



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Legislation Text

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Authorizing a “Joint Task Force on City Flag Reform” to reexamine and recommend a process to reform the flag of the City of Philadelphia in line with vexillological conventions and an aim to promote Civic Pride.

WHEREAS, The Flag of the City of Philadelphia was adopted by ordinance on March 27, 1895 and is the first municipal flag adopted by a City on this continent, and

WHEREAS, The design of the flag is codified under § 21-103 of the City Code and mandates: “The flag shall be divided vertically in 3 equal parts, of which the first and third shall be azure blue and the middle pale golden yellow. Upon the later shall be blazoned the City arms, as upon the City seal;” and

WHEREAS, Experts in modern vexillology and aesthetics have rightfully criticized flag designs with color backgrounds and seals over top as having no design philosophy, inspiration, or taste; and

WHEREAS, All great flags, municipal, state, or national are comprised of four key components, none to which the flag of the City of Philadelphia adheres. They are: (1) simple, such that a child or an adult untrained in artistry could draw from memory; (2) distinct at a distinct, as flags are not wallpaper, money, or a poster, it must be recognizable from a distance as it will fly a great distance away from the observer; (3) it must contain three colors or fewer, unless there are special design and aesthetic exceptions which warrant more; (4) it must contain symbols or other symbolic meanings which fit the design aesthetic and represent the history and the pride of the people reside there; and

WHEREAS, The current flag as codified in Title 21 lack on all four components listed in the preceding paragraph, and accordingly, should be updated, revised, or abandoned; and

WHEREAS, The ideal municipal flag should have represent the diverse and varied history of the City of Philadelphia and its important role historically for all people who have lived on this land, beginning with American Indians and continuing with European Colonists, African-Americans, and those different group brought here by the various waves of immigration over the last 300 years; now, therefore,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY RESOLVES:

SECTION 1. Establish a Task Force on City Flag Reform. That it hereby authorizes the creation of the Joint Task Force on City Flag Reform to create a task force to recommend a process to adopt a new City Flag.

SECTION 2. Composition of the Task Force. The Task Force shall consist of eleven members, all appointed by City Council. Community members, stakeholders, and those who care about designing a new City Flag to promote Philadelphia as a world-class city.

SECTION 3. Purpose of the Task Force. The Task Force shall examine and recommend a process to reform the City Flag that shall include input from all stakeholders and include public comment on processes for reform and the ultimate design of a new City Flag.

SECTION 4. Function of the Task Force. The Task Force's charge shall include holding public hearings, soliciting information from and feedback from Philadelphians and other community stakeholders.

SECTION 5. Report of the Task Force. Within 120 days of the Task Force's first meeting, the Task Force shall submit a preliminary report of findings and recommendations to the Mayor and members of City Council, which should include an action plan for adopting a new City Flag.