



Legislation Text

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Calling on the City Council of Philadelphia to recognize and support President Barack Obama's execution of a Presidential Memorandum Creating and expanding ladders of opportunity for boys and young men of color which established the *My Brother's Keeper Initiative*.

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, recognized the disparities that existed between individuals of color and their peers and attempted to eliminate biases by asking that people be judged not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character; and

WHEREAS, Many of the obstacles that faced minorities in 1963 such as a lack of quality education, unfair sentencing practices, and unequal opportunities in the labor market remain in 2014 and impact young boys and men of color to a disproportionate degree; and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama, through his execution of a Presidential Memorandum on February 3, 2014, established the *My Brother's Keeper Initiative*; and

WHEREAS, The goal of *My Brother's Keeper* is to focus on critical challenges, risk factors and opportunities for boys and young men of color at key life stages, thus removing various obstacles that face these individuals; and

WHEREAS, The President's plan is a collaborative effort between the government, businesses, philanthropists, educational providers, and parents working in concert to improve outcomes for young boys and men of color; and

WHEREAS, The President has been able to get financial commitments from a number of organizations in the amount of \$200 million over 5 years to address the problems that are holding young men of color back; and

WHEREAS, The issues facing young boys and men of color have been recognized by many government leaders and nonprofit organizations, and has led to the creation of the Mayor's Commission on African American Males in Philadelphia and former Mayor Bloomberg's *Young Men's Initiative* in New York City, which are comprehensive efforts to tackle the broad disparities slowing the advancement of African American and Latino young men; and

WHEREAS, The *My Brother's Keeper* program helps bring about better decision making skills and improved coping mechanisms through partnering participants with mentors who can encourage and guide young people to stay on the right path; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative for parents to get involved early on and stay involved throughout a child's life to help their child define their own success and strive hard to achieve; and

WHEREAS, It is the hope of the program to make "the notion that no matter who you are or where you came from, or the circumstances into which you were born, if you work hard, if you take responsibility, then you can

make it in this country” true; and

WHEREAS, The *My Brother’s Keeper* program is a great step in the right direction, but will require a commitment of all of America to see its potential fulfilled; and

WHEREAS, It is necessary for all communities to succeed in order for America to reach its full potential; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the City Council of Philadelphia Recognizes and Supports President Barack Obama’s Execution of a Presidential Memorandum Creating and Expanding ladders of opportunity for boys and young men of color which established the *My Brother’s Keeper Initiative*.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be forwarded to the United States President Barack Obama, the Vice President of the United States Joe Biden, the United States Senate, the United States House of Representatives and the Pennsylvania Senate and Pennsylvania House of Representatives.