

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. 220417, which was passed by Council at its session on June 23, 2022. Bill No. 220417, would establish a fund to be used by Registered Community Organizations (RCO) to obtain legal representation for hearings and appeals before the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA).

While supportive of the intention of this legislation, until there is meaningful reform for RCOs, we cannot fund legal representation for RCOs before the ZBA. There are many incredible, professional, and well run RCOs throughout the City of Philadelphia, but there are a number of RCOs that are not. We believe that only through extensive reforms and professionalization can we ensure that every neighborhood, regardless of economic stability, has a well-functioning RCO. Until such time, resources might be better directed towards general improvements to the zoning process and other initiatives that further equity and increase access to expertise for community members and community groups .

For these reasons, I am returning without my signature Bill No. 220417.

Respectfully,
JAMES F. KENNEY
Mayor