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

Legislation Text

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Requesting that the City Controller conduct a Forensic Information Systems Audit of the City's Technological Infrastructure.

WHEREAS, As noted by the Annual Auditor's Report on Philadelphia City Departments for Fiscal Year 2017, the City's Office of Innovation and Technology (OIT) "oversees all major information and communications technology initiatives for the City of Philadelphia. OIT responsibilities include: identifying the most effective approach for implementing new information technology directions throughout City government; improving the value of the City's technology assets and the return on the City's technology investments; ensuring data security continuity; planning for continuing operations in the event of disruption of information technology or communications services; and supporting accountable, efficient and effective government across every City department, board, commission and agency"; and

WHEREAS, By many objective and well-publicized measures, OIT appears to not be successfully delivering results to further its mission to "manage the City's technology assets efficiently and effectively to help [its] clients advance opportunities and innovations to modernize City government and improve services to all Philadelphians"; and

WHEREAS, A July 18, 2017 letter from former City Controller Alan Butkovitz to former Chief Information Officer Charles J. Brennan states, "the City has not developed a plan to deal with a potential disaster or disruption of service to systems that many City departments utilize on a daily basis. This includes applications to process tax payments, water bills, contracts, and pension and payroll checks…it is even more troubling that the City has expended millions of dollars for technology systems that either did not perform properly or were never even implemented"; and

WHEREAS, The City Controller has faulted a lack of updated technology for the Department of Finance's repeated bookkeeping errors, which last year totaled $924 million on top of $33 million in missing cash account funds which is in the process of being reconciled. The City continues to prepare its financial statements using a conglomeration of software programs, including one which was discontinued in September 2014; and

WHEREAS, The Office of Innovation and Technology requested a General Fund budget appropriation of $101,871,935 for Fiscal Year 2019-a $19,371,443 increase over the previous year's spending. While the City's technology needs have grown, and the OIT budget has grown accordingly, an audit should be conducted to determine whether additional funding has helped meet these needs; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphians are entitled to transparency about OIT's efforts to ensure greater technological security, scalability, efficiency, and mobility. It is important for the City to leverage technology to determine the state of its information technology (IT) security; verify its overall data integrity, backup, and recovery processes; and ensure efficiency and effectiveness; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY PHILADELPHIA, That Council hereby requests the City Controller conduct a forensic information systems audit of the City's technological infrastructure.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That in no more than 180 days of passing this Resolution, the City Controller submit a full report to the Council and the Mayor, and make its findings and recommendations available to the public.

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