

## Legislation Text

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**File #: 240294, Version: 0**

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Authorizing the establishment of a “Special Committee on Kensington” to analyze and examine the effectiveness of current polices to further develop data driven solutions and restore stability in the Kensington area.

WHEREAS, Kensington, a neighborhood in Philadelphia, has been nationally known for experiencing a surge in illicit drug activities, including open-air drug markets and other criminal offenses. This has created a growing concern among residents and calls for immediate action to address the issue; and

WHEREAS, Kensington has been a destination to buy illegal drugs by people traveling from the Greater Philadelphia area such as Bucks, Montgomery, Delaware, and Chester County and throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS With the rise of synthetic opioids like fentanyl and xylazine, doctors are facing challenges treating patients addicted to these harmful drugs; and

WHEREAS, According to a recent report from Thomas Jefferson University, people have waited 15 to 18 hours while going through withdraw for a bed they may or may not get, and an urgency for a coordinated effort to enable real-time bed, space, level of care and program availability is much needed in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, A Community Health Profile by Drexel University in 2019 reports, compared to all Philadelphia residents, Kensington residents are more likely to lack public or private health insurance, smoke, have skipped a meal, and have hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, or mental health diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, During the Kensington Marshall Plan hearings, it was reported an estimated 70 million dollars was spent in the Kensington area; and

WHEREAS, The Kensington Marshall Plan is a comprehensive strategy developed by the City Council to address the multifaceted crisis in the Kensington area. This plan was adopted unanimously on February 16, 2023, and was designed to highlight the importance of tackling the issues faced by the community, including poverty, crime, drug abuse, and homelessness; and

WHEREAS, The Special Committee will help establish a framework for addressing the root causes of these problems by focusing on initiatives such as affordable housing, job creation, community policing, and addiction treatment programs by identifying steps to create a safer and more prosperous community in Kensington; and

WHEREAS, The community and all those who call Kensington home are hoping for a solution to this problem that would ensure their safety and well-being; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council hereby authorizes the establishment of a “Special Committee on Kensington” consisting of members appointed by the Council President, to analyze and examine the effectiveness of current polices to further develop data driven solutions

and restore stability in the Kensington area.

FURTHER RESOLVED, The Special Committee is responsible for various duties, including but not limited to convening regular meetings to plan and coordinate activities, evaluating the effectiveness of current programs and policies, identifying the best practices at the local and national levels, engaging community leaders, enhancing the capacity for data collection and analysis, reviewing the allocation of City resources to ensure optimal outcomes, and holding public hearings to report on the Special Committee's progress and gather public feedback.