

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 260029)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing the Committee on Law and Government to hold a hearing on the process to resolve a tangled title in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, A Pew Charitable Trust report released in 2021 entitled “How Tangled Titles Affect Philadelphia,” highlighted the serious and significant impact tangled titles have on Philadelphians; and

WHEREAS, Currently there are thousands of tangled title cases across the City that are both unresolved and unreported. The confusion in the number of cases also contributes to the delay in cases being resolved; and

WHEREAS, As of 2021, there were 10,407 unresolved tangled title cases. According to Philly Stat 360, there have been 2,769 cases resolved from 2022 to 2024; and

WHEREAS, Over \$1.1 billion worth of property in Philadelphia is affected by a tangled title, and the areas with the most tangled titles are 87% Black; and

WHEREAS, Areas of Philadelphia most affected by tangled titles have also seen dramatic property value increases. Over a 10-year period, property values in North Philadelphia have increased at least 86%, and in West Philadelphia, property values have increased at least 139.2%. Without support, those with tangled titles in these areas will be unable to keep their property; and

WHEREAS, Having a tangled title increases the risk of deed fraud, prevents the purchase of home insurance, and disqualifies owners from assistance programs, including tax relief, home repair grants, and utility help; and

WHEREAS, Resolving a tangled title can be a lengthy and expensive process. Pew estimates that without assistance it can cost an average of \$9,200 in legal fees to resolve a tangled title; and

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WHEREAS, The Register of Wills, Orphan's Court, the Department of Records, and the Department of Revenue are potentially all involved in the resolution of a tangled title. Additionally, many residents with tangled titles are eligible for assistance through the Tangled Title Fund, overseen by the Office of Housing and Community Development, as well as legal assistance through Philly VIP, Community Legal Services, Philadelphia Legal Assistance, Senior Law Center, and Christian Legal Services; and

WHEREAS, Addressing the tangled title crisis is crucial to maintaining generational home ownership in so many Philadelphia neighborhoods and improving collaboration and coordination within the City is crucial to ensuring a smooth process for our residents; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby authorizes the Committee on Law and Government to hold a hearing on the process to resolve tangled titles in the City of Philadelphia.

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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 twenty-second day of January, 2026.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Gilmore Richardson

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Gilmore Richardson, Phillips, Gauthier, Jones, Landau, Lozada, Young, Brooks, Harrity, O'Rourke, Driscoll, Bass and Ahmad