



# City of Philadelphia

City Council  
Chief Clerk's Office  
402 City Hall  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

## **RESOLUTION NO. 160378**

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**Introduced April 28, 2016**

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**Councilmember Johnson**

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### **RESOLUTION**

Calling on the Pennsylvania State Legislature to increase the City of Philadelphia's income limit guidelines for the Senior Citizen Property Tax Relief program.

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia has experienced a real estate development boom over the past 5 years, resulting in many neighborhoods across the City seeing large spikes in real estate valuations, leading to drastically increased property taxes and risking resident displacement. The City's Actual Value Initiative (AVI) has compounded this effect; and

WHEREAS, As a result of these property tax increases, many long-standing residents face the prospect of displacement; and

WHEREAS, Senior citizens, many of whom live on fixed incomes that are already stretched thin, are particularly vulnerable to increases in the cost of living; and

WHEREAS, The physical and mental toll of finding and moving into to a new home amount to a hardship that many seniors are not able to undergo; and

WHEREAS, The income qualifications for the City's Senior Citizen Property Tax Relief, which stand capped at \$23,500 for a single or widowed spouse and \$31,000 for a married couple, are outdated and must be revised to reflect current income levels in order for this relief program to function effectively; and

WHEREAS, These outdated income guidelines are generally governed by section 519 of the PA State Code, which hasn't been amended since 2006, and guidelines such as these must remain current to reflect the changing needs of the Philadelphia's resident population; and

# City of Philadelphia

*RESOLUTION NO. 160378 continued*

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia are responsible for defending the City's most vulnerable citizens and balancing their concerns with the benefits of real estate development; and

WHEREAS, Foregone revenue that results from an expansion of this program will be but a small price for ensuring that every Philadelphian can retire with dignity and security in their own home; and

WHEREAS, Housing policy in the City of Philadelphia, of which taxation is an integral part, must seek to minimize involuntary displacement of the City's most vulnerable residents; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA Hereby calls on the Pennsylvania State Legislature to increase the City of Philadelphia's income limit guidelines for the Senior Citizen Property Tax Relief program.