

Legislation Text

File #: 170578, **Version:** 0

Recognizing June as Re-entry Awareness Month in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, An estimated 30,000 people return to Philadelphia from federal, state, and local prisons each year, and there are an estimated population of more than 200,000 returned citizens in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, As of December 31, 2015, Philadelphians accounted for 28% of people in state prisons, and Philadelphia has some of the highest re-arrest and re-incarceration rates for people released from state prison in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphians returning from Philadelphia jails and federal prisons also experience extremely high rates of recidivism; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's high recidivism rates carry heavy consequences for the well-being of affected individuals, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, Individuals returning from prison face various difficulties, among them finding housing, securing drug treatment and other medical care, obtaining loans and credit, accessing higher education, and finding and maintaining employment. Re-entry programs seek to mitigate these difficulties, with the goal of reducing recidivism and helping returning citizens to thrive as productive members of society; and

WHEREAS, Reduced recidivism allows for reinvestment of savings in proactive programs including broad public safety and community enhancement initiatives; and

WHEREAS, Over 100 governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in the Philadelphia Re-entry Coalition are actively collaborating to reduce recidivism in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor's Office of Re-Integration Services (RISE) is leading the Kenney Administration's work to build on existing efforts to improve reentry outcomes in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's increasing focus on re-entry is occurring within the context of a growing understanding of the importance of re-entry at the national level, as evidenced by the announcement by the U.S. Department of Justice of the inaugural National Re-entry Week in April 2016; and

WHEREAS, City Council has previously recognized June as Re-entry Awareness Month in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Gateway to Re-Entry has brought Philadelphia into a national network of municipalities recognizing June as Re-entry Month; and

WHEREAS, Re-entry advocates across Philadelphia support the recognition of June as Re-entry Awareness Month in the City of Philadelphia, to serve as a reminder that returning citizens should always be afforded the full rights of citizenship and that their successes make Philadelphia a better City; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby recognizes June as Re-entry Awareness Month.