



Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committee on Disabled & Persons With Special Needs to hold hearings regarding ongoing efforts to meet the demand for services among children and adults with Autism by groups like the Philadelphia Autism Project.

WHEREAS, April is National Autism Awareness Month, a time to educate our community about Autism, also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), a complex neurological disorder that affects, in varying degrees, language and social skill development, characterized by challenges in communication and social interactions, repetitive behaviors and movement, impacting individuals of all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recently found that 1 in 68 children meet criteria for Autism nationwide; and

WHEREAS, The 2014 Pennsylvania Census Report identified over 4,167 individuals in Philadelphia County with Autism receiving services - more than double the previously documented number - the majority of whom are between the ages of 5 and 17 years old, with the number of adults over 21 years old increasing as the population ages; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Autism Project was launched in 2014 by Philadelphia Councilman-At-Large Dennis M. O'Brien in partnership with Philadelphia's Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services to address the growing need for local resources for individuals with Autism and their families; and

WHEREAS, With the help of stakeholders, including self-advocates, family members, policy makers, researchers, service providers and others, the Philadelphia Autism Project convened working meetings in three phases, which ultimately generated a list of over 100 suggested, prioritized initiatives; and

WHEREAS, As it proceeds to implement those initiatives, the Philadelphia Autism Project is joined in serving those with Autism by the statewide Autism Services, Education, Resources and Training (ASERT) Collaborative, the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute, the Kevy K. Kaiserman Center for Developmental Medicine and Genetics at Albert Einstein Medical Center, the Center for Autism Research at CHOP, the University of Pennsylvania's Social Learning Disorders Program, and many other programs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the Committee on Disabled & Persons With Special Needs hold hearings regarding ongoing efforts to meet the demand for services among children and adults with Autism by groups like the Philadelphia Autism Project.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Committee identify opportunities for enhanced City support for provision of services to those with Autism.

