

Legislation Text

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Recognizing December 3rd 2015 as International Day of Persons with Disabilities in honor of individuals living globally with disabilities.

WHEREAS, The International Day of Persons with Disabilities is a day to honor those living with disabilities worldwide. The goal of this day is to promote awareness, mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of individuals living with a disability and increase understanding of issues people with disabilities face every day. This day is also designed to promote community inclusion and accessibility for all people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, The annual observance day of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities was declared in 1992 by the United Nations General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, The theme for this year's International Day of Persons with Disabilities is "Inclusion Matters: Access and Empowerment of People of All Abilities". It is estimated by the United Nations that there are one million people living with disabilities that face barriers everyday when it comes to inclusion in all aspects of society; and

WHEREAS, This day will entail a series of events focusing on accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities including panel discussions, the United Nations Film Festival, UN Enable Photo Exhibition "Images of Ability," and an Art Exhibition, "Like Wildflowers, Like Stars"; and

WHEREAS, Perceptions of what it means to be a person living with a disability is often affected by the societal attitudes grounded in stigma and negative or outdated beliefs regarding those with disabilities. This often results in discrimination and becomes a significant barrier to full and equal inclusion into society; and

WHEREAS, The lack of data on disabilities contributes to the invisibility of people living with disabilities in official statistics. Planning and implementation cannot be done when research and data are not available; and

WHEREAS, This day is also meant to highlight invisible disabilities such as mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and hearing impairments; and

WHEREAS, A core value of United Nations Enable is to focus on the ability rather than the disability. At the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the United Nations is highlighting specific topics related to full community inclusion. This year they are focusing specifically on making cities inclusive and accessible for all, improving disability data and statistics, and including persons with invisible disabilities in society and development; and

WHEREAS, Countries all over the world are commemorating this International Day of Persons with Disabilities by raising awareness on issues surrounding people with disabilities through ceremonies, forums, and campaigns in places like Ethiopia, Italy, Maldives, Nigeria and Saint Lucia; and

WHEREAS, According to the United States Census Bureau, nearly 1 in 5 Americans have a disability. In 2008 13.4% of people living in Pennsylvania reported having one or more disabilities. In Philadelphia there are approximately 527,000 people under the age of 65 who are living with a disability; and

WHEREAS, Despite efforts to address the need for educational, employment, and housing supports for individuals with disabilities, Philadelphians with disabilities continue to face significant barriers to living independently; and

WHEREAS, More significant attention must be given to reducing barriers to full inclusion of all people with disabilities if Philadelphia is to achieve the vision the United Nations has mapped out of making all cities inclusive and accessible so all individuals living with disabilities are able to fully participate in the community; and

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize December 3rd 2015 as International Day of Persons with Disabilities in honor of individuals globally living with disabilities.