

Legislation Text

File #: 171091, **Version:** 0

Authorizing the City Council Committee on Public safety to hold hearings examining compliance with the Ban the Box law since its enactment, and further examining the willingness of local area universities to ban the box from college applications.

WHEREAS, The Ban the Box Law created in 2011 and further updated in 2016 with an amendment offered by Councilman Curtis Jones, Jr., was enacted to provide job opportunities to those with criminal histories. The law prohibits a private employer from requesting criminal conviction history until a conditional offer of employment has been extended; and

WHEREAS, Since its latest amendment, City Council has not publicly examined compliance with the Ban the Box law in order to measure the success of or issues with the legislation. Furthermore, City Council has not publicly examined whether inquiries about criminal convictions are affecting the City's youth who are attempting to attend college; and

WHEREAS, Young adults seeking to attend college in this City, and other cities across the country, are subjected to questions about juvenile and criminal records on admissions applications. Philadelphia area colleges, including University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, and Temple University, have continued the practice of inquiring about criminal records on their respective applications; and

WHEREAS, According to research conducted by Community Legal Services (CLS), the practice of inquiring about criminal records on admissions applications has no increased affect on campus safety, and it prevents many prospective students from applying or enrolling in school; and

WHEREAS, Research also suggests that the practice of colleges inquiring about criminal records on admissions applications has a disparate impact on prospective students of color and those coming from low-income households; and

WHEREAS, Universities inquiring about criminal records on admissions applications serves as a barrier to higher education. Therefore, the willingness and feasibility of local area universities to implement a "Ban the Box" policy for college applications should be explored; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes the City Council Committee on Public safety to hold hearings examining compliance with the Ban the Box law since its enactment, and further examining the willingness of local area universities to ban the box from college applications.