

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the holding of public hearings pursuant to City Council's declaration of 2016 as "The Year to Combat The Heroin Abuse Epidemic in Philadelphia" to explore the serious Effects that heroin abuse is having on our communities and to develop a strategy with the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services to effectively address the heroin Epidemic as an urgent local health priority.

WHEREAS, Heroin is an opioid drug that is synthesized from morphine, and is a highly addictive drug; and

WHEREAS, Heroin abuse is associated with serious health conditions, such as hepatitis, HIV, and fatal overdose. Chronic abusers of heroin may develop collapsed veins, infections of the heart lining and valves, gastrointestinal cramping, and liver or kidney diseases; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the effects of the drug itself, street heroin often contains toxic contaminants or additives that can clog blood vessels which may cause permanent damage to vital organs, such as the lungs, liver, kidneys, or brain; and

WHEREAS, Heroin overdoses frequently involve a suppression of breathing, which limits the oxygen that reaches the brain. This can lead to psychological and neurological damage; and

WHEREAS, The death rate from heroin overdoses in the United States has nearly tripled from 2010 to 2013; and

WHEREAS, Heroin is a primary drug threat in the Philadelphia area. According to the City's Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, almost 35% of the people who died from drugs in Philadelphia had heroin in their system; and

WHEREAS, Heroin abused in Philadelphia average 77% pure (a more potent form of the drug), which is the highest in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Heroin abuse affects youth, adults, parents, mentors, and all community members. All members of the community can play a part in helping the next generation make choices that support better physical, mental, behavioral, and emotional health; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes the holding of Public Hearings pursuant to City Council's declaration of 2016 as "The Year to Combat The Heroin Abuse Epidemic in Philadelphia" to explore the serious effects that heroin abuse is having on our communities and to develop a strategy with the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services to effectively address the heroin epidemic as an urgent local health priority.