

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committee on Law and Government to hold hearings on the current laws governing outdoor advertising, including but not limited to: billboards, non-accessory commercial signs, advertisements on or attached to buildings, and all other such forms of advertising; and, further authorizing the Committee to investigate the extent to which existing laws are being enforced, the extent to which existing billboards are legally permitted, the extent to which billboards are seeking relief through the zoning variance process, and the extent to which the billboard industry is in compliance with The Philadelphia Code; and, further providing that the Committee is authorized to issue subpoenas as may be necessary to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents to aid in its investigation to the full extent authorized under Section 2-401 of the Home Rule Charter.

WHEREAS, In 1991, a comprehensive ordinance was enacted by City Council which regulates "outdoor advertising and non-accessory advertising signs"; and

WHEREAS, The legislative findings regarding "outdoor advertising" contain many statements about the negative aspects of this form of advertising including that "existing zoning controls have done little to prevent the City-wide proliferation of commercial outdoor advertising signs" and that "the excessive number of commercial outdoor advertising signs contribute to visual clutter and detract from the aesthetic beauty of the City of Philadelphia;" and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Code provisions contain many different controls including, but not limited to: size, height, distance from residential areas, and illumination; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Code provisions also list a total of fifteen areas within which outdoor advertising and non-accessory signs are prohibited, and the Code further provides for the removal of existing, illegal signs; and

WHEREAS, This Code provision has been in effect for ten years and many billboards still remain which may not be in compliance and zoning variances continue to be sought for the legalization and erection of billboards in prohibited areas; and

WHEREAS, The continuous presence of billboards since the enactment of the 1991 ordinance and the development of new and emerging forms of non-accessory outdoor advertising, call for an evaluation of the current code provisions and the implementation of a comprehensive enforcement policy; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the Committee on Law and Government be authorized to hold hearings on the current laws governing outdoor advertising, including but not limited to: billboards, non-accessory commercial signs, advertisements on or attached to buildings, and all other such forms of advertising; and, further authorizing the Committee to investigate the extent to which existing laws are being enforced, the extent to which existing billboards are legally permitted, the extent to which billboards are seeking relief through the zoning variance process, and the extent to which the billboard industry is in compliance with the Philadelphia Code; and authorizing the Committee to issue subpoenas as may be necessary to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents to aid in its

investigation to the full extent authorized under Section 2-401 of the Home Rule Charter.