechanisms in place to assure any future budget impasse or budget delay does not become a burden on the citizens or City and County of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Counties are at the forefront for delivery of crucial human services that protect the most vulnerable individuals, such as child welfare and protective, mental health, intellectual disabilities, substance abuse treatment, homeless assistance, meal programs, lottery-funded transportation, and others; and

WHEREAS, The capacity to meet critical service needs has been compromised by a steady decrease in state funding over the past decade, especially the drastic ten percent aggregate cut to the seven human services line items in FY 2012-2013; and

WHEREAS, The Human Services Block Grant has provided much-needed flexibility for the 30 counties eligible to participate, but remains closed to the remaining 37 counties, including Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, New mandates and additional program requirements continue to be placed on counties in the face of decreasing state funds; and

WHEREAS, While the rebalancing initiative for child welfare services is portrayed as only an accounting change, the initiative shifts a full quarter of funds for mandated child protective services into the following budget year with no more than a promise of being made whole; and

WHEREAS, As a result of the six-month budget impasse in FY 2015-2016, counties and the providers with whom they contract were forced to make difficult decisions about remaining open and meeting clients' needs while state payments were withheld; and

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WHEREAS, Many counties tapped reserves, borrowed funds, reduced or suspended payments to vendors or subcontractors, limited staff travel, laid off or reduced hours of employees, among other strategies, to maintain their focus on service delivery and assure that clients felt no harm; and

WHEREAS, As a result of the six-month budget impasse in FY 2015-2016, counties and the providers with whom they contract were forced to make difficult decisions about remaining open and meeting clients' needs while state payments were withheld; and

WHEREAS, The City and County of Philadelphia withheld payments from all providers other than those who demonstrated a financial hardship, a showing that they had exhausted their line of credit, were unable to make payroll, and unable to continue operations without immediate relief; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That this Council does hereby respectfully urge the General Assembly to restore funding for human services programs to historic levels, and to put mechanisms in place to assure any future budget impasse or budget delay does not become a burden on the citizens or City and County of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Pennsylvania General Assembly as evidence of the sentiments 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-sixth day of May, 2016.

Darrell L. Clarke
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmembers Green, Gym and Squilla

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Green, Gym and Squilla