

Legislation Text

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Authorizing Council's Committee of the Whole to hold hearings to investigate the coordination between various City commissions, departments and agencies on outreach efforts regarding the Actual Value Initiative (AVI) in the City of Philadelphia, particularly as to informing senior citizens, vulnerable populations and other hard-to-reach groups, and to determine and immediately make recommendations to the appropriate City agencies for improved citizen and community outreach.

WHEREAS, The Office of Property Assessment (OPA) conducts property assessments to determine the value of properties within the City of Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The OPA is proposing change to the way properties are assessed from the current system to the Actual Value Initiative (AVI) which is changing the certified market value of every piece of property in the City and the way individual assessments are used to calculate tax bills; and

WHEREAS, During the OPA's 2013 Budget Hearings in City Council on Tuesday, March 26, 2013, it was revealed that many homeowners in the City were not informed or educated about the proposed AVI initiative and out of 340,000 property owners eligible for the Homestead Exemption only 183,000 applications were received; and

WHEREAS, Evidence suggests that certain categories of homeowners may require additional or alternative methods of outreach, particularly those homeowners who lack regular internet access including the elderly and low-income, and those who have limited English proficiency; and

WHEREAS, Although the Administration has held select community meetings in the City, there is clearly a need for an improved implementation strategy amongst City commissions, departments and agencies such as the Office of Property Assessment, the Mayor's Commission on Aging, the Managing Director's Office, Philly Rising, the Office of Consumer Affairs and all Housing Counseling Agencies and Neighborhood Action Centers that receive funding from the Office of Housing and Community Development, to strengthen citizen and community outreach, in particular with vulnerable populations, including seniors so that all are aware of the proposed changes and how it will change their taxes; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council's Committee of the Whole is authorized to hold hearings to investigate the coordination between various City commissions, departments and agencies on outreach efforts regarding the Actual Value Initiative (AVI) in the City of Philadelphia particularly as to informing senior citizens, vulnerable populations and other hard-to-reach groups, and to determine and immediately make recommendations to the appropriate City agencies for improved citizen and community outreach.