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Calling on the City of Philadelphia to modernize intermodal high-level communications to reestablish an effort to ensure Philadelphia can actively and efficiently respond to a crisis.

WHEREAS, Including recent crises, effective communication is essential in situations such as natural disasters, disease outbreaks, power outages, infrastructure failures, transportation disruptions, weather emergencies, civil unrest, or protests. Therefore, it is necessary to reestablish a dedicated hotline for public officials to communicate. This will benefit all citizens of our City; and

WHEREAS, Roughly eight years ago, there was a switchboard manned by Maryann Taliafello that quickly connected public officials in a time of crisis. This hotline has not been used in years, it is crucial that the proper steps are taken to allow for a new and improved hotline to be reintroduced; and

WHEREAS, Effective communication between public officials plays a crucial role in responding to various crises, enables the distribution of important information, coordinates emergency efforts, and ensures public safety in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Communication is paramount in managing the spread of information during emergencies, and is especially needed between high level officials to resolve the issue at hand and prioritize the security of public health and safety; and

WHEREAS, In 2023 in Philadelphia, there have been numerous issues associated with drinking water. In March 2023, due to a chemical spill in the Delaware River, Philadelphia issued a bottled water advisory for a large number of its citizens. Furthermore, on June 11, 2023, a boil water advisory was put into effect within parts of West Philadelphia after a pumping station failed that afternoon. In the event of a water emergency, it is essential for officials from the executive and legislative branches of government to be in constant communication to discuss, communicate, and respond to issues; and

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2023, a section of northbound I-95 collapsed due to a truck fire beneath the highway. The I-95 highway portion that was destroyed is “likely the busiest interstate in the commonwealth” seeing an estimated 160,000 vehicles daily, according to Secretary Mike Carroll of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. In situations that effect massive numbers of both Philadelphians and Americans, authorities must quickly communicate alternate routes, expected delays, and ongoing repair; and

WHEREAS, In June 2023, Philadelphia was clouded in smoke from wildfires that were raging in Canada and New Jersey. It is critical for public officials to communicate about possible health risks that are associated with poor air quality, as well as to discuss air quality levels, and recommend safety measures that must be implemented. In times of crisis, communication is necessary to make informed decisions regarding the safety and well-being of Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby calls on the City of Philadelphia and the Kenney Administration to modernize high-level communications in an effort to ensure

Philadelphia can actively and efficiently respond to a crisis.

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