

Legislation Text

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Calling on City Council's Committee on Technology and Information Services to hold public hearings to determine whether the City and its Office of Innovation and Technology have implemented sufficient security and are fully prepared to prevent cyber-attacks and network outages that other cities and governments have recently experienced.

WHEREAS, Cybersecurity is critical to the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the information of the citizens of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, A 2015 survey by the Ponemon Institute found that 71% of information technology employees in local and state governments reported cybersecurity practices for their organizations were not clearly defined or fully funded; and

WHEREAS, A 2017 survey conducted by the International City/County Management Association found that 44% of local governments reported that they face cyber-attacks regularly on a daily or hourly basis; and

WHEREAS, Technological advances have provided new cyber-threats, including the May 7, 2019 ransomware attack that crippled Baltimore's online systems, and cost the city roughly \$18 million through a combination of lost or delayed revenue as well as direct costs to restore systems, while preventing Baltimoreans from being able to access critical online city services for weeks; and

WHEREAS, On May 21, 2019, Philadelphia court computer systems were forced to shut down after they experienced a virus intrusion on a limited number of computers, which greatly impacted the operations of the First Judicial District and has caused a huge inconvenience for many Philadelphians who are in need of court services, two weeks later; and

WHEREAS, Too often information technology is under-funded by municipal governments, as more urgent issues tend to be ahead of IT in the budgeting process, and too often information technology is not adequately staffed by municipal governments, as IT professionals can find lucrative salaries in every other industry; and

WHEREAS, Cybersecurity is more than just an IT issue, as it must also be a priority for every municipal department because our critical government services rely on the internet and technology to function, and as technology and the nature of cyber-attacks evolve, so too must the actions and responses of local governments to these threats; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That City Council's Committee on Technology and Information Services is hereby authorized to hold hearings to determine whether the City and its Office of Innovation and Technology have implemented sufficient security and are fully prepared to prevent cyber-attacks and network outages that other cities and governments have recently experienced.