Legislation Text

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Authorizing the joint committees on Public Safety and Public Health and Human Services to examine the causes and impacts of the uptick in pharmacy closures across Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, The threat of pharmacy closures, both locally owned and chain stores, has grown since 2021 nationwide, especially in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Rite Aid, Philadelphia's most numerous pharmacy chain, filed for bankruptcy in 2023. Since then, the company has closed over 70 locations in and around the Philadelphia area; and

WHEREAS, CVS and Walgreens have also announced nationwide cutbacks in recent years, signaling that pharmacy closures are not isolated incidents but part of a broader restructuring of the industry; and

WHEREAS, With the large number of pharmacy closures in Philadelphia, community members are left vulnerable with little certainty about where they can fill prescriptions. Senior citizens who rely on services such as prescription delivery are especially at risk; and

WHEREAS, Pharmacies serve as critical access points for healthcare services, including the dispensing of medications, administration of vaccines, and provision of medical advice, particularly in underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, In many neighborhoods, local pharmacies are among the only accessible healthcare providers, particularly for residents who are uninsured or underinsured, and closures compound the shortage of primary care options; and

WHEREAS, Pharmacists across Pennsylvania have pointed to financial pressures from pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) as one factor driving closures, raising concerns about reimbursement practices that make it difficult for independent and community pharmacies to remain viable; and

WHEREAS, Chain closures, driven by bankruptcy filings, corporate restructuring, and changing retail landscapes further threaten reliable access to pharmacies in every corner of the City; and

WHEREAS, The combined impact of these closures extends beyond healthcare, creating potential public safety challenges by reducing trusted, neighborhood-based points of contact for residents seeking care, information, and preventive services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby authorizes the joint committees on Public Safety and Public Health and Human Services to hold hearings to examine the causes and impacts of the uptick in pharmacy closures across Philadelphia.