City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committee on the Disabled and Persons with Special Needs to hold hearings regarding professional and family caregivers and first responders in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Professional and family caregivers and first responders give their time, talent, and sometimes their well-being, so that others, including children, the elderly, people with intellectual, physical, or emotional challenges, and people who are affected by trauma, may live the lives they choose with dignity and independence; and

WHEREAS, Professional caregivers include child welfare workers, social workers, social service providers, medical personnel, therapists, and paid home care attendants; and

WHEREAS, Uncompensated home care attendants, estimated to number 34 million in the United States, provide similar kinds of vital support, but to relatives or loved ones, often at great personal and emotional expense; and

WHEREAS, First responders include police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, disaster response workers; and

WHEREAS, As a result of being exposed to the primary traumas experienced by the people they serve, caregivers and first responders experience significant rates of Secondary Traumatic Stress (“STS”), also known as Compassion Fatigue or Vicarious Trauma; and

WHEREAS, STS, which may be experienced by up to 30% of caregivers and first responders during their careers, is a significant mental and physical health condition somewhat similar to, but usually less severe than, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, during which the trauma of patients or clients is absorbed by the person in the helping profession; and

WHEREAS, It is appropriate and just that caregivers and first responders, whose heroic work reminds us that one of life’s greatest gifts is to be able to support and recognize the humanity of our neighbors, be applauded for their selflessness and provided with the support they may need to mitigate the effects of secondary trauma; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby authorize the Committee on the Disabled and Persons with Special Needs to hold hearings regarding professional and family caregivers and first responders in the City of Philadelphia.