



Legislation Text

File #: 150132, Version: 0

Authorizing City Council's Committee on The Environment to hold public hearings regarding the state of Philadelphia's environment.

WHEREAS, One of the Mayor's top goals has been to make Philadelphia the greenest and most sustainable city in America. In 2009, the Mayor's Office of Sustainability launched Greenworks, a six year initiative to help achieve that goal by setting a number of initiatives in Energy, Environment, Equity, Economy and Engagement to be completed by 2015; and

WHEREAS, Greenworks has reported that 95 percent of the 166 initiatives were underway or complete as of their 2013 annual report and that municipal government has lowered energy use by seven percent since 2008; and

WHEREAS, Improving the environment in Philadelphia also lowers energy costs for residents and businesses, improves transit for Philadelphians and creates new jobs; and

WHEREAS, SEPTA ridership is at its highest point in over two decades and is working hard to reduce emissions while also meeting increased demand. In 2013, SEPTA purchased 160 new hybrid diesel buses and by 2015 over 50 percent of SEPTA's bus fleet will be fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles; and

WHEREAS, The number of Unhealthy Air Quality Index days has increased from 20 in 2008 to 21 in 2012, far above the 2015 target of 10; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia was ranked the fourth most bikeable city in the United States in 2013; and

WHEREAS, Over the past six years, Philadelphia has experienced a period of consistent growth, resulting in increased construction, renovation and energy use. Compared to the 2006 Greenworks baseline, Philadelphia used four percent more energy in 2012, totaling over 129 trillion BTUs. This is far above the 2015 target of 109.85 BTUs; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation has formed a number of tree-planting partnerships, on both public and private land, that have resulted in planting more than 89,000 new trees, or approximately 30 percent of the Greenworks goal to plant 300,000 trees by 2015; and

WHEREAS, City Council has proposed legislation to allow the Philadelphia Streets Department to enter into a solid-waste contract that will divert nearly 100 percent of residential municipal solid waste from landfills beginning in 2014; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia has proposed Green City, Clean Waters, a novel initiative that will invest \$2 billion over the next 25 years to green our City's stormwater infrastructure and recreate the natural processes that keep storm water out of our systems; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia has become the largest Green Power Community in the country. Green Power Communities must meet or exceed alternative energy purchase and generation levels established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The City of Philadelphia continues to purchase 20 percent of its electricity from alternative sources and promote renewable energy generation in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, On March 20, 2014 City Council passed Resolution 140188 in support of increasing solar power generation in the City by setting a goal of 20,000 solar roofs by 2025. The City of Philadelphia has great solar potential, with over 200 days of sun each year, but this potential is largely untapped. Solar energy has both environmental and economic benefits and by investing in solar opportunities, Philadelphia can ensure a cleaner future while generating jobs and lowering costs for both the City and its residents; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Nutter created a Philadelphia Food Charter and Food Policy Council in 2008 to increase access through initiatives such as expanding the number of farmers markets and creating more working gardens; encouraging commercial agriculture; and integrating local food into anti-hunger programs. To help bring local food within a ten-minute walk of 75 percent of residents, Greenworks Philadelphia calls for the creation of 86 additional local food outlets by 2015; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby authorize the Committee on The Environment to hold public hearings regarding the current and future state of Philadelphia's environment.