

## Legislation Text

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Recognizing and honoring the Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network for their ongoing and compassionate efforts in providing shelter and support to homeless families on the occasion of their 17th Annual Empty Bowl Dinner to be held Wednesday, November 18, 2015.

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network (PIHN) is a shelter, supportive services, and housing program for Philadelphia working families experiencing homelessness. They are a growing cooperative effort of 56 churches and synagogues, 10 universities, two seminaries, and over 2,000 volunteers of diverse faith groups, working together to provide a safe, family-centered atmosphere for homeless families. In addition to providing temporary shelter, PIHN offers long-term transitional and post-shelter supportive services, affordable housing opportunities in mixed-income neighborhoods, and educational opportunities for children and teens; and

WHEREAS, Since their inception in 1991, PIHN has moved 325 families-910 individuals- from homelessness to stability. It has also grown their network further with the expansion of the network into Northeast Philadelphia in 2012; and

WHEREAS, PIHN offers a safe and child-friendly alternative to more chaotic public shelter settings, allowing families to remain intact. Because they are small, they can accommodate intact couples, single father households, adolescent boys, as well as single women with children. PIHN strongly emphasizes taking a holistic approach to rebuilding from homelessness. The residents, who are referred to as “guests” call it “the shelter that’s more like a home”; and

WHEREAS, Held right before Thanksgiving at the start of the winter holiday season, a time when people reflect on their good fortune and the needs of others, PIHN’s Empty Bowl Dinner raises awareness about family hunger and homelessness. At the start of their meal, diners choose a hand-made bowl, donated by local students or professional potters, in which to eat their meal. Soups, stews, breads, desserts and beverages have been graciously provided by local restaurants and cafes. After the meal, diners take their bowls home as a reminder that every night hundreds of families go hungry in the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, None of the work that PIHN does could happen without the support of a caring community of individuals, partner organizations and corporations who provide financial resources, volunteer time and material donations. At the heart of their work, PIHN recognizes the promise that each family and community member holds to provide a safe and nurturing home for children. However, they know that the horrific cycle of homelessness can only end if longer term solutions are developed to support the well-being of neighbors in need; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA,** That it hereby recognizes and honors the Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network for their ongoing and compassionate efforts in providing shelter and support to homeless families on the occasion of their 17th Annual Empty Bowl Dinner to be held Wednesday, November 18, 2015.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.