



Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Committee on Public Health and Human Services to hold hearings regarding mobile crisis units.

WHEREAS, On October 9, 2020, the City announced its 911 Triage and Co-Responder Program, which is currently designed to connect residents experiencing behavioral health crises to law enforcement and clinicians working together in response to calls for service; and

WHEREAS, On April 15, 2021, Mayor Kenney's budget address included a proposal of \$6 million to expand the pilot program, as well as \$7.2 million to expand behavioral health mobile crisis units and establish a hotline for emergency mental health services; and

WHEREAS, Advocates across the country have called for the use of mobile crisis units, which would reduce police interactions with people in crisis. It is estimated that one-quarter to one-half of all people killed by police were experiencing a mental health crisis. According to Stat News, mental health professionals state that mobile crisis units offer a safer, more compassionate way to help those in crisis while preventing needlessly violent and traumatic encounters in the process; and

WHEREAS, There are many variations of mobile crisis units, including a community-based response, a co-response between police and mental health professionals, and a system where police can respond after the mental health professional; and

WHEREAS, According to The Philadelphia Inquirer, some residents believe the City's co-responder pilot program will "connect residents to services, divert people from the criminal justice system, and de-escalate potentially volatile situations" while other residents believe the program "doesn't go far enough and advocate [s] removing police entirely, sending social workers and clinicians instead;" and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that the public have a space to provide their feedback and input on mobile crisis units in Philadelphia directly to public officials; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council does hereby authorize the Committee on Public Health and Human Services to hold hearings regarding mobile crisis units.