

Legislation Text

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Recognizing October 21-27, 2018 as Lead Poisoning Prevention Week in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Lead poisoning is a chronic public health issue in the City of Philadelphia. Though rates of elevated blood lead concentration have fallen among the City's children over the past decade, rates remain higher than the national average. Homes built before 1978 are most conducive to lead poisoning, as the national ban on lead-based paints went into effect that year. An estimated 95% of housing units in Philadelphia were built before 1978, while the national average is 54% of units; and

WHEREAS, Lead exposure during childhood is particularly risky and can result in number of health and behavioral complications for children who are exposed to dangerous amounts of lead. Heightened blood levels of lead are known to cause slowing of growth and development, behavioral problems, difficulty learning and paying attention in school, and damage to hearing and speech abilities, which are irreversible. Long term, lead poisoning can damage the nervous and cardiovascular systems and have an impact on reproductive health; and

WHEREAS, In the United States, children experiencing poverty and African American children are more likely than other groups to be at risk of dangerous lead exposure. The most indicative factor of lead exposure is a child's home, which is more likely to contain dangerous levels of lead if it has not been properly inspected or remediated; and

WHEREAS, Members of this body have taken affirmative steps to address the issue of lead poisoning in the City. City Council worked closely with homeowners, lead specialists and experts and advocates to tackle the issue of lead paint in rented properties. The resulting legislation compelled landlords to disclose the presence of lead paint in their properties and requires properties to be certified lead free or lead safe before they are rented to tenants with children under six years old; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Kenney convened the Philadelphia Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Advisory Group in 2016, which consisted of healthcare providers, City and state representatives, property owners, and other stakeholders. The Group was charged with developing a final set of recommendations aimed at addressing the chronic issue of lead, and meeting the goals of Mayor Kenney's "Lead Free Kids" plan; and

WHEREAS, The Advisory Group published its full set of recommendations on June 20, 2017, which include, but are not limited to: lead education initiatives, additional training for lead inspectors, review and more diligent enforcement of the Lead Paint Disclosure Law, and identifying healthcare providers that should increase their rates of lead screening among children; and

WHEREAS, The theme of this year's National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week is "Lead Free Kids for a Healthy Future." The campaign, organized by the Center for Disease Control, encourages individuals, organizations, and state and local governments to work together to reduce childhood lead exposure; and

WHEREAS, Childhood lead poisoning is considered the most preventable environmental disease among young children, with half a million United States children having blood lead levels above five micrograms per deciliter, the reference level at which CDC recommends public health actions be initiated. Officials of the City

of Philadelphia have taken actionable steps to tackle this public health crisis. The City must remain diligent to protect children from its physical and mental health impacts long-term; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize October 21 -27, 2018 as Lead Poisoning Prevention Week in the City of Philadelphia.