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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COUNCILMAN HENON CALLS FOR HEARINGS ON PROBLEM PROPERTIES

Philadelphia, PA – Councilman Bobby Henon introduced a resolution calling for hearings by the Joint Committees on Licenses and Inspections and Public Safety on negligent landlords, problem rental properties and their effects on the surrounding community. The resolution, which was introduced with co-sponsors Councilman Curtis Jones, Jr., Councilwoman Cherelle Parker and Councilwoman Maria Quiñones-Sánchez, gives the Committees the ability to issue subpoenas to compel witnesses to attend and also expands the Councilman’s bad neighbor and Problem Property Advisory Council efforts city-wide.

“Properties that violate the City’s codes time and time again are not only driving down its neighboring property’s value and the community’s quality of life, but they are also draining the resources of City Departments. Not to mention the danger they could present,” said Councilman Henon. “These hearings, and the power to use subpoena, are an important tool in the fight against blight, bad neighbors and problem properties. I look forward to Council’s partnership with Licenses and Inspections on these hearings and to working closely with other members to identify and address problem properties in their Districts and across the City.”

According to a 2014 study by Pew Charitable Trust, homeownership in Philadelphia is on the decline, whereas rentals increased by nearly 37,000 units. Despite the occupancy shift being a city-wide issue, specific zip codes are experiencing larger declines in homeownership. An increase in rental properties could result in more absentee landlords and more code violations. According to 2015 data from the Department of Licenses and Inspections, the 8 zip codes (19121; 19124; 19127; 19134; 19135; 19140; 19142; 19149) with the sharpest declines in homeownership accounted for one-third of all code violations in 2015.

Councilman Henon launched the Problem Property Advisory Council in 2012 in his District, Council District 6, in 2012. Made up of neighborhood leaders and community activists from and the 6th District, the Problem Properties Advisory Council (PPAC) identifies problem properties and, in collaboration with city departments, like CLIP, the Streets Department, the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office, and the Department of Licenses and Inspections, it addresses the underlying nuisance issues and works to improve the overall quality of life.



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