

Legislation Text

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Honoring and expressing solidarity with “Hands Around City Hall”, an event being hosted in partnership between Women Organized Against Rape (WOAR) and the Mayor’s Commission on Women, on April 28, 2017.

WHEREAS, “Hands Around City Hall” is an event aimed towards bringing attention to sexual assault and violence in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The event will feature survivors of sexual assault as well as advocates who will speak out against sexual violence and about healing after traumatic experiences; and

WHEREAS, Participants will form a human chain around City Hall during to the event to symbolize solidarity; and

WHEREAS, WOAR, one of the hosts of the event, is a non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating sexual violence through specialized treatment services, educational programming, and advocacy for the rights of survivors of sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor’s Commission on Women was created in March 2016 for the purpose of advancing public policies that increase equity and enhance the lives of women and girls in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, In 2016, 1,199 cases of rape were reported in Philadelphia alone, a figure which does not include the hundreds, or even thousands, of unreported cases that occurred that year; and

WHEREAS, Sexual assault is alarmingly prevalent on college campuses, a significant fact in a City that is home to 20 four-year colleges and universities. In 2015, the New York Times reported that every 1 in 4 college women experienced sexual assault at their institutions of higher education; and

WHEREAS, Sexual assault is also a grave concern in the City’s LGBTQ community. An astonishing 64% of transgender people reportedly have experienced sexual assault in their lifetime. It is not widely known that there are also high rates of sexual violence experienced by lesbians, gay men, and bisexual men and women; and

WHEREAS, African American communities are also acutely affected by sexual assault. One study found that 19% of African American people reported rape in their lifetime, and many more cases go unreported or unaddressed by authorities; and

WHEREAS, Events like “Hands Around City Hall” are vital to our City, and bring needed public attention to issues like sexual violence that affect individuals and families in the most intimate parts of their lives, too often in secret. These citizens must be heard and their experiences recognized; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the City of Philadelphia honors

and expresses solidarity with “Hands Around City Hall”, an event being held in partnership between WOAR and the Mayor’s Commission on Women on April 28, 2017.