



COUNCILMAN BILL GREEN

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BRT Reform Bill Fact Sheet

On October 8, 2009, Council members Bill Green, Anna C. Verna, Marian B. Tasco, Darrell L. Clarke, Jim Kenney, Curtis Jones, Jr., Maria Quinones Sanchez, Bill Greenlee, Joan L. Krajewski, Frank DiCicco, Blondell Reynolds Brown, W. Wilson Goode, Jr., Donna Reed Miller, Jack Kelly, and Brian O'Neill introduced legislation proposing fundamental governance reform of Philadelphia's property tax system.

The key points of the proposed legislation are as follows:

Abolition of BRT; Appeals and Assessment and Functions Divided

- BRT abolished after work completed related to assessments made during calendar year 2010 for taxes due in 2011.
- Appeals and assessment functions divided up: appeals function handled by new Board of Property Assessment Appeals; assessment function handled by new Office of Property Assessment.
- Existing employees transferred to the Board of Property Assessment Appeals or the Office of Property Assessment, depending upon their current job responsibilities.

Appeals Function

- New Board of Property Assessment Appeals ("Board") created upon passage of ballot question (to allow sufficient ramp-up time) and charged with hearing appeals of property assessments made in calendar year 2011 and thereafter.
- Seven-member nominating panel established to put forward three names for each Board opening (as per existing Charter-provisions regarding nominating panels). Nominating panel comprised of one appointee each of the City Council President, the Mayor, the Greater Philadelphia Association of Realtors, the local chapter of the Assessors' Association of Pennsylvania, the Building Industry Association of Philadelphia, the Housing Association of Delaware Valley, and the Philadelphia Bar Association.
- Nominating Panel required to provide public notice of openings on the Board, solicit applications thereto, and select nominees only from those who apply.

- Board members appointed to five-year, staggered terms by the Mayor, subject to Council approval.
- Board comprised of seven members, all of whom must be Philadelphia residents:
 - 2 members required to have ten or more years' experience as certified real estate assessors/appraisers;
 - 2 other members required to have ten or more years' experience as attorneys with expertise in residential or commercial valuation; and
 - 1 of the remaining members required to be a homeowner and/or commercial property owner in Philadelphia.
- Board required to establish rules and regulations for property assessment appeals that are consistent with law and based on industry standards.
- Board required to file a report of its activities with Council twice a year and to make appeals information available online within sixty days of appeals decisions.

Assessment Function

- New Office of Property Assessment ("Office") created within City government upon passage of ballot question (to allow sufficient ramp-up time) and charged with making property assessments in calendar year 2011 and thereafter.
- Office to be headed by Chief Assessment Officer (CAO), who must be a certified assessor/appraiser and have significant experience in the management of property valuation.
- CAO, who will be civil service exempt, appointed to four-year term by the Mayor, subject to Council approval. (N.B. The CAO's term will span mayoral terms, due to the timing of the creation of the position.)
- CAO may only be fired for cause alleged by the Mayor and voted on by two-thirds of the members of Council.
- CAO authorized to appoint staff of the Office, subject to the approval of the Mayor.
- All staff members involved in determining property values must be state-certified evaluators.
- CAO required to establish rules and regulations for property assessment process.