

## Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committee on Public Health and Human Services to hold hearings on the City of Philadelphia's preparedness for the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and its plans to respond to an outbreak.

WHEREAS, At the start of 2020, China experienced an outbreak of a virus, COVID-19, commonly referred to as the Coronavirus; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a new virus, previously unexperienced, and belongs to the same disease classification as other highly contagious and potentially life-threatening conditions. Coronavirus presents as coughing, fever, and upper respiratory irritation or distress; and

WHEREAS, Coronavirus spreads through being in proximity to an infected person and inhaling droplets generated when they cough or sneeze or touching a surface where these droplets land and then touching one's face or nose. In short, COVID-19 is considered highly contagious; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the month of January, Coronavirus spread through Asia and first cases developed in Europe and the United States. Governments worldwide have adopted quarantine procedures as residents develop symptoms and return to their home countries with possible exposure. The incubation period for Coronavirus is unknown but estimated to be around ten to fourteen days. Public Health officials have recommended all with possible symptoms to stay home and away from others; and

WHEREAS, At present, COVID-19 is believed to be responsible for nearly 4,000 deaths worldwide. Health officials do not believe a vaccine for the virus will be available for at least twelve to eighteen months. The United States is experiencing the spread of this virus and the first suspected case in Philadelphia was reported this week; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia must be prepared to respond to the inevitable arrival of Coronavirus. The Health Department has created a resource center for the public explaining the symptoms associated with COVID-19 and how to prevent the spread of the virus; and

WHEREAS, The City must be ready to handle an influx of testing demands, treatment needs and capacity issues, emergency service preparations, and an increased demand for information provided to the public. The City must also be informed about potential costs associate with best serving the public during an outbreak of Coronavirus; and

WHEREAS, The City is working with institutional health partners, the Commonwealth and other stakeholders to prepare for the arrival of Coronavirus, but specific preparations are not fully understood at this time. Council and the public should be made aware of best practices and plans adopted around this issue; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF PHILADELPHIA,** That the Committee on Public Health and Human Services is authorized to hold hearings on the City of Philadelphia's preparedness for the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and its plans to respond to an outbreak.

