City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
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Legislation Text

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Authorizing City Council's Committee on Technology and Information Services to hold hearings to examine and evaluate the City of Philadelphia's security of information technology as well as to identify additional measures and best practices in order to prevent criminal misuse of information technologies.

WHEREAS, We recognize that the free flow of information can promote economic and social development, education and democratic governance; and

WHEREAS, There has been significant advancements in the development and application of information technologies and means of telecommunication; and

WHEREAS, Governments are increasingly relying on artificial intelligence and machine learning to analyze data and make decisions and as cities like Philadelphia automate water supply, electricity, mass transit, and hospital services cyber threats remain a concern; and

WHEREAS, Technological advancements have created new possibilities for criminal activity, particularly the criminal misuse of information technologies; and

WHEREAS, Cyber attacks on cities have been occurring with increased frequency with Atlanta most recently targeted in March of 2018, Charlotte having experienced a ransomware issue in December of 2017, followed by Davidson County, North Carolina in February 2018 as well as Baltimore and Denver, and cities in Alabama, Tennessee and New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, In such ransomware attacks malicious software cripples victims' computers or networks and blocks important data until a ransom is paid to unlock it; and

WHEREAS, According to The New York Times the Atlanta cyber attack caused "Atlanta's municipal government [to be] brought to its knees . . . one of the most sustained and consequential cyberattacks ever mounted against a major American city"; and

WHEREAS, It is crucial to the various city agencies, departments and to all Philadelphians that we eliminate safe havens for those who criminally misuse information technologies; and

WHEREAS, All city agencies and departments should have best practices in place to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of data and computer systems from unauthorized impairment and ensure that criminal abuse is penalized; and

WHEREAS, Protocols and regulations should be created to ensure that information technologies are designed to help to prevent and detect criminal misuse, trace criminals and collect evidence; and

WHEREAS, The fight against the criminal misuse of information technologies requires the development of solutions that protect individual freedom and privacy while also maintaining the City's ability to fight such

criminal misuse; and

WHEREAS, According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation Internet Crime and Complaint Center ("IC3"), in 2017 Pennsylvanians lost over 1.7 million dollars due to identity fraud; and

WHEREAS, It is necessary to the various City agencies, departments and to all Philadelphians that we establish protocols and best practices to ensure the City's information technologies prevent and detect criminal misuse and that immediate and appropriate levels of management and oversight are undertaken to safeguard information technology; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Authorizes the Committee on Technology and Information Services to hold hearings to examine and evaluate the City of Philadelphia's security of information technology as well as to identify additional measures and best practices in order to prevent criminal misuse of information technologies.