City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
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Legislation Details (With Text)

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On agenda:				**Final action:**	

Title: Authorizing the Joint Committees on Education and Public Safety to hold hearings to discuss the use of state funding to construct two new state prisons - SCI Phoenix I & II - while funding has been drastically cut for basic education.

Sponsors: Councilmember Reynolds Brown, Councilmember Blackwell, Councilmember Jones, Councilmember Tasco, Councilmember Greenlee, Councilmember Goode, Councilmember Green, Councilmember Johnson, Councilmember Bass, Councilmember Quiñones Sánchez

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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result	Tally
11/21/2013	0	CITY COUNCIL	Introduced and Ordered Placed on This Week's Final Passage Calendar	Pass	
11/21/2013	0	CITY COUNCIL	ADOPTED & REFERRED		

Authorizing the Joint Committees on Education and Public Safety to hold hearings to discuss the use of state funding to construct two new state prisons - SCI Phoenix I & II - while funding has been drastically cut for basic education.

WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (PA DOC) is currently spending $400 million to construct two new prisons that will house 4100 prisoners, making it the second most expensive construction project in state history; and

WHEREAS, The funding for this project was approved by the Pennsylvania Legislature in 2008, based on testimony from then DOC Secretary that the prison system was badly overcrowded and in need of additional beds; and

WHEREAS, This construction project has moved forward at a time when state funding for basic education, higher education and social services have been slashed across the state; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia School District has sustained a major decline in state funding in with an unprecedented number of layoffs and staff restructuring; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia School District and other school districts across the Commonwealth will be impacted by this expensive construction project for decades to come, with the debt incurred from a $400 million capital project paid with interest from Pennsylvania's General Fund over at least a twenty year period; and

WHEREAS, Almost one-third of state prisoners in Pennsylvania come from the City of Philadelphia; and

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WHEREAS, Council wishes to conduct public hearings to determine the effects of prison expansion on residents of the City; and

WHEREAS, Because of the impact prison growth and decreased funding for basic education and social services have on the City, its neighborhoods and residents, it is imperative to discuss how funding is allocated and justified; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the City Council Joint Committees on Education and Public Safety are hereby authorized to hold public hearings in order to discuss the use of state funding to construct two new state prisons - SCI Phoenix I & II while funding has been drastically cut for basic education.

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