

Wilmington, Delaware
March 4, 2021

#0037

Sponsor:

Council
Member
Dixon

Co-Sponsors:

Council
Members
B. Fields
Cabrera
Oliver
McCoy
Harlee
Johnson

Council
President
Congo

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic is devastating to the economic, social, and political impact to the residents and businesses in the city of Wilmington, which the impact have not yet been fully determined; however, the dismantling of previous systems of support for the most vulnerable and disenfranchised populations are clear; and

WHEREAS, a lack of data-collection in the areas of disadvantaged businesses and individuals, economic development, and health access for Wilmington residents makes it difficult to advance policy research and decisions regarding equitable business and health practices; and

WHEREAS, consistent data collection is needed to authorize and commission various studies such as a Disparity Study, a best practice recommended by the National League of Cities, to be conducted periodically every 5 years in order to have substantive knowledge of disparities in the City of Wilmington; and

WHEREAS, the Council is committed to the elimination of racial and social disparities across key indicators of success including health, education, criminal justice, the environment, employment, and the economy, and seeks to promote equity within the City workplace and in the delivery of City services; and

WHEREAS, disparity studies in neighboring cities such as Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Asheville have revealed, according to the City of Asheville in 2018, “disparities between the percentage of contract dollars that the City spent with minority- and women-owned businesses during the study period (utilization) and the percentage they might be expected to receive based on their availability to perform specific types and sizes of City contracts

(availability),” increasing concerns that the same “large, adverse, and statistically significant disparities” (NERA, 2014) may be present in Wilmington; and

WHEREAS, no Disparity Study has been conducted in the City of Wilmington despite this growing concern; and

WHEREAS, a 2010 Supplier Diversity Council Report recommended the implementation of a comprehensive data collection plan to gather and organize such data as would be required to implement a race/gender neutral contracting and procurement policy, and,

WHEREAS, studies have shown the link between healthcare outcomes and various determinants of health including but not limited to economic and job opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the Wilmington City Council is committed to being supportive of and responsive to all constituents, including those already at a disadvantage due to various circumstances; and

WHEREAS, Wilmington City Council is requesting for the City to have a Disparity Study completed by December 31, 2021. Furthermore, Council is requesting to be informed on the progress of the Disparity Study and to be included in the selection process for determining the selected vendor and assisting with determining the key indicators for the disparity study.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that City Departments are strongly encouraged to develop better data-collection methods and procedures, and to be more transparent with the data-sharing practices regarding the number and types of Disadvantaged Businesses and their economic impact on the City of Wilmington and the health burden of these disparities on residents. Additionally, the City Council encourages all City Departments to be more transparent in their data

collection practices, and receptive to requests for information, in order to expedite and support the process of creating equitable policies in the City for all individuals. Actionable data needs to be collected systematically, updated at least annually, and made available to the public and to Wilmington City Council.

Passed by City Council,
March 4, 2021

ATTEST: Maribel Seijo
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: The Wilmington City Council is concerned with the insufficient data-collection and methods, procedures, and transparency of data-sharing practices of City departments. Council is requesting for the City to have a disparity study done by December 31, 2021, which could lead to creation of equitable policies in the City for local businesses, residents and to authorize and commission various studies on the social, health, and economic wellness climate of the City. Council is requesting to be included in the selection process for determining the selected vendor and assisting with determining the key indicators for the disparity study.