

Legislation Text

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Requesting the City Controller to conduct a performance audit on all allocations and funding distributed by the City in the Kensington area, and examine the policies and procedures of the recipients and their impact on the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Kensington, a neighborhood in Philadelphia, has transformed into a hub for illicit drug activities, open-air drug markets and criminal offense; and

WHEREAS, The hazardous circumstances have led to a substantial surge in criminal activity, specifically substance abuse, overdose deaths, human trafficking, and narcotic sales. These dangerous conditions pose a threat to the safety and well-being of the residents in the Kensington area and to those who are conducting these activities; and

WHEREAS, To address these concerns, it was reported during the Kensington Marshall plan hearings, an estimated amount of \$70 million dollars was invested in the Kensington area, to help address the Kensington crisis; and

WHEREAS, For fiscal year 2023, the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disabilities Services, Office of Homeless Services, and the Department of Public health had a combined budget of an estimated \$2.6 billion dollars; and

WHEREAS, The Kensington Community Resilience Fund, a public-private-community partnership between community members, City government, regional funders, and the Scattergood Foundation has awarded \$760 thousand dollars for the past three years to address: public safety, youth development, workforce development and training, beautification and blight removal, connecting residents to resources and building resilience and addressing community trauma; and

WHEREAS, According to a report from WHYY, to date, Philadelphia has been awarded \$200 million dollars in total opioid settlement funds, money paid by opioid makers, distributors and retailers in restitution for their role in the ongoing opioid crisis. City officials announced that the funds would be released over the course of 18 years and about 7.5 million was set aside for Kensington; and

WHEREAS, With so much invested in the Kensington area, the residents who call Kensington home are hoping for a positive return on these investments and by evaluating the allocation of these funds, it will help determine if they align with the needs of the community; and

WHEREAS, By examining the policies, procedures and the impact of the recipients of the funding, it will help determine if they are effective and efficient in achieving their intended results; and

WHEREAS, With the findings of the Controller, the hope is to identify any areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments to better serve the Kensington community that has been long overlooked; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council's Special Committee on Kensington hereby requests the City Controller to conduct a performance audit on all allocations and funding distributed by the City in the Kensington area, and examine the policies and procedures of the recipients and their impact in the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, Requesting the City Controller submit a full report to the Council, the Mayor, and to the Governor and make its findings and recommendations available to the public.