

## Legislation Text

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Authorizing Council's Committee on Commerce & Economic Development to hold public hearings to determine whether the City of Philadelphia should provide its own certification process for Minority, Women, or Disabled Owned Enterprises

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia purchases products and services from hundreds of businesses every year. The City is committed to ensuring that at least 25% of contracts for the City are fulfilled by Minority, Women, or Disabled Owned Enterprises; and

WHEREAS, Minority, Women, or Disabled Owned Enterprise certification verifies that at least 51% of the beneficial ownership interest and control are owned by a minority, woman, or disabled person; and

WHEREAS, Companies must be certified as Minority, Women, or Disabled Owned Enterprises before registering with the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) in order to receive preference in the City contracting process, as well as the City's for-profit and nonprofit partners; and

WHEREAS, As of February 17, 2016 there are 2,472 businesses with 2,488 certifications registered in the OEO Registry of Minority, Women, or Disabled Owned Enterprises, and 778 of these businesses (31.5% of registered businesses) have physical addresses in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, As of March 2010, the City no longer offers its own Minority, Women, or Disabled Owned Enterprise Certification Program; and

WHEREAS, To verify a company's status as a Minority, Women, or Disabled Owned Enterprise, the City of Philadelphia accepts certification from a variety of external agencies. The Department of Commerce website refers businesses seeking certification to governmental agencies in New Jersey, Washington, D.C., Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia. This poses additional hurdles and expenditures to small business owners within Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Locally, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), Philadelphia International Airport, and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation offer certification to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, which bid on federal and state contracts. The certification process offered by these entities, while accepted as valid by the Office of Economic Opportunity, is generally much longer and requires professional assistance; and

WHEREAS, Not having a certification program through the City makes the process less streamlined and may prevent local small business owners from participating in and benefitting from the City's procurement opportunities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes Council's Committee on Commerce & Economic Development to hold Public Hearings to determine whether the City of Philadelphia should provide its own certification process for Minority, Women, or Disabled Owned Enterprises.