

KEVIN J. BOYLE, MEMBER
172ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

102A EAST WING
P.O. BOX 202172
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2172
PHONE: (717) 783-4944
FAX: (717) 772-9917

7518 FRANKFORD AVE.
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19136
PHONE: (215) 331-2600
FAX: (215) 708-3135



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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URBAN AFFAIRS

PHILADELPHIA DELEGATION

E-MAIL: KBOYLE@PAHOUSE.NET
WEBSITE: WWW.PAHOUSE.COM/KBOYLE

MEMORANDUM

To: All House Members

From: Representative Kevin Boyle 

Date: March 27, 2012

Re: Landlord Accountability

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation creating the Landlord Enforcement and Accountability Database (LEAD) and granting municipal governments the option of requiring landlords to register and pay a fee on an annual basis.

In recent years, the Pennsylvania General Assembly has enacted several important laws, including Act 135 of 2008 and Act 90 of 2010, to combat blight. However, some landlords ignore municipal codes due in part to the fact that some issues do not constitute blight. In addition, non-resident landlords often disregard fines or fail to respond to correspondence from municipal officials requesting a remedy. In addition, municipal officials have issues establishing contact with non-resident or absentee landlords in order to address both code violations and fines. As a result, I will be introducing legislation establishing the Landlord Enforcement and Accountability Database (LEAD), and the LEAD Fund in the State Treasury.

Similar to Act 13 of 2012, my legislation requires any municipal government that elects to enact landlord registration and impose a fee to opt-in by enacting an ordinance. My bill caps the fee at \$100 per landlord and obliges the municipality to retain 80% of the fees collected for code enforcement and to remit 20% of the fees to the Commonwealth to be deposited in the Landlord Enforcement and Accountability Database Fund for LEAD development and maintenance. The LEAD Act specifies the information required to register and mandates that a non-resident landlord maintain an agent to act on their behalf and receive all service of process in the Commonwealth. Finally, my bill establishes penalties for failure to register and failure to designate an agent including a \$300 fine and abatement of rent. Furthermore, the municipal government may file a lien on the landlord's real property.

While the legislature has made a concerted effort to combat blight in recent years, absentee landlords continue to ignore municipal ordinances and Commonwealth laws. It is my intent to give municipal governments an additional tool to combat blight and hold landlords, both local

and non-resident, accountable for the condition of their properties. Likewise, this bill will establish a revenue stream allowing local governments to intensify code enforcement efforts and reduce blight within their jurisdiction.

Please join me in sponsoring this important legislation. If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, please contact Deborah Brady in my Harrisburg office via email at drbrady@pahouse.net or at 717-783-4944.