

Legislation Text

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Recognizing September 2016 as Inmate Awareness Month.

WHEREAS, According to the Prison Policy Initiative, there are over 2 million incarcerated individuals in the United States. This high rate of incarceration has broken up families across our nation and has cost taxpayers billions of dollars; and

WHEREAS, Statistics from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections 2015 end-of-year inmate report indicate that nearly 50,000 individuals are incarcerated in Pennsylvania state prisons; the Philadelphia Prison System incarcerates over 7,000 more individuals, according to its census; and

WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections' 2015 inmate report estimates that nearly 65% of individuals in Pennsylvania prisons are in need of alcohol or drug treatment. This report also indicates that over 80% of incarcerated individuals are "unskilled or possess no [professional] skills." These factors contribute heavily to recidivism and must be mitigated to ensure that inmates are properly rehabilitated for life outside of prison; and

WHEREAS, According to a 2013 Pennsylvania Department of Corrections report, Philadelphia has a 3-year overall recidivism rate of 65.5%, the second highest of any county in the state; and

WHEREAS, The 2013 Pennsylvania Department of Corrections report on recidivism estimated that a 10% reduction in the 1-year recidivism rate would reduce the state's prison population by 475,000 bed-days (roughly 1300 year-round inmates) and save nearly \$45 million annually; and

WHEREAS, Social services for incarcerated and recently-released individuals that focus on job training and other vital social skills have been shown in several studies to reduce the risk of re-incarceration; and

WHEREAS, Investments in social services that reduce the rate of re-incarceration are not only economically prudent, they are morally incumbent upon any society which strives toward justice; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADLEPHIA, Hereby recognizes September 2016 as Inmate Awareness Month.