

Providence City News



David N. Cicilline, Mayor

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Landmark Ordinance Designed to Assist Small Businesses & Artists Signed Into Law

Tenant Relocation Ordinance recognizes the importance of small businesses and the creative community to Providence's economy



Mayor David N. Cicilline, Councilman Luis Aponte and representatives of the Partnership for Creative Industrial Space (PCIS) today announced the passage of a landmark City Ordinance designed to retain jobs in Providence by assisting small businesses and artists who may be displaced by redevelopment projects.

The Ordinance was signed into law at a news conference at MEDport, an Olneyville-based

company that designs and markets consumer products for clients throughout the world.

"Small business is the backbone of our knowledge-based economy and as we continue to create jobs and expand our tax base, it's critically important that we ensure small businesses continue to thrive," said Mayor Cicilline. "The measure also recognizes the important role Providence's creative community plays in fueling our economy, and the redevelopment of our historic mills and once decaying industrial buildings should not come at the expense of the artists and small businesses that create jobs and stimulate commerce."

Sponsored by Councilman Aponte, the Industrial Commercial Buildings District (ICBD) Tenant Relocation Ordinance provides commercial tenants in buildings that have historic value and have been slated for City-supported redevelopment with at least 90 days notice to vacate the property. Under provisions of the Ordinance, tenants also receive a financial stipend based on the number of employees at the location.

"The passage of this Ordinance represents an important first step in the City's efforts to remain competitive in attracting and retaining small businesses in Providence," said Councilman Aponte.

The Ordinance is modeled after a similar measure in Seattle and was spearheaded by the Partnership for Creative Industrial Space (PCIS) under the leadership of co-directors Erik Bright and Lisa Carnevale.

"Providence has many designers, inventors and entrepreneurs who are the driving force behind small businesses in our creative sector, many of whom compete in the global market," said Lisa Carnevale, Co-director of PCIS. "This Relocation Ordinance provides a degree of protection and insurance for these small businesses, and the Mayor and City Council should be commended for taking steps to ensure the future job growth and expansion of the city's tax base."

A survey conducted by PCIS of industrial buildings indicates that approximately 1,000 businesses employing approximately 15,000 workers are located in buildings that have historic value and are subject to the zoning regulations of the Industrial and Commercial Buildings District.