

Legislation Details (With Text)

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On agenda: **Final action:**

Title: Authorizing Council's Committee on the Disabled and Handicapped to hold public hearings for the purpose of examining and investigating the incidences involving Linda Ann Weston and three additional persons suspected of holding four mentally disabled adults and several juveniles captive with the intent to commit fraud by cashing the Social Security checks of those held in captivity.

Sponsors: Councilmember Reynolds Brown, Councilmember Tasco, Councilmember Kenney, Councilmember Greenlee, Councilmember Clarke, Councilmember Blackwell, Councilmember Rizzo, Councilmember Sanchez, Councilmember Goode, Councilmember O'Neill, Councilmember Kelly, Councilmember Jones

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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result	Tally
11/3/2011	0	CITY COUNCIL	ADOPTED & REFERRED		
10/27/2011	0	CITY COUNCIL	Introduced and Ordered Placed On Next Week's Final Passage Calendar	Pass	

Authorizing Council's Committee on the Disabled and Handicapped to hold public hearings for the purpose of examining and investigating the incidences involving Linda Ann Weston and three additional persons suspected of holding four mentally disabled adults and several juveniles captive with the intent to commit fraud by cashing the Social Security checks of those held in captivity.

WHEREAS, Four mentally disabled adults ranging in age from twenty-nine through forty-one with mental capacities of a ten year old - identified as Tamara Breeden, Derwin McLemire, Herbert Knowles, and one unnamed male - were discovered severely malnourished in the basement of Linda Ann Weston's Tacony neighborhood house by the landlord with one adult chained to the boiler; and

WHEREAS, Four suspects have been arrested alongside Weston, including her boyfriend, Gregory Thomas, and Eddie Wright, a self-described minister and Weston's daughter, Jean McIntosh, who lived in the building where the mentally disabled adults were kept; and

WHEREAS, The four suspects are charged with kidnapping, aggravated assault, false imprisonment, unlawful restraint, criminal trespass, and conspiracy; and

WHEREAS, Weston is suspected of holding the adults captive to access their Social Security checks due to lax rules around performing background checks for Representative Payees who can cash checks of the mentally disabled and handicapped as noted in a 2010 report by Social Security Administration's Office of the Inspector General; and

WHEREAS, Weston has a prior legal conviction from 1984, having been sentenced to imprisonment for third-degree murder for starving a man to death in the coat closet of her North Philadelphia apartment. The man, who was her sister's boyfriend, angered Weston by questioning whether he was the father of Weston's sister's child. Weston served four years in prison for her involvement in this case; and

WHEREAS, As part of her parole for the murder, Weston was supposed to be under court-ordered supervision and receiving psychiatric treatment. Frequently on the move, Weston had only sporadic meetings with her parole officer; and

WHEREAS, Weston was diagnosed as “mildly mentally retarded” and suffering from “intrinsic brain damage, namely epilepsy,” according to court-ordered psychiatric evaluations. Additional court records also show a diagnosis of schizophrenia; and

WHEREAS, Upon her early release from prison, after serving four (4) years, Weston was granted custody of three of her children. A fourth child, a son, went to live with an uncle; and

WHEREAS, More than fifty (50) Social Security cards, power of attorney documents, and other such forms were found in Weston’s belongings. Police are in the process of investigating whether the cards belong to persons dead or alive; and

WHEREAS, Weston has a history of fraud with Social Security. In the past, Weston attempted to continue collecting benefits for her roommate, Maxine Lee, after the woman’s death and Weston’s siblings have informed police of her abusive nature, citing numerous scenarios of physical and sexual torture, incest, and drugging. The siblings further allege that Weston forced them to perform incest, in hopes of expanding their family with children who would bring in additional benefit checks; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council’s Committee on the Disabled and Handicapped to hold public hearings for the purpose of examining and investigating the incidences involving Linda Ann Weston and three additional persons suspected of holding four mentally disabled adults and several juveniles captive with the intent to commit fraud by cashing the Social Security checks of those held in captivity.