

Legislation Text

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Calling on Safehouse, the United States Department of Justice, and the Mayor to halt implementation of supervised injection sites in the City of Philadelphia, to involve community groups and other branches of city government with differing views to participate in settlement negotiations, and to enforce the previous holding from the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

WHEREAS, Safehouse is a non-profit organization which seeks to establish multiple safe-injection sites in the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, safe-injection sites are unprecedented facilities in the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and remains un contemplated in the City Code and Pennsylvania Statutes; and

WHEREAS, Safehouse has tried to establish safe-injection sites in the past, without input from both the Communities they seek to serve and from this Body; and

WHEREAS, This Body has condemned Safehouse's previous attempt to open such sites without such input in Resolution No. 200195; and

WHEREAS, The Third Circuit Court of Appeals has held safe-injection sites to be a violation of 21 U.S.C § 856(a)(2), which makes it illegal to manage or control a property and then knowingly open it to visitors for the purpose of using a controlled substance; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Justice and Safehouse have begun negotiations in contravention of this ruling from the Third Circuit to open multiple safe injection sites in the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Members of this Body attempted to testify in anticipation of these settlement negotiations, but were barred from sharing their opinions by the Department of Justice; and

WHEREAS, This issue is multilayered and many stakeholders, community groups, and addiction treatment professionals feel as though they are being left out of discussions about a safe-injection site; and

WHEREAS, The impact of harm reduction on safe-injection sites have not been fully studied and there is no evidence that the communities which surround these sites will not suffer; and

WHEREAS, There is no demonstrable impact of safe-injection sites on helping addicted individuals seek treatment and reduce their consumption of harmful and illegal drugs; and

WHEREAS, During settlement negotiations the administration has indicated to both Safehouse and the Department of Justice that the City is not opposed to the implementation of safe injection sites; and

WHEREAS, The administration's representation that the City and its residents are uniformly in favor of safe-injection sites is untrue, and strains credulity; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it calls on Safehouse, the United States Department of Justice and the Mayor to halt the implementation of safe-injections sites in Philadelphia, allow for more community involvement and involvement of other City Government officials to truly and accurately provide the correct assessment of safe injection sites on our City.