



**PUBLIC INTEREST LAW
CENTER OF PHILADELPHIA**

AFFILIATED WITH THE LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS UNDER LAW

**City Council Committee on Law and Government Hearing of April 28, 2014
Testimony of the Amy Laura Cahn, Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia
Bill No. 140131**

Thank you. Chairman Greenlee and committee members for the opportunity to testify. My name is Amy Laura Cahn and I am testifying in my capacity as a staff attorney with the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia. I am here, today, to testify in support of Bill Number 140131.

This bill amends Chapter 21-1700 of The Philadelphia Code by revising provisions concerning how notices of regulations proposed by departments, boards and commissions shall be published and advertised.

Throughout its forty year history, the Law Center has been concerned with encouraging transparency and civic participation at all levels of government. We are fully in support of an amendment to enhance notice of proposed regulations by City departments, boards and commissions. The bill provides three improvements to the existing notice requirements: 1) notice of the proposed regulation on the City's official website, 2) the inclusion of the full text of the regulation as proposed on the City's website; and 3) the posting on the website of final version of the regulation following its adoption.

Philadelphia's residents often have a difficult time understanding how government works. It is not always clear how each of the City's various departments, boards and commissions works internally; how to most effectively interact with them; or how and when to offer public comment on changes within government.

The technological infrastructure is in place to make notice available online. Thus, the changes required by the amendment will be neither labor- nor cost-intensive. The Law Center supports this most basic and efficient step to increase government transparency and assist residents in becoming a more active and engaged populace.