



Legislation Text

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Authorizing the City Council Committee on Public Safety to hold hearings to review the motor vehicle stop of a young mother and her two-year old son and resulting police activities as well as other incidents that arose following the police killing of Walter Wallace.

WHEREAS, As Anna Orso detailed in a deeply researched article in the Inquirer reported in the early morning hours of October 27th a young Black woman was stopped by police after turning the wrong way on a one-way street; and

WHEREAS, Protests had formed in West Philadelphia after Philadelphia Police Department shot and killed Walter Wallace; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia Police Department Officers, heavily deployed in the area, swarmed the vehicle, broke all the vehicles windows and dragged the female driver to the ground and beat her; and

WHEREAS, In the midst of some officers beating the driver other officers removed her 2-year-old child from its car seat and took possession of the child. It remains unclear what happened to the child over the next 8 to 10 hours; and

WHEREAS, Summarily taking children and making threats about the Department of Human Services (DHS) doing the same stokes and inflames real fears and recent history of African American families having their children removed without due process or full consideration of the needs of the child; and

WHEREAS, The City has appropriately reframed decision making “through an equity lens” and such actions cause lasting damage to communities and their ability to trust law enforcement and government actions; and

WHEREAS, In the midst of an economic and health crisis caused by a global pandemic such trust is vital for stopping the spread and eventually defeating the virus; and

WHEREAS, City Council has a responsibility to learn and build a vision for an equitable city that includes and values all of us. This work demands creating public trust in policing and increasing governmental accountability; and

WHEREAS, The need for building public trust in policing and government accountability to its citizens predates the multitude of injustices and tragedies of 2020; now, therefore, be it,

RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Philadelphia, Authorizes the Committee on Public Safety to hold hearings to review the motor vehicle stop of a young mother and her two-year old child and resulting police activities as well as other incidents that arose following the police killing of Walter Wallace and make recommendations to ensure such actions are not repeated.

