

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, October 6, 2025
1:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DRISCOLL, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILMAN NICOLAS O'ROURKE
COUNCILMAN ANTHONY PHILLIPS

ALSO PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN NINA AHMAD

BILL: 250774

1 - - -

2 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: I
3 now note the hour's come. After a
4 rough sports weekend here in
5 Philadelphia, we're still going to
6 have this hearing. Yes, we are
7 because the Phillies are going to
8 make amends tonight, at least we
9 hope and pray anyway.

10 Ms. McDonald, will you
11 please call the roll to take
12 attendance. And members that are
13 in attendance, please indicate that
14 you are present when your name is
15 called.

16 THE CLERK:
17 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

18 (No response.)

19 THE CLERK:
20 Councilmember Jones.

21 (No response.)

22 THE CLERK:
23 Councilmember Gauthier.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

1 Present.

2 THE CLERK:

3 Councilmember Phillips.

4 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

5 Present.

6 THE CLERK:

7 Councilmember O'Rourke.

8 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:

9 Present.

10 THE CLERK: Vice-Chair

11 Squilla.

12 (No response.)

13 THE CLERK: Chair

14 Driscoll.

15 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

16 Present. Thank you. A quorum of

17 the committee is present and this

18 hearing is now called to order.

19 This is the public hearing of the

20 Committee on Licenses and

21 Inspections regarding Bill No.

22 250774.

23 Ms. McDonald, will you

24 please read the title of the bill.

1 THE CLERK: Bill No.
2 250774, amending Section 9-3903 of
3 The Philadelphia Code ("Certificate
4 of Rental Suitability; Required
5 Tenant Documents") to include
6 provisions of voter registration
7 information to tenants, all under
8 certain terms and conditions.

9 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:
10 And I now note the presence of
11 Councilman Vice-Chair Squilla.

12 Before calling our first
13 panel, I'd like to acknowledge the
14 sponsor of the bill,
15 Councilmember Nina Ahmad for some
16 remarks.

17 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:
18 Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon,
19 everyone. Chairman Driscoll and
20 the members of the Committee, thank
21 you for the opportunity to speak in
22 support of Bill No. 250774 which I
23 introduced. I would like to thank
24 Councilmembers Phillips, Gauthier,

1 Landau, Lozada, Harrity and Bass
2 for co-sponsoring this measure.

3 The goal of this measure
4 is simple and straightforward, to
5 make voter registration information
6 easier for renters to access at the
7 exact moment they sign a lease.
8 The bill simply adds one item to
9 the documents landlords already
10 must provide, a link to the City
11 Commissioners' How to Register
12 page.

13 This is a nonpartisan
14 easy lift, high-impact step. L&I
15 has confirmed it can incorporate
16 this link directly into the
17 Partners in Good Housing handbook
18 that landlords already give
19 tenants. So compliance requires no
20 extra work beyond providing the
21 updated handbook. L&I has agreed
22 to post the revised handbook online
23 in English and several other
24 languages, extending access to more

1 residents across the city.

2 Additionally, the
3 Philadelphia City Commissioners
4 have expressed their support for
5 this bill and they actually helped
6 us craft this bill, so I just may
7 add. And the stewards of our local
8 Election Administration, they
9 recognize that providing accurate
10 registration information at move-in
11 is a simple way to help eligible
12 residents keep their voter records
13 current and participate in our
14 democracy.

15 This is a prudent
16 investment to help close a
17 persistent gap for renters, many of
18 whom don't benefit from the motor
19 voter interactions and may move
20 frequently. The policy is
21 straightforward at the start of
22 each tenancy, along with the
23 Certificate of Rental Suitability,
24 the owners attestation and the

1 Partners in Good Housing handbook,
2 tenants received the link to
3 register, update their
4 registration. Nothing more,
5 nothing less. It's an
6 informational nudge at a key life
7 moment when people most likely need
8 to update their address so they can
9 vote from the block where they
10 live.

11 I'm grateful that L&I
12 supports this bill and has already
13 prepared the path to implementation
14 via the handbook update. I also
15 appreciate the partnership of our
16 City Commissioners, whose office
17 maintains how-to-register resources
18 and advocates and residents here
19 today who share the goal of making
20 civic participation easier for our
21 Philadelphians.

22 I want to give a shout-
23 out to Commissioner Lisa Deeley and
24 Nick Custodio, who we worked with

1 very specifically to get this bill
2 this far. Colleagues, Bill 250774
3 is targeted, efficient and ready.
4 It leverages an existing landlord
5 requirement, adds virtually no
6 administrative burden and helps
7 ensure eligible voters get timely,
8 accurate information to participate
9 in our democracy.

10 I respectfully ask for
11 your favorable recommendation so we
12 can enact this ordinance effective
13 30 days after passage and have it
14 working for renters citywide.
15 Thank you for giving me this
16 opportunity to speak.

17 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

18 Thank you, Councilmember Ahmad.

19 It's a major bill and I
20 think this is good legislation.
21 Anything we can do to make it
22 easier for people to understand our
23 voting process and get to that. No
24 matter what political party they

1 want to register, they need to
2 register and we need people to
3 vote. So thank you for your
4 efforts today.

5 And with that, I'd like
6 Ms. McDonald to please call the
7 first panel we have to testify this
8 morning on Bill No. 250774.

9 THE CLERK: Commissioner
10 Lisa Deeley.

11 (Witness approached
12 witness table.)

13 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:
14 Welcome, Commissioner.

15 COMMISSIONER DEELEY:
16 Thank you. Thank you very much,
17 Mr. Chairman, fellow Councilpeople.
18 Lisa Deeley, Vice-Chair,
19 Philadelphia City Commissioner's
20 Office. I'd like to thank
21 Councilmember Ahmad for this
22 significant legislation, which
23 although may seem insignificant in
24 as much as it just adds a QR code

1 to a piece of information that
2 we're already giving landlords at
3 the time that they go for their
4 license at L&I, it really has a
5 significant impact, especially when
6 we look at the landscape of
7 Philadelphia as it relates to
8 apartment buildings and apartment
9 housing.

10 So, you know, back in
11 the -- when I started this journey
12 at this office, I started at like a
13 rudimentary level as a committee
14 person and I used to go door to
15 door, like at my neighbor's houses.
16 And when somebody would move in,
17 you know, I would go and introduce
18 myself to them and try to give them
19 voter registration information.
20 And we know now that these large
21 apartment complexes, for example,
22 we're not able to get in.

23 It's not a matter of
24 Democrat, Republican, Working

1 Families, Independents, League of
2 Women Voters. Nobody can get in.
3 They're like fortresses. You can't
4 penetrate. So this really helps
5 get through that barrier and it
6 gives people the information they
7 need just to find out how to
8 register to vote.

9 And one of the other
10 advantages to this link and
11 providing it for people is that
12 when you use that link, it will
13 take you to the Commissioner's
14 voter registration page, it says
15 how to register to vote. But
16 another thing it does is it gives
17 you all the language options. So
18 that is also a barrier that we are
19 helping to overcome. Because if
20 they use that QR code to get voter
21 information, they'll see that they
22 can get that information in various
23 languages, that our voter
24 registration application is made

1 available and where they can get
2 it. Whether they come to the
3 office, they go online, they go to
4 one of our satellite election
5 offices, it's just providing
6 pertinent information to do
7 everything we can do as a city to
8 make voting part of the
9 conversation.

10 So I appreciate very
11 much this opportunity to be here.
12 Thank you for this well-thought-out
13 legislation, and I look forward to
14 other opportunities such as this to
15 continue adding voting to the
16 conversation. Thank you very much.

17 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:
18 Well, thank you, Commissioner. And
19 I'd like to commend you on all your
20 efforts with the many languages
21 that you're now putting on the
22 website. As we saw yesterday at
23 the Harvest Moon Festival up there
24 in Northeast Philadelphia, the

1 growing Asian population and you
2 have the Chinese on there. So we
3 thank you for that.

4 Any other members? I do
5 want to recognize Member Gauthier.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 I just wanted to first
9 commend you, Commissioner, and
10 commend you, Councilmember Ahmad.
11 I think this bill is really good,
12 and I'm hopeful that it will help
13 us get a lot more people registered
14 or updated.

15 I did have a question
16 just out of curiosity. Do we know
17 the breakdown of the percentage of
18 renters who consistently vote
19 versus homeowners? Is that a stat
20 that you all collect?

21 MS. DEELEY: That is not
22 a stat that we track. We can look
23 to see if we can do some kind of
24 search by addresses. That's

1 something we'll look into and we'll
2 certainly get you that information.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

4 I mean, it'd be just an interesting
5 data point to have. But certainly,
6 I think this bill is wonderful.

7 MS. DEELEY: Yeah. And
8 as we know and as Councilmember
9 Ahmad also noted, another big
10 advantage of this is sometimes
11 people that are in that rental
12 population, they have a tendency to
13 move a lot so we miss them even
14 when they move. So this just keeps
15 them active. Thank you.

16 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

17 Thank you, Commissioner Deeley.

18 Hearing no further
19 questions -- I'm sorry.
20 Councilmember Phillips.

21 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

22 Thank you so much, Commissioner,
23 for your testimony. I just had a
24 quick question about the

1 implemented execution strategy.
2 And I'm not sure. Hopefully, I
3 think you're going to be
4 tag-teaming with Councilwoman Ahmad
5 on this. What communication
6 strategy is going to be used to
7 announce this change to landlords
8 and the public, and both for the
9 landlords and tenants who may wish
10 to verify this information to make
11 sure that you're in compliance with
12 it?

13 MS. DEELEY: Well, I
14 believe that any announcement would
15 come from the Licenses and
16 Inspections Department in
17 conjunction with the Councilwoman,
18 but this QR code is just going to
19 be added to the landlord handbook
20 that we already distribute as a
21 city to landlords.

22 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:
23 Okay. Thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

1 Member Ahmad.

2 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

3 Thank you, Chair.

4 I just wanted to also
5 respond to what Commissioner Deeley
6 just said. Yes, once we get this
7 bill done, we will be messaging it
8 out and just reminding, one more
9 reminder for people to make sure
10 they're registered and -- so we'll
11 be doing some messaging around this
12 as soon as we get this out of
13 committee. Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

15 Thank you.

16 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

17 Thank you, Commissioner.

18 Hearing no further
19 questions from members of this
20 panel, Ms. McDonald, will you
21 please call the second panel we
22 have to testify this morning on
23 Bill No. 250774.

24 THE CLERK: Sarah Adamo.

1 (Witness approached
2 witness table.)

3 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:
4 Good afternoon. And please state
5 your name for the record and
6 proceed with your testimony.

7 MS. ADAMO: Good
8 afternoon, Chairperson Driscoll,
9 members of the Licenses &
10 Inspections Committee. My name is
11 Sarah Adamo and I'm the Director of
12 Zoning and Legislation for the
13 Department of Licenses and
14 Inspections Quality of Life.

15 Today I'm here to
16 provide testimony on Bill No.
17 250774, introduced by Councilmember
18 Ahmad, which if enacted, will amend
19 Section 9-3903 of The Philadelphia
20 Code, ("Certificate of Rental
21 Suitability; Required Tenant
22 Documents"), to include the
23 provisions for voter registration
24 information to tenants, all under

1 certain terms and conditions.

2 This bill will require
3 that all owners and landlords
4 provide their tenants with a link
5 to the How to Register page on the
6 City Commissioner's website. In an
7 effort to support this legislation,
8 L&I has already made the change to
9 the Partners in Good Housing
10 handbook to include this new
11 required link.

12 This change will not
13 only make this information
14 available to the public, but will
15 also allow landlords to comply with
16 this new requirement with no
17 additional effort, as they are
18 already required to provide this
19 handbook to their tenants. L&I is
20 supportive of this legislation and
21 is prepared to make the revised
22 Partners in Good Housing handbook
23 available on our website in English
24 and in several other languages.

1 Thank you for the
2 opportunity to provide testimony
3 for the Department of Licenses and
4 Inspections and I'm happy to answer
5 any questions at this time.

6 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:
7 Member Phillips.

8 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:
9 Thank you so much, Chairman
10 Driscoll.

11 I just have a quick
12 question for you. From an
13 enforcement perspective, how will
14 it be verified that landlords have
15 included the voter registration
16 link and materials they provide to
17 tenants?

18 MS. ADAMO: So
19 currently, landlords are already
20 required to give this handbook. If
21 they are complying with that by
22 providing the updated handbook that
23 we have online, they'll
24 automatically be complying with no

1 additional effort.

2 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

3 Gotcha. And is there a way that
4 you all are going to get together
5 and discuss -- by the way, I think
6 this is great. By the way, I just
7 want to put that out there. But I
8 want to know if you all are going
9 to discuss, like, how this
10 requirement is going to be reviewed
11 for effectiveness, for example,
12 seeing that people have updated
13 their voter registration as a
14 result of this, as in how can we
15 measure the effectiveness?

16 MS. ADAMO: We would
17 have to work together with the City
18 Commissioner to look into that. I
19 mean, we at L&I, we wouldn't be
20 able to track voter registration
21 but we can certainly work with them
22 to see if we can make any
23 additional efforts to help with
24 that.

1 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

2 Thank you so -- oh, Dr. --

3 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

4 Yes. Thank you, Chair.

5 I just wanted to also
6 add if a landlord wants to proceed
7 with any eviction process, they
8 have to show proof that they
9 actually gave that handout to the
10 renter. I mean, it's a bit after
11 the fact and hopefully not anybody
12 having to do that, but that's one
13 measure of knowing that -- if it
14 comes to that, that that handbook
15 is being -- the landlord is
16 actually giving that to the renter.
17 But we don't have any punitive
18 measure in place to do that.

19 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

20 And I just want to say thank you to
21 Dr. Ahmad for trying to increase
22 voter participation in the city of
23 Philadelphia.

24 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

1 Thank you.

2 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

3 Councilmember O'Rourke.

4 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6 Member Ahmad, to make
7 sure I'm clear on what you just
8 said, so in order for landlords to
9 proceed with evictions, they have
10 to have to have made sure that this
11 handbook has been given to them and
12 this handbook will automatically
13 include now voter registration as
14 well?

15 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

16 Correct.

17 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:

18 Correct. That is wonderful news.
19 And I want to just commend you for
20 the work that you've done to make
21 it much more automatic and kind of
22 a given that those who are often
23 half the city by the way, renters,
24 have an easy access to voter

1 registration and we can make sure
2 that if you were trying to put
3 somebody out of their shelter, that
4 you have done your due diligence to
5 make sure they are registered
6 voters. This is another way that
7 we move forward to more direct
8 democracy. Thank you so much for
9 your work. Thank you so much.

10 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

11 You're most welcome and thank you
12 for your support.

13 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

14 Okay. Sarah, thank you for your
15 testimony.

16 MS. ADAMO: Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

18 Hearing no further questions from
19 members of this panel and there
20 being no other panels to testify on
21 the bill before us today, we will
22 now transition to our public
23 comment section.

24 Ms. McDonald, will you

1 please call the first person making
2 public comment we have to testify
3 this morning on the bill before
4 this committee?

5 THE CLERK: There are no
6 names for public comment.

7 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:
8 Okay. We would like to thank all
9 of our witnesses for joining us
10 today. There being no further
11 questions or members of the
12 committee and no other witnesses to
13 testify on Bill No. 250774, I will
14 ask if there's anyone else present
15 in this hearing whose name we have
16 failed to call and that wishes to
17 offer testimony on the bills being
18 considered today?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:
21 Hearing none, I want to thank the
22 panels and witnesses for their
23 participation. We certainly value
24 your opinions. This concludes the

1 public hearing of the committee.
2 We will now go into the public
3 meeting to consider the action to
4 be taken on the bill before this
5 committee today.

6 Ms. McDonald, will you
7 please call the roll to take
8 attendance. Members that are in
9 attendance, please indicate that
10 you're present when your name is
11 called.

12 THE CLERK:
13 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

14 (No response.)

15 THE CLERK:
16 Councilmember Jones.

17 (No response.)

18 THE CLERK:
19 Councilmember Gauthier.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
21 Present.

22 THE CLERK:
23 Councilmember Phillips.

24 COUNCILMAN PHILLIPS:

1 Present.

2 THE CLERK:

3 Councilmember O'Rourke.

4 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:

5 Present.

6 THE CLERK: Vice-Chair

7 Squilla.

8 (No response.)

9 THE CLERK: Chair

10 Driscoll.

11 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

12 Present. The Chair recognizes

13 Councilmember O'Rourke for a motion

14 on the amendment to Bill No.

15 250774.

16 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:

17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 I offer an amendment to

19 Bill No. 250774. A copy of the

20 amendment has been circulated to

21 all members of the committee. I

22 move that the amendment to Bill No.

23 250774 be approved.

24 (Duly seconded.)

1 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

2 The Chair notes for the record that
3 Councilwoman Gauthier seconds the
4 motion. It has been moved and
5 properly seconded that the
6 amendment to Bill No. 250774 be
7 approved.

8 All those in favor of
9 the motion will signify by saying
10 aye.

11 (Aye.)

12 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

13 Those opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

16 The ayes have it. The motion
17 carries and the amendment to Bill
18 No. 250774 has been approved.

19 The Chair recognizes
20 Councilmember O'Rourke for a motion
21 on Bill No. 250774 as amended.

22 COUNCILMAN O'ROURKE:

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24 I move that Bill No.

1 250774 as amended be reported from
2 this committee with a favorable
3 recommendation and further move
4 that the rules of Council be
5 suspended to permit first reading
6 of this bill at our next session of
7 Council.

8 (Duly seconded.)

9 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

10 The Chair notes for the record that
11 Councilmember Gauthier seconds the
12 motion. It has been moved and
13 properly seconded that Bill No.
14 250774 as amended be reported from
15 this committee with a favorable
16 recommendation and further move
17 that the rules of Council be
18 suspended to permit first reading
19 of this bill at the next session of
20 Council.

21 All those in favor of
22 the motion will signify by saying
23 aye.

24 (Aye.)

1 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

2 Those opposed?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

5 The ayes carry it. And that
6 concludes the business before this
7 Committee today on Licenses and
8 Inspections. Thank you all very
9 much for your attendance.

10 Congratulations, Member Ahmad.

11 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13 (Committee on Licenses
14 and Inspections concluded at
15 1:22 p.m.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T I O N

2 I, hereby certify that the proceedings
3 and evidence noted are contained fully and
4 accurately in the stenographic notes taken by
5 me in the foregoing matter, and that this is a
6 correct transcript of the same.
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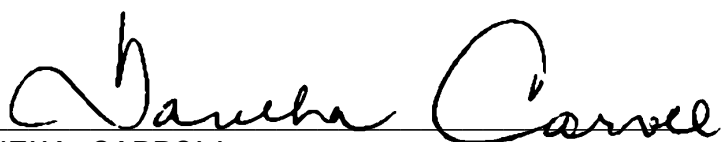
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TANEHA CARROLL
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