



City of Detroit

COUNCILMAN SCOTT R. BENSON

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Conrad Mallett, Chief Corporation Counsel, Law Department  
David Whitaker, Director, Legislative Policy Division

**FROM:** Hon. Scott Benson, City Council District 3

**CC:** Hon. James Tate, Chair, Planning & Economic Development  
Standing Committee  
Hon. Janice Winfrey, City Clerk  
Malik Washington, Mayor's Liaison

**VIA:** Hon. Council President Mary Sheffield

**DATE:** 21 March 2025

**RE:** **REQUEST FOR LEGAL OPINION ON PRIVACY CONCERNS  
REGARDING BOARD OF REVIEW RECORDINGS**

I am requesting a legal opinion and analysis regarding the mandate under the Property Tax Reform Ordinance requiring the recording of Board of Review proceedings. Specifically, I am seeking guidance on how to balance transparency with the privacy concerns of residents who may be experiencing financial hardship.

1. Does the City have the authority to implement an opt-out process for residents who do not wish for their hearings to be recorded or publicly available?
2. What privacy protections exist for residents seeking property tax relief, and do any legal limitations prevent the City from restricting public access to these recordings?
3. Are there alternative methods that would allow for compliance with the ordinance while safeguarding personal financial information from widespread public exposure?

It is critical that we ensure public accountability while also respecting the dignity and privacy of residents facing economic challenges. Your legal opinion and policy recommendations will help inform potential amendments or procedural adjustments to this requirement.

Please provide your response at your earliest convenience.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my office at 313-224-1198.

SRB