File #: 130622, **Version:** 0

September 6, 2013

To The President and Members of
The Council of the City of Philadelphia:

For the reasons discussed below, I am returning Bill No. 120142-A (passed June 20, 2013) to your Honorable Body without my signature.

Bill No. 120142-A would require the Managing Director to ensure that, by no later than June 30, 2014 a broad "electronic option" would be incorporated into a far-reaching array of City services and functions. The Managing Director is further directed by the bill to create a "unique identifier" for each citizen or business, to associate with all transactions by that individual or entity; to report on workflow processes for every citizen-City interaction, including all license and permit applications and all payments to the City; and to file a written report with Council after 180 days, detailing the workflow process for each such interaction or transaction.

As members of my Administration have testified, while this bill's basic goal is worthy, it is not the most appropriate means of achieving that goal. An important, constant, and ongoing goal of this Administration is to put more City business online. But as a practical matter, it is simply not possible to establish an electronic option for every transaction a member of the public might conduct with the City. This is a process that takes time, and a process in which my Administration is already deeply engaged. The timeline set forth by the Bill is not realistic, and an undue rush to digitize all City transactions would prove disruptive at best. A well-planned and prioritized, strategic roll out of electronic options where they will do the most good is a better approach.

Furthermore, the Law Department has advised that the Bill would not comport with the organization of City government under the Charter, and, therefore, that it cannot be enforced. While Council's powers under the Charter are significant, they generally do not extend to managing the operations of the executive branch. This Bill would control the ultimate administrative details of the manner in which the executive branch conducts business, depriving the executive branch of its discretion to determine and direct the most efficient way to accomplish its tasks and allocate resources.

My Administration will remain open to discussion and collaboration with Council on establishing electronic options for City transactions. This is a shared priority.

As discussed above, this Bill does not fit within the scheme of government laid out by the Charter, but I do recognize that its intent good. Therefore, I will not disapprove the Bill, but am instead returning it to you without my signature.

Respectfully,
Michael A. Nutter
Mayor