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Title: Authorizing the Committee on Labor and Civil Service to hold public hearings investigating the possibility of an increase in the City's use of incarcerated, nonviolent offenders to perform supplementary services.

Sponsors: Councilmember Kenney, Councilmember Tasco, Councilmember Quiñones Sánchez, Councilmember Goode, Councilmember Greenlee, Councilmember Bass, Councilmember Oh, Councilmember Henon, Councilmember Squilla

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5/17/2012	0	CITY COUNCIL	ADOPTED		

Authorizing the Committee on Labor and Civil Service to hold public hearings investigating the possibility of an increase in the City's use of incarcerated, nonviolent offenders to perform supplementary services.

WHEREAS, During the past several years, select Philadelphia inmates have been successfully working outside prison and alongside other workers across several city programs. In PhillyRising, they maintain plots, alleys and yards; for the Community Life Improvement Program (CLIP), they perform lot reclamation; and for Mural Arts, they create murals, landscape the surrounding areas and maintain playgrounds. The inmates are monitored by an officer escort when appropriate, and they are either paid minimum wage, are unpaid, or fulfill community service requirements; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Prison System already prepares inmates for landscaping and park maintenance work through its landscaping program, as exhibited in the successful "Roots to Re-Entry" program, which is a partnership among Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the City, Bartram's Garden, Awbury Arboretum, and a local landscaping firm; and

WHEREAS, Research supports the premise that these types of inmate employment programs are transforming the relationship between prisoners and the places in which they live: the programs can decrease recidivism rates, improve behavior, develop skills and work experience, and increase the likelihood of securing meaningful employment upon release. Additionally, expanding the employment of eligible, nonviolent male and female inmates in service to the City is a cost-effective way to supplement work performed by municipal and contract laborers while improving the safety and beauty of our communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the Committee on Labor and Civil Service is hereby authorized to hold public hearings investigating the possibility of an increase in the City's use of incarcerated, nonviolent offenders to perform supplementary services.

