

Legislation Text

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Calling on Mayor James F. Kenney to establish and implement a COVID-19 “Operation Philly Special” mass vaccination campaign using the Philadelphia Eagles Lincoln Financial Field, the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium, religious institutions, Philadelphia health partners, colleges and universities, and other large outdoor facility locations as identified to provide vaccines to Philadelphia residents and workers.

WHEREAS, Philadelphia continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and has formulated a vaccination schedule dispensing approximately 20,000 vaccinations per week as allocated by the Federal government to residents of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, In January 2021, Philly Fighting COVID was given approval by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (“PDPH”) and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) to administer vaccinations to Philadelphia residents and essential workers in accordance with the PDPH vaccination schedule; and

WHEREAS, In late January 2021, Mayor Kenney and the PDPH terminated the relationship with Philly Fighting COVID citing concerns regarding the shift of the nonprofit organization to a for-profit status; and

WHEREAS, On February 5, 2021, Philadelphia City Council held a Public Health and Human Services Committee hearing to investigate the City’s vaccine contracting process, including an examination of Philly Fighting COVID’s contract with the City; and

WHEREAS, Members of City Council expressed concerns regarding the negligence on the part of the Administration in the contracting process and further acknowledged the subsequent damage to public trust and confidence in the City’s ability to execute a fair and equitable vaccination operation; and

WHEREAS, City Council has made requests to the Mayor and the Public Health Commissioner to use the Philadelphia Eagles’ Lincoln Financial Field stadium to vaccinate larger numbers of residents and the broader regional commuter workforce in order to achieve “herd immunity” thresholds in a more equitable and efficient manner; and

WHEREAS, The National Football League (“NFL”) Commissioner, Roger Goodell, announced on Friday, February 5, 2021 that every NFL team would make its stadium available as a mass vaccination site in a letter to President Joseph Biden; and

WHEREAS, On February 7, 2021, President Joseph Biden said that his Administration intended to take the NFL’s offer and further stated, “I’m going to tell my team they’re available and I believe we’ll use them.”; and

WHEREAS, As of February 9, 2021, eight NFL stadiums were already being used as part of a mass vaccination site including, the San Francisco 49ers’ Levi’s Stadium, Carolina Panthers’ Bank of America Stadium, Arizona Cardinals’ State Farm Stadium, Atlanta Falcons’ Mercedes-Benz Stadium, Baltimore Ravens’ M&T Bank Stadium, Houston Texans’ NRG Park, Miami Dolphins’ Hard Rock Stadium, and New England Patriots’

Gillette Stadium; and

WHEREAS, In addition to NFL stadiums, cities across the United States of America have already initiated mass vaccination and COVID testing sites. Yankee Stadium in New York City is open to residents of the Bronx between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. in order to meet the needs of its population. Additional stadiums include Boston Red Sox's Fenway Park, San Diego's Padres' Petco Park, Los Angeles' Dodger Stadium, New York Mets' Citi Field, (North) Carolina Hurricanes' PNC Arena, and former Louisville, Kentucky's hockey stadium Broadbent Arena; and

WHEREAS, As additional vaccination products become available and supplies increase, the City of Philadelphia must have a mass vaccination plan in place that is equitable, user-friendly, efficient, and operationally achievable for its residents; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Eagles have offered use of Lincoln Financial Field to the City of Philadelphia for the purposes of administering the COVID vaccine; and

WHEREAS, The Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium has the qualifications, willingness, and ability to oversee the management and distribution of COVID vaccinations at Lincoln Financial Field, and will ensure proper attention is given to our minority populations who struggle to gain access to this vaccine through current channels; and

WHEREAS, Our area health partners have offered to support an operation at Philadelphia's three major stadiums should the Mayor initiate outreach and coordination; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Kenney and the PDPH must provide a technical solution for a single-access scheduling system that eliminates the need for residents to visit various online websites to schedule vaccination appointments; and

WHEREAS, This mass vaccination plan shall be called "Operation Philly Special" in recognition of the Philadelphia Eagles' Superbowl LII winning play that secured a championship win; and

WHEREAS, Many of Philadelphia's religious institutions, businesses, unions, colleges and universities are standing by ready and able to support the City's efforts to implement a mass vaccination plan; and

WHEREAS, In order to win back public trust and confidence, the Kenney Administration must provide a transparent mass vaccination plan that includes a drive-thru, mobile, and/or indoor option at our area stadium by February 28, 2021; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the City Council of Philadelphia hereby Council hereby calls on Mayor James F. Kenney to establish and implement a COVID-19 "Operation Philly Special" mass vaccination campaign using the Philadelphia Eagles Lincoln Financial Field, the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium, religious institutions, Philadelphia health partners, colleges and universities, and other large outdoor facility locations as identified to provide vaccines to Philadelphia residents and workers.