

Legislation Text

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August 10, 2022

TO THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA:

I am hereby returning without my signature Bill No. 220110, which was passed by Council at its session on June 23, 2022. Bill No. 220110 would add additional requirements for demolition permits for structures that were ever used as religious facilities and that were built 50 or more years ago.

This bill is problematic for several reasons. Apart from the practical considerations, the bill is not legally effective or enforceable, according to the Philadelphia Law Department. The passage of this bill did not follow the legal process prescribed by State law. Additionally, enforcing the bill would require the Department of License and Inspection (L&I) to exceed its legal authority in order to consider community opposition when processing permit applications.

Furthermore, my Administration believes that this Bill creates a significant safety concern as it relates to structures that are designated imminently dangerous or unsafe, especially if their condition impacts the public right of way or an adjacent property. It is crucial that these structures are brought into compliance as soon as possible and subjecting these properties to the provisions of this bill would cause significant delays in their permitting. The Sponsor was made aware of these concerns prior to the hearing, yet there was no attempt to adequately address them.

For these reasons, I am returning without my signature Bill No. 220110.

Respectfully,
JAMES F. KENNEY
Mayor