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Declaring October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Each year, advocates, survivors, and supporters recognize October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. It provides an opportunity to remember victims of domestic violence, raise awareness of what domestic violence is, how to recognize it, and what we can all do to collectively prevent it. It reminds us that, together, we can foster a culture that ensures that survivors find the help they need to break free from the cycle of abuse; and

WHEREAS, One in three women, one in four men, and nearly half of all LGBTQIA+ people will experience domestic violence at some point over their lifetimes. Domestic violence is not a small-scale, private, or individual problem; it is a widespread, community problem that requires comprehensive community solutions. We must acknowledge this, so we can collectively work towards ending domestic violence and creating safe, healthy communities for everyone; and

WHEREAS, Each year, the Philadelphia Police Department responds to more than 100,000 domestic violence related calls. However, domestic violence extends far beyond Philadelphia. It is a pervasive national issue where, every minute, 24 people are victims of physical violence, rape, or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States. This amounts to more than 12 million people annually, and it results in loss of life for more than three individuals each day; and

WHEREAS, There is a significant correlation between domestic violence and gun violence. Women in abusive relationships are five times more likely to be killed by their partner if the perpetrator has access to a gun. Last year in Pennsylvania, 104 people were killed by domestic violence, and 67% of these victims were killed with a gun; and

WHEREAS, In declaring October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, The City of Philadelphia commits to supporting the strong Philadelphia network of advocates, survivors, supporters, and organizations working to end these cycles of violence and abuse; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia recognizes the important work of local activists against Domestic Violence, such as Christina Vega and her organization Love Shouldn't Hurt. Love Shouldn’t Hurt (LSH) is an organization servicing people in and around Philadelphia affected by incidents of domestic violence. LSH is focused on supporting survivors and victims of domestic violence by providing them services that address crisis management, advocacy, and educational needs as well as guidance toward resources and referrals; and

WHEREAS, Domestic Violence Awareness Month is being sponsored locally by Women Against Abuse and, through their sponsorship, they are encouraging everyone to help to increase the awareness of domestic violence in our homes and communities and to decrease its negative impact on Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1976, the mission of Women Against Abuse is to provide quality and compassionate services, in a manner that fosters self-respect and independence in persons experiencing intimate partner

violence and to lead the struggle to end domestic violence through advocacy and community education; and

WHEREAS, Women Against Abuse and its partners, Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Lutheran Settlement House's Bilingual Domestic Violence Program, and Women In Transition, all make up the Philadelphia Domestic Violence Collaborative. Together, they provide a comprehensive continuum of services to survivors of domestic violence and their families in Philadelphia, which includes safe housing, legal aid, counseling, medical advocacy and behavioral health services; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Domestic Violence Collaborative provides resources, education, and training to the community about domestic violence issues. It has also partnered with the City of Philadelphia to operate the 24-hour toll-free Philadelphia Domestic Violence Hotline for callers to access crisis intervention and counseling services, as well as intake into WAA's emergency safe havens. And in fiscal year 2023, more than 11,500 calls were answered via the Hotline; and

WHEREAS, To ensure a more holistic approach to addressing violence in our community, the Philadelphia Domestic Violence Collaborative is partnering with the City Administration's Office of Domestic Violence Strategies and over 70 different community stakeholders to implement "Shared Safety: Philadelphia's Response to Relational Violence", a citywide plan to respond to domestic violence in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, To support a coordinated community response to domestic violence, the Philadelphia Domestic Violence Collaborative Organizations will hold events throughout the month of October to promote awareness about domestic violence and to build community support so that all Philadelphians will take a stand against violence; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Declares and recognizes October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in the City of Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to representatives of Women Against Abuse as a sincere expression of City Council's gratitude, appreciation, and commendation for raising the public's awareness regarding domestic violence.

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