

Legislation Text

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Calling for a fair contract for commercial office cleaners and building service workers in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, There are nearly 3,000 commercial office cleaners and building service workers who work hard every day taking care of the City's most expensive buildings, most of which are located in Center City. These men and women, mostly people of color, are fighting for a fair contract in the midst of record profits for Philadelphia's commercial real estate industry; and

WHEREAS, Cleaners and building service workers should not be asked to sacrifice their benefits and retirement security in order to create more profits for an industry that is undeniably booming; and

WHEREAS, More than a quarter of Philadelphia residents remain in poverty, including 11 percent in "deep poverty," with incomes below half the poverty line. Center City is booming, and the skyline is growing. Yet, despite the commercial real estate industry's growth, 32BJ SEIU cleaners and building service workers struggle with the rising cost of living and are increasingly finding themselves priced out of their neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia should be a City where everyone thrives. An individual's race, occupation, and location of their residence should not determine whether they can pay for basic needs; and

WHEREAS, The booming real estate market must create good jobs for everyone, not just for a select few. Cleaners and building service workers helped create and continue to help create the prosperity in Center City. They deserve to benefit from it too. Inequality should not be allowed to tear Philadelphia apart; and

WHEREAS, Workers who clean Center City buildings deserve a living wage with healthcare and retirement benefits. The commercial real estate industry can afford good wages and benefits, and when workers are paid a fair wage, everyone benefits. These cleaners and building service workers are the lifeblood of our neighborhoods - often supporting multiple generations with their paychecks; and

WHEREAS, When thousands of hard-working men and women win good jobs with decent wages and benefits, it's a win for families, communities, employers, and the economy as a whole. It is through unions that workers across industry, geography, race, gender, and national origin come together to speak in a united voice and change the balance of power back to real opportunity for all; and

WHEREAS, Whether or not the cleaners and buildings service workers get a fair contract is a crucial test to see if Center City's development will truly benefit all Philadelphians; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby calls for a fair contract for commercial office cleaners and building service workers in Philadelphia.