



Legislation Text

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Authorizing Council's Committees on Legislative Oversight and Commerce and Economic Development to hold hearings examining economic inclusion and diversity participation in professional services, capital projects, and other contracted work related to the planned \$600 million investment in Philadelphia's Rebuild initiative.

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia is embarking on a historic effort to revitalize a variety of neighborhood assets, particularly playgrounds, recreation centers, and libraries. The City will issue \$300 million in bonds and spend \$8 million annually for the next 6 years in order to finance the initiative. This is an unprecedented level of investment in our City's neighborhoods and social infrastructure, and marks a turning point for Philadelphia's renewal efforts; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia's Annual Disparity Study for FY 2015 found a 31.7% participation rate for minority, women, and disabled owned businesses (M/W/DSBE) in City contracts, and the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) has recently raised the City's participation goal for FY16 to 35%. The City's efforts to create a more diverse marketplace are laudable, and show that each new public investment is an opportunity to grow on our successful inclusion strategy; and

WHEREAS, According to the Census Bureau, 54.5% of Philadelphia's population are racial minorities, while 53.5% are female; 12.1% of individuals under 65 have a disability. In order to create vibrant and just economy, the City must create opportunity for these historically-disadvantaged groups with all the tools at its disposal, including a robust inclusion requirement for City contracts; and

WHEREAS, The City's efforts to encourage economic diversity and inclusion have also run into challenges which must be addressed and mitigated. For instance, there were 68 contracts worth more than \$150 million in FY 2015 "for which there are few or no M/W/DSBEs available to participate," according to the Annual Disparity Study for 2015; and

WHEREAS, Major City-directed investments such as the Rebuild Initiative have the potential to spur economic opportunity for M/W/DBSEs through the use of progressive, inclusive contract bidding standards. By mandating involvement from M/W/DSBEs in all City contracts, the City's historic investment in our neighborhoods can also serve to encourage business development among communities that the market has long overlooked; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby authorizes Council's Committees on Legislative Oversight and Commerce and Economic Development to hold hearings examining economic inclusion and diversity participation in professional services, capital projects, and other contracted work related to the planned \$600 million investment in Philadelphia's Rebuild initiative.