



Legislation Text

File #: 260032, Version: 0

Authorizing the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development to hold hearings to assess the City of Philadelphia's workforce development efforts and existing barriers to employment, and to evaluate job creation and workforce development as strategies to eliminate poverty for Philadelphians.

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's strength as a City is rooted in its people, and the City's economic future depends on whether all residents have a fair opportunity to access employment that provides stability, dignity, and pathways to advancement; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's local economy supported an estimated 791,400 jobs as of December 2024, reflecting growth of nearly 19,000 jobs over the prior year, with education and health services and leisure and hospitality experiencing the largest sector gains, sectors that are critical to both entry-level employment and long-term career pathways; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's unemployment rate stood at 4.5% in 2024 and remained below 5% for the second consecutive year, signaling continued recovery and labor-market strength; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's median household income increased to \$60,302 in 2023, demonstrating modest economic progress, yet remains significantly below the national median household income of \$77,719, underscoring persistent income gaps and the ongoing need to connect residents to quality jobs that offer living wages, benefits, and opportunities for advancement; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia remains a City driven by small businesses, which account for more than 92% of all firms in the region, making access to a reliable, prepared workforce essential not only to individual business success but also to the City's overall economic competitiveness and neighborhood vitality; and

WHEREAS, Reports on economic stability and mobility indicate that many Philadelphia residents are primarily focused on achieving basic financial stability, such as meeting housing, food, healthcare, and utility costs, before they are able to pursue opportunities for upward economic mobility, and that even individuals working multiple jobs often struggle to consistently cover everyday expenses; and

WHEREAS, Many Philadelphians face persistent barriers that limit workforce entry, attachment, and retention, including caregiving responsibilities, the rising cost and reliability of transportation, clearance and background screening requirements, health-related constraints, and training and credential pathways that are not sufficiently aligned with available jobs; and

WHEREAS, Additional reporting finds that income volatility remains a significant challenge, with only approximately one-quarter of surveyed workers reporting that they earned the same amount over a six-month period, highlighting the prevalence of unstable hours, contingent work, and unpredictable earnings that undermine household financial security; and

WHEREAS, Connecting Philadelphians to quality jobs with pathways for advancement is critical to ensuring that economic growth translates into real opportunity, upward mobility, and long-term prosperity for residents and for future generations of the City; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby authorizes the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development to hold hearings to assess the City of Philadelphia's workforce development efforts and existing barriers to employment, and to evaluate job creation and workforce development as strategies to eliminate poverty for Philadelphians.