

Policy Alert – Subcontractor Protections Bill

On February 8, 2024, City Councilmember Jim Harrity (At Large) reintroduced legislation that would implement new protections for building service workers, including subcontracted workers, who are “displaced” when the properties where they are employed are sold or closed, with an eye toward office-to-residential building conversions in Center City. The current version of the bill is co-sponsored by Councilmembers Mark Squilla (District 1), Jamie Gauthier (District 3), Curtis Jones (District 4), Mike Driscoll (District 6), Cindy Bass (District 8), Kendra Brooks (At Large), Rue Landau (At Large), Nicolas O’Rourke (At Large), and Isaiah Thomas (At Large) and has been referred to the Committee on Commerce & Economic Development.

The bill builds off of existing protections that were passed at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and would require building service workers receive 15 days’ notice before the termination of any contract, 60 days’ notice of workplace closure, and 90 days’ retention by new building owners following a change in ownership or management. The bill would also require new building owners to offer building service workers their previous or similar positions once those positions become available again.

The revised legislation offers protections to various categories of employees including security, janitorial services, building maintenance, concierge services, door attendant services, food and beverage, hotel services, health care (including registered nurses), and parking employees. The bill would apply to buildings that are larger than 50,000 square feet or have more than 50 residential units.

While the bill was originally passed by City Council in December by a 14-1 vote — with Councilmember Brian O’Neill (District 10) casting the only “no” vote — the bill was pocket vetoed by outgoing Mayor Jim Kenney at the conclusion of his last term in office. The bill has been referred to the Committee of Commerce and Economic Development. The Parker administration has not indicated either support or opposition to the legislation as proposed.



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