

Legislation Text

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Authorizing Council's Committees on Public Safety, Commerce & Economic Development, and Global Opportunities and Creative/Innovative Economy to hold Public hearings concerning recent home invasions and armed robberies that have victimized Asian business owners in the City.

WHEREAS, Over a dozen armed robberies targeting Asian-owned businesses have occurred in the City since May 2016. In several cases, armed robbers have targeted businesses as well as the residences of these business owners; and

WHEREAS, Asian food business owners have been particularly targeted by burglars. In most reported incidences, offenders carrying handguns have invaded upstairs residences above food businesses between 4 AM and 6 AM. Cash and other items of value are taken from businesses and their attached residences; and

WHEREAS, Asian businesses in Philadelphia County, PA; Montgomery County, PA; Delaware County, PA; and New Castle County, DE; have been targeted by armed robbers. While patterns of crimes against Asian business owners have also been reported in 2015, the modus operandi of these crimes reported in 2016 has changed from following or tracking particular Asian business owners to now targeting business properties themselves along with any residence connected to the business; and

WHEREAS, While some of the criminal perpetrators have been apprehended, several remain at large. The FBI and the Philadelphia Police Department are continuing to work to find suspects and bring justice to these robbery victims; and

WHEREAS, The targeting of Asian business owners is especially traumatic for immigrant small business owners who speak limited English. One challenge is to make sure that these business owners are educated about what to do in the event of an armed robbery; and

WHEREAS, The current news has spread to China and Chinese-speaking population around the world. This has painted Philadelphia as a City unfriendly to Chinese immigrants. The perception is adverse to Philadelphia's efforts to become a more globally competitive City which seeks to attract investments and job creation from China, the world's 2nd largest economy; and

WHEREAS, The Asian-American community in Philadelphia is comprised of many successful small businesses which have been founded by Asian immigrants. It is important for the City to demonstrate its commitment to protecting Asian-Americans and Asian immigrants who participate in the vital small business economy of Philadelphia and the overall success of the City as a hub of global opportunities; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Committees on Public Safety, Commerce & Economic Development, and Global Opportunities and Creative/Innovative Economy, are to hold public hearings concerning recent home invasion armed robberies that have victimized Asian business owners in the City.

