File #: 240481, **Version:** 0

Authorizing the City Council Committee on Licenses and Inspections to hold public hearings to examine the progress of implementing Section 906 of the Philadelphia Property Maintenance Code entitled "Necessary Urgent Repair Program," understand the impact it would have if fully funded, and further exploring partnerships and programs that could assist in successfully executing this initiative.

WHEREAS, On March 11, 2021, Councilmember Curtis Jones, Jr., along with Councilmember Jamie Gauthier and former Councilmember Bobby Henon introduced Bill #210205 to amend Chapter 9 of the Philadelphia Property Maintenance Code to create a program entitled the "Necessary Urgent Repairs Program," which would allow the City of Philadelphia to perform critical repairs on qualifying multi-family and vacant single-family buildings and charge the property owners for repayment of those repairs (Exhibit A); and

WHEREAS, The legislation was unanimously passed by City Council on October 28, 2021, and was returned to Council unsigned by the Mayor on November 18, 2021. Pursuant to Section 2-202 of the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, the Ordinance became law, and became effective on November 18, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Under the terms of the legislation, the City is empowered to repair critical violations that have become public nuisances. These include violations of the Philadelphia Property Maintenance Code concerning plumbing systems, mechanical and electrical heating systems, mechanical equipment, or other violations that the Department of Licenses and Inspections shall deem necessary; and

WHEREAS, In the more than a year since the legislation has been effective, the City has not implemented this program, leaving dozens of public nuisance properties to slip further into disrepair. In his letter that was submitted to Council providing an explanation for not signing the legislation, Mayor Kenney affirmed his support for the intention of the legislation but also noted that "the Administration does have concerns about our capacity to effectively implement the program" (Exhibit B). While the Administration at the time had concerns about the feasibility of implementation, the current cost that non-implementation has is detrimental to Philadelphia and its residents, and that cost grows higher each day that it is not being implemented; and

WHEREAS, There are numerous properties throughout the City of Philadelphia, both multi-family units and abandoned single-family residences, that would benefit from this program. Affordable housing is necessary for the preservation of strong neighborhoods. Implementing the Urgent Necessary Repair Program would allow for a larger number of residents, especially seniors, to stay in their homes, prevent displacement, and ensure the safety, health, and well being of communities throughout Philadelphia: and

WHEREAS, Even with adequate funding being made available, implementing the program will still be a challenge. However, just because a situation will be challenging does not mean it can be ignored and looked away from. Furthermore, it is necessary to understand how the City can work collaboratively without outside organizations to further implement this legislation. By creating city partnerships with groups like organized labor, CTE programs, and other organizations dedicated to teaching construction skills, the City would be able to address the issue of blighted and abandoned properties, potentially create a school-to-paycheck pipeline, and would skills that can be utilized for for generations to come; and now therefore be it,

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes the City Council Committee on Licenses and Inspections to hold public hearings to examine the progress of implementing Section 906 of the Philadelphia Property Maintenance Code entitled “Necessary Urgent Repair Program,” understand the impact it would have if fully funded, and further exploring partnerships and programs that could assist in successfully executing this initiative.