



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: WHEREAS, rates of drug use, fatal overdoses, HIV, and Hepatitis C diagnoses are increasing in the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County; and

Sponsors: R. Daniel Lavelle

Indexes: PROCLAMATION - MR. LAVELLE

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WHEREAS, rates of drug use, fatal overdoses, HIV, and Hepatitis C diagnoses are increasing in the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County; and

WHEREAS, syringe access is an evidence-based structural intervention to reduce transmission of bloodborne infections and a proven method of reaching individuals who are currently using drugs in order to engage them in other risk-reduction services; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that Syringe Service Programs have operated safely and effectively for over 25 years in Pittsburgh, saving an untold number of lives; and

WHEREAS, Syringe Service Programs do not increase drug use or crime and individuals who participate in Syringe Service Programs are five times more likely to enter treatment for substance use disorder; and

WHEREAS, the City of Pittsburgh must utilize its resources to assist the Allegheny County Health Department, Prevention Point Pittsburgh, and all other providers in expanding access to syringe service programs; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Community Health & Safety and the Department of Public Works have determined 611 2nd Avenue as a suitable primary distribution site; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Allegheny County Ordinance 04-08-OR, the Allegheny County Council adopted and approved Article II, Allegheny County Health Department Rules and Regulations pertaining to Needle Exchange Programs for Communicable Disease Prevention and Providing Drug Treatment Opportunities (the “Rules and Regulations”); and

WHEREAS, Section 205D of the Rules and Regulations states that, “No Needle Exchange Program shall operate in any location until the address of the Program Location is specifically approved by the Allegheny County Board of Health and the hosting municipality through legislative action;” and

WHEREAS, the Office of Community Health & Safety must pursue evidence-based public health and safety measures and is seeking to run a Needle Exchange Program at 611 2nd Avenue in Downtown Pittsburgh; and

WHEREAS, monitored needle exchange programs reduce the transmission of HIV and Hepatitis B and C among high-risk groups and ensure the distribution of sterile substance use supplies and dispensing of biohazard containers in a manner consistent with the goal of preventing transmission of infectious diseases; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Community Health & Safety will have their application considered by the Allegheny County Board of Health in March of 2022;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh hereby approves the Office of Community Health & Safety to apply for and operate a Needle Exchange Program at 611 2nd Avenue.