

Committee on Finance

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, June 3, 2026
10:05 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON,
CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN NINA AHMAD
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DRISCOLL

ALSO PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN RUE LANDAU
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN JEFFREY YOUNG, JR.

BILLS: 250915, 260299, 260507, 260508
260509, 260510, 260511, 260512,
260513, 260521, 260527, 260564

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2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Good morning. Good
4 morning. I now note that the hour
5 has come to begin today's hearing.

6 Clerk, will you please
7 call the roll to take attendance.
8 Members who are in attendance will
9 please indicate that you are
10 present when your name is called.

11 THE CLERK:
12 Councilmember Jones.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES:
14 Present.

15 THE CLERK:
16 Councilmember Ahmad.

17 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:
18 Present.

19 THE CLERK:
20 Councilmember Driscoll.

21 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:
22 Present.

23 THE CLERK:
24 Councilmember Thomas.

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1 (No response.)

2 THE CLERK: Vice-Chair

3 Bass.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

5 Present.

6 THE CLERK: Chair

7 Gilmore Richardson.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: I am present. Thank
10 you. A quorum of the committee is
11 present and this hearing is now
12 called to order. This is the
13 public hearing of the Committee on
14 Finance regarding Bill Nos. 260564,
15 260510, 260509, 260527, 260508,
16 260513, 260507, 260511, 260512,
17 260299 and 260521. And for the
18 record, Bill No. 250915 is being
19 held and will not be heard in
20 today's committee hearing.

21 And I wanted to make a
22 very quick statement about Bill No.
23 250519. And let me just triple-
24 check the bill number. Bill No.

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1 250519 was introduced by
2 Councilmember Thomas. It was
3 listed for this hearing. That
4 legislation would partially exempt
5 some child care businesses from the
6 Business Income and Receipt Tax we
7 all know as BIRT.

8 I wanted to ensure that
9 we addressed some of the confusion
10 that was noted by our Chief Clerk
11 this morning prior to our committee
12 hearing in the Committee of the
13 Whole regarding Bill No. 251026,
14 which was introduced by
15 Councilmember Driscoll. That bill
16 would create exemptions to the BIRT
17 tax, and that bill was not listed
18 for a hearing today.

19 However, over the
20 summer, Councilmember Driscoll and
21 Councilmember Thomas have committed
22 to work on the legislation to sort
23 of combine both bills to make the
24 best bill so that we can hear that

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1 legislation potentially in the
2 fall. And so, I'm committed to
3 working with both Councilmember
4 Thomas and also Councilmember
5 Driscoll on their BIRT legislation.

6 They have committed to
7 continuing to do this work
8 together, and I'm excited about the
9 work that they will do that will
10 positively impact our small
11 business community here in the city
12 of Philadelphia. So I wanted to
13 state that for the record just in
14 case anyone was here to provide
15 public testimony regarding either
16 Bill No. 250519 or Bill No. 251026
17 Okay. Thank you very, very much.

18 Clerk, will you please
19 read the titles of the bills.

20 THE CLERK: Bill No.
21 260564, an ordinance authorizing
22 encroachments in the nature of a
23 sidewalk cafe in the vicinity of
24 2351 South Front Street, under

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1 certain terms and conditions.

2 Bill No. 260510, an
3 ordinance authorizing the City
4 Treasurer, on behalf of the City,
5 to enter into a provider agreement
6 with Citizens Bank National
7 Association for provision of
8 payroll banking services to the
9 City, under certain terms and
10 conditions.

11 Bill No. 260509, an
12 ordinance authorizing the
13 Commissioner of Public Property of
14 The City of Philadelphia, on behalf
15 of The City of Philadelphia and in
16 cooperation with The Philadelphia
17 Municipal Authority, to undertake a
18 Project to promote the health,
19 safety and welfare of the residents
20 of The City of Philadelphia;
21 authorizing and approving (i) a
22 project including the refunding of
23 bonds issued to refinance the New
24 Youth Center Facility, (ii) one or

1 more amendments to an existing
2 Ground Lease, as previously
3 amended, between The City of
4 Philadelphia and The Philadelphia
5 Municipal Authority, (iii) one or
6 more amendments to an existing
7 Prime Lease, as previously amended,
8 between The City of Philadelphia
9 and The Philadelphia Municipal
10 Authority and the assignment of
11 such amendments to a trustee and
12 (iv) the obligation of The City of
13 Philadelphia to pay rent under the
14 Prime Lease, as amended, when due;
15 approving the issuance by The
16 Philadelphia Municipal Authority of
17 bonds, in one or more series, from
18 time to time, to pay the costs of
19 such project; authorizing certain
20 officers of The City of
21 Philadelphia to enter into such
22 lease amendments and to take such
23 other actions as may be necessary
24 or appropriate to accomplish the

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1 intent and purpose of this
2 Ordinance; agreeing to be bound by
3 each and every provision, covenant
4 and agreement set forth in the
5 Ground Lease and Prime Lease, each
6 as amended; covenanting that The
7 City of Philadelphia will make
8 necessary appropriations in each of
9 The City of Philadelphia's fiscal
10 years to provide for, and make,
11 rental payments when due under the
12 Prime Lease, as amended; all under
13 certain terms and conditions.

14 Bill No. 260527, an
15 ordinance authorizing and approving
16 the execution and delivery of a
17 Service Agreement between The City
18 of Philadelphia and The
19 Philadelphia Municipal Authority
20 relating to the financing of the
21 acquisition of 400 North Broad
22 Street and 1501 Callowhill Street
23 (together with certain ancillary
24 property rights), which premises

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1 the City has sub-leased for use as
2 the City's police headquarters and
3 certain other uses; approving the
4 issuance by the Authority of bonds,
5 notes or other evidences of
6 indebtedness (including
7 reimbursement obligations related
8 to lines or letters of credit) in
9 one or more series to finance or
10 refinance such acquisition costs
11 and authorizing and approving the
12 obligation of The City of
13 Philadelphia to pay in full when
14 due the Service Fee and other
15 amounts payable under the Service
16 Agreement; authorizing certain City
17 officers to take certain actions
18 required to issue such bonds, notes
19 or other evidences of indebtedness;
20 covenanting that The City of
21 Philadelphia will make necessary
22 appropriations in each of the
23 City's fiscal years to provide for,
24 and will make timely payments of,

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1 the Service Fee and other amounts
2 due under the Service Agreement;
3 and authorizing and approving the
4 Director of Finance of the City and
5 other City officials to take other
6 necessary or appropriate actions to
7 effectuate the purposes of this
8 ordinance; all under certain terms
9 and conditions.

10 Bill No. 260508, an
11 ordinance authorizing an increase
12 in the non-electoral indebtedness
13 of the City within the Pennsylvania
14 constitutional limit; authorizing
15 the Bond Committee to sell bonds at
16 public or private negotiated sale,
17 to provide funds toward various
18 capital municipal purposes;
19 providing for appropriations to the
20 Sinking Fund Commission for the
21 payment of such bonds; and
22 authorizing agreements to provide
23 credit or payment or liquidity
24 sources for the bonds in connection

1 with issuance of the bonds, and
2 certain other actions.

3 Bill No. 260513, an
4 ordinance authorizing the Director
5 of Planning and Development, on
6 behalf of the City, to file
7 applications with the United States
8 Department of Housing and Urban
9 Development for a Community
10 Development Block Grant; to file
11 applications to participate in the
12 HOME Investment Partnership program
13 and the Emergency Solutions Grant
14 program; to apply for a Housing
15 Opportunities for Persons with AIDS
16 grant; to file applications with
17 the Commonwealth to obtain grants
18 under the Act of April 12, 1956,
19 P.L. 1449, Section 4, as amended,
20 to prevent and eliminate blight;
21 authorizing the Director of
22 Planning and Development and the
23 Director of Commerce to file
24 applications to obtain other grants

1 from the Commonwealth; authorizing
2 the Director of Commerce to use the
3 Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program;
4 and authorizing the Director of
5 Planning and Development and the
6 Director of Commerce to enter into
7 all understandings and assurances
8 contained in such applications and
9 take all necessary action to accept
10 the grants; all under certain terms
11 and conditions.

12 Bill No. 260507, an
13 ordinance amending Chapter 19-1200
14 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled
15 "Parking Tax," to amend the
16 definition of parking facility to
17 exclude bus loading facilities from
18 imposition of the parking tax,
19 under certain terms and conditions.

20 Bill No. 260511, an
21 ordinance approving the Fiscal Year
22 2027 Capital Budget, providing for
23 expenditures for the capital
24 purposes of the Philadelphia Gas

1 Works, including the supplying of
2 funds in connection therewith, and
3 acknowledging receipt of the
4 Revised Forecast of the Capital
5 Budgets for Fiscal Years 2028
6 through 2023 or 2032, all under
7 certain terms and conditions.

8 Bill No. 260512, an
9 ordinance approving the amendment
10 of the Fiscal Year 2026 Capital
11 Budget providing for expenditures
12 for the capital purposes of the
13 Philadelphia Gas Works (including
14 the supplying of funds in
15 connection therewith) subject to
16 certain constraints and conditions
17 and acknowledging the receipt of
18 the Revised Forecast of Capital
19 Budgets for Fiscal Years 2027
20 through 2031, as amended.

21 Bill No. 260299, an
22 ordinance amending Section 9-803 of
23 the Philadelphia Code, entitled
24 "Fair Housing Commission," and

1 Section 20-304 of The Philadelphia
2 Code, entitled "Compensation for
3 Members of Boards, Commissions,
4 Committees and Councils," to amend
5 the compensation paid to members of
6 the Fair Housing Commission and
7 delete superfluous provisions, all
8 under certain terms and conditions.

9 And finally Bill No.
10 260521, an ordinance amending Title
11 22 of The Philadelphia Code,
12 entitled "Public Employees
13 Retirement Code, by modifying the
14 circumstances when certain City of
15 Philadelphia employees are entitled
16 to service-connected death
17 benefits, all under certain terms
18 and conditions.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
20 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
21 very, very much.

22 We will now call the
23 first panel here to testify on Bill
24 No. 260564.

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1 THE CLERK: Will Noelle
2 Marconi, Director of Legislative
3 Affairs for the Department of
4 Streets, make their way to the
5 podium.

6 (Witness approached
7 witness table.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
10 so much for being here again.
11 Welcome home. Please state your
12 name for the record and proceed
13 with your testimony.

14 MS. MARCONI: Good
15 morning, Chairperson Gilmore
16 Richardson and members of the
17 Finance Committee. My name is
18 Noelle Marconi, and I'm the
19 Director of Legislative Affairs for
20 the Department of Streets. I'm
21 here today to offer testimony on
22 Bill No. 260564, introduced by
23 Councilmember Squilla.

24 This bill authorizes

1 2351 Anthony Real Estate LLC, the
2 owner, to install, own, and
3 maintain encroachments in the
4 nature of a sidewalk cafe at Walt's
5 Restaurant, located at 2351 South
6 Front Street. A total of seven
7 tables and 28 seats for a sidewalk
8 cafe will be located along the
9 north sidewalk of Ritter Street,
10 along the property line of 2351
11 South Front Street, and the east
12 sidewalk of South Front Street
13 along the property line of 2351
14 South Front Street, six tables and
15 24 seats will be located adjacent
16 to the property line of 2351 South
17 Front Street, and one table and
18 four seats will be located adjacent
19 to the property line of 2351 South
20 Front, the Department of Streets is
21 not opposed to this proposed
22 sidewalk cafe as it will maintain
23 seven feet six inches of clear
24 unobstructed footway on both Ritter

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1 Street and South Front Street,
2 making meeting the complete streets
3 policy. This concludes my
4 testimony and I'm pleased to answer
5 any questions.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
8 very much for your testimony.

9 Are there any questions
10 or comments from the members of the
11 committee for this witness?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
15 thank you very much for being here
16 today.

17 There being no
18 additional panels for Bill No.
19 260564, we will please call any
20 names that we have for public
21 comment for Bill No. 260564.

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Seeing

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1 none, we will now proceed with our
2 next bill.

3 Clerk, will you please
4 call the first panel we have to
5 testify on Bill No. 260510.

6 THE CLERK: We have
7 Jacqueline Dunn, the City
8 Treasurer, and Shakina Clark,
9 Deputy City Treasurer of Banking.
10 (Witnesses approached
11 witness table.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
13 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
14 very much for being here. As you
15 approach the witness table, please
16 state your name for the record and
17 proceed with your testimony.

18 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
19 Good morning, Chair Gilmore
20 Richardson and members of the
21 Committee on Finance. I'm Jackie
22 Dunn, City Treasurer, and with me
23 this morning is Shakina Clark,
24 Deputy City Treasurer for Banking.

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1 I'm here to testify in favor of
2 Bill No. 260510.

3 This bill would provide
4 authorization to the City
5 Treasurer's office, on behalf of
6 the city, to enter into an
7 agreement with Citizens Bank for
8 provision of payroll banking
9 services from the period July 1,
10 2026 to June 30, 2027, under
11 certain terms and conditions. This
12 would be the first amendment of the
13 current contract.

14 For background, in June
15 2006 the city enacted legislation
16 that required the Treasurer's
17 Office to implement a request for a
18 proposal process, seeking proposals
19 from qualified institutions to
20 provide banking services for
21 accounts related to payroll
22 disbursements that include payments
23 to employees, payroll deductions,
24 and payroll taxes. This

1 legislation also required that no
2 contract amendment with a proposed
3 recipient of payroll banking
4 services be executed until it has
5 been approved by City Council with
6 an ordinance.

7 In 2024, the Treasurer's
8 Office issued a banking services
9 RFP, which resulted in Citizens
10 Bank ranking as the most qualified
11 institution. Citizens Bank served
12 as the city's payroll depository
13 since 2017 when City Council
14 approved the initial contract and
15 was again recommended in 2021
16 through another RFP process and
17 subsequently approved by City
18 Council.

19 Of the applicants for
20 this most recent RFP, Citizens Bank
21 had the most competitive fee
22 proposal, provides superior service
23 for the critical function of
24 employee payroll and has an

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1 extensive branch network through
2 the city, maintains an outstanding
3 Community Reinvestment Act rating
4 or CRA rating and regularly
5 partners with the city on local
6 priorities.

7 The Administration
8 respectfully recommends adoption of
9 this ordinance and requests that
10 the committee recommends the rules
11 of Council be suspended so as to
12 permit first reading of the bill at
13 the next session of Council. Thank
14 you for your consideration and the
15 opportunity to testify. I'm happy
16 to answer any questions.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
18 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
19 very much for being here.

20 Will you be presenting
21 testimony today as well or are you
22 here for questions?

23 MS. CLARK: I'm here for
24 questions.

1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: I figured. Okay.

3 Thank you. We appreciate both of
4 you very much and thank you to our
5 City Treasurer Jacqueline Dunn and
6 to Shakina Clark, who's our Deputy
7 City Treasurer for Banking for the
8 city. I wanted to first notate for
9 the record we always do a
10 pre-meeting before we have this
11 hearing, and I have reviewed the
12 community investment reporting for
13 Citizens Bank, continue to track
14 the numbers for residential
15 mortgages relative to census tract,
16 which is how they are able to track
17 the data, but particularly in our
18 majority-minority census tracts,
19 but also reviewing the low, mid and
20 high residential mortgage offerings
21 as well as the HELOCs, which we
22 know even from the last time and
23 the refinancing has decreased, and
24 also all the community involvement,

1 including the involvement with the
2 Enterprise Center, with LISC and a
3 number of our community
4 organizations that are helping
5 small businesses who need
6 additional assistance with loan
7 offerings, particularly during this
8 sort of difficult economic period.

9 And so, I wanted to just
10 state that for the record that I
11 have reviewed that information,
12 that I continue to be in discussion
13 with the city Treasurer's Office
14 relative to, in specific, my
15 expectations around how we are
16 interfacing with the community and
17 ensuring that we are providing
18 necessary financial literacy,
19 education and support not only for
20 the Philadelphia community but also
21 for those who are seeking
22 homeownership in every corner of
23 this city. And I just wanted to
24 state that for the record.

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1 The Chair now recognizes
2 Councilmember Jones.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
4 you, Madam Chair.

5 So I go back to the days
6 when city employees were issued
7 physical checks and the long lines
8 on Fridays and Thursdays in order
9 to get your check cashed. We have
10 gone to a direct deposit system.
11 What has that meant by way of
12 profitability, by way of interest
13 overnight that you now get as
14 opposed to back in the day when we
15 had physical checks?

16 Are there any statistics
17 on it? I would imagine it has made
18 it more profitable for Citizens
19 Bank.

20 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
21 Sure. Thank you, Councilmember.
22 You're correct that there have been
23 a significant shift over time away
24 from physical paper checks to

1 direct deposit and even products
2 like pay cards, so otherwise
3 electronic transfers of funds.
4 Currently of the 27,000
5 approximately city employees, 96%
6 are on direct deposit, 3% are on
7 pay card. And so, that remaining
8 1% is still paper check-based.

9 So the good news for
10 employees is that they have
11 immediate access to their funds
12 once payroll is released and
13 improved. And for our office and
14 for Shakina's team that processes
15 payroll, it really allows us to
16 focus on other things because
17 printing paper checks is very
18 labor-intensive. Unfortunately,
19 check fraud is quite common among
20 financial fraud cases. And so, it
21 helps also protect our employees
22 and recipients of checks if we can
23 get them onto an electronic means
24 of payment.

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1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Who
2 receives -- based on a direct
3 deposit method, do we get the
4 benefit of those overnight
5 interests or is it washed based on
6 they make a direct deposit? I'm
7 just curious.

8 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
9 Yeah, we've certainly had internal
10 savings because it allows our
11 employees to focus on other banking
12 and treasury supports versus
13 managing a larger inventory of
14 paper checks, and also our partners
15 in other departments that have to
16 help print the checks so the
17 Technology Office, for example.

18 Payroll is unique
19 because the funds, as you
20 mentioned, go into the funding
21 account and then immediately go out
22 to the end recipient, in this case,
23 our employees. And so, we've
24 historically not received much

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1 interest or much earnings credit on
2 the payroll accounts versus other
3 accounts. So there hasn't really
4 been a detrimental impact to the
5 city in that way. But I think the
6 big benefit to us is the ability to
7 focus our staff, time and resources
8 on other banking services.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: And a
10 lot of trees don't die because of
11 the paper.

12 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
13 I'm sorry.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: A lot
15 of trees don't die because of the
16 paper.

17 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
18 Yes.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: All
20 right. Thank you, Madam Chair.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
22 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
23 very much, Councilmember Jones.

24 The Chair notates for

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1 the record the presence of
2 Councilmember Mike Driscoll and
3 also our Council President Kenyatta
4 Johnson.

5 The Chair now recognizes
6 Councilmember Dr. Nina Ahmad.

7 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

8 Thank you, Madam Chair.

9 Good morning. Quick
10 question. In your RFP process, was
11 there some requirement to show how
12 these banks treat small businesses
13 who are coming in to open accounts?
14 This is anecdotal from constituents
15 about not getting treated very well
16 by big banks and having problems in
17 getting services. So I just
18 wondered if that was part of your
19 RFP process and how are you keeping
20 an eye on that, in addition to what
21 my Chair said around making sure
22 getting stats on how they're
23 investing in the community?

24 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

1 Sure. The payroll banking services
2 RFP is specific to payroll so the
3 internal city needs and processes,
4 but our office does, as you're
5 likely aware, perform the annual
6 lending disparity study. And so,
7 we look at small business
8 applications and originations for
9 those products on a couple
10 different factors. So that is the
11 way that Shakina and I keep track
12 of how our depositories are doing,
13 not just Citizens Bank, but all of
14 the banks that are authorized to do
15 business with the city.

16 Citizens performs quite
17 well on that, but especially on the
18 home lending side. I know J.P.
19 Morgan and Bank of America, two
20 other depositories on the
21 authorized list, in the last year
22 of federal data that was released
23 were quite strong among our
24 depositories in that service area.

1 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

2 Thank you for that. Is there a
3 component for public engagement in
4 this process to actually hear
5 directly from our small businesses
6 to kind of line up with the data
7 you're seeing? I just wondered
8 because it seems like somebody has
9 to call somebody to get attention.
10 And I just wonder how we capture
11 that so that that is part of this
12 process.

13 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

14 Sure. I think that's probably a
15 better fit under the annual lending
16 study process because we're looking
17 at federal data across a broad
18 swath, not just the banks that
19 apply for payroll depository
20 services, which is a more limited
21 pool, but we are always open to
22 refining, you know, what that
23 annual lending study examines,
24 especially as there are trends in

1 the marketplace with interest rates
2 or, for example, during the acute
3 COVID period when payroll
4 protection loan products were the
5 predominant product that banks and
6 other institutions were offering,
7 and they were pulling away from
8 other areas. We wanted to retool
9 our examination so we were focusing
10 on what was relevant. And so, I
11 think we're happy to talk with you
12 on that.

13 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

14 Thank you so much.

15 Thank you, Madam Chair.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
18 so much, Councilmember Ahmad.

19 Are there any further
20 questions for these witnesses and
21 for this panel? The Chair notates
22 for the record the presence of
23 Councilmember Jay Young. Thank you
24 very much, Councilmember Young.

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1 Any additional questions
2 for this panel?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Seeing none, we thank
6 you all so much for being here and
7 thank you for your testimony.

8 Is there anyone else
9 here present to testify whose name
10 has not been called?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Okay. There being no
14 further panel for Bill No. 260510,
15 we will now take public comment on
16 Bill No. 260510.

17 Clerk, will you please
18 call the first set of names you
19 have for public comment, if any.

20 THE CLERK: Mitch
21 Channin.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much for
24 being here. Please state your name

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1 for the record and proceed with
2 your testimony. We're on 260510.
3 This is the banking depository
4 bill. Mitch, I think you usually
5 come to testify on the PGW bills.
6 Are you giving public comment on
7 the bank depository bills?

8 MR. CHANNIN: Yeah.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Excellent. Okay.

11 Please state your name for the
12 record and proceed with your
13 testimony.

14 MR. CHANNIN: I signed
15 up for two bills so --

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Received. Okay.

18 MR. CHANNIN: Thanks for
19 the opportunity to testify. I'll
20 be really brief. I just wanted to
21 make Councilmembers and others
22 present aware that there is a
23 national boycott of Citizens Bank
24 organized by Indivisible and a

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1 number of other organizations
2 because of their financing of GEO
3 Group and other for-profit
4 companies that are providing these
5 notorious ICE detention facilities
6 like the one in New Jersey, where
7 there's currently a hunger strike.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Oh, wow. Well, thank
10 you very much for bringing that
11 information to our attention. This
12 is my first time hearing that, but
13 we appreciate you being here to
14 provide that information.

15 MR. CHANNIN: I can
16 share more later if you'd like me
17 to email you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: That would be great.
20 Okay.

21 MR. CHANNIN: Thanks a
22 lot.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mitch.

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1 Thank you very much for coming in.

2 Is there anyone else
3 here whose name has not been called
4 to testify on Bill No. 260510?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none and
8 there being no further witnesses or
9 panels for the bill, Clerk, will
10 you please call the first panel we
11 have to testify on Bill Nos. 260509
12 and 260527?

13 THE CLERK: Jacqueline
14 Dunn, City Treasurer; and Matthew
15 Bowman, Deputy City Treasurer for
16 Debt.

17 (Witnesses approached
18 witness table.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
21 so much. Please state your name
22 for the record and proceed with
23 your testimony.

24 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

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1 Good morning, Jacqueline Dunn
2 again, City Treasurer. Good
3 morning, Chair and members of the
4 Committee on Finance. I'm Jackie
5 Dunn, City Treasurer. And with me
6 this morning is Matt Bowman, the
7 Deputy City Treasurer for Debt
8 Management. I'm here to testify in
9 favor of Bill Nos. 260527 and
10 260509.

11 Bill 260527 would
12 authorize the City and the
13 Philadelphia Municipal Authority,
14 or PMA, to issue bonds to exercise
15 its one-time purchase option on the
16 police headquarters building at 400
17 North Broad Street and the
18 accompanying garage at 1501 Callow
19 Hill Street. The city has been
20 subleasing the property since late
21 December 2019. This purchase
22 option was built into the sublease
23 in December 2017.

24 The sublease provides a

1 formula to derive the purchase
2 price for the premises, which
3 compares the outstanding debt to
4 the appraised value with the city
5 paying the greater of the two. The
6 city is presently conducting the
7 due diligence related to the
8 appraised value. This bill
9 authorizes up to 225 million in
10 bonds to be issued for the
11 purchase, plus related cost of
12 issuance, credit enhancement and
13 discount.

14 The bonds would be
15 secured by the city's obligation
16 under the service agreement to
17 budget and appropriate annual
18 amounts necessary to pay the
19 service fee, which would be
20 sufficient to pay the debt service
21 on the outstanding bonds. Bill
22 260509 would provide authorization
23 for the City and PMA to refund
24 previously issued bonds for

1 savings.

2 The city has 56.4
3 million in PMA Series 2017 bonds
4 outstanding, which can be refunded
5 to reduce overall debt service
6 costs, or funding would be pursued
7 consistent with the city's debt
8 management policy as a part of this
9 transaction. The Administration
10 respectfully recommends adoption of
11 these ordinances and requests that
12 the committee recommends that the
13 rules of Council be suspended so as
14 to permit first reading of the
15 bills at the next session of
16 Council. Thank you for your
17 consideration and the opportunity
18 to testify. I am happy to answer
19 any questions that you may have.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
22 very much for being here today.
23 Thank you for your testimony on
24 Bill Nos. 260509 and 260527. I'm

Committee on Finance

1 sure Matthew, you're here, our
2 Deputy City Treasurer for debt is
3 here for questions if necessary,
4 but thank you both.

5 Are there any questions
6 from the committee for these
7 witnesses?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Okay. I'd like to now
11 recognize the District
12 Councilmember for the properties
13 notated in the bill. Councilman
14 Young.

15 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
16 you, Madam Chair.

17 Good morning and thank
18 you for your testimony. Can you
19 tell us what type of bond this will
20 be? What's the source of repayment
21 for this bond?

22 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
23 Sure. Approved by City Council,
24 this would be equivalent to the

1 city's GO tax-backed bonds to be
2 issued through our service
3 agreement structure and then the
4 debt service, which is estimated to
5 be about \$15.1 million annually,
6 would be paid through the Class 200
7 structure through the sinking fund.

8 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: And
9 how much are we paying in rent for
10 this current facility now?

11 CITY TREASURER DUNN: It
12 would be equivalent to the debt
13 service, so the annual rent is
14 approximately \$15 million now.

15 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: And
16 how long have we been renting this
17 facility?

18 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
19 We've occupied the property since
20 December '19. I believe the lease
21 was effective in December 2017.

22 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: So
23 we've been paying rent for nine
24 years. For the amount of rent that

Committee on Finance

1 we have been paying for I guess the
2 nine years, do we get any discount
3 on the sales price of the property?

4 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

5 The city's existing rent goes to
6 amortize the loan that the
7 developer took out to purchase the
8 property and to retrofit it into
9 the police headquarters facility
10 that the city needs rate based on
11 our specifications. So the bond
12 that the city issues is the
13 remaining debt that's outstanding.

14 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: So
15 that's new information to me, that
16 it's going to amortize the loan
17 that the property owner purchased
18 the property for. But I know the
19 property owner didn't purchase the
20 property for the benefit of the
21 city. So why is that going towards
22 that?

23 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

24 That was the original structure put

Committee on Finance

1 in place into 2017. It was a lease
2 to own with the city having this
3 one-time option that comes up and
4 expires at the end of Calendar Year
5 2026.

6 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: And
7 can you tell us when the bonds for
8 the market is going to be a
9 competitive or is negotiated
10 process?

11 CITY TREASURER DUNN: So
12 we would pursue a negotiated bond
13 sale, which is when we do an RFI to
14 select a bank and then the bank
15 helps us negotiate with prospective
16 investors to get the lowest cost of
17 capital for the city. That's
18 consistent with our general
19 approach for bond issuances, given
20 our credit quality and the
21 complexity of transactions like the
22 service agreement structure.

23 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: And
24 what's the total amount of the

Committee on Finance

1 borrowing that this legislation
2 will authorize?

3 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

4 The authorization is a maximum
5 amount of not to exceed 225
6 million. We estimate that we'll be
7 borrowing approximately 201
8 million. So we build in a buffer.
9 We do not believe that we will need
10 that amount, the full amount.

11 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: So
12 just for the record, we're going to
13 be paying \$201 million for one
14 property in the city of
15 Philadelphia. Just to note that
16 for the record. What is the total
17 cost of the borrowing?
18 Essentially, have you looked at
19 where I guess the estimates of
20 where the market would be by the
21 time we conduct the transaction and
22 what the total cost would be?

23 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

24 Sure. So the decision point for

Committee on Finance

1 the city at this time, because we
2 have that one-time purchase option,
3 is either to continue renting for a
4 10-year term and the rent resets at
5 a higher rate, which would be
6 approximately 29 million annually
7 versus the 15 million we're paying
8 now, or to issue debt to purchase
9 the property based on current
10 rates, which we hope would hold,
11 the annual debt service would
12 approximate the rent costs at about
13 15 million annually. So purchasing
14 the building would be a savings
15 relative to continuing to lease at
16 that higher reset rate, which would
17 start in January 27.

18 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Okay.
19 Would the bonds be callable? Will
20 we be able to refinance prior to
21 the maturity date?

22 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
23 Yes, we typically have a 10-year
24 call option.

Committee on Finance

1 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: 10

2 years, okay. Thank you. And can
3 you tell us what the appraised
4 value for the property is?

5 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

6 The appraised value for just 400
7 North Broad, we just received that
8 yesterday, but that's 21.5 million.

9 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: 21.5
10 million is the appraised value and
11 we're paying \$201 million for the
12 property.

13 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

14 Yes. I think the city in 2017, it
15 was always contemplated that the
16 outstanding debt would be higher
17 and would govern in that formula
18 because the property has a unique
19 value to the city to be able to
20 house our municipal police force.
21 There's less value to other buyers
22 who don't have a municipal police
23 force of this size.

24 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: And

Committee on Finance

1 if this legislation were to pass,
2 when do you expect to go to market?

3 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

4 Our goal would be to go to market
5 in late July, so we would go to the
6 rating agencies in early July and
7 we would like to try and price the
8 bonds at the end of July.

9 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
10 you.

11 Madam Chair, I just want
12 to note that we're borrowing money
13 for a noble cause for our
14 Philadelphia Police headquarters,
15 which is something that we
16 desperately need to have in our
17 ownership. But for the record, we
18 just need to note that there are
19 other public facilities in our city
20 that the city owns that could use
21 \$200 million worth of renovations.
22 That could help keep and maintain
23 our city in moving forward into the
24 future.

Committee on Finance

1 So I just want to note
2 that for the record that, yes, the
3 appraised value only has value to
4 us. This property only has value
5 to us. And I'm sure that was
6 contemplated when the transaction
7 originally occurred. When the
8 transaction originally occurred, I
9 was a staffer and we were
10 negotiating -- I was negotiating
11 the EOP for this particular
12 project.

13 We were spending as a
14 city -- so we've already spent
15 money on this project. Is this not
16 going to be the first -- the rent
17 is not the first time the city has
18 paid money for this project. The
19 renovations, the outfit of this
20 particular facility, the city paid
21 for. And that number was
22 equivalent to the entirety of what
23 Rebuild was, right. So just put
24 that for the record.

1 So we're spending a lot
2 of money on this property, but it's
3 a noble cause. Our police need a
4 state-of-the-art headquarters in
5 order to do 21st-century policing.
6 So that's not the issue. But I
7 think the issue is where do we as a
8 city prioritize our spending. So I
9 just wanted to note that for the
10 record.

11 Thank you, Madam Chair.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
14 so much, Councilmember Young.

15 Quickly, I need to
16 notate for the record the presence
17 of Councilmember Landau, who is now
18 here for the hearing. Prior to
19 recognizing Councilmember Jones,
20 who has asked to be recognized and
21 also Dr. Ahmad, help us with this
22 because this is not making sense
23 for us.

24 Parse this out for us

Committee on Finance

1 and take us on a timeline, because
2 we're in the middle of a budget
3 negotiation where we're being asked
4 to do things for similar amounts of
5 money. So walk us through this so
6 we understand fully what is going
7 on here and why we are in a
8 predicament to pay almost a quarter
9 billion dollars for one building.

10 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

11 Sure. In 2017, City Council passed
12 the ordinance related to the master
13 lease and sublease agreements,
14 which contain in it the one-time
15 purchase option that we're here
16 today to recommend that the city
17 pursue. And then in 2021, City
18 Council amended the ordinance to
19 allow the property to qualify for
20 historic tax credit revenue, which
21 the city then received back, a
22 portion of that back.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Pardon me. We

Committee on Finance

1 received part of it back by doing
2 the historical designation?

3 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

4 Correct. Making changes to allow
5 the property to qualify for the
6 historic tax credits.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Received.

9 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

10 The city at this point has two
11 options. The city can exercise its
12 one-time purchase option, and the
13 formula that was set in place in
14 2017 is that the city pays the
15 higher of the outstanding debt
16 because our rent has gone to pay
17 down the debt that was previously
18 issued to purchase and to retrofit
19 the facility for the police
20 headquarters or --

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: So walk me through.

23 So the rent started at what time?

24 MR. BOWMAN: Fiscal

Committee on Finance

1 Year --

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Pardon me one moment.

4 Just state your name for the

5 record. The mic is not on.

6 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

7 Matthew Bowman, Deputy Treasurer.

8 He had indicated Fiscal Year '18

9 was the first year.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: Then for the record,

12 how much was the rent?

13 MR. BOWMAN: It's \$15.2

14 million annually. So to date,

15 through a payment that was made two

16 days ago we're up to 131.8 million.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: So \$131.8 million for

19 rent up until two days ago?

20 MR. BOWMAN: Correct.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: Okay. Please proceed.

23 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

24 Sure. So the city can continue

Committee on Finance

1 renting the facility. And the way
2 that the terms were set in 2017,
3 the rent would reset if we don't
4 exercise this purchase option to
5 amortize the remaining debt over a
6 10-year period at a higher interest
7 rate. And so, our calculation
8 based on current interest rates
9 would have that rent being \$29
10 million annually versus the 15.2
11 that we're currently paying.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: So --

14 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

15 That would be a new cost that would
16 be in the Five Year Plan that's not
17 currently contemplated.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: Received. But also,
20 that would be a 10-year period --

21 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

22 10-year period. And at the end of
23 the 10 years, the city would have
24 to identify a new police

Committee on Finance

1 headquarters facility and
2 presumably pay an unknown amount
3 related to that.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: But with the new
6 amount and the higher interest
7 rate, it would be 290 million over
8 the 10 years, correct?

9 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

10 Approximately, yes.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Okay. So it would be
13 approximately 290 million over the
14 10 years. But the option that you
15 all are seeking to exercise would
16 be 225 million. And the reason why
17 this has to be done is because --
18 the reason why this has to be done
19 is because we're already locked
20 into the deal, so you have to take
21 action on it. And what you all are
22 seeking to do is try to get it at a
23 lower option?

24 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

Committee on Finance

1 Correct. We're presented with
2 these two decisions that the city
3 could undertake, and we're
4 recommending the lower cost option
5 that would allow us to purchase the
6 facility that the police are
7 currently occupying.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you. The
10 Chair recognizes Councilmember
11 Young and then Councilmember Jones.

12 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: Thank
13 you. Just for a point of
14 information, in the original deal
15 there was an escalation clause
16 which is kind of handcuffing us
17 right now which makes us purchase
18 this property. Because if not,
19 then after this year the rent will
20 almost double, right. So I just
21 want to put that on the record too.

22 It's not our doing here.
23 That deal happened in 2017, right.
24 But we have to now do something

Committee on Finance

1 about a deal that may not have been
2 in the best interest of the city at
3 that time.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much.

6 The Chair now recognizes
7 Councilmember Jones.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Let
9 me boil it down to simple math for
10 me. How much is the appraised
11 value of the building today?

12 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
13 21.5 million just for 400 North
14 Broad property. It does not
15 include the garage at --

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Throw
17 in the garage, how much is it?

18 CITY TREASURER DUNN: I
19 would have to get back to the
20 committee on that.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: So
22 let's give it another 10 million.
23 Because of the land, let's go with
24 30 million. We're going to borrow

Committee on Finance

1 200 and what?

2 CITY TREASURER DUNN: We
3 would be borrowing approximately
4 201 million, which is the cost of
5 the remaining debt on the facility.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: And
7 is that because we're locked into
8 the lease?

9 CITY TREASURER DUNN: We
10 are locked into the formula that
11 was set in 2017, correct.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: So
13 somebody was smart enough -- work
14 with me. Somebody was smart enough
15 to say, I'm going to give you a
16 hamburger today and charge you 10
17 times more over the course of the
18 amortization of this deal. Is that
19 what we got locked into?

20 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
21 We're recommending what we feel is
22 the best option based on the two
23 choices that are available.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: All

1 right. We got took. Somebody fell
2 asleep in the getaway car. There's
3 somebody down in Atlantic City
4 that's getting ready to profit from
5 this mightily. And just -- I know
6 it wasn't you, I know it wasn't
7 you. But somebody set up somebody
8 to benefit mightily on a real
9 estate deal, because that was the
10 same site that was supposed to be
11 the stadium at one point, right.

12 And so, there was
13 another -- I think Member Young
14 talked about other municipal
15 buildings. There was one that
16 comes to mind at 46th and Market
17 that we were going to do because it
18 was not Center City. It would
19 increase the value of that property
20 and give better utility. Somebody
21 fell asleep in the getaway car and
22 it wasn't you.

23 But I remember Allan
24 Domb raising a ruckus about this,

1 who is arguably one of the better
2 real estate people particularly in
3 Center City. And I just think that
4 we got took and we are paying the
5 price today, and it's an
6 opportunity cost that takes away
7 from the school district and other
8 places like that. So I'm baffled.
9 I'm baffled by how we got in this
10 position.

11 Thank you, Madam Chair.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
14 very much, Councilmember Jones.

15 The Chair now recognizes
16 Dr. Ahmad.

17 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: I
18 am similarly baffled, but here we
19 are today. I want to know who is
20 the owner-landlord entity that
21 we're dealing with?

22 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

23 400 North Broad Partners is a Bart
24 Blatstein predominantly-owned

Committee on Finance

1 entity, and that's the current
2 owner.

3 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

4 Thank you, Madam Chair. I just
5 wanted that to be in the public
6 record, who is going to benefit
7 from this.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Thank you. May you
10 repeat the answer. I'm sorry.
11 We're trying to understand what's
12 happening here --

13 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
14 (Inaudible).

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you.
17 Thank you very, very much.

18 Are there any additional
19 questions for these witnesses
20 regarding Bill No. 260509 and
21 260527?

22 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

23 Sorry.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

Committee on Finance

1 RICHARDSON: Chair now recognizes
2 Councilmember Ahmad.

3 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

4 Apologies, Madam Chair.

5 The other -- right now
6 where we are versus what
7 Councilmember Curtis Jones referred
8 to, the property in West
9 Philadelphia, there's no other
10 option. Is that where we are right
11 now? There's no other option for
12 the police department to go
13 elsewhere that would cost us much
14 less?

15 CITY TREASURER DUNN: We
16 have two options here, to continue
17 renting at the higher rate and then
18 eventually determine a new site at
19 the end of a 10-year period or to
20 purchase this property. I'm not
21 the best person to answer your
22 question.

23 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: The
24 question is can we actually

Committee on Finance

1 consider a different property now
2 before the 10 years? Is there a
3 penalty for that?

4 MR. BOWMAN: Under the
5 current documents, I don't think
6 that is an option we have. It is
7 either to pay a higher rate for 10
8 years or issue --

9 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: I
10 wanted to see how locked in we are
11 with all this. Thank you.

12 Thank you, Madam Chair.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: I think what I'm
15 hearing is stuck between a rock and
16 a real hard place.

17 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
18 We're trying to recommend the best
19 option for the city to --

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Received. Okay.

22 Which is why the historical tax
23 credit designation was helpful
24 partially. But at this point and

Committee on Finance

1 at this juncture in the road, we're
2 in a circumstance where we have to
3 make a determination on how best to
4 move forward and how to be the best
5 stewards of the city's dollars.

6 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

7 Correct.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Received.

10 Councilmember Young.

11 COUNCILMAN YOUNG: I

12 mean, at this time the information
13 that we received I don't know if
14 this deal was in the best interest
15 of the city, right. And I think
16 that's something that we as a
17 Council need to contemplate.

18 Unfortunately, we were dealt this
19 hand almost 10 years ago. But we
20 really have to look at what is in
21 the best interest of the city here,
22 and we have other, you know, \$200
23 million, that would fix 27
24 libraries, right. So just think

Committee on Finance

1 about that for a second.

2 So just want to put that
3 on the record, Madam Chair.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
6 very much, Councilmember Young.

7 Is there anyone else
8 here to testify whose name has not
9 been called?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none,
13 are there any witnesses here to
14 present public comment on Bill Nos.
15 260509 and 260527?

16 THE CLERK: There are no
17 names for public comment for 260509
18 or 260527.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you.

21 There being no further
22 witnesses for these bills, we will
23 now proceed with the next bill.

24 Clerk, will you please

Committee on Finance

1 call the first panel we have to
2 testify on Bill No. 260508.

3 THE CLERK: Tavare
4 Brown, Deputy Budget Director for
5 Capital.

6 (Witnesses approached
7 witness table.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
9 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
10 so much for being here. We
11 appreciate your presence. Please
12 state your name for the record and
13 proceed with your testimony.

14 MR. BROWN: How's
15 everybody doing. I'm Tavare Brown,
16 Deputy Budget Director for Capital.
17 All right. All right. Good
18 morning, Chair Gilmore Richardson
19 and members of the Finance
20 Committee. My name is Tavare
21 Brown, Deputy Budget Director for
22 Capital. I'm joined by Matthew
23 Bowman, Deputy City Treasurer. And
24 we're here today to testify on Bill

Committee on Finance

1 No. 260508.

2 This bill would
3 authorize an increase in the
4 non-electoral indebtedness of the
5 city in the amount not to exceed
6 578 million. The total reflects
7 both the FY27 loan authorization
8 amount, which is 293 million and a
9 technical fix to the existing FY22
10 loan authorization amount, which
11 was approved by City Council in
12 2021, but was later determined to
13 be invalid, as outlined later on in
14 the presentation, and that was 285
15 million.

16 The increase will leave
17 the city within the Philadelphia
18 Constitution debt limit. As of May
19 29, 2026, the city's legal debt
20 limit is 19.68 billion. And the
21 amount of debt applicable to that
22 limit is 2,917,000,000. As a
23 result, the city has a debt margin
24 of about 16.8 billion. The FY27

1 capital budget for new general
2 obligation bonds is approximately
3 28 -- I'm sorry, 281.17 million.
4 The proposed ordinance includes the
5 new general obligation loan amount
6 plus an additional 4% for cost of
7 issuance fees, bringing the total
8 for FY27 in this loan authorization
9 to \$293 million.

10 This bill also includes
11 a section regarding the FY22 loan
12 authorization, which was not
13 advertised in the manner required
14 by law and was subsequently
15 determined to be invalid. At the
16 direction of the city's bond
17 counsel, we included a distinct
18 section to the FY27 loan
19 authorization as a technical fix to
20 advertise an issue from several
21 years ago. This will enable us to
22 borrow the supported capital borrow
23 to support the capital projects
24 that were previously approved in

1 FY22 as originally intended.

2 The remaining 285
3 million in this loan authorization
4 corresponds to the FY22 figure. If
5 approved, the loan authorization
6 would finance capital projects
7 classified for the following
8 purposes in the following aggregate
9 amounts. So for this portion in my
10 written testimony, I broke it out
11 by each year, but I'll just refer
12 to the new borrowing, which is
13 FY27's amount.

14 So for transit-related
15 improvements, 11,261,000. For
16 streets and sanitation
17 improvements, 77,843,000. For
18 municipal buildings, 147,520,000.
19 For parks, recreation, and museum
20 improvements, 41,266,000. For
21 economic and community development
22 capital improvements, \$15,110,000,
23 for a total of 293 million. And
24 like I said, the rest of the

1 portion is prior already-approved
2 authorization.

3 I respectfully request
4 that Bill No. 260508 be reported
5 out of committee with a favorable
6 recommendation. I further request
7 that the rules of Council be
8 suspended so as to permit first
9 reading at the next session of
10 Council. The FY27 loan
11 authorization will be amended to
12 reflect any applicable amendments
13 to the FY27 budget, which should be
14 coming shortly. And this concludes
15 my testimony and I'll be happy to
16 answer any questions you might have
17 at this time.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
20 both so much for being here.

21 The Chair notates the
22 presence of Councilmember Jim
23 Harrity for the record.

24 Are there any questions

Committee on Finance

1 for these witnesses regarding Bill
2 No. 260508?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing no
6 questions, are there any other
7 witnesses whose names have not been
8 called?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: And is there anyone
12 here to provide public comment on
13 Bill No. 260508?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
17 thank you so much for your
18 testimony. We appreciate your
19 presence here today and we thank
20 you.

21 We will now proceed with
22 Bill No. 260513. Clerk, will you
23 please call the first panel we have
24 to testify.

Committee on Finance

1 THE CLERK: Mark Dodds,
2 Deputy Director, Division of
3 Housing and Community Development.

4 (Witness approached
5 witness table.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
8 very much for being here. Please
9 state your name for the record and
10 proceed with your testimony.

11 MR. DODDS: Good
12 afternoon, Mark Dodds, Deputy
13 Director of City of Philadelphia
14 Division of Housing and Community
15 Development. Good afternoon,
16 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson,
17 and members of the Finance
18 Committee. I am Mark Dodds, Deputy
19 Director of the Division of Housing
20 and Community Development. I will
21 present testimony on behalf of the
22 Administration on Bill No. 260513,
23 which permits the city to apply for
24 Federal Community Development Block

1 Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment
2 Partnership or HOME, Emergency
3 Solution Grant or ESG and Housing
4 Opportunities for Persons with AIDS
5 or HOPWA funds, and for state funds
6 from the Department of Community
7 and Economic Development or DCED.

8 The bill refers to
9 Exhibit A, which is the proposed
10 Annual Action Plan 2026 to 2027,
11 the required HUD funding
12 application, the Annual Action Plan
13 2026 to '27 details our plan for
14 spending funds from four primary
15 federal sources I named as well as
16 from the state's DCED, the Housing
17 Trust Fund, and the H.O.M.E. bond.

18 As it relates to the
19 existing Annual Action Plan
20 projects, as detailed in the Annual
21 Action Plan 2026 to '27, the city
22 was awarded approximately 44
23 million in CDBG, 11.1 million in
24 HOME Investment Partnership funds,

1 9.9 million in HOPWA and 3.9
2 million in ESG for the upcoming
3 fiscal year.

4 The Annual Action Plan
5 goals are aligned with
6 Philadelphia's high-priority
7 housing and community development
8 needs as well as the core North
9 Star goals set forth in the Parker
10 Administration's H.O.M.E. housing
11 plan. The Annual Action Plan goals
12 are to create affordable homeowner
13 and rental housing opportunities,
14 preserve affordable homeowner and
15 rental housing, reduce homelessness
16 and expand special housing
17 opportunities, foster open access
18 to all housing and community
19 development resources and programs,
20 address economic, education and
21 income needs of people and
22 communities, strengthen community
23 assets and manage vacant land,
24 promote fair housing and access to

1 opportunities.

2 Approximately two-thirds
3 of our total funding will go to
4 putting and keeping people in
5 homes. This work includes
6 production and preservation of
7 rental housing, mortgage
8 foreclosure prevention and eviction
9 prevention programs, rental
10 assistance, home repair programs
11 such as Basic Systems Repair and
12 Heater Hotline.

13 We will continue
14 programs that prevent homelessness
15 and support people with special
16 needs. These programs include
17 rental assistance through HOME
18 Investment Partnership and HOPWA
19 programs and the Adaptive
20 Modifications Program. We remain
21 committed to organizations and
22 programs that meet our residents
23 where they are, serving them in
24 their own communities. These

1 include our housing counseling
2 agencies, our Neighborhood Advisory
3 Committees or NACs, our
4 Neighborhood Energy Centers.

5 We will also continue
6 expansive cleaning and greening
7 efforts through the PHS Land Care
8 Program. Vibrant commercial
9 corridors are important for safe
10 and healthy communities that help
11 provide economic opportunity for
12 all. Accordingly, significant
13 resources are invested in community
14 economic development opportunities.
15 The plan includes funding for
16 business loan programs, commercial-
17 oriented real estate grants,
18 corridor management support, and
19 building improvement support.

20 We are excited to launch
21 several new initiatives in Fiscal
22 Year 2027, including the One Philly
23 Mortgage Program, Curbside Appeal
24 program and a Facade Repair

1 program. We also look forward to
2 the continuation of many
3 longstanding, successful programs
4 and services, many of which I
5 referenced earlier.

6 Please know that we are
7 relying on City Council to approve
8 this plan expeditiously because the
9 city will forfeit its funding from
10 HUD unless the city submits an
11 approved Annual Action Plan no
12 later than August 15, 2026 to
13 permit expeditious transmittal of
14 the Annual Action Plan to HUD.
15 Suspension of the rules to permit
16 the first reading at the next
17 Council session is requested.

18 In closing, the Division
19 of Housing and Community
20 Development is grateful to Council
21 for its sustained commitment to
22 housing and neighborhood
23 infrastructure. We thank you for
24 your ongoing work with the

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1 Administration on the bold and
2 comprehensive H.O.M.E. initiative
3 to address Philadelphia's housing
4 crisis, and thank you for the
5 opportunity to present this
6 testimony. I'm happy to answer any
7 questions.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
10 very much for your testimony. We
11 appreciate you being here and for
12 all the work that you do with our
13 offices.

14 The Chair will recognize
15 Councilmember Jones.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
17 you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

18 And bear with me on the
19 math stuff. This is math day, I
20 guess. So over the last 10
21 years -- I'll phrase it this way:
22 Have we received a reduction of
23 federal funding from HUD for
24 various programs?

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1 MR. DODDS: I would say
2 over the last 10 years it's pretty
3 much remained level. So with that
4 being said, it hasn't risen to meet
5 the increasing demands that we face
6 and it hasn't risen to help
7 accommodate things like increased
8 cost and salary increases and
9 things like that.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I
11 would agree with that. The second
12 thing that I would ask is, what is
13 the percentage of the money we are
14 requesting that will go for
15 economic development as opposed to
16 poverty and housing?

17 MR. DODDS: So I
18 probably couldn't provide specific
19 breakdowns right at this moment. I
20 could get that --

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: It
22 used to be about 7%.

23 MR. DODDS: I would
24 think that -- so this plan does

1 contain CDBG dollars for economic
2 development activities that the
3 Commerce Department helps
4 administer. It is a small portion
5 of our overall allocation.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: And
7 then finally, this is a compliment
8 to you and the Mayor for your
9 administration. I would say the
10 H.O.M.E. program, because we have a
11 responsibility to submit to HUD an
12 annual plan on how we're going to
13 deal with affordability when it
14 comes to housing; is that correct?

15 MR. DODDS: Yes, that's
16 essentially what this plan does.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: So
18 the H.O.M.E. program is probably in
19 my memory the most comprehensive
20 housing affordability plan this
21 city has ever offered. Would you
22 agree?

23 MR. DODDS: I would,
24 yes.

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1 COUNCILMAN JONES: And I
2 mean, that's a big deal.

3 MR. DODDS: It's a
4 tremendous investment in affordable
5 housing.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: So
7 compliments to the Mayor.
8 Compliments to you. Because in
9 years past, Madam Chair, how are
10 you going to deal with
11 gentrification, how are you going
12 to deal with affordability for new
13 homeowners, how are you going to
14 deal with rent and its
15 fluctuations. The H.O.M.E. program
16 speaks to each and every aspect of
17 that. And that is a job well done.

18 MR. DODDS: Thank you,
19 Councilmember.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
21 you, Madam Chair.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
23 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
24 very much, Councilmember Jones.

1 And I echo the sentiments relative
2 to the Tangled Title programming in
3 particular, and also more
4 specifically now the pre-planning
5 relative to the Wills program.

6 I know we have a second
7 panel for this bill, but I just
8 wanted to notate for the record in
9 reviewing prior to the hearing all
10 the testimony that was submitted, I
11 stayed up as late as I could last
12 night to read every single thing, I
13 want to notate for the record that
14 I did read the concerns from PACDC
15 and wanted to ask about why the
16 funding was not in the proposed
17 budget that we received regarding
18 the PACDC request?

19 MR. DODDS: Could you
20 elaborate on that please?

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: And so, per the
23 testimony that we have received in
24 advance, they were specifically

1 talking about the community
2 capacity building fund, I believe,
3 and making it a permanent multi-
4 year program. I think that work
5 started in a previous fiscal year
6 or was at least addressed by
7 another member. I think in the
8 budget last year, but I wanted to
9 notate that on the record while you
10 were here that we did receive that
11 testimony.

12 I'm going to ask for
13 Panel 2 to please approach the
14 witness table, state your name for
15 the record and proceed with your
16 testimony. Clerk, can you just
17 call that second panel for the
18 record.

19 THE CLERK: Garrett
20 O'Dwyer, Policy Director,
21 Philadelphia Association of
22 Community Development Corporations.

23 (Witness approached
24 witness table.)

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1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you.

3 Please state your name for the

4 record and proceed with your

5 testimony so that we can have

6 clarity on this specific request.

7 MR. O'DWYER: Sure.

8 Good morning, Chairperson Gilmore

9 Richardson and members of City

10 Council's Committee on Finance. My

11 name is Garret O'Dwyer and I'm the

12 Policy Director for the

13 Philadelphia Association of

14 Community Development Corporations.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to

16 offer testimony on Bill 260513,

17 which will adopt the Annual Action

18 Plan.

19 We want to extend our

20 gratitude to the city agency staff

21 from Planning and Development,

22 Commerce and other city offices and

23 departments who composed the Annual

24 Action Plan and for their tireless

1 efforts on behalf of communities
2 and residents of our city. PACDC
3 is the leading voice of nonprofit
4 community development corporations
5 in Philadelphia. Our 60 CDC
6 members and over 90 additional
7 associate members are responsible
8 for addressing key affordable
9 housing, economic development and
10 social service needs across the
11 city.

12 Our members play a
13 central role in the equitable
14 revitalization and stabilization of
15 their communities and are the
16 on-the-ground partners that the
17 city relies on to provide services
18 and act as catalysts for community
19 change. It is Philadelphia's CDCs
20 who will be determinative in
21 achieving the goals in the Annual
22 Action Plan before us today.

23 I draw your attention to
24 this fact because it underscores

1 the importance of strategic
2 investments in CDCs to ensure the
3 successful implementation of city
4 plans. This is nowhere more true
5 than with the H.O.M.E. Initiative,
6 which will direct unprecedented new
7 resources to address housing needs,
8 but requires high-capacity
9 community partners if it's going to
10 maximize the affordability returns
11 on this substantial public
12 investment.

13 Articulating the goals
14 in the Annual Action Plan is
15 important, but we need commensurate
16 support to scale the capacity and
17 organizational infrastructure of
18 our nonprofit partners that are
19 actually doing the work. At the
20 end of last year, the Community
21 Capacity Building Fund launched to
22 do just that. It has provided
23 organizations with flexible funding
24 that they can use to enhance their

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1 work in affordable housing and
2 economic development and create
3 innovative solutions to emerging
4 neighborhood needs.

5 Unfortunately,
6 legislation that would have made
7 the Community Capacity Building
8 Fund a permanent multi-year program
9 will not be heard before the summer
10 recess. Therefore, we implore City
11 Council to ensure that additional
12 funding for another year is
13 included in the city's FY27 budget,
14 which is currently being finalized.

15 The goals laid out in
16 the Annual Action Plan are
17 ambitious. Let's make sure that we
18 provide the necessary supports to
19 make them achievable. Thank you.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
22 very much for your testimony.
23 Thank you for being here.

24 The Chair recognizes

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1 Councilmember Jones.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: And
3 what would that needed
4 appropriation be? It was told to
5 me before, but put it on the
6 record.

7 MR. O'DWYER: So in the
8 legislation that was introduced,
9 that would be 6.25 million last
10 year. To begin to make the fund in
11 earnest, there was 3.5 million
12 appropriated.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
14 you.

15 MR. O'DWYER: You're
16 welcome.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
18 RICHARDSON: Thank you very much,
19 Councilmember Jones.

20 Are there any other
21 questions for these witnesses? The
22 Chair now recognizes Councilmember
23 Dr. Nina Ahmad.

24 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

1 Thank you, Madam Chair.

2 I just had a question to
3 understand the process of
4 intersection of this money and
5 particularly the HOME here with the
6 H.O.M.E. that we're authorizing for
7 the entire thing that the Mayor has
8 done. And in that, I had put an
9 amendment for 8.8 million for
10 homeless issues, and that impacting
11 those in foster care and the child
12 welfare system. I just wanted to
13 understand how this money
14 intersects with that in terms of
15 delivering those services?

16 MR. DODDS: Yes, that's
17 a good question. So the H.O.M.E.
18 bond or the local funding requires
19 an annual program statement and
20 budget that's approved by City
21 Council. We've gone through that
22 process essentially. And this is
23 our application to HUD for federal
24 funding. We've traditionally

1 referred to this document as a
2 consolidated plan. And the reason
3 we do that is because it contains a
4 consolidated budget that shows
5 funding from all sources. That way
6 Council and other interested
7 parties can get a full picture of
8 how we're funding these items.

9 So HOME Investment
10 Partnership or traditional HOME
11 federal funds is a portion of this
12 plan that we'll submit to HUD for
13 approval. That funding --
14 typically, we spend that in two
15 different ways, for tenant-based
16 rental assistance and for the
17 production and preservation of
18 affordable housing, those large-
19 scale multi-unit buildings.
20 Traditionally, that's what it goes
21 towards.

22 The H.O.M.E. bond this
23 year, that contains, like you
24 mentioned, 8.8 million that will go

1 specifically towards a wide array
2 of homeless services as it's
3 written in the resolution. And
4 we're working with the Office of
5 Homeless Services on how exactly
6 that will be allocated. We have
7 had cross-departmental meetings to
8 talk about that.

9 Right now NPI funds have
10 supported a Shared Housing program,
11 which is operating in conjunction
12 with the Housing Authority. That's
13 been very successful and I think we
14 hope to continue that work as to
15 spend a portion of those H.O.M.E.
16 bond funds, which leaves a sizable
17 balance. And I think the Office of
18 Homeless Services could probably
19 answer it better. But I think
20 they're exploring options around
21 perhaps a single SRO building that
22 that may address some of the issues
23 that you've raised.

24 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

1 Yeah, we had put in that amendment
2 engagement with DHS clients, and
3 that's where that rental assistance
4 can be of much importance. We can
5 avoid families being put into the
6 system at all, if that is the real
7 reason why they're in it in the
8 first place. So I just wanted to
9 publicly put on the record that we
10 are looking for that type of
11 engagement because it can go into
12 this big morass and we don't see
13 disaggregated data around how it's
14 actually impacted, the issues that
15 cause us both DHS engagement and
16 homelessness as a whole.

17 So maybe we'll follow up
18 to see. I've been trying to find
19 out how will that actually happen.
20 And I haven't gotten an answer yet.
21 But we'll talk further.

22 Thank you, Madam Chair.

23 Thank you for your testimony.

24 MR. DODDS: Thank you.

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1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Thank you very much,
3 Councilmember Ahmad.

4 Are there any further
5 questions for these panels for Bill
6 No. 260513?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing no
10 additional questions, we thank you
11 very much for being here today and
12 thank you for your testimony.

13 Are there any further
14 witnesses whose names have not been
15 called for Bill No. 260513?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, is
19 there anyone signed up for public
20 comment for Bill No. 260513?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you.
24 Seeing none, we appreciate you all

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1 being here today.

2 MR. DODDS: Thank you.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: We're good. Thank you
5 so much.

6 All right. We will now
7 proceed with our next bill. Clerk,
8 will you please call the first
9 panel we have to testify on Bill
10 No. 260507.

11 THE CLERK: Nicola
12 Mammes, Director of Strategic
13 Programs in the Office of
14 Transportation and Infrastructure
15 Systems.

16 (Witnesses approached
17 witness table.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
20 very much for being here. You can
21 state your name for the record and
22 proceed with your testimony.

23 I was expecting Michael
24 Carroll based on the testimony I

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1 read last night, but I'm glad that
2 you were able to make it here with
3 us today. And I am going to say
4 for the record because I know Mike
5 will either go back and watch or
6 listen or hear, Mike, we are still
7 waiting to hear back on that very
8 challenging issue that we have
9 relative to parking on the circle
10 with PennDOT. And I'm going to put
11 that on the record today.

12 But please state your
13 name for the record and proceed
14 with your testimony.

15 MS. MAMMES: Good
16 morning, Chair Gilmore Richardson
17 and members of the Committee on
18 Finance. My name is Nicola Mammes,
19 Director of Strategic Programs in
20 the Office of Transportation and
21 Infrastructure Systems or OTIS. I
22 am here to testify on behalf of
23 Michael Carroll, Deputy Managing
24 Director of OTIS. He unfortunately

1 was not able to make it today, but
2 I am the one who's working on the
3 project so I can certainly speak to
4 it, in strong support of Bill No.
5 260507.

6 This proposed
7 legislation amends the definition
8 of a parking facility to explicitly
9 exclude the newly revitalized
10 intercity bus facility, also known
11 as the PPA Transportation Center,
12 located at 1001 Filbert Street in
13 Center City. To provide some
14 context, Section 19-1201 of The
15 Philadelphia Code currently defines
16 a parking facility as any space
17 where more than three motor
18 vehicles park for a fee, triggering
19 a 22.5 percent city tax on those
20 transactions as of July 1, 2021,
21 with an exemption for parking
22 spaces used exclusively by unit
23 owners or tenants of condominium
24 buildings, whereas Section 12-927

1 specifically dictates that fees
2 collected at intercity bus
3 facilities cannot exceed the actual
4 cost of providing, maintaining, and
5 managing those services.

6 Under the current code,
7 this new facility is subject to the
8 22.5% parking tax. However, the
9 intercity bus facility is designed
10 with a public purpose, with all
11 fees collected from intercity bus
12 operations directly reinvested into
13 managing, maintaining and operating
14 the facility itself. This
15 legislation creates a clean,
16 intentional exclusion for the
17 intercity bus facility, supporting
18 streamlined management and ensuring
19 the fees collected support the
20 facility and providing high-quality
21 customer service experience for
22 Philadelphia residents and visitors
23 alike. Thank you for your time
24 today. We are available to answer

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1 any questions you may have.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
4 very much for your work and for
5 your leadership on this issue.

6 Are there any questions
7 for this panel and for this
8 witness?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: Okay. Chair
12 recognizes Councilmember Mike
13 Driscoll.

14 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

15 Unrelated to this specific tax,
16 how's 10th and Filbert working out?

17 MS. MAMMES: It's really
18 great. We've gotten a lot of
19 really positive feedback.

20 Anecdotally, we've been told that
21 it's one of the best bus stations
22 that provides intercity bus
23 service. The staff who work there
24 feel that they're working there

1 with dignity, and the passengers
2 continue to rate it very highly for
3 the customer service experience. So
4 far it's going great.

5 Really glad that we have
6 that, especially as all these
7 summer events are coming and we're
8 seeing a lot of people using the
9 station to come visit Philadelphia
10 and also just to travel to other
11 cities for work or other reasons.
12 So, so far so good.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Excellent. Thank you
15 and thank you very much for your
16 leadership, Councilmember Driscoll.
17 We appreciate you as our Chair so
18 thank you so much.

19 The Chair now recognizes
20 Councilmember Dr. Nina Ahmad.

21 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

22 Thank you for your testimony. Just
23 following up on what my colleague
24 stated, that this is a bus station

1 that is going to get a lot of foot
2 traffic and people coming through,
3 particularly as we have our FIFA
4 events unfolding. We have a
5 campaign going on in the city, a
6 half a million dollar campaign
7 around human trafficking.

8 I just wanted to make
9 sure that this bus station is
10 connected, and I just wondered if
11 you are already because the RFP has
12 been given out to three entities
13 we're working on. I just wanted to
14 know if you guys are engaged in
15 that and what are you potentially
16 going to be doing around that
17 issue?

18 MS. MAMMES: Yeah,
19 that's a great question. Thank
20 you. So we are connected with
21 Chatterblast. They're doing a
22 virtual training for the staff that
23 work at the facility to do training
24 around human trafficking

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1 coordination and support, and also
2 the PPA folks who manage the
3 station have done an initial
4 training around human trafficking
5 before the station opens. So
6 there's certainly engagement in
7 that space and connected with
8 Dr. Ugarte and Chatterblast to make
9 sure that those folks are getting
10 the training that's needed.

11 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

12 Thank you very much. I just wanted
13 to make sure all the dots are
14 connected.

15 MS. MAMMES: Yeah,
16 absolutely.

17 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

18 Thank you, Madam Chair.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much,
21 Dr. Ahmad. You've been working on
22 that issue for a very long time.
23 Thank you too for your leadership.
24 Thank you. Thank you very much for

1 your testimony.

2 There being no
3 additional panels to testify, are
4 there any additional witnesses here
5 whose names have not been called?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none,
9 are there any witnesses here to
10 provide public comment on 260507?

11 THE CLERK: Yes, there
12 are names for public comment.

13 Will Tanya Moores, Jigga
14 Mehta and Erica Chung please make
15 their way to the podium.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: On 507 -- I just
18 wanted to say for the record I know
19 that we talked about this with our
20 Chief Clerk prior to the hearing.
21 There are many individuals here or
22 are there many individuals here to
23 testify on the BIRT legislation?

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

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1 Yes. We're going through the
2 gas --

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Okay. Hold on one
5 second, because I have to keep the
6 order here because we have
7 technically two additional hearings
8 today. And we're going to
9 reconvene at 5 o'clock on the
10 Committee of the Whole, which we
11 recessed from starting at 9
12 o'clock.

13 260507 is germane to the
14 parking tax, not the BIRT tax. And
15 that's why I made that announcement
16 at the beginning of the hearing. I
17 think there was some confusion
18 regarding which bills would be
19 listed today and what was being
20 held. I did notate that for the
21 record and I did confirm that with
22 Councilmember Driscoll and both
23 Councilmember Thomas. So I just
24 wanted to reaffirm that to make

1 sure everybody understood that's
2 where we are.

3 Okay. Please, you
4 wanted to say something in response
5 to that. Please state your name
6 first and then respond.

7 MR. MEHTA: Sure. My
8 name is Jigar Mehta. We had
9 originally told people to come out
10 to speak because we thought the
11 bill was going to be scheduled
12 today. And then when we recently
13 heard that it was not, it was taken
14 out the session, then at that point
15 people still wanted to have their
16 voices heard. So we're speaking
17 now to just basically -- one, thank
18 you --

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
20 RICHARDSON: Hold on one second. I
21 just need to get this straight for
22 the record. Okay. Because this is
23 important to me not only as Chair
24 of this committee, but also as the

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1 Majority Leader of this Council.
2 From a process perspective, because
3 I do not believe in wasting
4 people's time, so I apologize that
5 you had that information. May I
6 ask for the record who invited or
7 told you to come to the hearing
8 today? So who invited you or told
9 you to come?

10 MR. MEHTA: So
11 originally, there was a hearing
12 where Councilmember Thomas said
13 that we were going to -- made a
14 commitment to give us a Finance
15 Committee hearing publicly, and
16 that was on May 6. And then from
17 there, this was supposed to be the
18 last hearing. And so, we were
19 expecting to see this on the
20 schedule. And then we had a
21 conversation with several people
22 within City Council, thinking that
23 would get through. And then we
24 were told the last minute that the

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1 bill got pulled.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Okay. I just want to

4 say for the record, because I'm

5 Chair of the Finance Committee,

6 meaning that I'm in charge of the

7 scheduling for this committee, the

8 original bill for the Child Care

9 BIRT was scheduled. That is

10 Councilmember Thomas's bill that

11 was introduced in 2025, which is

12 why that one started with 25.

13 Councilmember Driscoll's

14 bill was introduced in '26, right?

15 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

16 '25.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: '25 as well. So one

19 was listed, one was not. In order

20 to ensure that those bills are as

21 strong as they can be together,

22 right, and that they're not in

23 conflict with each other, because

24 the way bills are written is that

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1 you have to take it from a certain
2 section of the code, right. We
3 don't want them to be in conflict
4 when we are seeking to achieve the
5 same goal, right.

6 And so, we are committed
7 to working together in order to
8 achieve the best bill possible that
9 will best be of support for our
10 small business community. We were
11 not going to hear that legislation
12 today because we are committed to
13 working on the best bill possible
14 for the small business community.
15 I've spoken with both of my
16 colleagues. The commitment is
17 there.

18 As Chair of Finance, I'm
19 telling you that I will work with
20 them. And as soon as they want it
21 scheduled, I will send the request
22 to the Council President for his
23 approval and we will get it
24 scheduled. But I just wanted to

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1 notate that for the record. I
2 don't want anybody to think that
3 there's anything nefarious
4 happening here. Okay.

5 Secondly, I'm going to
6 respectfully request, based on the
7 schedule that we have today, we
8 want to hear from each of you who
9 have come, but I will ask if you
10 could give please an abbreviated
11 version of your testimony because
12 we are also in the middle of budget
13 negotiations. Okay. Is that all
14 right with everybody that came?
15 And I apologize for any
16 miscommunication that may have
17 occurred regarding this, but I take
18 full responsibility as Chair of the
19 committee. Okay.

20 Thank you very much.
21 Please state your name for the
22 record and proceed with your
23 abbreviated testimony.

24 MR. MEHTA: My name is

1 Jigger Mehta. What we're asking
2 for obviously is the hearing. But
3 in that as well, we want to make
4 sure that the analysis that's going
5 to be provided by Revenue is
6 transparent, that it actually
7 reflects the group that we're
8 talking about so the spirit of it
9 is intact.

10 So who we are talking
11 about are sole proprietors and
12 single-member LLCs that are owned
13 by individuals. That's an
14 important distinction. Single
15 member LLCs can also be owned by
16 partnerships. They can be owned --
17 they can take an S Corp election,
18 they can be owned by corporations.
19 They can be owned by trusts. We're
20 not interested in those. Those are
21 not in our bill.

22 So when Revenue does
23 provide data and starts saying that
24 these are the people that are going

1 to be affected, we just want to
2 make sure that the scope is
3 correct, that it's tied to sole
4 proprietors and single member LLCs
5 owned by individuals. That's it.
6 That is the defined class that
7 we're talking about.

8 In addition to that,
9 when we're talking about our belief
10 in fiscal analysis, it is not just
11 the city's view. What we're saying
12 is that we should also look at
13 what's called a multiplier effect
14 in our communities. So when you
15 take \$30 million out of communities
16 in Philadelphia, they're no longer
17 able to spend that money for the
18 250-year celebration.

19 Basically, what happens
20 is that that money gets sucked out
21 of our communities. The local
22 grocery store doesn't get the same
23 amount of business. You have the
24 babysitter, the child care person

1 who basically is not going to be
2 able to get paid for their child
3 care. So the impact of the BIRT
4 exemption going away has not just
5 affected the individual. It has
6 affected the entire community.

7 So we want to make sure
8 that whatever analysis is done,
9 that we also look at the multiplier
10 effect, the impact on the community
11 as well. So that's basically it.
12 But thank you very much. And now
13 the folks here, you know, their
14 passion is there. They're
15 suffering and we greatly appreciate
16 the opportunity to speak from their
17 heart and we look forward to the
18 fall.

19 And if there's anything
20 that we can do to provide data, to
21 provide analysis, we are prepared
22 and ready. You need experts; we'll
23 bring experts. But we're just
24 asking for a fair hearing where

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1 Revenue is fully transparent with
2 the data and it's defined with the
3 class that we're talking about.

4 Thank you very much.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

6 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
7 very much for coming in. And I can
8 assure you as Chair of Finance, you
9 will receive a fair hearing and we
10 will request whatever information
11 you all are seeking to be provided.
12 Okay.

13 Thank you very much.
14 Please state your name for the
15 record and proceed with your
16 testimony.

17 DR. CHUNG: Thank you so
18 much. Good morning,
19 Councilmembers. Thank you for the
20 opportunity to share public
21 comment. My name is Dr. Erica
22 Maria Chung. I am the
23 Communications Director at the
24 Asian Pacific Islander Political

1 Alliance. I'm here to read some
2 statements that we've collected
3 from Korean American business
4 owners along 5th Street and East
5 Oak Lane and Olney. We have been
6 going out and speaking with Asian
7 American small business owners for
8 the past couple months to hear from
9 them, how they're doing and how
10 increased taxes are impacting them.
11 And I am going to read portions of
12 what we had gathered.

13 This is from Song Si
14 Mun, from owner of Asia Barber
15 Shop. I've been in business for 30
16 years and things in the U.S. have
17 never been as tough as they are
18 now. I used to cut hair for about
19 20 people a day. These days I
20 don't even get seven. I stay at
21 the shop all day long, only to make
22 maybe 30 or \$50 a day. It's a real
23 struggle to survive.

24 We're supposed to pay

1 taxes, but we can't because we are
2 not making any money. It's just so
3 incredibly hard for people like us
4 to make a living.

5 This is from the owner
6 of Fern Rock Hardware at 5957 North
7 5th Street. I've been running a
8 business in here in Philly for 30
9 years. The economy is terrible.
10 It's been especially bad since
11 Trump, starting from last year.
12 The number of customers has
13 dropped. There's barely anyone
14 walking on the streets and there's
15 no foot traffic. Over the years
16 there's been so many new taxes,
17 like the soda tax and the trash
18 tax, and it's been very difficult
19 to figure out how to stay in
20 business.

21 I have two more, one
22 from a Korean restaurant owner
23 named Kim Suk Lim from Jonggah Gym.
24 Business is so tough these days.

1 Prices have gone up so much. I'm
2 actually scared to go grocery
3 shopping. Everything is more
4 expensive. We should be raising
5 our prices too, but we can't bring
6 ourselves to do it because all of
7 our customers are struggling.

8 I've been in business
9 for over 20 years. I've never
10 asked City Hall or any government
11 office for help or support because
12 I don't know how and I don't have
13 the information. Prices need to
14 stabilize. This is a nationwide
15 problem. But on top of that,
16 Philly has certain taxes other
17 states just don't have. I really
18 wish they would look into it and do
19 something about it.

20 My last one is from
21 Kim's Restaurant, 5955 North 5th
22 Street. I've been running my
23 business for 16 years. My place is
24 pretty big. But after running the

1 business for a year and paying all
2 the taxes, there's basically
3 nothing left. We used to have tax
4 break benefits before, but suddenly
5 they cut taxes for big corporations
6 while burdening small businesses
7 with more taxes. It just seems so
8 unfair. Thank you so much for the
9 opportunity to share these stories
10 from people who can't be here today
11 because they're trying to run their
12 businesses, and we really
13 appreciate the opportunity to
14 share. Thank you.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
17 very much for sharing those stories
18 with us. And please recognize that
19 we received that feedback and are
20 committed to working on this issue.
21 And I'm very proud of the
22 leadership of Councilmember
23 Driscoll and also Councilmember
24 Thomas on this issue.

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1 Are there any further
2 witnesses to give public comment
3 today?

4 THE CLERK: Yes. We
5 have Alex Haynesworth, Leah Yeager
6 and Patricia Rodriguez.

7 (Witnesses approached
8 witness table.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
10 RICHARDSON: Please state your name
11 for the record and proceed with
12 your testimony.

13 MS. HAYNESWORTH: Thank
14 you. My name is Alex Haynesworth.
15 I'm a constituent from District 3.
16 I'm here to speak about BIRT relief
17 as well. I'm a young professional.
18 And for the past four years, I've
19 been a contractor for the National
20 Museum of American History while
21 living in Philadelphia. The work I
22 have done is that of a standard
23 employee. Yet I have paid for my
24 own health insurance and only had

1 guaranteed income for six months at
2 a time.

3 This year I paid \$6,880
4 towards the BIRT tax and the
5 mandatory estimated BIRT tax.
6 Throughout the nonprofit sphere,
7 these kinds of contract positions
8 are common as a way to offload the
9 insecurity of the funding landscape
10 onto the workers. And now, the
11 city is offloading their funding
12 crisis onto me as well. That
13 nearly \$7,000 is almost eight
14 months of rent for me or a year of
15 private health insurance payments.
16 It is by no means a small amount.

17 Where are the
18 progressive taxes? Why in such a
19 funding crisis are corporations
20 paying less in taxes than gig
21 workers, freelancers, artists, Uber
22 drivers, nannies and small
23 businesses? How can we equitably
24 fund the programs that this city

1 desperately needs? By introducing
2 progressive tax bills that will
3 equitably share the load of the
4 city's expenses between its
5 citizens and corporations. I urge
6 you all to propose a hearing for
7 Councilmember Driscoll's bill to
8 exempt sole proprietors from the
9 BIRT tax as soon as possible.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. YEAGER: Good
12 morning, Councilmembers. Thank you
13 so much for hearing our testimony
14 today. I'm the owner of a small
15 business. It is a fitness and
16 wellness studio here in Center
17 City. My clients make it clear to
18 me that --

19 THE CLERK: Please state
20 your name for the record.

21 MS. YEAGER: My name is
22 Leah Yeager. Thank you. My
23 clients make it clear to me that
24 our work impacts their lives

1 positively. Additionally, I also
2 make space for other practitioners
3 in my field to run their small
4 businesses from my physical space.
5 And I really believe that small
6 businesses are an important part of
7 what makes Philadelphia a vibrant,
8 interesting, colorful place to be.

9 Even just riding my bike
10 here, I was keenly aware of all of
11 the businesses dotting the streets,
12 you know, the nail salons, the
13 restaurants, the sandwich stores,
14 Danny's Midnight Confessions, you
15 know. It really makes our city an
16 interesting and wonderful place to
17 be. And I'm a lifelong
18 Philadelphian so I love this city.
19 And I would love to be able to
20 afford to continue to have a small
21 business here.

22 It's a precarious
23 endeavor, undertaking a small
24 business. That's the nature of the

1 beast. It is also already an
2 onerous process to organize
3 finances, taxes, save independently
4 for retirement, licenses and the
5 like. So this BIRT tax, after
6 personally coming to the third year
7 of this iteration of my business
8 where I felt like I was finally
9 getting my feet on the ground, this
10 was a smack to the back of the
11 head.

12 And I know that not just
13 for me, 2,000; 3,000; 4,000; 5,000
14 is material for people with small
15 businesses. And I know that we got
16 grit, but don't make us grind for
17 peanuts. We're not all going to
18 make it. So I love this city. And
19 I hope you will consider this
20 testimony. Thank you so much.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
23 very much for your testimony.

24 Please state your name

1 for the record and proceed with
2 your public comment.

3 MS. DOMINGUEZ: Hi. My
4 name is Patricia Dominguez. Thank
5 you for listening to me. I came
6 here a month ago when I talked and
7 I just wanted to come back and ask
8 again like -- well, not even ask.
9 I'm begging if you could please
10 consider changing the sole
11 proprietor LLCs out of the BIRT,
12 exempting them.

13 I'm just two-and-a-half
14 years into my business, and hard to
15 get the new business off the
16 ground. And I'm in a vicious
17 cycle. Like, last year I didn't
18 couldn't afford to pay my
19 estimated, so I'm getting hit with
20 fines and I'm paying it all. And
21 this year, again I've got to pay
22 for daycare. So I'm not paying my
23 estimated so I'm going to get hit
24 again next year with my fines.

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1 And I'm like, this is
2 really -- we're going into
3 summertime. And so, I'm like it's
4 real light during the summertime,
5 so I'm biting my nails. And, yeah,
6 I would like so appreciate if you
7 could reconsider it. My business
8 also includes people that work also
9 as 1099, they're 1099 workers.
10 And, yeah, so we're all like
11 feeling it.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: I see that.

14 MS. DOMINGUEZ: Thank
15 you so much for listening.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Thank you and thank
18 you for coming in again. Please
19 state your name for the record and
20 proceed with your testimony -- hold
21 on one second. You good?

22 MS. DOMINGUEZ: Patricia
23 Dominguez.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

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1 RICHARDSON: Yep, we got you.

2 MS. HAWLEY: Okay.

3 Thank you.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Thank you, dear, and
6 thank you for coming in.

7 MS. HAWLEY: My name is
8 Laura Hawley. I'm a licensed
9 social worker. I've been working
10 as a sole proprietor in this city
11 for about 25 years. I worked first
12 as an acupuncturist and then as a
13 psychotherapist. During the
14 pandemic, I started working from my
15 house. It would have been a lot
16 cheaper to stay there.

17 And then as I noticed
18 what was happening to my city, as
19 we all sort of contracted and went
20 home, I thought let me just make a
21 commitment, let me come back into
22 the city. Let me have an office
23 here. Let me go to Bill's for
24 lunch, go to the gut trucks, meet

1 friends after work. Just be part
2 of the blood flow of this city.

3 This is humiliating to
4 me. This is like two months, more
5 than two months of rent to me. And
6 I haven't prioritized making money.
7 I've always said I make two kinds
8 of profit. I make money and I make
9 the contact with other people.
10 This is crushing me. I had a man
11 come in the other day that I used
12 to treat, a man who lives with HIV
13 and AIDS and he asked me to see him
14 as a therapist because frankly, he
15 loves me, we love each other and he
16 has to have a sliding scale.

17 It's just so nerve-
18 wracking and exhausting to be
19 squished like this. That is the
20 end of my very rational, calm
21 testimony. Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
24 all very, very much.

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1 Are there any other
2 witnesses to give public comment?

3 THE CLERK: Dominic
4 Brennan, Mindy King and Minda
5 Reeves, the last three.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
7 RICHARDSON: Okay. While we're
8 receiving the last three witnesses
9 for public comment, please know
10 that we are hearing your public
11 comment. Not just from each of
12 you, but from so many small
13 business owners and sole
14 proprietors who have been
15 contacting us.

16 Full disclosure, I had
17 to pay BIRT this year so we are
18 feeling it. And so, we are
19 listening. And I know under the
20 leadership of Councilmember
21 Driscoll working with Councilmember
22 Thomas, that they will come up with
23 the best bill to address what we
24 are hearing today. This is not

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1 something that we wanted. Okay.
2 We got to be very clear about that.
3 This is not something that we
4 wanted. So we appreciate you all
5 coming in.

6 So please state your
7 names for the record and proceed
8 with your testimony.

9 MR. BRENNAN: Hi. My
10 name is Dominic Brennan. I am the
11 community building coordinator for
12 CMAC. Chair, Committee, thank you
13 so much for your time today. Much
14 like Erica earlier on, I have been
15 collecting stories of the small
16 business owners on the South 7th
17 Street commercial corridor. I'm
18 the corridor manager for the
19 corridor there.

20 There are 76 businesses
21 on the South 7th Street commercial
22 corridor. They're almost
23 exclusively immigrant and refugee-
24 run businesses, and almost

1 exclusively making under \$100,000
2 in gross revenue. So they have
3 been hit heavily by BIRT this year.
4 Because with that area, there's
5 over 55 languages spoken and tax is
6 not one of them. So people were
7 very surprised by having to pay
8 this big amount.

9 So again keeping it
10 quick, we've had as much as
11 businesses paying 5600 in their
12 taxes this year in extra. We have
13 businesses who are not paying
14 themselves out. They're mostly
15 single-family businesses, husband
16 and wives running ethnic grocers or
17 nail salons, corner stores, so not
18 paying themselves out, and a lot of
19 businesses who are considering
20 selling their stores. It's very
21 devastating for the corridor, for
22 the small business community and
23 for the surrounding community as
24 well. Because we have a lot of

1 people who treat these businesses
2 as community hubs. They get all of
3 their resources there because these
4 are the groceries within walking
5 distance.

6 South 7th Street in
7 particular, would otherwise were it
8 not for the small Burmese grocer,
9 the small Honduran grocer would be
10 a food desert. So thank you for
11 your time. I really appreciate you
12 squeezing us in and thank you for
13 the consideration.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

15 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
16 so much for sharing the stories
17 from South 7th Street.

18 Please state your name
19 for the record and proceed with
20 your testimony.

21 MS. REEVES: I'm Minda
22 Reeves. I am a writer. I'm
23 heading into my third year as a
24 citizen of the city of

1 Philadelphia. Last July I was
2 among the more than 600,000 Black
3 women who were forced from the
4 workforce. I was laid off.
5 Unfortunately, I lost about 90% of
6 my income, and unemployment
7 benefits maxed out at less than
8 \$2,000. So as not to be a burden
9 to the great state of Pennsylvania,
10 I focused my time on freelancing,
11 and it takes a while to ramp up
12 your freelance income. And I was
13 barely eking out more than I was
14 making on unemployment, but I was
15 very proud of the work that I was
16 doing and making my own way.

17 So you can imagine my
18 shock when I got hit by the BIRT
19 tax this April, and it basically
20 wiped out the difference. So I
21 actually made less money than I
22 would have if I just stayed on
23 unemployment. The job market is
24 terrible so there are not really

1 many options. My tax service
2 provider, I work with a national
3 company, and they were like, look,
4 we've been informing all of our
5 Philly clients about how unfair
6 this tax is and you all got to get
7 active.

8 So here I am at City
9 Council because it just really
10 feels like I'm running out of
11 possibilities. And I was under the
12 impression that Philadelphia was a
13 city of possibilities. So I really
14 appreciate you all taking the time
15 today and listening to us because
16 this is an undue burden, and it
17 feels really unfair that not only
18 are we being hit with this tax, but
19 that it's also a gross tax.

20 So I'm basically being
21 taxed on top of the 30% I'm already
22 paying in taxes to the federal
23 government, the state government
24 and the City of Philadelphia. So

1 there are just so many different
2 aspects that are incredibly unfair.
3 I'm really nervous about the next
4 year of this tax because even
5 though I will be making
6 significantly less money than I did
7 last year, more of that income that
8 I'm bringing in falls underneath
9 the BIRT tax. So I'll be paying
10 greater taxes despite making less
11 money. Thank you.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
14 for your testimony and we are happy
15 to have you in Philadelphia, and
16 we'll be continuing to work on this
17 issue.

18 Okay. Please state your
19 name for the record and proceed
20 with your testimony.

21 MS. KING: Hi. My name
22 is Mindy King. I'm a pediatric
23 occupational therapist. I work in
24 Philadelphia's early intervention

1 system. I'm here as a 1099 worker
2 who's impacted greatly by the
3 removal of this exemption, as are
4 most of my colleagues in early
5 intervention. It is primarily run
6 by 1099 workers.

7 These are occupational
8 therapists, speech therapists,
9 physical therapists, special
10 instructors, workers for the blind
11 and deaf, providing vital services
12 to our youngest and most vulnerable
13 citizens. This kind of burden
14 makes it more difficult to draw in
15 new therapists and more difficult
16 to retain our therapists in a
17 system that's already hurting and
18 already struggle to meet the needs
19 of our city. I just wanted to come
20 to say my piece for myself and for
21 my fellow 1099 early
22 interventionists, and to urge you
23 to please bring this before the
24 Council and work with us.

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1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you.
3 You have the commitment from me as
4 the Chair of Finance, but
5 particularly the leader on this
6 issue for this bill, Councilmember
7 Driscoll and also Councilmember
8 Thomas. And so, I know that
9 they've committed to work again
10 over the summer. As Chair, I'll be
11 prepared and ready to go in the
12 fall.

13 So we thank you very
14 much and I specifically thank you
15 and your team of comrades as a
16 mother of a child who benefited
17 from speech therapy. Thank you
18 very, very much.

19 MS. KING: Thank you for
20 your time.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: Are there any further
23 witnesses to provide public comment
24 on Bill No. 260507?

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1 (No response.)

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Okay. And I want to
4 be very clear. We heard each of
5 you who are here today and we are
6 working on it. And the commitment
7 is there. I don't want you to
8 think that you have gone unheard.
9 Okay. All right. Thank you so
10 much.

11 Seeing no additional
12 witnesses to testify or panels to
13 give public comment, clerk, will
14 you please read the panels for Bill
15 Nos. 260511 and 260512.

16 THE CLERK: Will Melanie
17 McCottry, PGW Senior Vice-President
18 of Corporate Affairs and Chief of
19 Staff as well as Gemela McClendon,
20 Executive Director of the
21 Philadelphia Gas Commission, please
22 make their way to the podium.

23 (Witnesses approached
24 witness table.)

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1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you.

3 Please state your name for the

4 record and prior to your -- oh,

5 okay. Please state your name for

6 the record and proceed with your

7 testimony.

8 MS. McCOTTRY: Good

9 morning, Chair Gilmore Richardson

10 and members of the Committee on

11 Finance. My name is Melanie

12 McCottry and I am Chief of Staff

13 and Senior Vice-President of

14 Corporate Affairs for the

15 Philadelphia Gas Works. I am

16 joined today by members of PGW's

17 management team, Dan Cassidy and

18 Bill Gallagher and I am here to

19 testify in favor of Bill No. 260511

20 regarding PGW's FY27 capital budget

21 and Bill No. 260512 regarding

22 amendments to the FY26 capital

23 budget.

24 I have submitted written

1 testimony on both bills, but would
2 like to provide some brief comments
3 on both pieces of legislation.
4 Through Bill No. 260511, PGW seeks
5 approval of its FY2027 capital
6 budget in the amount of
7 \$208,010,000. This capital budget
8 will enable PGW to replace existing
9 facilities and acquire additional
10 assets to ensure safe and reliable
11 operations, maintain our existing
12 customer delivery infrastructure
13 and support revenue opportunities,
14 which will help maximize the need
15 for future rate relief.

16 90% of this year's
17 capital budget focuses on core
18 functions in PGW's gas processing,
19 distribution and field services
20 departments. The remaining 10% is
21 focused on fleet facilities and
22 information technology investments.
23 Among the projects funded through
24 the FY27 capital budget include a

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1 new odorant system at PGW's Penrose
2 station and new station
3 modifications --

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Pardon me one moment.
6 I apologize for the very brief
7 interruption. I'd like to notate
8 for the record that the Council
9 President has appointed temporarily
10 Councilmember Young to the
11 committee so that we can continue.
12 Thank you very much. Please
13 proceed.

14 MS. McCOTTRY: Thank
15 you. This year's capital budget
16 also includes provisions to provide
17 meter and regulator facilities to
18 support revenue opportunities from
19 new customer requirements and
20 replacement meters and regulators.
21 This infrastructure supports the
22 initial implementation of PGW's
23 Advanced Metering Infrastructure
24 Program, otherwise known as AMI.

1 Additionally, PGW is
2 seeking funding for its commercial
3 and industrial telemetering
4 program. Through Bill No. 260512,
5 PGW seeks a third amendment to its
6 FY26 capital budget. This
7 amendment would provide lifespan
8 extensions for three previously
9 approved projects that will not be
10 completed within their approved
11 two-year lifespans. These projects
12 would bring PGW's total amended
13 request to 204,855,000 from its
14 original 229,985,000 authorization.

15 The projects include
16 replacing the main electric
17 switchgear at PGW's headquarters, a
18 project which 200,000 has been
19 spent through 2026, construction
20 cost for PGW South Operations
21 Center, which does not require any
22 additional increases in spending.

23 In conclusion, PGW
24 respectfully requests that the

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1 committee provide a favorable
2 recommendation on both bills and
3 suspend the rules of Council so as
4 to permit the first reading of
5 these bills at the next session of
6 Council. On behalf of PGW, I would
7 like to express my thanks to the
8 Philadelphia Gas Commission and
9 Commission Chair Christy Brady and
10 its staff, with a special
11 acknowledgement given our venue to
12 Councilmembers Mike Driscoll and
13 Curtis Jones, Jr. for conducting an
14 efficient and comprehensive budget
15 review.

16 I am also very grateful
17 to City Council for its support of
18 the work of PGW, as we carry out
19 our mission to enhance the quality
20 of life for all by delivering safe,
21 reliable, and affordable energy in
22 an environmentally responsible way.
23 And we look forward to your
24 continued support. Thank you for

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1 your time and consideration on
2 these matters and I'm happy to
3 answer any questions you may have.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
6 very much for your testimony and
7 for being here today.

8 Please state your name
9 for the record and proceed with
10 your testimony and then we'll take
11 questions.

12 MS. McCLENDON: Good
13 morning, Chair Gilmore Richardson,
14 and members of the committee. My
15 name is Gemela McClendon and I'm
16 the Executive Director of the
17 Philadelphia Gas Commission. The
18 Gas Commission appreciates the
19 opportunity to testify in support
20 of Bill Nos. 260511 and 260512,
21 both of which embodies the
22 recommendations of the Commission's
23 recommendations to City Council
24 regarding the approval of PGW's

1 Fiscal Year 2027 capital budget and
2 the amendment of PGW's FY26 capital
3 budget.

4 I will address Bill No.
5 260511 first. On January 2, 2026,
6 PGW filed a fiscal year capital
7 budget proposal totaling
8 \$390,561,000 and a capital budget
9 forecast for the years FY2028 to
10 FY2032 totaling \$1.21 billion. The
11 Commission performed its due
12 diligence review and evaluation of
13 PGW's proposals in accordance with
14 the applicable legal and governance
15 standards, considering PGW's
16 finances, operations and core
17 operating purposes.

18 The proceedings
19 undertaken by the Commission in
20 reviewing PGW's FY27 capital budget
21 were completed in full compliance
22 with Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act.
23 Members of the public were allowed
24 to testify at the Commission's

1 public hearing held on this matter
2 on February 19, 2026. The full
3 transcript from that hearing, along
4 with the public record developed
5 during the proceedings, may be
6 found on the Commission's website.

7 During the hearing,
8 eight members of the public
9 attended in person and an
10 additional 35 members of the public
11 attended virtually. All were
12 offered the opportunity to offer
13 testimony on the record, either via
14 inperson testimony or the
15 submission of written testimony for
16 those who participated virtually.
17 All testimony received was
18 considered by the Commission in
19 rendering its decision.

20 At the conclusion of its
21 proceedings on May 12, 2026, the
22 Commission voted to unanimously
23 endorse an FY2027 capital budget
24 and the not-to-exceed amount of

1 \$208,010,000 with related
2 constraints and conditions for said
3 budget. The Commission
4 respectfully recommends that
5 Commission approve Bill No. 260511
6 in the amount endorsed by the
7 commission.

8 Turning next to Bill No.
9 260512. On December 12, 2025, PGW
10 requested an amendment to its
11 Fiscal Year 2026 capital budget
12 that would reauthorize and extend
13 two previously approved capital
14 budget line items originating in
15 PGW's Fiscal Year 2021, '24 and '25
16 capital budgets, with no additional
17 spending authority beyond those
18 amounts that were originally
19 approved by City Council in those
20 respective fiscal years.

21 PGW's requests were
22 accompanied by appropriate PFMC
23 resolutions authorizing the
24 amendment to the FY2026 capital

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1 budget to reflect these requested
2 changes. After completing its
3 standard due diligence review of
4 PGW's requests, the Gas
5 Commission's professional staff
6 showed that these requests were
7 reasonable. The commissioners
8 agreed and voted to approve
9 commission staff's recommendation
10 to approve PGW's requested
11 amendments and recommend approval
12 of the same to City Council.

13 The Commission's
14 specific recommendations to City
15 Council are detailed in the
16 Commission's resolution and order
17 dated April 14, 2026, which was
18 attached to my submitted written
19 testimony. I would like to
20 emphasize that the requested
21 amounts of PGW's FY2026 capital
22 budget before you today does not
23 increase the dollar amount of
24 approved for these line items.

1 However, the capital
2 program protocols, as enacted in
3 prior fiscal years, require that
4 unspent funds from those years be
5 transferred into the FY2026 capital
6 budget to effectuate these lifespan
7 extensions. Put plainly, the
8 ordinance before you today
9 effectively transfers unspent funds
10 into the FY2026 capital budget
11 without impacting the overall costs
12 of these line items.

13 We thank you for the
14 opportunity to testify in support
15 of both of these ordinances and
16 respectfully request that this
17 committee report these bills out
18 with a favorable recommendation
19 together with the suspension of
20 rules so that they may have their
21 first reading at the next Council
22 session.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you

Committee on Finance

1 very much for your testimony and
2 thank you for your work not only
3 with the Philadelphia Gas Works but
4 also with the Gas Commission, and
5 must recognize Councilmember
6 Driscoll both and Councilmember
7 Jones, who serve on our Gas
8 Commission. We thank you for the
9 work that you all do in advance of
10 these hearings and appreciate and
11 uplift that work.

12 Are there any questions
13 for this panel?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: And I know that we had
17 a few background things that we
18 worked on. And I also wanted to
19 notate for the record the
20 constituent cases that you all have
21 been working on with us. One in
22 particular in Councilmember Jones's
23 district.

24 So thank you to the two

1 of you, but also to Ken Anderson
2 who's here and present for the
3 hearing and also Nyesha Chapman.
4 Thank you very much for your
5 responsiveness on those very
6 complicated constituent issues,
7 particularly the one that's in
8 Wynnefield 5800 block. I'm
9 forgetting which -- it's in the
10 5800 block. So thank you very,
11 very much for that.

12 Seeing no questions --
13 you have a question? Okay. The
14 Chair recognizes Councilmember
15 Ahmad.

16 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:
17 Thank you so much, Madam Chair.

18 It is somewhat
19 unrelated. This is about the
20 operating budget, but I'm asking
21 you probably have the information.
22 It is about in 2022, \$500,000 was
23 allocated in PGW's operating budget
24 for a geothermal feasibility study.

1 And in March in 2025, PGW issued an
2 RFP for a consultant to complete
3 the study. So that's \$1 million
4 rounded.

5 It's been four years
6 since the first 500,000 was
7 allocated for the completion of the
8 study. The utility has not
9 delivered on the study and updates
10 have been infrequent. So I just
11 wanted to know the status of the
12 study and will PGW dedicate more
13 funds to advance faster timelines
14 and move from studies to
15 implementation for energy
16 alternatives?

17 MS. McCOTTRY: Yes,
18 Councilmember. Appreciate the
19 question. We are very, very close.
20 We have been working with Alderson
21 Engineering, which is the
22 consultant firm who's done I think
23 an excellent job of really looking
24 at the feasibility and the

1 technical accessibility.

2 Part of what we did with
3 this study, and just to set
4 expectations, it's a feasibility
5 study so it's taking a look at the
6 site location, if it's a good
7 location for geothermal. And so,
8 we've partnered with the school
9 district and we're also working
10 with Parks & Rec because the
11 location we selected, which is in
12 the 9th District, is McCloskey
13 Elementary, and right next door is
14 Dorothy Emanuel Rec Center.

15 So we have a working
16 committee that includes the Parks &
17 Rec and also the Office of
18 Sustainability along with the
19 school district. The final draft
20 is complete. We have reviewed it
21 technically, and we've shared it
22 now with the school district and
23 also with the city. And so, as
24 soon as they turn around their

1 review, we are looking forward to
2 releasing this study, and then
3 there will be next steps after
4 because this is only the first
5 step. And so, then it is taking a
6 look at what funding might be
7 available.

8 Geothermal is expensive.
9 And so, there are federal grants
10 that we've already identified that
11 would have to be pursued, and those
12 are in some cases tens of millions
13 of dollars. But as PGW, we're
14 dedicated to seeing this process
15 through and continuing to work with
16 our partners. Because as we've
17 shared in other venues, it's our
18 job with others to think and look
19 down every potential pathway that's
20 available, while continuing to be
21 able to provide service the way we
22 do because of the fact that 90% of
23 the city relies right now on
24 natural gas to heat their homes.

1 So we have to be able to do more
2 than one thing at one time.

3 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: I
4 appreciate that. Thank you. The
5 reason why it's important is
6 because this will impact your
7 capital budget, depending on what
8 other alternative sources we choose
9 to go down. And so, we need to do
10 it sooner than later and to
11 understand what the benefits are in
12 terms of how that impacts the
13 overall economic structure, because
14 there is a benefit which also has
15 health benefits and all of those.

16 So when you do that, I
17 hope you're going to include the
18 indirect impact that transforming
19 our sources of energy do. And you
20 know and I know you have to change
21 your business model and we have to
22 move from natural gas at some
23 point, and --

24 (Applause.)

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1 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: --
2 the more you do it, the faster we
3 will be. So thank you for that. I
4 look forward to the report and I
5 really look forward to how soon we
6 can go into the implementation
7 phase.

8 MS. McCOTTRY: Thank
9 you.

10 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:
11 Thank you, Madam Chair.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
13 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
14 so much, Dr. Ahmad. We thank you
15 very, very much for all of your
16 work. Pardon me one moment.

17 Notating for the record
18 that Councilmember Rue Landau has
19 been temporarily appointed to the
20 Committee on Finance hearing today
21 with the approval and permission of
22 the Council President.

23 Are there any further
24 questions for these witnesses and

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1 for this panel?

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
5 thank you very, very much for your
6 testimony.

7 Are there any witnesses
8 here to provide public comment?

9 THE CLERK: Yes. We
10 have four names: Mitch Channin,
11 Patrick Houston, Eric Stowers and
12 Emily Davis.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Please
15 approach the witness table. You
16 can state your name for the record
17 and then proceed with your public
18 comment.

19 (Witnesses approached
20 witness table.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: And again, for the
23 record we have Councilmember Young,
24 thank you very much, and

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1 Councilmember Landau. Thank you
2 both for being temporarily
3 appointed to City Council's
4 Committee on Finance.
5 Hey, Mitch.

6 MR. CHANNIN: Hey.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: You got me at the
9 beginning.

10 MR. CHANNIN: Sorry
11 about that. One bill is not enough
12 for me.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Not today. So thank
15 you. I appreciate you being here.
16 Just state your name for the
17 record.

18 MR. CHANNIN: Mitch
19 Channin, PGW ratepayer, Northeast
20 Philly resident, also a 1099 worker
21 and really appreciated the
22 testimony earlier and agree with
23 what was said there. I'm here to
24 speak on 260511, which is the

1 FY2027 PGW capital budget. As I
2 think Councilmembers know, I'm a
3 volunteer with a number of
4 organizations that fight for
5 environmental, climate, racial,
6 economic justice.

7 Though today, I'm just
8 speaking as an individual. In two
9 sentences before I speak about the
10 capital budget, I do want to say I
11 appreciated the hearing yesterday
12 about the Water Department's
13 low-income discount program TAP and
14 the urgent necessity to improve and
15 expand access to that. And I think
16 the same conversation needs to
17 happen about PGW.

18 There are tens of
19 thousands of people, from what I
20 understand, who are eligible for
21 PGW's low-income discount program
22 CRP who are not enrolled, and that
23 means many thousands of people who
24 are very economically challenged

1 are overpaying their gas bills and
2 we need to do much better.

3 In terms of the PGW
4 capital budget, so I think all of
5 us who are speaking today want
6 everyone to be able to afford their
7 energy. We want energy to be
8 reliable. We want clean air and a
9 livable climate and good jobs. And
10 the capital budget for PGW that
11 Council is considering does not
12 advance those values. Basically
13 just doubles down on fossil fuel
14 infrastructure at a time when we
15 are supposed to be moving away from
16 that. I appreciated the questions
17 about the geothermal feasibility
18 report. Four years is just an
19 extremely long time to wait for a
20 report, and I really would like to
21 see progress on that. I hope
22 Councilmembers will consider
23 holding PGW accountable.

24 The main thing I wanted

1 to say was about a project that was
2 originally part of this capital
3 budget proposal and then was
4 removed by the Gas Commission
5 temporarily. But we expect City
6 Council to have to consider it
7 again in the coming weeks or
8 months.

9 As Councilmember
10 Driscoll is aware, there was a
11 proposal for \$180 million-plus to
12 replace PGW's liquefied natural gas
13 facility in Port Richmond. Due to
14 advocacy from the public advocate,
15 residents of Port Richmond, a
16 variety of organizations and then
17 also State Rep. Joe Hohenstein, the
18 Gas Commission did elect to delay
19 approval of that project pending
20 further study. I was one of the
21 people who went to multiple
22 hearings and meetings asking for
23 that to happen.

24 However, the Commission

1 did not direct PGW to study
2 potential alternatives to the
3 project, and I think that is a
4 glaring gap in what has been done.
5 And if there is not an examination
6 of alternatives, I think what's
7 most likely is that Council will be
8 asked to approve a project for
9 \$180-plus million with no
10 consideration for alternative
11 options that would be better for
12 affordability, for clean air, for
13 jobs of the future and for our
14 climate, and that's just not okay.

15 In a number of
16 jurisdictions across the country,
17 regulators and legislative bodies
18 are directing gas utilities to
19 provide thorough examination of
20 alternatives before seeking
21 approval for large-scale fossil
22 fuel infrastructure investments.
23 That's really important in
24 Philadelphia, especially given that

1 gas consumption is declining and
2 has to decline dramatically in the
3 coming years.

4 So before Council
5 considers approving spending almost
6 \$200 million on a fossil fuel
7 infrastructure project, we really
8 need a thorough examination of
9 alternative strategies for making
10 sure that people have reliable heat
11 in the winter. We're going to
12 raise this again before the Gas
13 Commission in terms of the
14 operating budget, but we would
15 really like to see City Council
16 direct the Gas Commission and PGW
17 to provide that kind of thorough
18 analysis of alternatives. Thank
19 you very much.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Thank you and thank
22 you very much for your work, Mitch,
23 and really appreciate you. I'm
24 just thinking back to those really

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1 hard COVID years when you were one
2 of our most trusted committee
3 members for City Council's
4 Committee on the Environment.

5 And I really want to
6 uplift your work and your advocacy
7 and just years of work on this
8 issue and just continue to ask the
9 Philadelphia Gas Works and also the
10 Gas Commission to please review the
11 requests and recommendations as
12 notated in the previous testimony.
13 Okay.

14 MR. CHANNIN: Thank you.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: All right. Thank you.
17 Please state your name for the
18 record and proceed with your
19 testimony. The next person can
20 approach.

21 MR. HOUSTON: Patrick
22 Houston. Good afternoon. Thanks
23 for this opportunity to testify
24 today. I'm a member of the Here

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1 for Climate Justice Coalition,
2 testifying on my own behalf today
3 in regard to Bill 260511, the
4 Fiscal Year 2027 PGW capital
5 budget.

6 I'm going to add onto
7 some of the things that the
8 previous testifier Mitch just
9 named, but I really want to
10 emphasize for the Finance Committee
11 for Council this opportunity that
12 Council has every single year with
13 the capital budgets and with the
14 operating budgets to really help
15 our city advance towards our
16 affordability needs and towards our
17 climate pollution goals.

18 As Mitch just mentioned,
19 the Commission heard advocates and
20 delayed -- is not currently
21 allocating the \$180 million for
22 that plant in Port Richmond. We
23 commend that decision. We commend
24 that type of scrutiny from the

1 Commission, and would ask the City
2 Council to carry that forward.
3 Particularly the way that this can
4 be done right now before next
5 year's capital budget comes right
6 back, is as has been mentioned,
7 looking at alternative studies and
8 alternative energy sources that can
9 still meet energy need affordably
10 and in an environmentally
11 sustainable way in our city.

12 Right now PGW is not on
13 track to do that, not in the near
14 term. And then also, I say that in
15 the Commission hearings there were
16 no proposals about alternatives
17 that were being explored to the LNG
18 plant that was proposed for Port
19 Richmond. So that's in the near
20 term. In the long term, the
21 utility is still planning to spend
22 \$8 billion between now and 2058 on
23 more gas, gas pipelines.

24 And so, when we have

1 from PGW themselves, this dwindling
2 rate base, people having to pay
3 into this system, but these least
4 sustained costs, that's just going
5 to create more energy in
6 affordability for our city. So we
7 really are calling on City Council
8 to see these capital budgets as an
9 opportunity to each year nudge the
10 gas utility to explore affordable
11 environmental sustainable
12 alternatives.

13 And the way that City
14 Council can take action on that
15 right now over the next few months
16 is by making sure that when PGW
17 comes back to the Commission for
18 the Fiscal Year 2028 budget, we're
19 not looking at this same proposal
20 for more gas without clean energy
21 alternatives.

22 Last thing I'll mention
23 is just to name a specific example
24 of how other municipalities and

1 states are taking action, in
2 Massachusetts they worked on a DPU
3 Order 8020, which sets a model that
4 Council could follow. And in this
5 case, Council has that authority.
6 It does not have to wait for the
7 state to act. City Council could
8 have that authority. So that
9 order, DPU 8020 in Massachusetts,
10 in addition to the work that Here
11 for Climate Justice is doing,
12 working in communities, helping
13 people get their energy needs met
14 and push for larger change, are
15 just two ways where we would want
16 to support being in communication
17 with Council to push for
18 alternatives. Thanks for your
19 time.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Great. Thank you.
22 Thank you very much for being here.
23 We truly appreciate your public
24 comment.

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1 Please state your name
2 for the record and proceed with
3 your public comment. And the next
4 witness can please approach.

5 MR. STOWERS: Thank you.
6 My name is Eric Stowers. I am a
7 resident of Port Richmond. And
8 thank you, Councilmember
9 Richardson, for letting the people
10 speak earlier about BIRT. I'm a
11 fan of not wasting people's time
12 either, so I'm grateful that you
13 gave them the chance to and they
14 showed up to give their testimony.

15 Since I was here to
16 speak against the LNG plant, which
17 has been removed from the budget,
18 I'm going to make this quick since
19 that doesn't seem to be relevant
20 today. But I just wanted to
21 emphasize, I was here a couple
22 weeks ago when Councilmember Thomas
23 had, we'll say, a hearing or like a
24 day related to affordability,

1 specifically for utilities.

2 And during that, we had
3 PGW talk. And then when I was
4 making a comment, Councilmember
5 Thomas said, I'm so glad that PGW
6 is here, you can connect with them
7 and you two can connect on those
8 details after. So I was expecting
9 to hear back from PGW and I still
10 haven't heard anything from them.
11 And that's been the whole thing
12 about this process, is that PGW has
13 been pushing their agenda on what
14 they see as what's best for the
15 city. And when communities come
16 and ask for more transparency, more
17 details on what they are trying to
18 do, we are just not receiving that.
19 So that is the main thing that
20 we've been pushing for, is just to
21 know what's going on, to know what
22 the details are.

23 We heard a bill earlier
24 where Councilmember Jones was

1 talking about somebody like the
2 getaway car where people just
3 there -- where there was a deal
4 with the housing. I think
5 Councilmember Young was addressing
6 that, where just the math doesn't
7 add up for what the city is going
8 to be paying for what the deal is,
9 and somebody is getting way more
10 than they should.

11 Well, the LNG plant was
12 like a similar thing where we just
13 don't have the details of what the
14 deal is going to be with a private
15 partner. And so, we deserve to
16 know those details before things
17 get approved. So I'm going to
18 leave that right here today. But
19 please, this is something the LNG
20 plant is not just like -- it's not
21 just like a one-time thing. This
22 is a big investment in our
23 community that affects our
24 community's health and how it's

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1 going to affect our city's ability
2 to address affordability in the
3 future. So thank you so much for
4 hearing us today.

5 And when we do come to
6 that time to address it, that is
7 something that we should look into
8 scrutiny in the same detail that
9 Councilmember Young and the Finance
10 Committee were asking questions on
11 how did this deal come about. We
12 need to take that same approach
13 now.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
15 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
16 very much, dear. Prior to your
17 departure, may you please write
18 your information down on this sheet
19 of paper. We're going to give it
20 to the representatives who are here
21 from the Philadelphia Gas Works.

22 MR. STOWERS: Thank you.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: All right. Thank you,

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1 dear. Please state your name for
2 the record and proceed with your
3 testimony.

4 MS. DAVIS: My name is
5 Emily Davis --

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Pardon me. Are you
8 providing public comment as well?
9 Can you please approach the witness
10 table because I think we missed you
11 twice now. Please state your name
12 for the record and proceed.

13 MS. DAVIS: My name is
14 Emily Davis and I'm here again to
15 talk about the gas company, which I
16 don't trust. As members of City
17 Council, you represent the citizens
18 of Philadelphia and our interests.
19 And budgets are a great way to see
20 what an organization is doing. So
21 it's important to take a good look
22 and I'm glad you're here to do it.

23 Also, 10 years ago you
24 guys passed a resolution that said

1 we're going to be carbon neutral,
2 so every budget should reflect that
3 and show the path. PGW has not,
4 with maybe a little exception
5 because they did have the
6 diversification study, but I think
7 OS(ph) was more responsible for
8 that.

9 And then we've got this
10 study that they of course was
11 forced to do, which was really,
12 really exceedingly inadequate. 95%
13 of PGW's customers are commercial.
14 Yet none of them were engaged in
15 this study. And actually, there
16 were no PGW customers engaged in
17 the study. It was only non-PGW
18 customers, which is kind of
19 interesting.

20 At any rate, I'm glad
21 that the funding for the LNG for
22 next year is gone, but it should be
23 gone forever. That's going to be a
24 stranded asset. It's a plant that

1 could last a long time and it will
2 be well past 2050 before it's gone.
3 The other problem with that is just
4 like the pipe replacement that
5 customers are paying for now on
6 their bills, there will probably be
7 an addition to their bills to pay
8 for this plant, so we don't want to
9 add any extra bills. Please make
10 sure that future budgets don't
11 include only infrastructure that
12 supports the city environmental
13 goals. Thank you.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

15 RICHARDSON: Thank you very much
16 for your testimony. We appreciate
17 you being here. Thank you for
18 coming in.

19 Okay. Please state your
20 name for the record and proceed
21 with your testimony. Apologies for
22 missing you that last round.

23 MS. BOND: No, no. My
24 name is Linnea Bond. I'm the

1 Health and Environmental Education
2 Director for Physicians for Social
3 Responsibility Pennsylvania.
4 PSRPA's focused attention on PGW
5 because the use of gas has a huge
6 impact on the health of
7 Philadelphians. And of course as
8 Councilmember Ahmad said, those all
9 have costs too.

10 Petrochemical operations
11 increases mortality and morbidity
12 for those living near it.
13 Explosions, there have been four
14 home explosions in Philadelphia in
15 the last eight years, plus a small
16 business that just exploded twice
17 due to gas in Overbrook.
18 Respiratory issues, 12% of
19 childhood asthma can be attributed
20 to gas stoves. And of course,
21 global warming, the main ingredient
22 in gas has 80 times the global
23 warming impact of carbon dioxide in
24 addition to the carbon dioxide that

1 is emitted when gas burns.

2 According to the DEP,
3 historically Philadelphia has had
4 six days per year with temperatures
5 over 95. By 2050, that number is
6 projected to be 21 to 34 days over
7 95 annually. There are about four
8 leaks for every mile of PGW
9 pipeline, and intentional releases
10 are an essential part of the gas
11 system and have a huge climate
12 impact, not to mention accidents.
13 One in Pennsylvania in 2022
14 accounted for 10% of our year's
15 emissions.

16 Energy affordability is
17 also of course a serious health
18 issue, and gas is getting more
19 expensive for several reasons.
20 Demand for gas, as mentioned by
21 others, is decreasing, and PGW's
22 customer base is shrinking with
23 infrastructure costs skyrocketing,
24 which led to a rate case a year

1 ago, which PSRPA intervened in.

2 We opposed both PGW's
3 proposed weather normalization
4 adjustment increase, which has
5 already led to very high bills in
6 the past. And they wanted a
7 revenue guarantee, which would have
8 allowed them to charge more even
9 when we were using less. In
10 settlement, they agreed to throw
11 out the revenue guarantee.

12 What I would ask for
13 Councilmembers going forward is
14 beyond these committee
15 conversations, we have a lot of
16 expertise to share. We intervene
17 in PUC cases. We study the future
18 of gas proceedings across the
19 country. We see huge potential in
20 geothermal and we're talking with
21 neighbors who are asking questions
22 about their health. And I ask you
23 to demand transparency and
24 accountability from PGW, especially

1 as PGW's answer to its crisis has
2 not been to think proactively about
3 either shrinking with demand or
4 transitioning to a non-gas
5 alternative business model. Their
6 plan is to expand gas operations
7 industrially.

8 In this budget, they
9 were asking for, like we talked
10 about, 182 million replacement of
11 the Port Richmond LNG facility that
12 would have increased capacity by
13 30%. I appreciate Dr. Ahmad's
14 question today and the
15 conversations we've had with you,
16 Councilmember Driscoll. We hope
17 you will all engage with deep
18 oversight in the fall when they'll
19 propose a public-private
20 partnership for this facility.

21 Residential customers,
22 residents impacted by gas, and
23 workers whose pensions must be
24 secured should be at the center of

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1 this conversation. Thanks for your
2 time, and I hope that we can
3 continue these conversations over
4 the summer for more opportunities
5 for oversight in the fall and
6 beyond. Thank you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
9 very much for your testimony and we
10 appreciate you coming in this
11 afternoon.

12 Are there any further
13 witnesses to provide public comment
14 on Bill Nos. 260511 and 260512?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Anyone here whose name
18 has not been called?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
22 thank you also very much. Pausing
23 to notate for the record the
24 presence of Councilmember Jim

1 Harrity, who has also been
2 appointed to the committee
3 temporarily for today by Council
4 President Johnson. We thank you
5 very much for your flexibility.
6 Thank you also very much.

7 Clerk, will you please
8 call the next panel we have to
9 testify on Bill No. 260299. And
10 prior to that, I'd like to
11 recognize my colleague
12 Councilmember Rue Landau for
13 remarks.

14 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
15 Thank you. Thank you, Chair, and
16 thank you, everyone. Just a few
17 points. Thank you for being here
18 today. Many of you know that I
19 served as the Executive Director of
20 the Philadelphia Commission on
21 Human Relations and the Fair
22 Housing Commission for more than a
23 decade.

24 While there, I saw the

1 profound impact the agencies had on
2 thousands of families and
3 individuals throughout the city.
4 That would not have been possible
5 without the tireless efforts and
6 intentionality of commissioners who
7 do the work to steer the Commission
8 and the dedicated staff.

9 The Fair Housing
10 Commission serves as one of the
11 city's most important safeguards
12 for renters, investigating
13 complaints, enforcing housing
14 protections, and providing many
15 tenants with a lifeline to
16 challenge unfair rental practices
17 before seeing a courtroom. When
18 rights are violated, people turn to
19 the Fair Housing Commission. The
20 sole four employees there take on a
21 larger and larger workload every
22 year.

23 This year they've
24 handled 600 cases. Next year, they

1 expect this number to grow even
2 more. With Councilmember
3 O'Rourke's new Safe and Healthy
4 Homes bill in effect, that number
5 is likely to reach 700 or higher.
6 By better supporting the
7 commissioners who hear cases, my
8 legislation to increase the
9 commissioner's stipend to \$100 per
10 meeting and a \$14,000 annual cap
11 will reduce wait times and increase
12 the number of hearings the
13 commissioners can hold.

14 It's just simple math.
15 More hearings and meetings mean
16 lower wait times for cases to be
17 heard, more cases being closed and
18 more Philadelphians' rights
19 protected. As you all know, I've
20 spent my career rooted in fair
21 housing and tenants' rights. And
22 in honor of my dear friend Dave
23 Ramler, the former Chair of the
24 Fair Housing Commission, who passed

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1 away in 2024, I'm working as hard
2 as I can to support the Director of
3 the Fair Housing Commission to get
4 a full complement of commissioners
5 and to get a new budget funding for
6 staff that will be able to do the
7 work of the Commission, and with
8 this legislation to increase the
9 stipend for commissioners and
10 expand the annual cap to cover all
11 the necessary meetings to do the
12 work of the people.

13 Dave and I talked about
14 this many times when he was alive,
15 that they are doing this work from
16 their hearts and for peanuts, and
17 now that the volume is so high that
18 the caps have to be extended. I'm
19 excited to move forward with this
20 today, and I urge the Finance
21 Committee to support this bill.
22 Thank you very much.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you

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1 very much, Councilmember Landau.
2 So glad that you are here and
3 notating your support for Bill No.
4 260299.

5 Clerk, will you please
6 call the first panel we have to
7 testify on Bill No. 260299.

8 THE CLERK: Will, Renee
9 Chenault Fattah, Executive
10 Director, Philadelphia Commission
11 on Human Relations and Philadelphia
12 Fair Housing Commission.

13 (Witnesses approached
14 witness table.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
16 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much for
17 being here. Please state your name
18 for the record and then proceed
19 with your testimony.

20 MS. CHENAULT FATTAH:
21 Good afternoon, Chairperson Gilmore
22 Richardson and members of the
23 Finance Committee. My name is
24 Renee Chenault Fattah, and I'm the

1 Executive Director of the
2 Philadelphia Commission on Human
3 Relations, PCHR and the Fair
4 Housing Commission FHC. I am here
5 today in my capacity though as the
6 Executive Director of the Fair
7 Housing Commission in support of
8 Bill No. 260299, which was
9 introduced by Councilmember Landau.
10 Thank you so much for your support
11 in this. Thank you.

12 A little bit of history:
13 The Fair Housing Commission was
14 founded in 1962 to enforce the
15 city's fair housing ordinance. In
16 the early '90s, PCHR was asked to
17 staff the Fair Housing Commission
18 to save money to address the city's
19 financial crisis. Since that time,
20 we have operated under one budget
21 but separate commissions. The
22 commissioners of the Fair Housing
23 meet twice a week to conduct public
24 hearings on properties in which

1 tenants allege are unsafe or in bad
2 condition.

3 Our commissioners hear
4 testimony. They examine evidence
5 to determine whether an unfair
6 rental practice has taken place.
7 They verify that landlords have
8 necessary rental licenses and
9 certificates and are meeting other
10 requirements ensuring habitability.
11 If there is a violation,
12 commissioners issue orders and it's
13 all to enforce the fair housing
14 ordinance.

15 Despite the volume of
16 work, which you heard Councilmember
17 Landau refer to, and the fact that
18 they meet twice a week, the stipend
19 for housing commissioners is \$85 a
20 day, while Human Relations
21 commissioners, who meet only twice
22 a month receive a \$100 a day
23 stipend. Under the code, both
24 commissions right now are capped at

1 \$8,500 a year.

2 Today I am overjoyed to
3 support Councilmember Landau's
4 bill, which amends the code section
5 entitled "Fair Housing Commission"
6 in Section 20-304 of The
7 Philadelphia Code, entitled
8 "Compensation for Members of
9 Boards, Commissions, Committees,
10 and Councils." This bill would
11 raise the compensation paid to
12 members of the Fair Housing
13 Commission to \$100 a meeting. This
14 increase puts the Fair Housing
15 Commission per meeting in line with
16 comparable boards and commissions
17 throughout the City of
18 Philadelphia.

19 The total compensation,
20 as you heard, would be capped at
21 \$14,000 a year, and that's just for
22 the Fair Housing Commissioners.
23 The increase in the yearly stipend
24 is necessary to accommodate the

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1 number of meetings the Fair Housing
2 Commission holds as well as to
3 address the high volume of cases
4 the Commission considers.

5 The caseload is, as you
6 also heard, likely to increase
7 because of additions to important
8 protections afforded to tenants
9 under recent changes in the fair
10 housing ordinance. I'm happy to
11 address any questions you might
12 have.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
15 very much for being here and thank
16 you for your testimony.

17 Are there any questions
18 for this witness and for this
19 panel?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: All right. Seeing
23 none, thank you.

24 MS. CHENAULT FATTAH:

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1 Thank you.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
4 very, very much for your patience
5 and thank you for being here this
6 afternoon.

7 MS. CHENAULT FATTAH: I
8 would have waited all day for this
9 stipend, so thank you.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you,
12 thank you so very much.

13 Are there any further
14 witnesses here whose names have not
15 been called?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: Is there anyone else
19 here to provide public comment
20 whose name has not been called?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
24 thank you very, very much for your

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1 testimony. We will now proceed
2 with our last bill. It is our last
3 bill for colleagues who are
4 listening, Bill No. 260521.

5 Clerk, will you please
6 call the first panel to testify on
7 Bill No. 260521.

8 THE CLERK: First panel,
9 Sharolyn Murphy, Risk Manager.

10 (Witnesses approached
11 witness table.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much for
14 being here. Please state your name
15 for the record and then you can
16 proceed with your testimony.

17 And I also just wanted
18 to recognize again that our Council
19 President was here earlier in the
20 hearing I believe for this
21 legislation. So please proceed.
22 Thank you.

23 MS. MURPHY: Sharolyn
24 Murphy. Good afternoon,

1 Chairperson Gilmore Richardson and
2 members of the Finance Committee.
3 My name is Sharolyn Murphy, and I
4 serve as the Risk Manager for the
5 City of Philadelphia. I am here to
6 testify on Bill No. 260521. This
7 bill would create a presumption
8 that the families of a certain
9 class of employee who commit
10 suicide are entitled to pension
11 benefits. Because the city
12 prioritizes prevention programs, it
13 opposes this bill.

14 Background: The
15 Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation
16 Act specifically precludes benefits
17 for intentionally self-inflicted
18 injury or death. Historically,
19 Pennsylvania courts treated suicide
20 as a voluntary, intentional act
21 that severed the workplace causal
22 relationship connection. Over time
23 however, Pennsylvania courts
24 adopted a more nuanced framework

1 that was more beneficial to
2 grieving families, namely the chain
3 of causation test.

4 The chain of causation
5 test provides that if a workplace
6 injury leads to a severe mental
7 disturbance, the worker's rational
8 judgment becomes obscured. Because
9 the individual lacks normal
10 rational control over their
11 choices, the act of suicide is
12 legally viewed as involuntary,
13 rather than intentionally self-
14 inflicted. This framework has led
15 to an increased recognition of
16 suicide deaths while maintaining an
17 emphasis on work relationship.

18 Bill 260521 would create
19 a presumption that first responders
20 who commit suicide did so as a
21 result of vague criteria that
22 hardly touches upon the
23 complexities of the causes of the
24 illness. Research consistently

1 demonstrates that suicide is
2 multifactorial and may involve many
3 personal, socio-demographic,
4 medical and economic factors.
5 Frequently, factors associated with
6 suicide include intimate partner
7 problems and physical health
8 problems. Those other factors may
9 be a bigger factor than events at
10 work.

11 Preserving human life
12 and health is a shared and
13 fundamental value. The city fully
14 embraces this responsibility and
15 remains committed to supporting the
16 mental health and well-being of its
17 employees. The city supplies a
18 number of supports in this regard.

19 I'll start with the
20 medical examiner's office. The
21 city's medical examiner's unit is a
22 fully equipped unit that is very
23 capable of managing medical and
24 psychological matters that may

1 impact our sworn officers. They
2 have a unit that includes a medical
3 director who is Dr. Jordan Burnett,
4 Barnett rather. He is a Board-
5 Certified emergency medical
6 physician who has extensive
7 experience in emergency medical
8 services and peer-to-peer support.
9 We also have a clinical
10 psychologist, Dr. Keyoni Rogers,
11 who specializes in mental health
12 illness and the police community.

13 The fire department has
14 a peer support team that responds
15 to critical incidents and provides
16 outreach to personnel following
17 traumatic events. Peers often
18 follow up later with a visit to the
19 firehouse in the following days to
20 ensure continued support. In
21 addition to peer support, which is
22 available 24/7, the fire department
23 also offers inhouse initiatives
24 that address substance use

1 awareness, trauma recognition and
2 suicide prevention. And Local 22
3 and the fire department have an
4 employee assistance program that
5 offers a wealth of behavioral
6 health resources focused on
7 ensuring members and their families
8 have confidential, professional and
9 accessible support when they need
10 it.

11 The police department's
12 mental health response prioritizes
13 prevention, resilience, and long-
14 term wellness as critical elements
15 of effective law enforcement.
16 Dr. Andrew Best, Jr. is the
17 Director of the Health and Wellness
18 Division for the police department.
19 He leads the department's efforts
20 to support the physical, mental,
21 and emotional well-being of sworn
22 and civilian personnel.

23 These efforts include
24 the completion of the police

1 department's suicide investigation
2 protocol, the strengthening of the
3 internal employee assistance
4 program, establishment of an
5 external employee assistance
6 program through Penn Medicine, and
7 supporting a dedicated peer support
8 program. At the federal level, the
9 Public Safety Officer Benefit
10 Program provides death and
11 disability payments for first
12 responders, and it has expanded its
13 coverage to include suicides, PTSD,
14 and other mental health conditions
15 resulting from traumas.

16 Eligible survivors get a
17 lump sum payment of more than
18 \$460,000 in 2026, plus educational
19 assistance. Notably, the state of
20 Pennsylvania has not passed
21 legislation extending benefits to
22 first responders who commit
23 suicide. And I just wanted to note
24 that during the process of these

1 hearings, the Administration has
2 been working with Council on
3 language to amend what was
4 submitted. And we understand that
5 those amendments have been accepted
6 and we appreciate your partnership
7 in this regard insofar as the
8 language is concerned. Thank you.

9 But with that said, I do
10 want to stress that it's
11 universally accepted that
12 preserving life and health is
13 paramount. This priority aligns
14 with the Administration's
15 objectives. For this reason, the
16 city is constrained from supporting
17 this bill. This concludes my
18 testimony and I am happy to answer
19 the committee's questions.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
22 very much for your testimony. I'd
23 ask that we call the next panel and
24 then we'll take questions.

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1 Okay. Are there any
2 questions for the first panel --
3 well, we'll do questions first. So
4 are there any questions from --
5 okay. We'll recognize Dr. Ahmad
6 and then Councilmember Landau.
7 Okay. And then we'll move to the
8 next panel.

9 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

10 Thank you, Madam Chair.

11 Good afternoon. I'm
12 sorry. But it just seems extremely
13 cruel what you just testified.
14 That's just basic cruelty. We're
15 asking for families who are left
16 behind and for us to say that the
17 work does not have an impact in the
18 mental health, the kind of work
19 they do, rushing into situations
20 that we all rush to leave. I'm not
21 comprehending why we are doing
22 this.

23 Why would we not include
24 survivors of those who have

1 perished to do this -- I'm just
2 trying to wrap my head around that.
3 And I just wanted to ask you what
4 will this expanding benefit cost?
5 And was the cost already funded in
6 the FY27 budget? What would this
7 cost?

8 MS. MURPHY: So before I
9 get to the cost, I wanted to
10 address the cruelty, because that's
11 not our intention at all. Our
12 intention is to focus on the
13 preservation of life. This is a
14 huge human problem dealing with
15 suicides, and the Administration is
16 focusing on preserving life.
17 That's never cruel. That's always
18 our intention, to keep people
19 alive. And families that we've
20 talked to regarding this issue,
21 when we talk about benefits and we
22 talk about preserving life, they
23 always emphasize preservation of
24 life and benefits that we provide

1 to the families --

2 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

3 Excuse me. I need to interrupt
4 you. We can always work on
5 prevention, but that doesn't take
6 away that suicides do happen and
7 will happen. And for us to say
8 that their survivors don't deserve
9 anything because we're just going
10 to put all our efforts into
11 preservation and if someone goes
12 ahead and does die by suicide, oh
13 well. Is that --

14 MS. MURPHY: That's
15 not --

16 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:
17 Well, that's what it's sounding
18 like. Whether you're intending to
19 say that or not, what it's sounding
20 like is, oh, we're going to put all
21 our resources in preventing this,
22 and then if one person slips
23 through, too bad --

24 MS. MURPHY: That's not

1 it at all.

2 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: --
3 you're survivors, too bad. Because
4 that's what I'm hearing when you
5 say this. And to me, this is
6 deeply cruel. But I do want to
7 understand what is the cost
8 associated with this.

9 MS. MURPHY: With all
10 due respect, we're not saying to
11 the families, so be it. What we're
12 saying to the families is we hear
13 you. We hear you that you don't
14 want any other families to go
15 through what you've gone through.
16 So we want to focus on preserving
17 life. We want to focus on
18 prevention.

19 Councilmember, if we get
20 that right, we never get to the
21 second question. And it is our aim
22 in this Administration to get it
23 right to preserve life. But with
24 respect to your question regarding

1 cost, the Pension Fund has not had
2 the actuarial analysis completed
3 regarding this legislation. But I
4 will say this, that the expectation
5 is that we'll have more
6 applications in light of this
7 ordinance, and the pension benefit
8 regarding death is a very generous
9 benefit. So you'll have more
10 applications at a higher cost to
11 the Pension Fund.

12 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD: I
13 am -- I have no words to say.
14 First, you haven't done the
15 analysis to tell us what it'll cost
16 and say it's prohibitive. We just
17 heard we give away millions of
18 dollars to some preferred developer
19 here for housing, and we can't give
20 money to survivors of -- this is --
21 I am outraged that in the same
22 hearing we are hearing these two
23 juxtaposed, and it just tells me we
24 are losing our humanity if we are

1 trying to push this side of
2 nonsense.

3 So you have to testify.

4 This is not at you. I'm just
5 saying the kind of focus you're
6 putting on this prevention, of
7 course if there's prevention, you
8 don't have to put out any money, so
9 let's do it. Let's have
10 prevention. But in case there is a
11 need, then we have this support for
12 those who survive. So I don't
13 understand how you can sit here and
14 say we don't support this bill.

15 But thank you very much,
16 Madam Chair. I really --

17 MS. MURPHY: What I will
18 say to that is that we do have lots
19 of resources for family members and
20 we never step away from that
21 responsibility. We just want to
22 emphasize that life is the ultimate
23 issue here, preserving it. But we
24 also do have supports for family

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1 members.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: I'm just going to be
4 honest. This is real rough. This
5 is real rough, because many of us
6 in this room have lost loved ones
7 to this very issue and folks that
8 we actually know who have worked
9 for the City of Philadelphia
10 previously who we have lost. This
11 one is a little rough. Okay. And
12 it does feel a little cruel.

13 And obviously, we all
14 want to do all that we can from a
15 prevention standpoint, but that
16 does not always happen. And this
17 feels a little rough. And so, I'm
18 going to recognize Councilmember
19 Landau and recognize Councilmember
20 Harrity, who I know has recently
21 experienced a loss. Okay.

22 Councilmember Landau.

23 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

24 Thank you, Chair. I will be brief.

1 I will start by saying
2 in my years now of serving on
3 Council, this is possibly the
4 saddest and most bizarre testimony
5 I've ever heard from the
6 Administration. It is so painful
7 and so deep and cruel, that it is a
8 little shocking that it's so public
9 and a matter of fact.

10 Absolutely, we should
11 invest in everything we possibly
12 can for mental health services and
13 lifesaving services of all of our
14 employees, not just those folks on
15 the front line. That's what we
16 should do. Prevention is extremely
17 important. This has nothing to do
18 with that. What we're asking for
19 is to have these benefits go to
20 survivors when there's service
21 connected, these are death
22 benefits. And you are now parsing
23 out acceptable types of death and
24 unacceptable types of death and I

1 find that outrageous.

2 PTSD is real. Trauma is
3 real. Trauma from folks who are on
4 the front line is especially real.
5 We should do everything we can to
6 support them, and their families
7 every single day are hoping that
8 their loved ones come home from
9 work and it does not matter how
10 somebody passes. But suicide is
11 real. It is painful. It harms
12 families. It trickles down for
13 generations. We absolutely must
14 provide the benefits.

15 And the fact that you
16 don't have the cost here today is
17 extra disturbing. But I will ask
18 the question, in the past three
19 years, each year how many of our
20 city employee staff in these
21 categories have died of suicide?

22 MS. MURPHY: To answer
23 your question, right now we've only
24 had a very small number of

1 employees who've passed from
2 suicide. Most of the suicides that
3 come through risk management will
4 be the suicides that have a work-
5 relationship component. If there's
6 not a work-relationship component,
7 risk management may never hear
8 about the suicide. So fortunately
9 for the city, our numbers have been
10 very small. But today, I can't
11 give you an exact number of
12 suicides for our employees in the
13 City of Philadelphia for the last
14 three years.

15 COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

16 Thankfully, the number is very,
17 very small. Thankfully, we will
18 even be working to reduce that
19 very, very small number. If the
20 number is so small, give those
21 families those benefits.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you,
24 Councilmember Landau --

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1 MS. MURPHY: Can I
2 respond?

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Pardon me one moment.
5 Please allow me to recognize
6 Councilmember Harrity, and then
7 we'll recognize you for response.

8 COUNCILMAN HARRITY:

9 Thank you, Madam Chair.

10 I'm going to try to keep
11 my anger in check because I've been
12 known to go a little off. But as a
13 son of a police officer and a
14 grandson of a firefighter, this is
15 completely outrageous, outrageous.
16 I've seen my father's friends who
17 are on the police force commit
18 suicide. It's not seen. It's not
19 something that people admit,
20 especially police officers and
21 first responders who are trained
22 that they are above that kind of
23 thing. They're the protectors. So
24 for them to go to admit doesn't

1 happen like that.

2 And as Kathy said, I
3 lost a friend of mine a few months
4 ago, right. This guy had
5 everything by sight that you can
6 imagine somebody would want. He
7 didn't have no money issues. He
8 owned a successful business, but he
9 decided to take his own life for
10 reasons we still don't know to this
11 day.

12 Some mental illnesses
13 are seen. I've said this before.
14 I'm very well-versed in this. This
15 isn't my first rodeo when it comes
16 to this. I grew up in a rough
17 neighborhood where a lot of my
18 friends died when they were young,
19 and a lot of them took their own
20 lives when they were young.

21 For you to say in one
22 breath that the number is a very
23 small number and then in the other
24 breath say that the city can't

1 afford to cover this is outrageous,
2 especially our first responders,
3 but any city employee. There's a
4 lot of stress that comes with this,
5 right. There's a stigma. So if
6 they tell somebody they're afraid
7 that they're going to be punished,
8 that they're going to be put on
9 desk duty, that they're not going
10 to be able to do their job, and
11 that alone is another mental block
12 for them, because they can't speak
13 about it because that's not who
14 they are. They're that guy that
15 runs into the burning building.
16 They're that person, that woman
17 that runs at the bullets.

18 You don't think when
19 they get home at night they're not
20 crying to themselves. I've seen
21 it. My father suffered from post-
22 traumatic stress from Vietnam,
23 ended up in the police department
24 where it just got worse. Because

1 as you said, people were waiting
2 for him to say something. But a
3 special forces veteran from Vietnam
4 and a police officer isn't going to
5 tell anybody something like that,
6 you understand. So there is no way
7 to know. You can do all the
8 prevention you want.

9 And this isn't directed
10 towards you. You have a job to do.
11 I'm thoroughly disappointed in my
12 city. I'm thoroughly disappointed
13 with this Administration, that this
14 would be the stance they are taking
15 when you, yourself, testified that
16 the number is so small that you
17 don't even know it. So what are we
18 even talking about here, ma'am. I
19 know it's not your decision, but
20 you're in the room. This is not
21 going to over well in this Council.

22 I think that you should
23 look into your stances on this and
24 I would ask that you reconsider.

1 Because if you don't, then one of
2 us is just going to legislate that
3 you have to anyway, and I don't
4 care what (inaudible). Thank you.

5 MS. MURPHY:

6 Councilmember Harrity --

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much,
9 Councilmember Harrity.

10 The Chair now recognizes
11 our risk manager.

12 MS. MURPHY: Thank you,
13 Councilmember Harrity. And you and
14 I have spoken about this before.
15 My heart goes out to you for this
16 situation with your family, it
17 really does. And we've actually
18 spoken to other people who have
19 lost loved ones, siblings, children
20 and we know the pain that's
21 associated with that.

22 But I will tell you
23 this: Everyone that we've spoken
24 to has said prevention was the key,

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1 that money can't bring their loved
2 one back. But what we can do as an
3 Administration is prevent this from
4 happening to anyone else. And we
5 hear them and that's what they say
6 to us. It's not our intention to
7 be --

8 COUNCILMAN HARRITY:
9 Bull --

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
11 RICHARDSON: One moment. One
12 moment.

13 MS. MURPHY: It is what
14 they're saying to us and that's
15 what we're focusing on. And we too
16 as a city have to prioritize what
17 we can and what we cannot do. But
18 I tell you this for a fact, what we
19 are aiming to do is to eliminate
20 this epidemic from the City of
21 Philadelphia. And the numbers are
22 small, thanks in large part to all
23 of the efforts that we have put
24 into prevention and we will

1 continue to fight that fight.

2 So we invite you to join
3 us in that fight to save lives
4 because you have a very powerful
5 voice because of your experience,
6 but we will continue to push this
7 issue of prevention because we want
8 to save every life that we possibly
9 can. And you know that the city
10 doesn't have unlimited resources,
11 we don't. But we put our resources
12 to where the priorities should be,
13 and we believe that it should be
14 with prevention. So we just thank
15 you for your efforts to support us
16 in that.

17 COUNCILMAN HARRITY:

18 Prevention --

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: And this is what I'm
21 going to do. Hold on --

22 COUNCILMAN HARRITY: --

23 is fine and dandy and I'm for all
24 the prevention you want. But you

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1 go look in those kids' eyes whose
2 father or mother just committed
3 suicide and then explain to them
4 how they're going to eat next week
5 because the City of Philadelphia
6 won't cover the fact that their
7 parent died because they suffered
8 from PTSD that we gave them, we
9 gave them.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: Thank you,
12 Councilmember Harrity. I am going
13 to respectfully request as Chair,
14 we are going to proceed from this
15 particular panel and ask that Panel
16 2 please approach the witness table
17 so that we can take Panel 2's
18 testimony, because this is -- okay.
19 As Chair, please Panel 2.

20 THE CLERK: Will

21 Dr. Melissa Rice, co-founder of
22 First Responders Mental Health
23 Symposium; Thomas Kane, union
24 member of International Association

1 of Firefighters Local 22; and
2 Brianna Wakefield will be reading
3 for Regan Faulk. Please approach.

4 (Witnesses approached
5 witness table.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Okay. And then for
8 the record, we also have written
9 testimony from John C. Becker, Jr.,
10 Ethos Treatment; Emily Child Gray
11 as well for the record. And for
12 everyone who's here, particularly
13 Councilmember Harrity, for everyone
14 who's here watching on Channel 64
15 or listening online and for those
16 who will rewatch this hearing
17 afterwards, I am very sorry. I am
18 very, very sorry.

19 And if there's anyone
20 listening who needs help or
21 support, know that we are here for
22 you. Okay. So I just want to
23 apologize for just how traumatic
24 and triggering I'm sure that was

1 for so many people and/or families
2 who may have been impacted through
3 the years.

4 Please state your name
5 for the record and proceed with
6 your testimony.

7 DR. RICE: My name is
8 Melissa Rice, and I'm representing
9 the First Responders Symposium of
10 Philadelphia. A few years ago I
11 was asked to put together and speak
12 at a symposium for first
13 responders. And I asked the
14 question why me. I've been a
15 mental health advocate for years,
16 but I have never been a first
17 responder so how could I relate to
18 these people.

19 When I started
20 organizing it and meeting with
21 these speakers on Zoom, I could
22 just feel their stories, their pain
23 of losing loved ones, of struggling
24 with post-traumatic stress

1 disorder, and I knew there was a
2 reason I was here. I knew that
3 although I couldn't experience what
4 they went through on the job, we
5 all had mental health. We all had
6 things going on. And if we could
7 start the conversation and talk
8 about mental health issues and
9 bring this awareness about, it's
10 very important. But we have to
11 focus on those left behind who are
12 lost to suicide, those family
13 members, particularly I met Regan,
14 whose husband was a Philadelphia
15 police officer, died by suicide,
16 leaving 2-month-old twins at home.

17 Her health care was
18 being cut off, funeral expenses and
19 she's meant to deal with that, but
20 all the grief she's facing. I've
21 heard this twice already. We're
22 very lucky it's a low number. Do
23 you know why it's a low number?
24 Because it's not in uniform. It's

1 at home. Also, if you have
2 addiction or overdose, suicide and
3 overdose statistics are not
4 accurate because they will label
5 them as an overdose or a suicide
6 when it could have been either/or.
7 So we don't even know the exact
8 numbers of this.

9 If you look at the
10 stats, 13.5 of out of 100,000
11 people represent the general
12 population that will die by
13 suicide. 18 or 19 of first
14 responders out of 100,000 represent
15 that. It may not seem like a big
16 jump, but going from 13 to 18
17 because of the high-stress
18 pressures of this job and going
19 from one scene to the next scene to
20 the next scene without being able
21 to cope with what happened, if I
22 was in a traumatic situation, I
23 would have time to back off and
24 cope.

1 They are literally
2 risking their lives every day going
3 into scene, scene and not being
4 able to cope with these things.
5 And you want to talk about
6 prevention? Trust me, there's a
7 lot of prevention. This man
8 sitting next to me, peer support,
9 employee assistance, I have sat in
10 with his firefighters and done
11 workshops with him.

12 I've done workshops with
13 the Philadelphia Police Department
14 who just started their peer support
15 program with Sergeant Janine Brown.
16 So there is prevention happening.
17 I don't want to hear that. There
18 are conferences, there are
19 symposiums, there is awareness.
20 But when someone is struggling with
21 post-traumatic stress disorder or
22 mental illness, you look at my
23 life, my life's perfect. You think
24 at 15 playing sports, having a

1 great life with family, I thought I
2 was going to attempt to end my
3 life? No. Why, because I'm
4 struggling so much. And I look at
5 that struggle and then I see it
6 times a million by these first
7 responders who are struggling every
8 day with these scenes that they're
9 seeing.

10 And I forget the one
11 person that's closest to me. My
12 husband, who served as a police
13 officer for only one year, and he
14 talked to me the other day and I
15 forgot the situation he went
16 through, that he was a rookie and
17 it was his first couple months and
18 he was called to a train station
19 where there was a suicide. He was
20 20-something years old and walked
21 in, and what he saw of the remains
22 haunted him for months.

23 And you know what, I was
24 so young that I didn't know how to

1 deal with it. And it's really
2 crazy that I've been in this work
3 since 21. I'm 38, and the fact
4 that last week is the first time
5 I've remembered he went through
6 this. I totally forgot my own
7 husband went through that. And
8 although he's not a police officer
9 anymore and I'm proud of the work
10 he does, I think of that one scene
11 and him waking up and him thinking
12 about this and that replaying in
13 his head, and wonder that these
14 first responders who were on the
15 job for I don't care if it's three
16 months to years about what they see
17 all the time, we have to focus on
18 these families.

19 And Regan, who was left
20 to raise her twins alone with no
21 medical benefits. How is the
22 funeral going to get paid? We have
23 to start focusing because you know
24 what, our first responders serve

1 us, but their families sacrifice so
2 much. And, yes, it's great that we
3 don't have a huge number of suicide
4 in Philadelphia. But there are
5 reasons for that because those
6 numbers are not being shown.

7 And I can 100% tell you
8 that one of the people that spoke
9 on the panel at the first responder
10 symposium was a police officer who
11 went in and found their coworker
12 who was supposed to be coming to
13 their shift, they didn't show up, a
14 police officer in Philadelphia
15 because they took their own life
16 that morning. So what does that
17 mean? Because they were home in
18 their pajamas, taking their own
19 life from the stress of the job, we
20 don't focus on that person.

21 And I know you all are
22 in support of this and I appreciate
23 it. But I have to testify with
24 this passion because mental health

1 is so important. And I promise
2 myself, I don't care if it's young
3 adults, kids, 3-year-olds all the
4 way up to first responders, to our
5 amazing older citizens, I'm going
6 to fight for mental health. I'm
7 going to fight for prevention and
8 those resources, but I'm also going
9 to fight for supporting those
10 families that are left behind
11 because of suicide, because of
12 first responders who are literally
13 risking their lives for us and
14 those families that are
15 sacrificing. Thank you so much.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
18 very much for your testimony and
19 for being here and for sharing your
20 personal story.

21 Please state your name
22 for the record and proceed with
23 your testimony.

24 MR. KANE: Good

1 afternoon. My name is Thomas Kane.
2 I'm representing Local 22. I'm
3 also a 34-year veteran of the
4 Philadelphia Fire Department.
5 Currently, my position at Local 22
6 is coordinator of the peer support
7 team. Myself and Mike Yeager,
8 retired Battalion Chief, started
9 out about 10 years ago. With the
10 department, I'm the employee
11 relations officer. I oversee the
12 employee assistance program.

13 So our representative
14 from risk management did mention we
15 do have prevention and we do, we
16 have tons of it. Also mentioned
17 the medical examiner's office,
18 which we don't really deal with
19 medical examiner's office at all.
20 MEU, I believe, medical evaluation
21 office, Dr. Barnett, who texted me,
22 says, no, no, hasn't lost anybody
23 yet. But we deal with this every
24 day.

1 As a matter of fact,
2 today, today's a beautiful day. I
3 don't know if you noticed it.
4 Outside, it's beautiful. But even
5 more so when I stepped out of the
6 room, I got a text and one of our
7 guys is okay. Last night he
8 wasn't. We were at his house until
9 about 1 o'clock in the morning and
10 he's okay. It's a beautiful day,
11 and for some people it is and they
12 go on, they have moments and
13 they're able to get past those
14 moments. And some people aren't.
15 And all the prevention you try, it
16 doesn't stop you from trying. You
17 can't stop every suicide, but you
18 can try and you don't stop trying.
19 And that's what we do.
20 We're out there. We talk to our
21 members. And so many things that
22 were said by you folks,
23 Councilpeople, with the last
24 testimony is so true. It's like

1 what do we need to say. You're
2 saying it all and it's so true.
3 We're out there. We have
4 trainings. We talk. I try and get
5 as close as I can to people to let
6 them know the message, you're
7 important, everything you do is
8 important.

9 This job takes a lot out
10 of us. It does. And suicide is a
11 result of this job at times and
12 substance use and depression and a
13 lot of things. But suicide is
14 there and some folks -- like the
15 connection, I notice in there
16 there's language about it has to be
17 certain things. Yes, yes, we can
18 take that and draw those lines and
19 connect those dots, yes. And the
20 number is small. And that's great
21 that the number is small. I want
22 the number to be -- you want it to
23 be zero. It's not going to be
24 though, but we're going to do our

1 best everything we can do.

2 And again, the

3 resources. Like I said, with Local

4 22 -- and I want to give credit to

5 the people who've helped me out,

6 with Local 22 and within the

7 department. So when I got in this

8 position as ERO, Commissioner Thiel

9 was commissioner at the time.

10 After him, Commissioner Murphy and

11 now Commissioner Thompson. 100%

12 support, they back me up 100%.

13 On the union side, Eddie

14 Marks, Andy Thomas before him and

15 Mike Bresnan now, 100% support. So

16 we have that commitment at the top.

17 Missy mentioned Regan. What's

18 Regan -- Regan is her first name.

19 Regan Regan, right, how about that.

20 And Kevin was the police officer

21 who died and her benefits were to

22 be terminated.

23 And what happens is --

24 what could happen depending on the

1 person's situation, they could be
2 actually -- if somebody completes
3 suicide on the 27th of the month,
4 three days later their benefits are
5 cut off, if they don't have the
6 right pension time in and stuff
7 like that. That's what can happen.
8 This bill would take that to
9 another level where they're going
10 to have benefits throughout and it
11 makes a big difference. It really
12 does.

13 Like I said, we've had
14 enough suicides that we've seen,
15 and they're fewer now too. They
16 are fewer. And that is a result of
17 prevention and the outreach we do
18 to our members. But again, there
19 are folks who can't cope. And I
20 don't want to say fail, but they
21 lose the battle. And that's where
22 this could help.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you

1 for your decade of work, and longer
2 than that, but decade of work
3 specifically in this area and your
4 34-plus years of service to the
5 city and all that you continue to
6 do. We certainly appreciate both
7 of you for being here, for staying
8 for the entire hearing and just
9 uplifting the importance of the
10 work that you are doing.

11 Again, just for anyone
12 who's listening, you can call 988
13 for additional help or assistance.
14 But we want to just say thank you,
15 thank you for the hard work that
16 you are doing. It's hard work, but
17 it's heart work. So thank you
18 very, very much for that work.
19 Okay.

20 Are there any questions
21 for these two witnesses before we
22 hear the reading of the testimony
23 on behalf of Regan Faulk?

24 Please, Madam Vice-

1 Chair.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

3 Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

4 And I want to thank you
5 all for being here, hearing the
6 testimony. And getting a briefing
7 from my colleagues about some of
8 the commentary and some of the
9 decisions by the Administration is
10 extremely disappointing. I can
11 only think of what it is like, and
12 I praise God that I haven't had
13 this personal experience, but what
14 it is like when you have a sudden
15 loss, whether that be a homicide, a
16 suicide, you know, a naturally-
17 occurring death and all of a
18 sudden, if to use your example,
19 sir, if you pass away let's say on
20 the 27th, that on the 30th now you
21 no longer have benefits, and trying
22 to figure out and scramble and just
23 in the midst of grief is just --
24 it's incomprehensible.

1 The idea that we
2 wouldn't be more thoughtful about
3 making sure that people have what
4 they need to be able to get through
5 at least this grieving period. And
6 then far beyond that, there's so
7 much more that we could be doing on
8 this issue around suicide and what
9 happens when a city employee
10 commits suicide.

11 But beyond that, we know
12 that there are certain positions
13 that are more stressful than
14 others. We know that particularly
15 for police and for firefighters and
16 paramedics and, you know, there are
17 certain positions, I would say
18 correctional officers are in that
19 as well, and there's a number of
20 different positions, but we know
21 that those are positions that give
22 a level of stress or level of
23 stress on our employees that some
24 other positions likely don't affect

1 them the same way. And so, with
2 the cause and effect.

3 For example, we used to
4 dispute that, say, for example,
5 asbestos caused cancer. There was
6 a time when we -- well, we said
7 there was no connection, but we
8 know better now. And there was a
9 time when we said, okay, well, lead
10 paint doesn't cause any sort of
11 issues with young children. We
12 know better now. We know that
13 there is a direct relationship
14 between exposure to asbestos or
15 lead paint or to the health effects
16 of an individual. So we should
17 also by now know that those who are
18 in these very critical positions
19 are affected in a way that could
20 more likely lead to depression,
21 anxiety and ultimately suicide.
22 And we should know that by now.
23 It's not a secret. It's not hard
24 to figure out. This is something

1 that you know.

2 To me, it's kind of like
3 common sense at this point. And
4 so, there's just so much more that
5 we can do as a city. I think that
6 this bill is going to be a
7 gamechanger and I'm happy to
8 support it. But even in supporting
9 it, I would like to see really the
10 city administration take a more
11 comprehensive, just sort of embrace
12 what it is that needs to happen
13 here. Just embrace what we're
14 trying to do and help our city
15 employees do, you know, our city
16 employees and their families when
17 these occurrences happen.

18 Just as an aside, I have
19 a relative, my sister, who works
20 for SEPTA and she works in the
21 subway system. And on more than
22 one occasion, she's seen someone
23 walk in front of a train. And so,
24 when people see these kinds of

1 traumatic events, when you talked
2 about your husband and how when he
3 saw a suicide victim and he just
4 replayed it over and over and over
5 in his mind, there's an effect.
6 There is absolutely an effect. And
7 so, I say all that to say that,
8 Madam Chair, I look forward to
9 supporting this piece of
10 legislation wholeheartedly.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
13 very much, Vice-Chair Bass.

14 The Chair now recognizes
15 Councilmember Driscoll.

16 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

17 Thank you, Madam Chair.

18 I just wanted to state
19 for the record, Dr. Rice, thank you
20 for what you're doing. You are an
21 asset to the fire department. And,
22 Tom Kane, I've been following your
23 career with admiration for years.
24 Thank you for what you do for the

1 men and women of Philadelphia Fire
2 Department. We're lucky to have
3 you guys advocating for our fellow
4 city workers, that we go to sleep
5 at night and they're awake waiting
6 for that call. So I just want
7 to -- I'll be supporting this bill
8 and thank you.

9 MR. KANE: Thank you,
10 Councilmember. Just want to add
11 one thing real quick, if I may.
12 One of the things like when I talk
13 to the folks, when I go out to the
14 stations and talk to them, I always
15 try and throw this out there.
16 What's the most important thing we
17 do every day? Go home. And people
18 say save lives, do this and
19 everything. And yes, we're all
20 going to do all that anyway. But
21 the most important thing we do is
22 go home. And that's what we want
23 to do.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

Committee on Finance

1 RICHARDSON: Thank you.

2 The Chair now recognizes

3 Dr. Ahmad.

4 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:

5 Thank you, Madam Chair.

6 I just have one

7 sentence. Thank you for your

8 humanity. We need nothing else.

9 Thank you.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you

12 both so much for being here, and

13 thank you again for all of your

14 work. And I just apologize for

15 today. It was very, very rough.

16 Brianna, if you could

17 approach the witness table to read

18 the testimony on behalf of Regan.

19 And I believe I was just reading

20 the previous transcript from the

21 last hearing that was in the

22 Committee on Public Safety. That

23 the witness you're reading

24 testimony on behalf of was at the

1 last hearing on the Committee on
2 Public Safety. Within the
3 transcript of that hearing, it did
4 notate the city gave a preliminary
5 estimate of \$1.3 million to \$1.6
6 million to respond to Councilmember
7 Landau's request, but that it could
8 potentially be more than that. And
9 that was directly from the
10 transcript.

11 So, Brianna, please
12 approach. State your name and then
13 the name of the individual you're
14 giving testimony on behalf of and
15 read the testimony. Okay.

16 (Witness approached
17 witness table.)

18 MS. WAKEFIELD: Good
19 afternoon, members of the Committee
20 on Finance. My name is Brianna
21 Wakefield. I'm here today to read
22 Regan Faulks' testimony into the
23 record. They're going to know,
24 Kevin said to me as we were

1 standing in the local emergency
2 room Thursday, October 6th. Who's
3 going to know what, I replied.

4 The department. They're
5 going to know something's wrong
6 with me. We're here and it'll be
7 reported back and I'll lose my job.
8 How is it possible that in the
9 middle of a mental health crisis,
10 my husband's biggest concern was
11 losing his job and his credibility.
12 Less than 36 hours later, he was
13 gone.

14 October 8, 2022, my
15 world came crashing down. I not
16 only became a widow, but our twin
17 1-year-old boys lost their father.
18 There's a lot of uncertainty
19 surrounding that day and what
20 happened and what went on. But
21 there's one thing I am 100% certain
22 about, and that's that my husband
23 didn't have PTSD and wasn't in a
24 mental health crisis from spending

1 time with his family.

2 He had PTSD and was in
3 crisis because of the stressors of
4 this job. There's no question that
5 first responders are exposed to
6 more traumatic events in their
7 career than the average human is in
8 their lifetime. In fact, they're
9 500 times more likely. And a study
10 done by First Health has showed
11 that first responders witness
12 anywhere between 400 and 600
13 traumatic events in a 20-year
14 career.

15 85% of those people
16 report symptoms related to mental
17 health conditions. 70% of that 85%
18 will never use the mental health
19 resources provided to them. 57%
20 say they don't ask for help because
21 they're scared of repercussions
22 associated. 40% specify that the
23 fear is being demoted or fired.
24 How is this possible?

1 How can the men and
2 women that put their lives on the
3 line for all of us, day-in and
4 day-out, fear their own
5 departments, scared of the benefits
6 that are being provided to them and
7 that they're working hard for?
8 Meanwhile, police and firefighters
9 are more likely to die by suicide
10 than on the job. It just doesn't
11 add up.

12 In October 2020, my
13 husband was on the front line of
14 the Walter Wallace riots, where he
15 was shot with bricks, glass and a
16 multitude of weapons, eventually
17 being injured in the line of duty.
18 Days after the riots, he got in an
19 email with information on how to
20 contact EAP. That was it. We
21 contacted EAP the week we got the
22 email. It took four phone calls
23 and countless attempts at getting
24 an appointment with someone before

1 we gave up.

2 In October of 2022, days
3 after Kevin's passing, I looked at
4 my family and said, we need to do
5 something, we can't just sit here
6 and let this happen to other
7 people. That day we came up with
8 Kevin Regan Family Foundation. We
9 are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit
10 organization committed to helping
11 families of fallen first responders
12 in the tri-state area, specifically
13 those who have taken their own
14 lives or who struggle with mental
15 illness. We provide not only
16 financial relief, but also the
17 mental health resources needed to
18 support struggling frontline
19 fighters and their loved ones.

20 We do the job that we
21 realized was so lacking after
22 Kevin's passing. We communicate
23 with the families, send initial
24 care packages, pay funeral costs,

1 pay mortgages and do whatever we
2 can to provide benefits for the
3 family. Because in a time of great
4 unexpected loss, money should never
5 be your first thought or burden.
6 We were born out of our very own
7 experience.

8 One, officers are scared
9 to use their health insurance.
10 They're scared of the big brother
11 aspect that the department has on
12 them. Astonished at the statistics
13 of how many people want or need
14 services, but won't use the ones
15 provided, we created a program
16 where first responders and their
17 families can sign up for mental
18 health services as well as regular
19 health care anonymously, quickly
20 and at zero cost to you or your
21 family.

22 Two, suicide in general,
23 but suicide related to PTSD is
24 somehow seen as lesser than death

1 than those that die in the line of
2 duty. Suicide should be pursued as
3 relentlessly as any other cop
4 killer, together, publicly and
5 without unabating courage. I won't
6 stand here and diminish in any way
7 those who make the ultimate
8 sacrifice, those who get dressed
9 for work and never come home.
10 Those people are heroes.

11 My question is, how is
12 suicide different. Both are
13 tragedies at the job. My husband
14 put on that uniform more days than
15 not, days, nights, weekends,
16 holidays, anniversaries, birthdays,
17 you name it. He left me and the
18 kids at home and went to work. The
19 only difference is his mental load
20 became unbearable. And on that
21 day, he didn't drive himself to
22 work. He took his own life in our
23 bedroom, what was supposed to be
24 our safe space.

1 We're all aware of what
2 happens when an officer dies in the
3 line of duty. There's an
4 outpouring of resources. There's
5 benefits for families. There's
6 stains to lift the emotional and
7 mental burden. When an officer
8 dies of suicide, there is a quiet
9 and uncomfortable, dishonorable,
10 quiet.

11 Three, money should
12 never be your first worry when you
13 lose your person. About a week
14 after losing Kevin, I got a phone
15 call to let me know that his last
16 check was coming to me in the form
17 of a paper check. However, it was
18 only \$900 because I had prorated
19 and stopped his salary the day he
20 died. I was also informed that I
21 had only 18 days to find health
22 insurance because it would be
23 expiring on October 31st for myself
24 and my kids.

1 My son Declan has Long
2 QT Syndrome, a syndrome that is
3 genetically inherited. In this
4 case, from his father. He sees a
5 cardiologist four times per year.
6 He takes medicine three times per
7 day, every single day since he was
8 7 months old. With police health
9 insurance that bottle is \$10 a
10 month. Out of pocket or with other
11 insurance, that can range anywhere
12 from \$275 to \$500 per month.

13 Seven days after Kevin
14 was gone, the panic set in:
15 mortgage bills, no health
16 insurance, twin toddlers, daycare,
17 everything hit me like a ton of
18 bricks. Three days after that
19 panic, I returned to work, only 10
20 days after the most traumatic loss
21 of my life. I sat back at the desk
22 in Conshohocken, Pa, left my kids
23 at home with their grandmother who
24 was using PTO, and I went to work

1 all because the burden of money and
2 life had just been dropped on my
3 shoulders.

4 I know many families
5 have had their health insurance in
6 days after the loss of their loved
7 one. There is no monetary benefit.
8 It's just you and your surrounding
9 family left to pick up the pieces
10 of something you never wanted.
11 You're submerged into a life you
12 didn't choose. About two weeks
13 after the loss of Kevin and only a
14 week left of health insurance, I
15 realized I needed to stand up and
16 fight for something. There was no
17 way I was able to survive on my one
18 salary, and now adding health
19 insurance bills and copays.

20 I went to the FOP and
21 asked for health insurance for
22 myself and the kids. If I couldn't
23 have his salary, could I at least
24 have health insurance. The

1 President of the FOP granted me
2 five years of health insurance,
3 expiring on October 2027. He told
4 me when he resigned as the
5 President of the FOP, he would look
6 into extending it before he left.
7 He never did. I've called four to
8 five times. I've spoken to the
9 Police Commissioner twice, and
10 still nothing has been done.

11 After fighting for
12 health insurance, I wondered if
13 there was anything else. A woman
14 from the FOP helped me get Kevin's
15 10-year pension. I was not
16 expecting it, but it felt very
17 lucky to get. After speaking with
18 multiple other Philly police
19 widows, it seems that my loud
20 outspokenness is what grants me
21 those two things I receive. These
22 other women receive nothing,
23 despite being in the same position,
24 children, now the sole provider,

1 etc.

2 The federal government
3 marks the suicide of a public
4 safety officer as an on-duty death
5 if PTSD is an underlying condition
6 of that death certificate. So why
7 do we as a state, city and
8 department not recognize that.

9 There is a one-time payout benefit
10 for widows or next of kin. The
11 amount changes yearly, but for 2022
12 the payout was \$422,000. It takes
13 about three years to receive.

14 In those three years, I
15 was essentially forced to sell my
16 home in Pennsylvania, move to
17 Florida to be near family and have
18 help with child care. I lost my
19 job in March of 2023 due to not
20 being in office enough because I
21 needed to be at home with my kids
22 for illness, doctor's appointments,
23 whatever the case may be.

24 I'm functioning as a

1 single unit, something I never
2 dreamed I'd be. I tell you all of
3 this not so you'll take pity on me
4 and my family. We are so lucky.
5 My children are so loved. I was
6 able to get a new job that is much
7 better for myself and for my
8 children. I bought a new home,
9 much smaller than the last, but
10 still filled with the love and
11 safety my children need.

12 I'm working as hard as I
13 can to give my kids the life Kev
14 and I had planned for them, all
15 without the help of the city and
16 the department. So in the case of
17 having a death benefit, not only is
18 it a need for these families,
19 especially the ones that aren't as
20 lucky as I, but it is a want for a
21 chance to grieve and adjust to a
22 new life we didn't sign up for.

23 At Kevin's funeral, one
24 of his fellow 9th District officers

1 said to me, he signed the paperwork
2 to put his life on the line, and
3 somehow now at the expense of the
4 job, you've given the city your
5 everything and barely are
6 surviving. I support Bill 260521
7 because it provides much needed
8 compassion and stability for the
9 families of the City of
10 Philadelphia during the most
11 excruciating point in their lives.

12 By modifying the
13 circumstances under which service-
14 connected death benefits are
15 granted, this legislation helps
16 ensure that surviving spouses and
17 families receive the support they
18 deserve during one of the most
19 difficult periods of their lives.
20 When a husband or wife loses their
21 partner, their focus should be on
22 grieving, healing, and caring for
23 their family, not navigating
24 financial insurgency or

1 bureaucratic obstacles.

2 This bill recognizes the
3 sacrifices made by public employees
4 and offers their loved ones greater
5 security and peace of mind. It is
6 a fair and humane measure that
7 honors those who serve the city
8 while protecting the families that
9 they leave behind. Thank you for
10 the opportunity today to share my
11 story and thank you for wanting to
12 change for all of us. Being here
13 is leaps further than I ever
14 thought we'd get. So thank you.
15 I'll leave you with one last
16 question. My husband, like many
17 others, sign up to protect you.
18 Who is going to protect them? This
19 concludes Regan Faulk's testimony.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Brianna.
22 Thank you for reading that
23 testimony and for working with
24 Regan Faulk for all of these months

Committee on Finance

1 and just working on the
2 legislation. We are going to get
3 clarification on one question that
4 we have and proceed from there.

5 Are there any other
6 witnesses here to testify on Bill
7 No. 260521?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Is there anyone here
11 whose name has not been called and
12 anyone who'd like to give public
13 comment?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: Okay. Are there any
17 other witnesses here to testify or
18 give public comment on any of the
19 previous bills who were unable to
20 do so?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
24 thank you for being here. And

Committee on Finance

1 given that there are no further
2 witnesses, panels or comments, we
3 will conclude our public hearing.

4 We will now begin the
5 public meeting on the previously-
6 mentioned bills. Clerk, I ask that
7 you please call the roll to take
8 attendance. And members who are in
9 attendance will please indicate
10 that you are present when your name
11 is called.

12 THE CLERK:
13 Councilmember Jones.

14 (No response.)

15 THE CLERK:
16 Councilmember Thomas.

17 (No response.)

18 THE CLERK:
19 Councilmember Ahmad.

20 COUNCILWOMAN AHMAD:
21 Present.

22 THE CLERK:
23 Councilmember Driscoll.

24 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

Committee on Finance

1 Present.

2 THE CLERK: Vice-Chair

3 Bass.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

5 Present.

6 THE CLERK: Chair

7 Gilmore Richardson.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Thank you. A quorum
10 of the committee is present, and we
11 thank you all again for being here.
12 Prior to recognizing for the
13 motions, we will be holding at this
14 time for the vote, holding 260509
15 and 260527 and also 260521. We are
16 only holding 521 to get an answer
17 to a question. If we could get
18 that answer now, we will be able to
19 move on. So I'll pause for one
20 moment.

21 Okay. We will now
22 resume with the public meeting and
23 thank you all so much for your
24 patience. At the onset of this

Committee on Finance

1 public meeting, we are going to
2 hold voting on 260509 and 260527 as
3 well as 260521 until we receive
4 clarification regarding one
5 question from a member of the
6 committee regarding who this will
7 impact.

8 And so, we will now
9 recognize -- I'll recognize
10 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
11 on Bill No. 260564.

12 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:
13 Thank you, Chair.

14 I move that Bill No.
15 260564 be reported from this
16 committee with a favorable
17 recommendation and further move
18 that the rules of Council be
19 suspended to permit first reading
20 of this bill at the next session of
21 Council.

22 (Duly seconded.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Chair notes for the

Committee on Finance

1 record that Councilmember Bass
2 seconds the motion. It has been
3 moved and properly seconded that
4 Bill No. 260564 be reported from
5 this committee with a favorable
6 recommendation and further move
7 that the rules of Council be
8 suspended as to permit first
9 reading of this bill at the next
10 session of Council.

11 All those in favor of
12 the motion will indicate by stating
13 aye.

14 (Aye.)

15 THE CLERK: Any opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 THE CLERK: The ayes
18 have it and the motion carries.
19 Bill No. 260564 will be reported
20 from this committee with a
21 favorable recommendation and a
22 request that the rules of Council
23 be suspended as to permit first
24 reading of this legislation at the

Committee on Finance

1 next session of Council.

2 The Chair recognizes
3 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
4 on Bill No. 260510.

5 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

6 Thank you, Chair.

7 I move that Bill No.
8 260510 be reported from this
9 committee with a favorable
10 recommendation and further move
11 that the rules of Council be
12 suspended to permit first reading
13 of this bill at the next session of
14 Council.

15 (Duly seconded.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: I note for the record
18 that Councilmember Bass seconds the
19 motion. It has been moved and
20 properly seconded that Bill No.
21 260510 be reported from this
22 committee with a favorable
23 recommendation and further move
24 that the rules of Council be

Committee on Finance

1 suspended as to permit first
2 reading of this bill at the next
3 session of Council.

4 All those in favor will
5 indicate by stating aye.

6 (Aye.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: All those opposed?

9 (No response.)

10 THE CLERK: The ayes
11 have it and the motion carries.
12 And Bill No. 260510 will be
13 reported from this committee with a
14 favorable recommendation with a
15 request that the rules of Council
16 be suspended as to permit for its
17 reading at the next session of
18 Council.

19 The Chair recognizes
20 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
21 on the amendment to Bill No.
22 260508.

23 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: I
24 offer an amendment to Bill No.

Committee on Finance

1 260508. A copy of the amendment
2 has been circulated to all members
3 of the committee and move that the
4 amendment to Bill No. 260508 be
5 approved.

6 (Duly seconded.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
9 the record that Councilmember Bass
10 seconds the motion. It has been
11 moved and properly seconded that
12 the amendment to Bill No. 260508 be
13 approved.

14 All those in favor of
15 the motion will indicate by stating
16 aye.

17 (Aye.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: All those opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it, and
23 the amendment to Bill No. 260508
24 has been approved.

Committee on Finance

1 The Chair now recognizes
2 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
3 on Bill No. 260508 as amended.

4 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

5 Thank you, Chair.

6 I move that Bill No.
7 260508 as amended be reported from
8 this committee with a favorable
9 recommendation and further move
10 that the rules of Council be
11 suspended to permit first reading
12 of this bill at the next session of
13 Council.

14 (Duly seconded.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: It has been moved and
17 properly seconded that Bill No.
18 260508 as amended be reported from
19 this committee with a favorable
20 recommendation and further move
21 that the rules of Council be
22 suspended as to permit first
23 reading of this bill at the next
24 session of Council.

Committee on Finance

1 All those in favor of
2 the motion will indicate by stating
3 aye.

4 (Aye.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

6 RICHARDSON: All those opposed?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
10 the motion carries. Bill No.
11 260508 as amended will be reported
12 from this committee with a
13 favorable recommendation with a
14 request that the rules of Council
15 be suspended as to permit first
16 reading at the next session of
17 Council.

18 The Chair recognizes
19 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
20 on the amendment to Bill No.
21 260513.

22 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: I
23 offer an amendment to Bill No.
24 260513. A copy of the amendment

Committee on Finance

1 has been circulated to all members
2 of this committee. I move that the
3 amendment to Bill No. 260513 be
4 approved.

5 (Duly seconded.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Thank you. The Chair
8 notes for the record that
9 Councilmember Bass seconds the
10 motion. It has been moved and
11 properly seconded that the
12 amendment to Bill No. 260513 be
13 approved.

14 All those in favor of
15 the motion will signify by stating
16 aye.

17 (Aye.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: All those opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
23 the motion carries.

24 The Chair recognizes

Committee on Finance

1 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
2 on Bill No. 260513 as amended.

3 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

4 Thank you, Chair.

5 I move that Bill No.
6 260513 as amended be reported from
7 this committee with a favorable
8 recommendation and further move
9 that the rules of Council be
10 suspended to permit first reading
11 of this bill at the next session of
12 Council.

13 (Duly seconded.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

15 RICHARDSON: Thank you. It has
16 been moved and properly seconded
17 that Bill No. 260513 as amended be
18 reported from this committee with a
19 favorable recommendation and
20 further move that the rules of
21 Council be suspended as to permit
22 first reading of this bill at the
23 next session of Council.

24 All those in favor of

Committee on Finance

1 the motion will indicate by stating
2 aye.

3 (Aye.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: All those opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
9 the motion carries. Bill No.
10 260513 as amended will be reported
11 from this committee with a
12 favorable recommendation with a
13 request that the rules of Council
14 be suspended as to permit first
15 reading at our next session of
16 Council.

17 The Chair now recognizes
18 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
19 on Bill No. 260507.

20 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

21 Thank you, Chair.

22 I move that Bill No.

23 260507 be reported from this
24 committee with a favorable

Committee on Finance

1 recommendation and further move
2 that the rules of Council be
3 suspended to permit first reading
4 of this bill at the next session of
5 Council.

6 (Duly seconded.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Chair notes for the
9 record that Councilmember Bass
10 seconds the motion.

11 It has been moved and
12 properly seconded that Bill No.
13 260507 be reported from this
14 committee with a favorable
15 recommendation and further move
16 that the rules of Council be
17 suspended as to permit first
18 reading of this bill at the next
19 session of Council.

20 All those in favor of
21 the motion will indicate by stating
22 aye.

23 (Aye.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

Committee on Finance

1 RICHARDSON: All those opposed?

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
5 the motion carries. Bill No.
6 260507 will be reported from this
7 committee with a favorable
8 recommendation with a request that
9 the rules of Council be suspended
10 as to permit first reading at the
11 next session of Council.

12 The Chair now recognizes
13 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
14 on Bill No. 260511.

15 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

16 Thank you, Chair.

17 I move that Bill No.
18 260511 be reported from this
19 committee with a favorable
20 recommendation and further move
21 that the rules of Council be
22 suspended to permit first reading
23 of this bill at the next session of
24 Council.

Committee on Finance

1 (Duly seconded.)

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
4 the record that Councilmember Bass
5 seconds the motion. It has been
6 moved and properly seconded that
7 Bill No. 260511 be reported from
8 this committee with a favorable
9 recommendation and further move
10 that the rules of Council be
11 suspended as to permit first
12 reading of this bill at the next
13 session of Council.

14 All those in favor of
15 the motion will indicate by stating
16 aye.

17 (Aye.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: All those opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
23 the motion carries and Bill No.
24 260511 will be reported from this

1 committee with a favorable
2 recommendation with a request that
3 the rules of Council be suspended
4 as to permit first reading of this
5 bill at the next session of
6 Council.

7 The Chair now recognizes
8 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
9 on the amendment to Bill No.
10 260512.

11 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: I
12 offer an amendment to Bill No.
13 260512. A copy of the amendment
14 has been circulated to all members
15 of this committee. I move that the
16 amendment to Bill No. 260512 be
17 approved.

18 (Duly seconded.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
20 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
21 the record that Councilmember Bass
22 seconds the motion. It has been
23 moved and properly seconded that
24 the amendment to Bill No. 260512 be

Committee on Finance

1 approved.

2 All those in favor of
3 the motion will indicate by stating
4 aye.

5 (Aye.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: All those opposed?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
11 the amendment to Bill No. 260512
12 has been approved.

13 The Chair now recognizes
14 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
15 on Bill No. 260512 as amended.

16 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

17 Thank you, Chair.

18 I move that Bill No.
19 260512 as amended be reported from
20 this committee with a favorable
21 recommendation and further move
22 that the rules of Council be
23 suspended to permit first reading
24 of this bill at the next session of

Committee on Finance

1 Council.

2 (Duly seconded.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
5 the record that Councilmember Bass
6 seconds the motion. It has been
7 moved and properly seconded that
8 Bill No. 260512 as amended be
9 reported from this committee with a
10 favorable recommendation and
11 further move that the rules of
12 Council be suspended as to permit
13 first reading of this bill at the
14 next session of Council.

15 All those in favor of
16 the motion will indicate by stating
17 aye.

18 (Aye.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: Those opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
24 the motion carries. Bill No.

Committee on Finance

1 260512 as amended will be reported
2 from this committee with a
3 favorable recommendation with a
4 request that the rules of Council
5 be suspended so as to permit first
6 reading of this bill for the next
7 session of Council.

8 The Chair recognizes
9 Councilmember Driscoll for a motion
10 on Bill No. 260299.

11 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

12 Thank you, Chair.

13 I move that Bill No.
14 260299 be reported from this
15 committee with a favorable
16 recommendation and further move
17 that the rules of Council be
18 suspended to permit first reading
19 of this bill at the next session of
20 Council.

21 (Duly seconded.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Chair notes for the
24 record that Councilmember Bass

Committee on Finance

1 seconds the motion. It has been
2 moved and properly seconded that
3 Bill No. 260299 be reported from
4 this committee with a favorable
5 recommendation and further move
6 that the rules of Council be
7 suspended as to permit first
8 reading of this bill at the next
9 session of Council.

10 All those in favor of
11 the motion will indicate by stating
12 aye.

13 (Aye.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

15 RICHARDSON: Those opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
19 the motion carries. Bill No.
20 260299 will be reported from this
21 committee with a favorable
22 recommendation with a request that
23 the rules of Council be suspended
24 as to permit first reading at the

Committee on Finance

1 next session of Council.

2 I want to go back to
3 Bill No. 260509. The Chair
4 recognizes Councilmember Driscoll
5 for a motion on Bill No. 260509.

6 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

7 Thank you, Chair.

8 I move that Bill No.
9 260509 be reported from this
10 committee with a favorable
11 recommendation and further move
12 that the rules of Council be
13 suspended to permit first reading
14 of this bill at the next session of
15 Council.

16 (Duly seconded.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: Chair notes for the
19 record that Councilmember Bass
20 seconds the motion. It has been
21 moved and properly seconded that
22 Bill No. 260509 be reported from
23 this committee with a favorable
24 recommendation and further move

Committee on Finance

1 that the rules of Council be
2 suspended as to permit first
3 reading of this bill at the next
4 session of Council.

5 All those in favor of
6 the motion will indicate by stating
7 aye.

8 (Aye.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Those opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
14 the motion carries. Bill No.
15 260509 will be reported from this
16 committee with a favorable
17 recommendation with a request that
18 the rules of Council be suspended
19 as to permit first reading at the
20 next session of Council.

21 To clarify for the
22 record, 260509 was regarding JJSC.
23 And then we are holding and not
24 voting on Bill No. 260527 or 260521

Committee on Finance

1 to receive further clarification
2 regarding those two bills.

3 The committee will now
4 stand in recess. City Council's
5 Committee on Finance will now stand
6 in recess until 4:30 p.m. today, at
7 which time we will go back into the
8 public meeting to address Bill Nos.
9 260527 and also 260521. Thank you
10 very much.

11 (Recess.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Good afternoon. Good
14 afternoon. We will now reconvene
15 City Council's Committee on
16 Finance, recognizing the presence
17 of Councilmember Cindy Bass,
18 Councilmember Curtis Jones, Jr.,
19 and thank you to our Council
20 President for appointing
21 Councilmember Jay Young to the
22 committee.

23 The committee will now
24 stand in recess until 5:30 p.m.

Committee on Finance

1 today, Wednesday, June 3rd. Thank
2 you.

3 (Recess.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Good afternoon. Good
6 afternoon. Thank you all so much
7 for being here for City Council's
8 Committee on Finance. We will now
9 move back into our public meeting.

10 The Chair now recognizes
11 Councilmember Bass for a motion on
12 the amendment to Bill No. 260521.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

14 Thank you, Madam Chair.

15 I offer an amendment to
16 Bill No. 260521. A copy of the
17 amendment has been circulated to
18 all members of the committee. I
19 move that the amendment to Bill No.
20 260521 be approved.

21 (Duly seconded.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
24 the record that Councilmember Jones

Committee on Finance

1 seconds the motion. It has been
2 moved and properly seconded that
3 the amendment to Bill No. 260521 be
4 approved.

5 All those in favor of
6 the motion will signify by stating
7 aye.

8 (Aye.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Those opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
14 the motion carries.

15 The Chair recognizes the
16 presence of Councilmember Dr. Nina
17 Ahmad, Councilmember Mike Driscoll,
18 Vice-Chair Bass and also
19 Councilmember Curtis Jones, Jr. and
20 in the gallery, Councilmember
21 Jeffrey Jay Young.

22 The Chair now recognizes
23 Councilmember Bass for a motion on
24 Bill No. 260521 as amended.

Committee on Finance

1 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:Thank
2 you, Madam Chair.

3 I move that Bill No.
4 260521 as amended be reported from
5 this committee with a favorable
6 recommendation and further move
7 that the rules of Council be
8 suspended to permit first reading
9 of this bill at the next session of
10 Council.

11 (Duly seconded.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
13 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
14 the record that Councilmember Jones
15 seconds the motion. It has been
16 moved and properly seconded that
17 Bill No. 260521 as amended be
18 reported from this committee with a
19 favorable recommendation and
20 further move that the rules of
21 Council be suspended as to permit
22 first reading of this bill at the
23 next session of Council.

24 All those in favor of

Committee on Finance

1 the motion will signify by stating
2 aye.

3 (Aye.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Those opposed?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
9 the motion carries.

10 For the record, we will
11 hold Bill No. 260527 until the call
12 of the Chair tomorrow morning,
13 Thursday, June 4th at 9:30 a.m.
14 Thank you very much. And the
15 committee will stand in recess
16 until Thursday, June 4th at
17 9:30 a.m. Thank you.

18 - - -

19 (Committee on Finance
20 concluded at 5:50 p.m.)

21 - - -

22

23

24

1 C E R T I F I C A T I O N

2 I, hereby certify that the proceedings
3 and evidence noted are contained fully and
4 accurately in the stenographic notes taken
5 by me in the foregoing matter, and that
6 this is a correct transcript of the same.
7

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12



13

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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19 (The foregoing certification of this
20 transcript does not apply to any
21 reproduction of the same by any means,
22 unless under the direct control and/or
23 supervision of the certifying reporter.)

24

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City of Philadelphia

Recessed Hearing Notice

The **Committee on Finance** of the Council of the City of Philadelphia held a Public Meeting on **Wednesday, June 3, 2026** and recessed the public Meeting until **Thursday, June 4, 2026 at 9:30 AM**, in **Room 400, City Hall**, to hear further testimony on the following:

- 250915** An Ordinance amending Chapter 19-2600 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled “Business Income and Receipts Taxes,” to establish a partial exemption for certain child care service businesses, all under certain terms and conditions.

- 260299** An Ordinance amending Section 9-803 of the Philadelphia Code, entitled “Fair Housing Commission,” and Section 20-304 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled “Compensation for Members of Boards, Commissions, Committees and Councils,” to amend the compensation paid to members of the Fair Housing Commission and delete superfluous provisions, all under certain terms and conditions.

- 260507** An Ordinance amending Chapter 19-1200 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled “Parking Tax”, to amend the definition of parking facility to exclude bus loading facilities from imposition of the Parking Tax, under certain terms and conditions.

- 260508** An Ordinance authorizing an increase in the non-electoral indebtedness of the City within the Pennsylvania constitutional limit; authorizing the Bond Committee to sell bonds at public or private negotiated sale, to provide funds toward various capital municipal purposes; providing for appropriations to the Sinking Fund Commission for the payment of such bonds; and authorizing agreements to provide credit or payment or liquidity sources for the bonds in connection with issuance of the bonds, and certain other actions.

City of Philadelphia

Recessed Hearing Notice

Committee on Finance

Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 10:00 AM

- 260509** An Ordinance authorizing the Commissioner of Public Property of The City of Philadelphia, on behalf of The City of Philadelphia and in cooperation with The Philadelphia Municipal Authority, to undertake a Project to promote the health, safety and welfare of the residents of The City of Philadelphia; authorizing and approving (i) a project including the refunding of bonds issued to refinance the New Youth Center Facility, (ii) one or more amendments to an existing Ground Lease, as previously amended, between The City of Philadelphia and The Philadelphia Municipal Authority, (iii) one or more amendments to an existing Prime Lease, as previously amended, between The City of Philadelphia and The Philadelphia Municipal Authority and the assignment of such amendments to a trustee and (iv) the obligation of The City of Philadelphia to pay rent under the Prime Lease, as amended, when due; approving the issuance by The Philadelphia Municipal Authority of bonds, in one or more series, from time to time, to pay the costs of such project; authorizing certain officers of The City of Philadelphia to enter into such lease amendments and to take such other actions as may be necessary or appropriate to accomplish the intent and purpose of this Ordinance; agreeing to be bound by each and every provision, covenant and agreement set forth in the Ground Lease and Prime Lease, each as amended; covenanting that The City of Philadelphia will make necessary appropriations in each of The City of Philadelphia's fiscal years to provide for, and make, rental payments when due under the Prime Lease, as amended; all under certain terms and conditions.
- 260510** An Ordinance authorizing the City Treasurer, on behalf of the City, to enter into a provider agreement with Citizens Bank National Association for provision of payroll banking services to the City, under certain terms and conditions.
- 260511** An Ordinance approving the Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Budget providing for expenditures for the capital purposes of the Philadelphia Gas Works, including the supplying of funds in connection therewith, and acknowledging receipt of the Revised Forecast of Capital Budgets for Fiscal Years 2028 through 2032, all under certain terms and conditions.
- 260512** An Ordinance approving the amendment of the Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Budget providing for expenditures for the capital purposes of the Philadelphia Gas Works (including the supplying of funds in connection therewith) subject to certain constraints and conditions and acknowledging the receipt of the Revised Forecast of Capital Budgets for Fiscal Years 2027 through 2031, as amended.

City of Philadelphia

Recessed Hearing Notice

Committee on Finance

Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 10:00 AM

- 260513** An Ordinance authorizing the Director of Planning and Development, on behalf of the City, to file applications with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for a Community Development Block Grant; to file applications to participate in the HOME Investment Partnership program and the Emergency Solutions Grant program; to apply for a Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS grant; to file applications with the Commonwealth to obtain grants under the Act of April 12, 1956, P.L. 1449, Section 4, as amended, to prevent and eliminate blight; authorizing the Director of Planning and Development and the Director of Commerce to file applications to obtain other grants from the Commonwealth; authorizing the Director of Commerce to use the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program; and authorizing the Director of Planning and Development and the Director of Commerce to enter into all understandings and assurances contained in such applications and take all necessary action to accept the grants; all under certain terms and conditions.
- 260521** An Ordinance amending Title 22 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Public Employees Retirement Code," by modifying the circumstances when certain City of Philadelphia employees are entitled to service-connected death benefits, all under certain terms and conditions
- 260527** An Ordinance authorizing and approving the execution and delivery of a Service Agreement between The City of Philadelphia and The Philadelphia Municipal Authority relating to the financing of the acquisition of 400 North Broad Street and 1501 Callowhill Street (together with certain ancillary property rights), which premises the City has sub-leased for use as the City's police headquarters and certain other uses; approving the issuance by the Authority of bonds, notes or other evidences of indebtedness (including reimbursement obligations related to lines or letters of credit) in one or more series to finance or refinance such acquisition costs and authorizing and approving the obligation of The City of Philadelphia to pay in full when due the Service Fee and other amounts payable under the Service Agreement; authorizing certain City officers to take certain actions required to issue such bonds, notes or other evidences of indebtedness; covenanting that The City of Philadelphia will make necessary appropriations in each of the City's fiscal years to provide for, and will make timely payments of, the Service Fee and other amounts due under the Service Agreement; and authorizing and approving the Director of Finance of the City and other City officials to take other necessary or appropriate actions to effectuate the purposes of this ordinance; all under certain terms and conditions.
- 260564** An Ordinance authorizing encroachments in the nature of a sidewalk café in the vicinity of 2351 South Front Street, under certain terms and conditions.

City of Philadelphia

Recessed Hearing Notice

Committee on Finance

Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 10:00 AM

Immediately following the public hearing, a meeting of the Committee on Finance, open to the public, will be held to consider the action to be taken on the above listed items.

Copies of the foregoing items are available in the Office of the Chief Clerk of the Council, Room 402, City Hall.