

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committee on Fiscal Stability and Intergovernmental Cooperation to hold quarterly hearings that include monthly reporting requirements, to discuss the fiscal position and overarching social impact goals of the City, including and as related to the Five-Year Plan and the reporting requirements set forth in the Quarterly City Manager's Report ("QCMR") and as submitted to the Pennsylvania Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority ("PICA").

WHEREAS, The City Council of Philadelphia is preparing to pass a dramatically reduced annual budget with increases to the parking tax and non-resident wage tax during the COVID-19 crisis. These steps, necessary to secure a balanced budget in line with the rules as set forth by the Home Rule Charter, place further financial burdens on our already struggling tax base in the upcoming 2021 fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, The City has increased spending by nearly \$1 billion over the last four years without demonstrating measurable progress towards publicly-stated goals. The budget hearing process was set in a virtual environment and expedited due to necessary revisions reflecting the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis and subsequent economic downturn. Under these circumstances, residents and taxpayers may pay the price for a lack of transparency around spending, performance, and impact in this fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic City Council appropriated necessary funds for the management of the crisis and established a biweekly reporting requirement to review the spending of those funds. Council also created a City Council budget workgroup to improve and realign the Administration's proposed FY2021 budget with City Council's collective priorities; and

WHEREAS, City Council anticipates receiving additional financial support from the Federal CARES Act, the proposed HEROES Act, and allocations from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Council must be prepared to make further decisions regarding the influence these dollars will have on Philadelphians and the fiscal position of the City during the COVID-19 crisis and in the future; and

WHEREAS, This crisis has made clear that City Council requires an ongoing process for gathering information about the fiscal health and social progress of the City. Council needs clarity in its decision-making during the budget season and its appropriations during the year; and

WHEREAS, City Council shall submit regular information requests to conduct budgetary analysis on an ongoing basis and seek to prevent a recurrence of problems identified in this year's budget process; and

WHEREAS, The City is required to submit monthly reports to PICA and provide quarterly reporting forty-five days after the end of each fiscal quarter. These reports include information on personnel and overtime spending, performance, cash flow, and quarterly financial results for the General Fund, Water Fund, and Aviation Fund; and

WHEREAS, At the time of the submission of the QCMR, the Committee on Fiscal Stability and Intergovernmental Cooperation shall hold a hearing assessing the financial state of the City based on the report and its own independent inquiries. The Committee is authorized to issue subpoenas to compel attendance of witnesses and the production of documents to the full extent authorized under Section 2-401 of the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter; and

WHEREAS, The quarterly hearing is intended to provide an ongoing analysis of the performance of City departments in achieving broader societal and financial goals. This would include for example, tangible analysis of impacts on poverty, safety, health, education, and economic progress in our communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the City Council of Philadelphia's Committee on Fiscal Stability and Intergovernmental Cooperation shall be authorized to hold quarterly hearings that include monthly reporting requirements to discuss the fiscal position and overarching social impact goals of the City including and as related to the Five-Year Plan and the reporting requirements set forth in the Quarterly City Manager's Report ("QCMR") and as submitted to the Pennsylvania Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority ("PICA").

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Fiscal Stability and Intergovernmental Cooperation may hold hearings with the authorization to issue subpoenas to compel attendance of witnesses and the production of documents to the full extent authorized under Section 2-401 of the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter.