



Legislation Text

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Authorizing City Council's Committee on Public Safety to hold hearings to investigate the quality of life as it pertains to personal safety and security for residents of public housing in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Studies show that public housing developments are hotbeds of violence involving predominantly local residents; and

WHEREAS, It has been suggested that the high density of low-income families, combined with general disorder, poor police response, lack of residential security, and low morale contribute to high rates of violence; and

WHEREAS, During a period of unprecedented decline in crime in the early 2000s, violent crime in public housing continued to outpace levels of violence in otherwise similar urban areas; and

WHEREAS, A study conducted by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development showed that people who receive housing assistance remain twice as likely to be victims of gun violence; and

WHEREAS, The presence of guards, management, cameras, and increased lighting has been shown to augment the sense of security for residents in the immediate building; and

WHEREAS, Multiple surveys conducted between 1981 and 2003 conclude that the victimization of residents of public housing is four times the national average, and the offender rate is higher than the national average; and

WHEREAS, Government-sponsored safety awareness campaigns which incentivize tenants to be vigilant and take precautions against crime have had a negligible effect toward preventing crime; and

WHEREAS, Redevelopment of public housing in Dayton, OH and Yonkers, NY, paired with increased police presence and an identification security system have cut crime rates in half; and

WHEREAS, Female-headed families comprise a large percent of public housing, but women report feeling more victimized than their male counterparts. Several studies of women in Chicago's most violent public housing developments have documented the precautions that women must take to ensure their own and their family's safety, including rarely taking their children outside and taking taxis to work; now therefore,

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That City Council's Committee on Public Safety is authorized to hold hearings to investigate the quality of life as it pertains to personal safety and security for residents of public housing in Philadelphia.