

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 241123)

RESOLUTION

Calling on the Pennsylvania Attorney General to investigate building code requirements affecting community-based housing and to provide strategies to ensure equitable, inclusive, and accessible housing for people with disabilities.

WHEREAS, The Department of Justice has filed a lawsuit against the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to address building code requirements that may limit the availability of community-based housing for individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism by mandating costly sprinkler system installations in "community homes"; and

WHEREAS, Under Pennsylvania's Uniform Construction Code, community homes for individuals with disabilities are required to install sprinkler systems at their own expense, a requirement not imposed on other single-family homes, potentially creating financial and logistical barriers to the operation and establishment of such homes; and

WHEREAS, These requirements could reduce housing options by deterring landlords, limiting the feasibility of certain housing types like apartments, and increasing costs for operators, which may ultimately impact the availability of safe, community-integrated housing for people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Community homes provide individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism the opportunity to live in family-like settings integrated within their communities, fostering independence, dignity, and inclusion while meeting stringent safety regulations such as evacuation drills; and

WHEREAS, Accessible and inclusive housing is vital to ensuring that individuals with disabilities can thrive and participate fully in society, and it is essential that Pennsylvania's building codes reflect principles of equity, fairness, and practicality; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby calls on the Pennsylvania Attorney General to thoroughly investigate the issues identified by the Justice

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Department, examine the impact of current building code requirements on community homes, and evaluate whether these policies align with the Fair Housing Act and other applicable laws.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council urges the Attorney General to develop and present comprehensive recommendations and strategies to address any potential barriers created by current building codes, including reviewing and amending policies to promote accessible housing opportunities and community integration for individuals with disabilities.

FINALLY RESOLVED, That the Council of the City of Philadelphia reaffirms its commitment to advocating for accessible, equitable, and inclusive housing for people with disabilities, recognizing its essential role in empowering individuals to live independently and with dignity within their communities.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twelfth day of December, 2024.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
INTERIM CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Brooks for Council President Johnson

Sponsored by: Council President Johnson, Councilmembers Brooks, Phillips, Gilmore Richardson, Gauthier, Thomas, Landau, Lozada, Young, Harrity, O'Rourke, Driscoll, Squilla, Bass and Ahmad