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Calling for the establishment of a "Marshall Stabilization and Recovery Plan" to combat the issues facing Kensington and the surrounding areas in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, The Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia, located in the 7th Council District, has faced compounding crises. In 2022, 22% of all homicides and 25% of all shootings in Philadelphia took place in Kensington. The opioid crisis has added fuel to the fire of tragedy, and it spills over into the surrounding areas and throughout the city. According to the Philadelphia Health Department, in 2021, fentanyl was found in 94% of overdose deaths involving opioids, and xylazine was found in 44% of those deaths; and

WHEREAS, The Marshall Plan, also known as the European Recovery Program, grew out of the horror and destruction caused by World War II. European countries desperately needed support to rebuild. Secretary of State George Marshall advocated for the Plan then President Harry Truman signed it into law in April of 1948. U.S. Congress appropriated $13.3 Billion for desperately needed European recovery efforts; and

WHEREAS, Kensington has been at the heart of our nation's opioid crisis and overdoses have skyrocketed in recent years. In 2021, there were 1,276 overdoses in Philadelphia. Kensington and Allegheny Avenues have become a hotspot for illegal drug activity, open air drug markets, and crime. Addiction has cost many in the neighborhood their lives, and the proliferation of heroin and cocaine have caused chaos. In recent years, these drugs have caused overdoses to turn fatal. Fentanyl and xylazine has tainted the city's drug supply. Xylazine, also known as "tranq" is unresponsive to the overdose reversing drug Narcan; and

WHEREAS, The opioid crisis has also fueled the gun violence crisis occurring in the neighborhood. Gun violence claimed the lives of 562 Philadelphians in 2021 and 516 in 2022. According to an article by WHYY, as of July 28, 2022, 295 people have been shot within a five-minute walk of the Kensington and Allegheny intersection since 2015. Overall, 1 in 4 shootings in Philadelphia took place in the 7th Council District in 2022. While gun violence has been plaguing the entire city of Philadelphia, Kensington has been hit especially hard. On November 5, 2022, multiple gunmen fired 40 bullets and injured nine people in a mass shooting just steps away from the intersection of Kensington and Allegheny; and

WHEREAS, Residents of the Kensington Neighborhood have also faced massive disinvestment and blight. Students learn under the constant threat of their school going into lock-down. Parents live with the fear of their toddler picking up a used needle off the ground. The elderly live with the constant need to clean their properties as a result of neighborhood conditions; and

WHEREAS, This Council body now calls on the City of Philadelphia to establish a "Marshall Stabilization and Recovery Plan" for Kensington, a community that has been underserved and under siege for decades. This plan will bring together leaders from across the city to stand together, work together, develop solutions together, and ensure that the investments into the community go where they are most needed and most effective; and

WHEREAS, These issues must be faced head on by a variety of stakeholders to ensure every voice is represented. Therefore, City Council, Mayor Kenney, community stakeholders, anti-violence partners,

rehabilitation centers, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, Housing organizations, The Police Department, The Department of Public Health, The Department of Behavioral Health and disAbility Services, the District Attorney's Office, and the Defender Association must work together to solve this crisis. The intersection of these organizations presents a unique way to collaborate on solutions. In order to have a prosperous Kensington, there must be clean SEPTA stops, those suffering from substance use disorder must be assisted, the homeless must be helped, crime must be addressed, and the violence must end; and

WHEREAS, The time for action is now. Kensington cannot wait for these problems to fix themselves. The neighborhood needs bold actions and investment to redefine the issues, determine well thought-out solutions in partnership with community residents, bring the relief that the residents of Kensington deserve, and hold each entity accountable. Much like the Marshall Plan redeveloped Europe, Philadelphia needs a Marshall Plan to invest in Kensington; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, that it hereby calls for the establishment of a "Marshall Stabilization and Recovery Plan" to combat the issues facing the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia.

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