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Authorizing the Committee of the Whole to conduct hearings to explore new revenue proposals to address the School District of Philadelphia's historic underfunding.

Whereas, The School District of Philadelphia is the eighth largest school district in the nation with nearly 220,000 students; and

Whereas, The District has received over $1 billion in revenue from the American Rescue Plan and Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds, which allowed for more teachers and services. With these additional funds, the district was able to invest directly in improving academics and has outpaced other large districts for post-pandemic learning; and

Whereas, With the ending of the federal Covid relief funds, the School District of Philadelphia is once again facing a structural budget crisis; and

Whereas, The Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania ruled in February 2023 that the state's school funding system was unconstitutional. Even with additional investments from the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's adequacy formula, there remains a significant gap in needed revenue; and

Whereas, In Fiscal Year 2027, City Council and the Administration agreed to increase the City's School District contribution by $48 million and passed a bill to increase revenue from the Use and Occupancy Tax to ensure there were no budgetary classroom based cuts; however, City Council and the Administration need to work collectively to find sustainable solutions to the funding crisis; and

Whereas, City Council is committed to doing its part to find additional long-term, recurring revenue to reduce the district's underfunding; and

Whereas, In order to identify the best options for additional revenue in advance of the Fiscal Year 2028 budget process, City Council must conduct a robust evaluation of proposals, considering the current economic conditions facing our residents; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Authorizes the Committee of the Whole to conduct hearings to explore new revenue proposals to address the School District of Philadelphia's historic underfunding.