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Urging the General Assembly to adopt House Bill 923, which would allow for Philadelphia and municipalities throughout Pennsylvania to enact their own living wage legislation.

WHEREAS, Low wages, and a high cost of living in the City of Philadelphia relative to other parts of the state, create serious economic and social problems for many Philadelphians; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is the only first class City in Pennsylvania with more than 1.5 million residents, and it should have the right to set a living wage for Philadelphians; and

WHEREAS, Prior to COVID-19, Philadelphia had the regrettable distinction of being the poorest large City in the country, a moniker that has unfortunately become more solidified since the start of the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, In the May 2019 primary election, Ballot Question #3, which stated that if the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania failed to pass legislation raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour by 2025 then the City of Philadelphia should have the power to do so on its own, was approved with overwhelming support; and

WHEREAS, When workers earn decent wages, such wages can boost the growth of the local economy; and

WHEREAS, Many Philadelphia workers earning a poverty wage in full-time jobs cannot survive on those wages alone and are forced to have multiple low-wage jobs; and

WHEREAS, Many low-wage Philadelphia workers are people of color who have long been over-represented and trapped in poverty-wage jobs; and

WHEREAS, Many Philadelphians work long hours yet still cannot afford housing, food, medical care, and other basic necessities; and

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic exposed how “essential workers” working in services that did not have the luxury of working from home - such as grocery stores, health care facilities, and sanitation services - faced, and continue to face, increased exposure to COVID-19 while being overworked and underpaid with little to no job security; and

WHEREAS, Increasing the minimum wage at the local level will help establish a minimum wage that reflects the true cost of living for Philadelphians; and

WHEREAS, Increasing the minimum wage will also promote the health, safety, and welfare of those who live and work in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania General Assembly has repeatedly failed to pass living wage legislation in the Commonwealth, forcing workers in Philadelphia to live in poverty despite, in some cases, working multiple low wage jobs; and

WHEREAS, Since a state-level solution seems unlikely in the short-term, Representative Kevin Boyle introduced House Bill 923, which would allow for Philadelphia and municipalities throughout the state to enact their own living wage legislation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby urges the General Assembly to adopt House Bill 923, which would allow for Philadelphia and municipalities throughout Pennsylvania to enact their own living wage legislation.

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