



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 160184, **Version:** 0

---

Authorizing Council's Committee on Public Health and Human Services to hold hearings to address the alarmingly high rate of HIV cases projected by the Centers for Disease Control at a time when preventative measures are well developed but not accessed by the most vulnerable populations, particularly in the African-American community.

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, based on infection rates from 2009 to 2013, has predicted that at current rates, half of all black men who have sex with other men will be found to have HIV at some point; and

WHEREAS, For most of the more than three decades since AIDS appeared, prevention messages have been aimed mainly at gay white males according to Eric Thomas, program director at Philadelphia's William Way LGBT Community Center; and

WHEREAS, Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) is the most significant new preventive measure in years. Truvada, a drug that treats HIV infection, is used to prevent infection in people who are at high risk. The once-a-day pill, which was approved as a treatment in 2004 and as a preventive measure in 2012, is highly effective and has few side effects; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 19,500 Philadelphia residents are living with HIV/AIDS, including 624 whose conditions were newly diagnosed during 2014, the most recent year for which statistics are available. About one-third of the new cases were among gay and bisexual black men; and

WHEREAS, Supply of drugs to treat and prevent HIV has exceeded demand due to the lack of outreach to the most vulnerable populations which are African American gay and bisexual men and

WHEREAS, For HIV, protection is both an individual and a community issue. People who take measures to avoid infection won't pass it on. With frequent testing, they'll know if they have become a risk to others. Those who are already infected cannot transmit it if their "viral load" is suppressed by medication; they are basically living with a chronic non-communicable disease; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that the City of Philadelphia implement creative and comprehensive strategies to inform and educate residents about testing and treatment for HIV; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes Council's Committee on Public Health and Human Services to hold hearings to address the alarmingly high rate of HIV cases projected by the Centers for Disease Control at a time when preventative measures are well developed but not accessed by the most vulnerable populations, particularly in the African-American community.

