

Legislation Text

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Appointing members to the “Special Committee on Criminal Justice Reform,” who will conduct public hearings examining the Philadelphia criminal justice system for the impact of current policies, and offer recommended strategies for reform that are in the best interest of public safety and the public good.

WHEREAS, On December 10, 2015, The Council of the City of Philadelphia, by a unanimous vote, adopted Resolution Number 150958, thereby creating the Special Committee on Justice Reform; and

WHEREAS, Expanding upon the existing work that is already being done in Philadelphia and across the nation, the Special Committee on Criminal Justice Reform will work to highlight important issues including: the unsustainable and rapid growth of the adult corrections population; the unique issues presented with respect to juveniles involved in the criminal justice system; the impact that current laws have on Philadelphia communities and the justice-involved population; and policy changes across the nation that have proven effective in reducing costs, recidivism, and corrections populations in other places; and

WHEREAS, Extensive and thoughtful work is already underway in Philadelphia that is aimed at permanently and significantly reducing the number of Philadelphians who experience incarceration and their rates of recidivism; and

WHEREAS, The Special Committee on Criminal Justice Reform will expand upon the existing expertise and reform efforts being conducted across many important stakeholders including but not limited to: the Philadelphia Police Department, the Philadelphia Prison System, the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, the Office of the Philadelphia District Attorney, the Defender Association of Philadelphia, the Criminal Justice Advisory Board, the MacArthur Foundation Safety and Justice Challenge, members of the Philadelphia Reentry Coalition and many others; and

WHEREAS, All sectors of government must work together to ensure law enforcement and criminal justice are equitably enforced and efficiently administered; and

WHEREAS, Government must also reach out and work with the community and other stakeholders to find real world solutions that will reduce recidivism and make our neighborhoods stronger; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That stakeholders and experts shall be selected for their knowledge and experience to serve as ad hoc members of the Special Committee on Criminal Justice Reform:

FURTHER RESOLVED, That Council President appoints the following members to the Special Committee on Criminal Justice Reform:

Curtis Jones, Jr., Co-Chair;

Kevin J. Bethel, former member of the Philadelphia Police Department, Co-Chair;

Keir Bradford-Gray, Chief of Philadelphia Defenders Association, Co-Chair;

Kenyatta Johnson

Ann Schwartzman, Pennsylvania Prison Society

Tariq El-Shabazz, Esquire, El-Shabazz & Harris, LLC

Mayor's Criminal Justice Coordinator

Representative of First Judicial District Court

Representative of Philadelphia District Attorney

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Special Committee on Criminal Justice Reform shall begin its work by investigating ways to make systematic improvements in the following areas:

Crime Prevention Initiatives; Pre-Trial Detention, Bail & Supervision; Arrest/Incarceration/Juvenile Adjudication & Detention; Re-entry/Reducing Recidivism; Sentencing Alternatives & Reforms; and, Evidence Based Programmatic Review and Fiscal Sustainability.