

Legislation Text

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Joining the City of Philadelphia in National Garden Week, celebrating the role of nature in nurturing mental and physical wellness, and recognizing the urgent need for garden equity across the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is home to more than 30 public gardens within its city limits, more than 400 community gardens, and thousands more private gardens. The number and quality of our gardens has made Philadelphia known as America's Garden Capital; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's arboretums, parks and community gardens are a crown jewel of our City and a core component of Philadelphia's consistent placement as one of the most walkable and livable cities in the Nation. But some parts of the City have less access to gardens and green spaces than others, disproportionately in lower-income Black and brown neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Gardens improve access to healthy foods and can offer locally-rooted jobs to communities, in addition to turning space that is often blighted or vacant into beautiful and productive green space. The presence of a garden improves a community's aesthetics, safety, and well-being; and

WHEREAS, After years of declining numbers of urban farms and community gardens, the City of Philadelphia has re-engaged with urban agriculture and gardening - including holding multiple urban garden-related hearings and discussions over the past few weeks - centered on Philadelphia's first modern urban agriculture plan, "Growing from the Root," which outlines a path forward for scaling up gardens, orchards and urban farms across the City; and

WHEREAS, Gardening has multiple emotional, mental and physical health benefits. Regular gardening can be a core component of a healthy exercise regimen, reduce anxiety and depression, improve bone strength, and increase self-esteem; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia has a rich history of community gardening, especially in communities of color, where they help community members to preserve cultural heritage, build community, and promote healing; and

WHEREAS, Due to rising land values, many community gardens are at risk of being sold off to developers and speculators. 70% of community gardens are located in high-poverty communities of color, and the City must play a role in protecting these green spaces; and

WHEREAS, Gardens play a role in improving climate resilience, especially in communities that face hazards due to environmental racism. Gardens contribute to cleaning our air and water, lowering temperatures, and fostering a connection to nature for urban residents; and

WHEREAS, Gardeners from across the country are joining this week to celebrate the role of nature in our lives and the ability of gardeners to nourish and grow spaces that uplift entire communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Joins the City of Philadelphia in

National Garden Week, celebrates the role of nature in nurturing mental and physical wellness, and recognizes the urgent need for garden equity across the City of Philadelphia.