

Legislation Text

File #: 220467, **Version:** 0

Celebrating June as Reentry Awareness Month in Philadelphia and recognizing the accomplishments of returning citizens across Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Philadelphia still has one of the highest incarceration and supervision rates in the country. An estimated 25,000 people return to Philadelphia from federal, state, and local prisons and jails each year, and there is an estimated population of well over 200,000 returned citizens in Philadelphia. Meanwhile, the Philadelphia Inquirer found in 2018 that 1 in 23 Philadelphia adults were on probation or parole; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphians returning from jails and prisons experience enormous challenges to successful re-entry. In Pennsylvania there are over 860 collateral consequences of conviction, including legal and regulatory sanctions and restrictions that limit or prohibit people with criminal records from accessing employment, occupational licensing, housing, voting, education, and other opportunities; and

WHEREAS, The result of these legal restrictions, along with a lack of systemic supports and social stigma, lead to high rates of recidivism. These re-entry failures are not only de-stabilizing for returning citizens but also can carry devastating consequences for the well-being of impacted individuals, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, It is critical that our criminal and juvenile justice systems provide meaningful opportunities for rehabilitation and redemption; while also addressing both the root causes of crime and the underlying needs of returning citizens using resources devoted to prevention, diversion, reentry, trauma-informed care, culturally-specific services, and social support; and

WHEREAS, Reduced recidivism allows for community reinvestment and proactive approaches to public safety, resulting in safer and more stable communities; and

WHEREAS, In 2017, this Body formally recognized June as Reentry Awareness Month in Philadelphia for the first time; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia Reentry Awareness Month is intended to acknowledge and celebrate Philadelphians who have returned home incarceration and the individuals who support them during and after this transition; and

WHEREAS, It is essential that we empower citizens who have paid their debt to society and to provide them with a second chance to participate, contribute, and succeed; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby celebrates this June as Reentry Awareness Month, and recognizes the accomplishments of returning citizens across Philadelphia.