



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Philadelphia City Council to hold public hearings to explore establishing Public Safety Officers and alternative code enforcement methods to improve the quality of life throughout the City.

WHEREAS, Ensuring the safety, health, and public welfare of its residents is the number one priority of any government; and

WHEREAS, As our City continues to prosper, it is important that we maintain the quality of life for all residents; and

WHEREAS, While city governments across the country look to modernize, it is important that this City Council examines various departmental duties to improve efficiency that will allow our City to remain competitive; and

WHEREAS, One way the City can improve efficiencies is by consolidating and streamlining functions of the various code and safety enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, Many municipalities in the U.S., such as San Jose, have developed some form of community policing program to support uniformed police officers in their efforts to enforce quality-of-life crimes; and

WHEREAS, These enforcement officers customarily handle lower-priority calls that do not require the same skillset and level of training held by sworn and armed police officers; do not have the power to arrest; and do not carry firearms; and

WHEREAS, Municipalities have authorized a wide array of duties including the ability to enforce violations ranging from garbage and lot maintenance to food establishments and street vendors; and

WHEREAS, In the City of Baltimore, video surveillance has been an effective tool in improving the quality of life within the neighborhoods where they employ retired police officers to monitor surveillance cameras as an alternative policing method; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia has adopted Vision Zero policies that aim to eliminate all traffic-related deaths and severe injuries, while increasing safety, health, and mobility for all; and

WHEREAS, In Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Police Department is the primary enforcement department for traffic safety laws and regulations with the Philadelphia Parking Authority and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority having a limited role; and

WHEREAS, peer cities such as New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., have all implemented a civilian force to help control and regulate the flow of traffic, with varying degrees of enforcement powers; and

WHEREAS, Judiciously applying traffic safety enforcement with the help of unarmed enforcement officers will tremendously aide in achieving the City's Vision Zero goals; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the Philadelphia City Council is hereby authorized to hold public hearings to explore establishing Public Safety Officers and alternative code enforcement methods to improve the quality of life throughout the City.