



# Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** RS2022-1395, **Version:** 1

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A resolution in support of the establishment of a Fisk University Business Incubation and Innovation Center and in support of establishing a steering committee to guide its development and solicit community input.

WHEREAS, Fisk University is a private, historically black university that serves as the oldest institution of higher learning in Nashville, Tennessee. Founded in 1866, Fisk University has fostered a legacy of graduates who have distinguished themselves as beacons of community service, national and international leadership, and scholarship in multiple academic fields; and

WHEREAS, with a 40-acre campus listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Fisk University is not only a treasured jewel within Nashville's community of distinguished colleges and universities, it has long served North Nashville as a vital cultural hub, community resource, and gathering space; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of Fisk University's crucial role in the North Nashville community, the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County has proposed the establishment of a Fisk University Business Incubation and Innovation Center, envisioned as a non-profit business and economic development center fostering public/private partnerships and providing multi-disciplinary services including business incubation services, entrepreneurial assistance, small business development, financial literacy assistance, educational assistance, and startup resources for Fisk students/faculty and the North Nashville business community; and

WHEREAS, development of the Business Incubation and Innovation Center will further Fisk University's role as an important business and innovation hub in North Nashville, creating a sense of economic opportunity and further inspiring the community-led revitalization of North Nashville and its vibrant neighborhoods. By expanding opportunities for startups and entrepreneurial innovation with much-needed local business and educational services, Fisk University will further its mission of bringing economic development, innovation, and talent to the North Nashville area; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of the Fisk University Business Incubation and Innovation Center will further inspire opportunities for capital investment toward the Fisk University campus which, in turn, can expand the capabilities and opportunities provided by the Incubation Center; and

WHEREAS, to facilitate the design, development, and formulation of objectives of the Fisk University Business Incubation and Innovation Center, it is appropriate that a Steering Committee of community members, including community business leaders, faith leaders, Fisk University administrators and students, representatives from Tennessee State University and Meharry Medical College, and a representative from the Metropolitan Council, be formed to support establishment of the Business Incubation and Innovation Center and solicit community outreach; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council is advised that Mr. Darrell S. Freeman, Sr. has offered to convene and chair a special Steering Committee, composed of community representatives, for the purposes of facilitating the design, development, vision and formulation of the objectives of the Fisk University Business Incubation and Innovation Center; and that Fisk University President Vann Newkirk, Sr. Ph.D. has accepted Mr. Freeman's generous offer to chair the committee and to shape the development vision for the Center along with representatives from Fisk University.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF

**NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:**

Section 1. The Metropolitan County Council goes on record as encouraging the establishment of a Fisk University Business Incubation and Innovation Center upon or adjacent to the campus of Fisk University.

Section 2. The Metropolitan Council further goes on record as requesting that Mr. Darrell S. Freeman, Sr. convene a Steering Committee of at least nine (9) individuals, consisting of North Nashville community members, including business leaders, faith leaders, representatives from Fisk University, Meharry Medical College, and Tennessee State University, and one member recommended by Vice Mayor Jim Shulman, to facilitate the design, development, and formulation of the objectives of the Fisk University Business Incubation and Innovation Center along with representatives from Fisk University.

Section 3. The Metropolitan Council further goes on record as requesting that, within one (1) month of its formulation, the membership of the Steering Committee be reported to the Metropolitan Council; and that within three (3) months of its formulation, the Steering Committee submit to the Metropolitan Council an initial report detailing preliminary design plans, spacing and location needs, intended utilization, and initial cost estimates.

Section 4. The Metropolitan Council further goes on record as requesting that the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, through departments including but not limited to the Metro Planning Department and General Services Department, as well as the Civic Design Center and Nashville Business Incubation Center, provide requested assistance to the Steering Committee for the design and development of the Fisk University Business Incubation and Innovation Center.

Section 5. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.