

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND CIVIL SERVICE

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, May 21, 2012
1:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN JAMES KENNEY, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR.
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

RESOLUTION 120217 - Resolution authorizing the Committee on Labor and Civil Service to hold public hearings on industry practices for private security officers working across the City of Philadelphia concerning their right to join labor unions and organize for improved terms and working conditions.

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2

COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good

3

afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. The

4

Committee on Labor and Civil Service is

5

now in order. We do not require a quorum

6

today because this is a resolution. So

7

we will be getting started.

8

Councilman Goode is to my

9

right. I am Councilman Jim Kenney. I'm

10

the Chairman of the Committee.

11

Through the years here, we have

12

accommodated many working people -

13

teachers, firefighters, construction

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workers, nurses - to have a forum to

15

discuss issues that are affecting their

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profession, their trade, and we do again

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today avail ourselves this opportunity to

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listen to what you have to say about what

19

it is you do for a living and the

20

difficulties that you encounter in doing

21

your jobs.

22

We would ask, because we have a

23

relatively long list of people, that you

24

confine your remarks to new material. If

25

someone has kind of hit something that

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2 you were going to do yourself, if you
3 could kind of go over that and give us as
4 much new material as possible. It's very
5 important for the record that it's a
6 concise and understandable record, and we
7 find that when we have multiple witnesses
8 and it's repetitive, the record is kind
9 of boring. So just to kind of give us
10 some new stuff or condense your stuff.

11 So we're going to get started
12 right now. It's my pleasure to call
13 Honorable Robert Brady, my Congressman,
14 to the witness table to give his
15 testimony.

16 (Witness approached witness
17 table.)

18 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
19 afternoon, Congressman.

20 CONGRESSMAN BRADY: Good
21 afternoon.

22 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Please
23 identify yourself for the record.

24 CONGRESSMAN BRADY: Robert E.
25 Brady, Congressman, the 1st Congressional

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2 District.

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Please
4 proceed. Thank you for being here.

5 CONGRESSMAN BRADY: Thank you.
6 Thank you, Chairman Kenney and member
7 Wilson Goode, Councilman Wilson Goode,
8 member of the Committee. It's my
9 pleasure to be here, and I thank you for
10 allowing me to testify.

11 Mr. Chairman, I'm extremely
12 honored to be here today to support and
13 champion the important first step in
14 rebuilding Philadelphia's middle class.
15 Nearly 3,000 security officers in
16 Philadelphia have come together and
17 decided to take a leadership role in
18 creating a brighter future for our
19 communities. I wish to commend the
20 security officers and their allies for
21 showing us the way forward, providing a
22 vision of how to make Philadelphia's
23 economy work for working people.

24 Working people have been pushed
25 aside in favor of a wealthy few. The gap

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2 between the poorest and wealthiest in our
3 state government continues to grow. The
4 wealthiest 5 percent of Pennsylvanians
5 had their income grow seven times faster
6 than our poorest 20 percent.

7 Americans are still struggling
8 to rebuild and recover from the
9 devastation Wall Street caused Main
10 Street. Our City poverty rate remains at
11 25 percent, with some of our
12 neighborhoods facing poverty rates above
13 40 percent. Many security officers and
14 their families live in these very
15 neighborhoods, struggling to make ends
16 meet and provide the basic necessities
17 for their families.

18 Poverty, low wages and
19 unemployment have had a
20 disproportionately large impact on the
21 African American community. In
22 Philadelphia, almost a third of African
23 Americans in the City live in poverty,
24 and their senior income dropped by as
25 much as 21 percent. With African

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2 Americans making up to 79 percent of the
3 City's security workforce, the decision
4 by security officers to stand up for good
5 jobs is a vitally important one.

6 The officers estimate that
7 through bargaining they will generate
8 \$230 million worth of economic activity
9 for our city in the next decade. This
10 will be targeted in the communities where
11 these officers live, which, as I have
12 already noted, are the communities most
13 in need of help. This could bring up to
14 \$25 million in new economy activity for
15 hard-hit communities in West and North
16 Philadelphia.

17 It is important we make sure
18 that the jobs in the growing service
19 sector are transformed into good jobs.
20 When I was growing up and up until the
21 1980s, we could graduate from high school
22 and get a good job, a union job, a
23 manufacturing or, in my case, a
24 carpenter. Today's middle class
25 manufacturing jobs have all but

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2 disappeared, with the manufacturing
3 comprising only 13 percent of our state
4 economy. On the other hand, the service
5 sector has grown 52 percent in the last
6 30 years to become 40 percent of the
7 state's economy. The only way to make
8 sure we have an economy that works for
9 everyone is if the jobs in this growing
10 sector become good jobs with
11 family-supporting wages.

12 Security officers are
13 performing a vital service to our city.
14 Because of their work keeping us safe,
15 our hospitals stay open, our schools in
16 session and our businesses running. It
17 is time all of us recognize the important
18 work they do and insist that they get the
19 respect that they deserve and the quality
20 of life that they deserve. Recognizing
21 them as professionals will lead to a
22 significant improvement in the quality
23 and effectiveness of security service in
24 our city.

25 I call upon our elected

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2 officials, our business leaders and the
3 heads of our institutions to recognize
4 the importance of quality security.
5 Together, we must agree to invest in
6 responsible, professional security
7 provided by experienced and appropriately
8 compensated security officers.
9 Appropriately compensated security
10 officers.

11 We as the community need to
12 unite. Low wages and high turnover jobs
13 will not move Philadelphia forward or
14 enhance public safety.

15 We know the positive impact
16 workers coming together can have on the
17 City. I am confident that security
18 officers of Philadelphia will be able to
19 raise standards in their industry just as
20 their brothers and sisters in 32BJ SEIU
21 have done for commercial cleaning. The
22 officers and their chosen union will
23 continue to point the way forward,
24 creating good jobs and a brighter future.

25 Mr. Chairman, I'm happy to be

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2 with you today and I'm happy to be with
3 my union brothers and sisters as we first
4 take the first of many steps forward for
5 working families in the City. I support
6 them. I support you. I stand with you.
7 I stand with them, and I will be here
8 with you as long as we help and continue
9 to rebuild this great city, the
10 Philadelphia's middle class.

11 Mr. Chairman, thank you and
12 that's the end of my testimony.

13 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
14 very much.

15 (Applause.)

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
17 very much.

18 CONGRESSMAN BRADY: I will
19 answer any questions if I can.

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
21 very much for your testimony. Thank you,
22 Congressman, for coming in. I just think
23 it's strange in this era of post 9/11
24 security needs that they try to reduce
25 the quality of security. We really do

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2 need to maintain a higher level of
3 security.

4 CONGRESSMAN BRADY:

5 Mr. Chairman, I just need to -- as you
6 all know, I've been involved in a lot of
7 these union issues. Just quite recently
8 we've had the problem with the SEPTA
9 Police and that they hire these outside
10 union bussing scab employees, and if you
11 look at them, they're young men and
12 women -- and I don't have nothing against
13 young women trying to get a job. They
14 have a uniform on them that is seven
15 times as big as they are. They have no
16 experience. And we're talking about, as
17 you said, after 9/11 what could possibly
18 happen.

19 Now, the security men and women
20 that are from a great union like SEIU
21 work and have the great relationship with
22 the Philadelphia Police Department, with
23 the SEPTA Police, with the colleges'
24 police, and they're professionals. So it
25 just makes good sense just to have our

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2 children, our workers protected by people
3 who know how to do their job and continue
4 to do the job and do it well.

5 So, again, I thank you.

6 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,
7 Congressman.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Verell
10 Rhyne, please.

11 Also have the record reflect
12 that Councilman Mark Squilla has joined
13 us.

14 (Witness approached witness
15 table.)

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Please
17 identify yourself for the record and
18 proceed. Good afternoon.

19 MR. RHYNE: Thank you,
20 Honorable Councilmen, for allowing me to
21 speak. My name is Verell Rhyne and I'm a
22 resident of Philadelphia. I'm a security
23 officer at the Centre Square building,
24 one with the clothespin outside, right
25 across the street from City Hall, 15th

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2 and Market.

3 We have a problem. Yes, we
4 have a problem in Philadelphia. Private
5 security officers provide the essential
6 services of keeping the City's people and
7 properties safe. Yet most of us work for
8 low pay and receive few, if any,
9 benefits. This puts our families and our
10 City communities at risk. We are at risk
11 of having our utilities cut off. We are
12 at risk of going hungry. We are at risk
13 of receiving eviction notices. Do you
14 care?

15 Yes, we have a problem.
16 Because we are voters living in your
17 jurisdiction. I'm sure you care.

18 The solution to this problem is
19 simple. Security jobs must be good jobs;
20 that is, they must pay a decent wage and
21 provide benefits. This will strengthen
22 Philadelphia's communities and enable
23 thousands of families to finally make
24 ends meet and to provide our children
25 with a brighter future.

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2 Now, I just want to keep it
3 real.

4 Can I keep it real, y'all?

5 (Audience members yelling,
6 "Yeah.")

7 MR. RHYNE: All right. I work
8 a full-time job, but yet I'm living on
9 the brink of poverty. It's embarrassing
10 to live from paycheck to paycheck. I
11 don't feel good about receiving low wages
12 but still having to pay for healthcare.
13 However, I come to work every day, early
14 even. I love the work that I do. I love
15 the people that I protect. Every day I
16 come to work, I have a nice uniform and I
17 have the state-of-the-art surveillance
18 equipment and a beautiful building, but
19 when I get off work, on my way home, the
20 bus is so packed that I have to stand.
21 My paycheck is so short that I can't
22 afford a vehicle, and if I could, then
23 insurance and fuel will be too expensive.
24 I pass through areas that are
25 void of businesses. I pass through some

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2 neighborhoods that are run down. In
3 fact, one of my peers informed me that he
4 was once robbed at gunpoint.

5 But I'm asking City Councilmen
6 to please, please help us. An increase
7 in our wages will allow us to have more
8 money to spend in our communities. As
9 the communities begin to improve, our
10 cities will improve. As the City begins
11 to improve, Philadelphians will live
12 better.

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
16 very much for your testimony.

17 The next witness on the list is
18 City Controller Alan Butkovitz.

19 (Witness approached witness
20 table.)

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
22 afternoon. Please identify yourself.

23 CONTROLLER BUTKOVITZ: Good
24 afternoon, Chairman Kenney, Councilman
25 Goode. Thank you for allowing me to

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2 participate in this hearing. I'm here
3 today to voice support for security
4 officers who protect our hospitals,
5 schools and office buildings and to have
6 them have the right to organize for
7 improved working conditions and wages.

8 As several of the speakers have
9 noted, our world has changed over the
10 last 11 years since the attack on the
11 World Trade Center in New York. The need
12 for highly qualified and trained security
13 officers is paramount. Security officers
14 provide the essential service of keeping
15 City residents and visitors safe, as well
16 as protecting public and private
17 property. Some put their lives on the
18 line every day.

19 That really can't be emphasized
20 enough. I mean, security guards have
21 been killed in the line of work, and
22 they're not getting the minimal respect
23 of a decent living wage.

24 Currently, private security
25 officers in Philadelphia work for low pay

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2 and receive few, if any, benefits,
3 putting themselves and their families at
4 economic risk.

5 In a survey of over 2,341
6 security officers conducted by the Demos
7 and Keystone Research Center in 2011, the
8 median hourly rate is \$10 for security
9 officers, approximately \$20,000 per year.
10 Compare that to the poverty rate for a
11 family of four, which is \$23,050.

12 In addition, a security
13 officer's salary is far below what a hair
14 dresser makes, \$35,640; a customer
15 service representative, \$363,090; and a
16 maintenance worker, \$37,040.

17 It is time for us to recognize
18 that being a private security officer is
19 more than a job, but is a trained
20 profession, and in doing so, this will
21 help lead to significant improvements in
22 training and ultimately would help
23 greatly reduce security officer
24 turnovers.

25 Security officers should, like

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2 any worker, have the ability to
3 collectively organize for better wages
4 and conditions. By doing so, they will
5 be able to help raise standards and
6 transform low-wage jobs into good-paying
7 jobs. This would put more spending power
8 in their hands, which would go to
9 housing, food and other consumer items.

10 In addition, keeping
11 experienced security officers on the job,
12 standing up for adequate staffing levels,
13 proper equipment and rigorous training
14 will enable security officers to respond
15 to and help prevent emergency situations.
16 Also, as any good businessowner will tell
17 you, providing training opportunities for
18 employees makes good business sense.

19 Improving their working
20 conditions and increasing their wages
21 benefits all of us. Good working
22 conditions result in motivated workers
23 and better secured buildings. The
24 private security officers' profession is
25 a growing industry that needs the full

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2 recognition and support of our city. The
3 Pennsylvania Department of Labor and
4 Industry projects that the number of
5 security officers employed in the City
6 will grow by 12 percent between now and
7 2018. As this service-sector job
8 industry continues to increase, raising
9 pay and benefit standards is vital for
10 families and the larger effort of
11 rebuilding Philadelphia's middle class.

12 Again, I support this
13 resolution. I thank Councilman Kenney
14 for his leadership in sponsoring it, and
15 I believe this resolution, if approved,
16 will provide private security officers
17 with a strong, unified voice in our city,
18 as well as enhance the safety of the
19 public.

20 Thank you for giving me this
21 opportunity.

22 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.
23 (Applause.)

24 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
25 very much for your testimony.

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2 Are there any questions or
3 statements from any of the Committee?

4 And please recognize Councilman
5 Henon has just arrived to my left.

6 CONTROLLER BUTKOVITZ: Thank
7 you.

8 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
9 very much.

10 Wayne MacManiman, Mid-Atlantic
11 District Leader, SEIU 32BJ.

12 (Witness approached witness
13 table.)

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
15 afternoon. Please identify yourself.

16 MR. MacMANIMAN: Wayne
17 MacManiman, SEIU Local 32BJ, Mid-Atlantic
18 District Leader.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Please
20 proceed.

21 MR. MacMANIMAN: Chairman
22 Kenney, Councilman Henon, Councilman
23 Goode, Councilman Squilla, members of
24 SEIU Local 32BJ, thank you for this
25 opportunity.

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2 What I'd like to do is do a
3 very short presentation as a PowerPoint.
4 So if you could just follow through, I'd
5 go on.

6 I just want to explain a little
7 bit about who we are. SEIU Local 32BJ,
8 we're the largest property service union
9 in the United States. We have
10 approximately 120,000 members in nine
11 states and in the District of Columbia.

12 In the Philadelphia region, the
13 Mid-Atlantic District, I represent office
14 cleaners, maintenance workers, window
15 cleaners, security officers, residential
16 workers, public workers and food
17 cafeteria workers. In all the workers
18 that we represent throughout 32BJ, we're
19 united on raising standards for people
20 and improving their quality of lives, not
21 only for themselves but in their
22 communities.

23 Some of the successes that we
24 have had recently, I'd like to -- last
25 October, a lot of members from Council

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2 helped us out when we were going through
3 our contract campaign for 2,600 office
4 cleaners and maintenance workers, and
5 through bringing our members together and
6 having the support of City Council and
7 other leaders, we were able to bring home
8 a good contract that put wages in
9 people's pockets, maintained
10 employer-paid healthcare and we were able
11 to get other gains there.

12 I want to talk a little bit
13 about what is the private security. In
14 the private security, it's a fast-growing
15 industry with more than a million workers
16 in the United States. Here in
17 Philadelphia, there are about 3,000
18 private security officers just in our
19 city alone. Over the next eight years,
20 Philadelphia -- just in the Philadelphia
21 region, we're looking at another 12.4
22 percent growth.

23 Who are these security
24 officers? Well, 90 percent of them live
25 here in the City of Philadelphia, and of

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2 that 90 percent, 78 of them are African
3 Americans, and a vast majority of
4 security officers are at the age where
5 someone at home is dependent upon them to
6 bring home the paycheck. And right now
7 under the conditions that they work, they
8 cannot meet their needs the way they
9 should be able to.

10 Some of the locations that the
11 security officers secure, we talk about
12 the Commercial Office District. This is
13 the most expensive real estate we have
14 here in Philadelphia, and they secure
15 them. They're at the hospitals. When
16 you go into the hospital, there's usually
17 someone there that you'll meet, whether
18 it's Allied Barton or somebody else.
19 You'll meet them first. They'll be the
20 first ones that meet you there. Or at
21 our public higher education institutes,
22 they're there as well.

23 Let's talk about what they get
24 paid. On the average, the security
25 officer is making \$10 an hour with very

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2 few benefits. For the unfortunate ones
3 that work for U.S. Security Associates,
4 they get paid as little as \$8 an hour
5 with no benefits.

6 Our goal, again, is -- it's
7 twofold. One is to organize an industry
8 that has had rampant abuse as far as
9 we're concerned with the workers, but
10 it's also to raise an interest in their
11 communities, because, again, when they
12 make more money, they take home the
13 money, that improves their communities.

14 Potentially by raising the
15 standards of security officers, we can
16 pump over the next ten years hundreds of
17 millions of dollars into the City. We
18 hear every day in the news how the City
19 is struggling to find funding. This is
20 one way of being able to help some of the
21 funding crises that we have.

22 And what happens is is when we
23 raise the standards for officers, as I
24 just alluded to, you have the little mom
25 and pop sitting on the corner. The more

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2 money they make, they're taking their
3 business to the mom and pop. And if
4 they're not taking it to the mop and pop,
5 they're taking it to the Kmart or the
6 Target or they're buying a new car or
7 whatever, and from that, not only do they
8 benefit, but the City benefits, because
9 now they're bringing in new taxes.

10 Our organizing, half of our
11 victory has already been won. We've
12 gotten the contractors to recognize us.
13 We're going to go down --

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. MacMANIMAN: The tough part
16 is negotiate a contract. We're dealing
17 with some of the richest companies, not
18 just in this country but in the world.
19 The security -- the Allied Bartons are
20 not -- they're here in Philadelphia, but
21 they're national. The G4S, it's a
22 worldwide company. These companies have
23 millions and millions and millions of
24 dollars. They're worth millions, and
25 they pay their people little, and we have

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2 to raise those standards. And when we
3 raise those standards, everybody wins.
4 The City wins, the workers win, the
5 unions, everybody wins.

6 So, again, I want to thank you
7 for this opportunity. I want to thank
8 you for your support in this matter.
9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

12 Audrey Davis, please. Audrey
13 Davis. Thank you.

14 (Witness approached witness
15 table.)

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
17 afternoon. Please identify yourself.

18 MS. DAVIS: Yes. My name is
19 Audrey Davis, and I want to say hello to
20 the City Councilmembers, union members
21 and co-workers. My name is Audrey Davis
22 and I am here to share a little bit about
23 myself, my struggles and how I got here
24 today.

25 I was born and raised in North

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2 Philadelphia, attended George Washington
3 Carver Elementary School, graduated from
4 University City High School. From there,
5 I had two children, Clairessa and
6 Kenyatta, and we had to go on welfare
7 until I found a job, and I did. I
8 started in the security industry making
9 5.25 an hour. As a security officer with
10 15 years of experience, I want respect on
11 the job and opportunities for promotion.

12 Then I got involved with 32BJ,
13 and I said to myself, let's see where
14 32BJ is going with this. I asked
15 questions, went to meetings and got a
16 clear understanding of the union. I
17 liked what I heard. Together with
18 co-workers, we are making a plan to find
19 a better way forward, not just for
20 ourselves but for our children and
21 grandchildren. I've started networking,
22 talking to other security officers,
23 getting suggestions from co-workers, and
24 I attended a conference.

25 32BJ has changed my life. With

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2 the union, I have contributed to my
3 grandchildren's healthcare, college fund
4 and more. I believe this will help
5 restore respect to all of us in our
6 workplaces and in our community.

7 Thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
11 very much for your testimony.

12 Let the record reflect that we
13 also have in attendance Councilwoman
14 Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

15 And the next witness is
16 Professor Stu Eimer.

17 (Witness approached witness
18 table.)

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
20 afternoon. Please identify yourself.

21 PROFESSOR EIMER: Good
22 afternoon. I want to thank the City
23 Council and SEIU and the workers for
24 inviting me here today to comment on
25 security officers unions. I'd like to

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2 draw attention in my discussion to some
3 things that have been talked about
4 already; in particular, to equality and
5 poverty, and how this campaign fits into
6 the larger picture.

7 When we look at the graph which
8 is on the screen now -- I apologize for
9 those of you for which it is too small,
10 but I'll try to explain it -- this
11 describes the unprecedented level of
12 inequality that we face right now in our
13 nation. This report was released by the
14 Congressional Budget Office last fall in
15 the midst of the Occupy Wall Street
16 campaign. It had been commissioned long
17 before that campaign began. And what it
18 shows is the growing inequality in this
19 country.

20 Now, we've all heard the saying
21 that the rich get richer and the poor get
22 poorer, and if you look at this for a
23 moment, what you see is that what's been
24 happening in this country is that in fact
25 the rich are getting richer, but it's not

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2 just the poor that are getting poorer;
3 it's everybody else who is getting
4 poorer.

5 Each one of those bars
6 represents a quintile, 20 percent of the
7 American population. And what you'll see
8 is that for the bottom four quintiles,
9 the bottom 80 percent of Americans,
10 they're seeing less and less in the
11 nation's income now than they did 20, 30
12 years ago. The income gains have been at
13 the top for the top 20 percent and for
14 the top 1 percent.

15 Another way to look at this is
16 as a pie. This is data for 2010. If it
17 helps, you can imagine it as a pie, as a
18 pizza pie, and the question is, how big
19 of a slice does each group take. And
20 what this shows is that the top 20
21 percent of our nation is taking about
22 half the income on payday. The top 1
23 percent, though not displayed up there,
24 takes about 20 percent of the income.

25 This distribution of income has

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2 real consequences, in that the income pie
3 is only a certain size and when one group
4 takes more on payday, there's simply less
5 for the rest of us. Simple math. If I
6 can stick to the pizza analogy, if this
7 were a party with ten people and one
8 pizza, two people would be taking half
9 the pie and telling the rest of us to
10 split what's left. I challenge you to go
11 home tonight, invite some friends over
12 and ask them to do that, because they're
13 going to punch you in the eye. But that
14 is how our economy functions right now.

15 When people have too little
16 income, they can't meet their basic daily
17 needs and they slip below the poverty
18 level. The number of poor in our nation
19 is shown on this graph up here from the
20 federal government. It's been steadily
21 climbing for some time. And in
22 Philadelphia, as you know better than I
23 do, the level is extremely high. It's at
24 27 percent in 2010. In some
25 neighborhoods it's 40 percent or higher.

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2 Making matters even worse is
3 the number that researchers call the near
4 poor. These are people who do not
5 technically fall below the poverty level,
6 but who still struggle to make ends meet.
7 And researchers use the poverty line
8 times two, 200 percent of the poverty
9 line to demarcate this group. Using the
10 standard poverty measure that the Census
11 Bureau uses, which is on the left, 34
12 percent of Americans are either poor or
13 near poor. Using the new census measure,
14 which most researchers suggest is a much
15 better way of measuring poverty in this
16 country, you get close to 50 percent of
17 the nation which is either poor or near
18 poor.

19 Now, I want to suggest as a
20 sociologist that we need to begin to
21 shift the way we think about this
22 poverty, and I'd like to read this quote.
23 In the United States, there are more than
24 twice as many people in working poor
25 households as in single-mother poor

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2 households and more than four times as
3 many as in poor households where no one
4 is employed.

5 A lot of times when we talk
6 about poverty, when the media focuses on
7 poverty, attention is paid to family
8 structure, it's paid to educational
9 attainment, maybe it's substance abuse.
10 These are all issues that affect poverty.
11 But I want to suggest to you that when we
12 talk about poverty, we really need to
13 shift our frame and begin to think about
14 work and poverty, because this is the
15 more typical family.

16 The researchers who wrote this
17 from Duke University said it this way:
18 The working poor might actually be the
19 most typically poor. In the United
20 States, there are more than twice as many
21 of these people in working households
22 than single-mother households, but yet we
23 never hear about them.

24 Defining the working poor
25 varies from researcher to researcher.

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2 The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics finds
3 that about 23 percent of all poor people
4 either work or seek work but don't earn
5 enough money to pull themselves above the
6 poverty line. When you factor in these
7 folks' families, you're probably
8 accounting for the majority of poor
9 people in this country.

10 The Working Poor Families
11 Project on the right, they define poverty
12 at the 200 percent level, and it's hard
13 to see, but they have about 30 percent of
14 American families struggling in what they
15 call working poverty, and you can see
16 that's been growing over time.

17 Now, the growth in the working
18 poor is directly linked to the job
19 market. People can only work the jobs
20 that society offers them, and at present,
21 many of the jobs that our economy creates
22 simply do not pay enough.

23 The Bureau of Labor Statistics
24 graph that's shown up there shows the
25 occupations expected to have the most

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2 jobs in the coming years and their median
3 pay. And it's very difficult to see on
4 the right, but what that shows is that
5 pay for most of the occupations that are
6 going to add the most jobs in the coming
7 decade are bad jobs. They're jobs that
8 don't pay a living wage. There are two
9 jobs that pay significant amounts up
10 there, registered nurses and college
11 professors, two which pay medium wages.
12 Truck drivers and customer service rep
13 and the rest of those jobs are jobs which
14 will get somebody to the poverty line or
15 right around it.

16 Now, security guards are not in
17 the top ten occupations, but they are in
18 the top 25. They're expected to add
19 200,000 jobs by 2020. It's a very large
20 sector of economy, as it's already been
21 commented on. It's an important sector
22 of economy and it's a sector that's
23 characterized by low wages.

24 In 2010 nationwide, the median
25 pay was 23,920. The poverty level for a

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2 family of four was about 22,300. So it's
3 basically a poverty level wage where
4 folks will struggle to make ends meet.

5 Now, when we talk about job
6 loss, we often -- when we talk about
7 jobs, we often lament the fact that
8 manufacturing jobs have been lost in this
9 country and that this has had a profound
10 impact on our society, and it has.
11 Philadelphia was devastated by the loss
12 of its manufacturing base.

13 What we sometimes forget is
14 that manufacturing jobs are not always
15 good jobs. In fact, they're pretty awful
16 jobs. And what this graph shows are what
17 the wages were at Bethlehem Steel and
18 General Motors prior to unionization. In
19 both cases, the wages were very low, 4.98
20 in today's dollars, 9.28. Neither of
21 those wages would have supported a
22 family.

23 What we see is that when unions
24 form and when unions organize and when
25 unions collectively bargain, the wages go

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2 up dramatically, often in a very short
3 period of time. By 1940, they've pretty
4 much doubled, and in the case of auto, by
5 1960 they've more than doubled.

6 What we need to remember is
7 that manufacturing jobs were not by
8 nature good jobs. They were turned into
9 good jobs by workers who organize unions.

10 (Applause.)

11 PROFESSOR EIMER: What this
12 chart shows is that this can happen
13 again. It is happening again, and I
14 suspect it will happen again for the
15 folks in this room. This is protective
16 service occupations, medium weekly
17 earnings for non-union versus union.
18 This is from the Bureau of Labor
19 Statistics, \$627 for non-union workers,
20 \$1,008 for union workers.

21 That's a big difference.
22 That's \$400 a week. That's almost
23 \$20,000 a year.

24 That's \$400 more a week that is
25 in a worker's pocket that can be used to

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2 make ends meet without someone needing
3 housing assistance, SNAP or other aid
4 programs. That's money that can be spent
5 in the community, grocery stores and
6 hardware stores, restaurants or for any
7 other number of services, money that can
8 be spent for dentists, for healthcare,
9 for medicine, which is important for
10 families, money that can be spent for
11 school supplies, for tutors, for
12 educational access, and it's money that
13 becomes part of the tax base of
14 Philadelphia in a time of difficult
15 budgets.

16 What this slide shows is that
17 beyond the occupational differences, we
18 have very profound differences in what
19 workers pay based on race and gender.
20 African American workers here in unions
21 make significantly more than African
22 American workers who are not in unions.
23 The same trend holds for Hispanics, for
24 white men, for white women. Across the
25 board we see a very large gap, and,

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2 again, that's money in people's pockets,
3 money that can be spent in the local
4 economy.

5 Beyond wages, we know that
6 there are profound differences in
7 benefits. Unionized workers are much
8 more likely to have healthcare, much more
9 likely to have paid sick leave, much more
10 likely to have retirement benefits. In
11 each one of these cases, this benefits
12 workers, it benefits the communities. It
13 reduces the need for dependence on
14 assistance programs, like Medicaid. It
15 means when people get the flu, they can
16 stay home, not come to work, which is
17 good for the worker, it's good for the
18 community. And it means people who are
19 too old to work but too young to die can
20 live with dignity in their retirement
21 ages.

22 (Applause.)

23 PROFESSOR EIMER: As with pay
24 and benefits vary, we can look at a
25 subgroup here of African Americans. When

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2 African Americans are unionized, they're
3 significantly more likely to have
4 healthcare, they're significantly more
5 likely to have pensions, very, very big
6 difference for those of you who can see
7 those numbers. And when you look at
8 low-wage occupations, the 15 low-wage
9 occupations that the author used to
10 calculate, one of which was service --
11 not service; one of which was security,
12 you see that there's a very large gap
13 again between the likelihood of having
14 insurance, the likelihood of having
15 pensions, 54 versus 32 percent.

16 So unions matter. Unions make
17 a difference. They make a difference for
18 workers. They make a difference for
19 security workers. They make a difference
20 for African American workers.

21 (Applause.)

22 PROFESSOR EIMER: I have two
23 more brief things I'd like to share. One
24 is that beyond wages and benefits, unions
25 provide all sorts of pluses for workers

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2 and often for firms. We know from the
3 research that that lowers quit rates and
4 that improves retention. Workers who
5 don't quit have more stability in their
6 life. They also reduce training costs
7 for employers, and they can improve
8 productivity. They're doing very
9 important jobs, the security officers.
10 They're on the job. They're being
11 trained. They're staying there. They're
12 doing the job better.

13 Unions provide workers with a
14 form of voice and mechanisms to enforce
15 language in the contract as well as legal
16 rights. Things like the Family Medical
17 Leave Act, workers are more likely to
18 actually use it when there's a union
19 telling them they have these rights. And
20 we know, to cycle back to the beginning,
21 that unions reduce inequality. There's a
22 lot of good research on this. They
23 improve wages, not just for union
24 workers, but for non-unions workers
25 through what we call the threat effect,

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2 and they reduce wage dispersion, wages
3 paid to those at the top and those at the
4 bottom.

5 My final slide, I just want to
6 draw attention again to the benefits that
7 unions provide for those in these
8 industries. The research on the role of
9 unions of securing higher wages and
10 benefits for working people is clear.
11 There are instrumental unions in turning
12 our nation's manufacturing jobs into good
13 jobs and, in doing so, helped create the
14 American middle class. Faced with the
15 inequality that we see now on the
16 poverty, it's not surprising that the
17 workers behind me are seeking union
18 organization. I suspect they'll be
19 successful in gaining that. And the
20 historical record suggests that this will
21 improve not just their lives, but the
22 lives of many people in this community
23 and in the nation as a whole as we reduce
24 inequality and improve access to the
25 American middle class.

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2 Thank you very much, and I'll
3 take any questions.

4 (Applause.)

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
6 very much for your testimony. Thank you.

7 Bishop Dwayne Royster.

8 (Witness approached witness
9 table.)

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
11 afternoon, Bishop. Please identify
12 yourself for the record.

13 BISHOP ROYSTER: Yes. My name
14 is Bishop Dwayne Royster. I'm the
15 Executive Director of POWER Inter-Faith
16 Movement here in the City of Philadelphia
17 and the Senior Pastor of the Living Water
18 United Church of Christ located in the
19 Oxford Circle community.

20 Just a little bit about who we
21 are power. POWER is a 40 congressional
22 member faith-based organizing movement
23 here in the City of Philadelphia that
24 covers just about every councilmanic
25 district in the City. We are Christian,

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2 Jewish and Muslim, black, white, Asian
3 and Latino.

4 We have come together to stand
5 with 32BJ today and all these workers
6 that are sitting behind me to say that
7 Philadelphia is in trouble and needs to
8 turn itself around. There is an issue of
9 low wages, there's an issue of poverty,
10 and we need folk back to work if this
11 city is going to not just survive but
12 thrive.

13 (Applause.)

14 BISHOP ROYSTER: POWER has very
15 much seen this as an issue and we have
16 our own campaign that we are working on
17 related to this right now. But as it
18 relates to today's hearing, we recognize
19 that high poverty exists.

20 If you would turn to Page 5 in
21 your booklets there that shows a map of
22 the City and an overlay of the poorest
23 communities that also reflect the largest
24 number of security guards in this city,
25 you'll note that approximately almost a

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2 third of POWER congregations are located
3 in those areas. I could say Grace
4 Christian Fellowship in Southwest
5 Philadelphia, the Harold Davis Memorial
6 Baptist Church in Logan, the St. Paul's
7 Baptist Church in North Philly, the Sweet
8 Union Baptist Church in West
9 Philadelphia, the St. Rita's Catholic
10 Church in South Philly, Calvary St.
11 Augustine Episcopal Church in West
12 Philadelphia, St. Benedict's Roman
13 Catholic Church in West Oak Lane, Rodef
14 Shalom Synagogue in North Philly, Cookman
15 Baptist Church in North Philadelphia,
16 Evangel Chapel in West Kensington, Holy
17 Innocence Church in Juniata Park, St.
18 Vincent's Church in the Germantown
19 communities. These communities in these
20 areas are where our members and our
21 neighbors live on a daily basis. If we
22 want our communities to be able to thrive
23 and survive, we need for Philadelphians
24 to be able to have living-wage,
25 family-sustaining jobs.

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2 (Applause.)

3 BISHOP ROYSTER: These workers
4 have taken on the task of supporting and
5 protecting all of us Philadelphians and
6 those that come in from the suburbs and
7 in Jersey on a daily basis to work. We
8 have a responsibility to support them and
9 encourage them in every way possible.
10 Low wages and lack of benefits is not
11 acceptable. We must fight for them to
12 have their due wages and benefits, not
13 only for themselves but for the good of
14 all Philadelphia.

15 Thank you for allowing me the
16 opportunity, Chairman Kenney and all the
17 Council folk that are gathered here
18 today.

19 (Applause.)

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,
21 Bishop. I appreciate your testimony.

22 BISHOP ROYSTER: Thank you.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Pamela
24 Johnson and Damon Harris, if they're in
25 the room. Mr. Harris here? Please come

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2 forward together.

3 (Witnesses approached witness
4 table.)

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
6 afternoon. Please identify yourself for
7 the record.

8 MS. JOHNSON: Good afternoon.
9 My name is Pamela Johnson.

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Please
11 proceed.

12 MS. JOHNSON: I was born and
13 raised in West Philadelphia and I've been
14 a security officer for 30 years. I am
15 currently a security officer right here
16 in Center City at the Municipal Services
17 Building. I have been a proud member of
18 32BJ for five years. I am also a shop
19 steward and a member of Fight for Philly.

20 On a daily basis we deal with
21 homeless people with mental issues. We
22 also deal with bomb threats and fires.
23 We also deal with the public, who we love
24 and protect, but can be quite unruly at
25 times.

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2 As a 32BJ member, we currently
3 earn 15.35 per hour for Security Officer
4 1, 19.99 for our armed guards. We have
5 medical benefits, which is fully funded
6 by our employer. We have a grievance and
7 arbitration procedure, legal services.
8 We have a pension plan, dental, vision,
9 health, pharmacy, all paid for by the
10 employer. We have vacation, personal,
11 funeral leave and paid jury duty.

12 I feel that every security
13 officer in the City of Philadelphia
14 should have these rights and benefits.
15 Not only is it a question of fairness --

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. JOHNSON: -- and justice,
18 but we deserve to be recognized and
19 appreciated as all peace enforcement
20 officers should be, law enforcement
21 officers also. Being treated fairly and
22 told that you are appreciated means ever
23 so much in a challenging work
24 environment.

25 It has been five years since

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2 the union came into our building. Many
3 of my co-workers are still there and they
4 don't plan on going anywhere. There is
5 no longer a revolving door of turnover.
6 I believe that once we began to receive
7 respect as members of a strong union as
8 well as being recognized as
9 professionals, turnover no longer was an
10 issue at our work site. Lower turnover
11 has helped to make our building safer.

12 Respect and having a voice on
13 the job is essential. Being able to
14 speak on wrongs and rights of other
15 co-workers without fear of being punished
16 or reprimanded is the key.

17 With respect to representation,
18 I have been a shop steward for five
19 years. When I come to the table with
20 issues to discuss with management, I come
21 to the table as an equal partner with
22 management. We work together to resolve
23 our members' issues almost on a daily
24 basis. We feel our union is there to
25 back us and it is our backbone, just as

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2 security officers are in the long term to
3 protect our institutions.

4 Thank you for the opportunity
5 to speak with you, and God bless.

6 (Applause.)

7 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
8 afternoon. Please identify yourself for
9 the record.

10 MR. HARRIS: Yes. My name is
11 Damon Harris. I'm with -- I'm not with
12 32BJ. I'm here to speak on behalf of
13 U.S. Security Associates.

14 I was born and raised in West
15 Philadelphia. I currently live in
16 Northeast Philadelphia. I work for U.S.
17 Security and I only earn \$8 an hour. I
18 sign people in and weigh trucks at a
19 factory in Philadelphia. Our job at the
20 site is very stressful. We should be
21 paid according to the difficult work that
22 we do to protect the site.

23 The low wages I earn, it is
24 very hard to make ends meet. I struggle
25 with myself and the daily personal needs

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2 of my mother, who is in a nursing home in
3 Camden, New Jersey.

4 My company has aggressively
5 resisted our attempts to form a union to
6 raise standards. The managers have
7 intimidated and harassed on a regular
8 basis. U.S. Security should respect our
9 rights to join a union.

10 We will not give in to fear.
11 We will win respect and the right to join
12 our brothers and sisters in the City who
13 bravely together to raise our standards
14 so that we too have an opportunity to
15 provide for our families, for ourselves
16 and our families.

17 In addition to the low pay
18 benefits, we need training so we can
19 better handle the threats that we
20 encounter on a day-to-day basis. There
21 have been violent situations at my
22 workplace. We see volatile situations.
23 Proper training is still needed so we can
24 be successful at our jobs.

25 With the budget cuts and hard

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2 times facing our city and the police
3 force, security officers like me will be
4 asked more and more to step in and fill
5 the void. We need a union to ensure our
6 workplace is safer and we are properly
7 prepared, when we have a strong union
8 like SEIU 32BJ --

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. HARRIS: -- to ensure our
11 voices be heard to be a safer city.

12 The union has really came into
13 my life to help me pick my head up, and
14 they've done a very good job. And when I
15 went to Atlantic City, I seen something
16 powerful that I've never seen in my
17 lifetime, and I thank God for them.

18 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Sir, can I
19 just ask you a question. What's the
20 company you work for?

21 MR. HARRIS: U.S. Security
22 Associates.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Where's the
24 plant where you're assigned? Is there --

25 MR. HARRIS: The plant where I

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2 was at at that time was Kraft Foods there
3 at that time and --

4 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: When you
5 talk about the harassment, that's coming
6 from the U.S. Security people or the
7 Kraft Food people?

8 MR. HARRIS: From U.S.
9 Security.

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: All right.
11 Thank you.

12 Councilman Henon.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: How you
14 doing? Thank you for coming in, and I
15 appreciate everybody's testimony coming
16 in here standing up for people, human
17 beings, human beings who deserve a fair
18 wage, fair benefit and fair retirement
19 opportunities or packages, which I
20 believe in a thousand percent, raising my
21 family on it.

22 So let me ask you. The
23 challenges, you say there's some
24 challenges with the company interfering.
25 What type of interfering are they having,

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2 are you experiencing with --

3 MR. HARRIS: Well, I'm

4 experiencing that -- I'm trying to get

5 workers to come in to the fold, and

6 they're just backing away, backing away

7 from it and they're scared. And I'm

8 standing up for the right, for the legal

9 right, of the union. I'm not running.

10 And for some reason or another, they're

11 scared to join it, and certain security

12 officers say they want to wait for

13 everybody else. And I'm telling them,

14 Hey, you can't wait for that. You got to

15 jump on that right away, and they're just

16 backing and backing away.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: So you have

18 an employer who is intimidating?

19 MR. HARRIS: Yeah.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Intimidating

21 and keeping down wages for single parents

22 and people who may be below the median

23 wages and benefits?

24 MR. HARRIS: Yes, sir. Yes,

25 sir. Yes, sir.

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2 (Applause.)

3 MR. HARRIS: This is why we
4 need to form with 32BJ so they could
5 help. And I'm trying to reinforce that
6 as much as possible, and I know that
7 these things take time, but I'm there
8 reinforcing it.

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: You got it.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. HARRIS: All right.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. HARRIS: 32!

14 (Audience members yelling
15 "BJ!")

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Mark Price,
17 please.

18 (Witness approached witness
19 table.)

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Please
21 identify yourself for the record.

22 MR. PRICE: My name is Mark
23 Price. I'm a labor economist at the
24 Keystone Research Center based in
25 Harrisburg. We're also the home of the

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2 Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center.

3 One of the grimaced aspects of
4 my job is to document the ways in which
5 the economy in the United States and
6 sometimes in Pennsylvania has let workers
7 down. That's why this event is probably
8 one of the best parts of my job, because
9 basically I get to come and talk about
10 3,000 workers who got a union. And that
11 union is going to make sure that they're
12 going to have higher wages, it's going to
13 improve the quality of life in the
14 communities, and it's going to ultimately
15 move this country in the right direction.

16 In the last 30 years, we've
17 seen policymakers choose to allow rising
18 prices to erode the purchasing power of
19 the minimum wage. In the last 30 years,
20 we have seen policymakers stand by and
21 allow management to become aggressive,
22 and we've seen a decline in union
23 membership in the broader economy.

24 In the last 30 years, we have
25 seen the manufacturing sector become less

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2 prominent and less important relative to
3 the financial sector in the broader
4 economy.

5 Now, there were those who
6 looked at these trends and promoted them
7 from the beginning and hailed these
8 changes as good for the economy. Because
9 at the end of the day, fewer unions, a
10 lower minimum wage, a less important
11 manufacturing sector would generate more
12 jobs and higher incomes. Well, I don't
13 have to tell you the results are in, and
14 the outcomes didn't add up to what we
15 were promised.

16 Today, increasing with each
17 year, new workers are driven into poverty
18 because the minimum wage buys fewer and
19 fewer goods, certainly buys less today
20 than it did in 1979.

21 The manufacturing sector as it
22 has shrunk has taken with it a lot of
23 jobs that economists typically call
24 middle skill jobs, and the professor from
25 Widener University illustrated some of

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2 the advantages of manufacturing
3 employment in terms of wages. As those
4 jobs have disappeared, they've taken with
5 them middle-class jobs, provide good
6 incomes and buttress our communities.

7 And as the professor from
8 Widener illustrated, the result is even
9 though the U.S. economy has grown in the
10 last 30 years, it's grown well. It's
11 produced a tremendous amount of wealth.
12 The vast majority of that new wealth and
13 that new income has accrued to a very
14 tiny share of households at the top of
15 the income distribution. And what I'm
16 here to tell you and as the other
17 testimony has illustrated as well is that
18 there is a better way, that you can have
19 more broadly shared prosperity, and on
20 that note, I want to bring your attention
21 to a recent study by the Pew Center on
22 the States.

23 They evaluated economic
24 mobility in the United States and in a
25 groundbreaking study actually looking at

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2 it across the individual states, how did
3 Pennsylvania do relative to South
4 Carolina or North Carolina. What they
5 found is that Pennsylvania actually in
6 terms of economic mobility, in terms of
7 people's ability to move up the income
8 scale over time, Pennsylvania actually
9 was above average, even in this grim
10 period. We had folks who were in their
11 late 30's tracking the change in their
12 income from their late 30's to their late
13 40's. We were above average in the
14 growth of that income.

15 The states that were below
16 average, below the national average, were
17 typically in the south. And when you
18 look at the states, one of the things
19 that comes out of this analysis is that
20 the states that were below average were
21 mostly low-union or non-union states.
22 The states that were above average, like
23 Pennsylvania, like New York, were
24 high-union density states. So there's a
25 clear advantage to increasing

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2 unionization in terms of encouraging
3 economic mobility, and as the professor
4 from Widener University illustrated,
5 unions raise wages. And particularly for
6 middle-income workers, higher wages gets
7 spent. They get spent in the local
8 community. They get spent in local
9 businesses. They generate tax revenue.
10 And we're here talking about 3,000
11 workers who are going to get a union. In
12 this economy, we've got double-digit
13 unemployment rates in this city, thanks
14 basically to a casino-like culture in
15 Wall Street.

16 But the economy is recovering,
17 and as it slowly recovers, building
18 owners in this city are going to begin
19 making more money. That's good. We
20 like, in this culture, profits, but going
21 forward, when those building owners make
22 more money, they're also going to have to
23 contend with the union, and they're going
24 to have to share the prosperity that
25 they're going to enjoy as our economy

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2 expands. That's the kind of environment
3 we had in the United States from 1945 to
4 1973, an environment when the economy
5 grew, incomes grew at the top and they
6 grew just as much as at the bottom.

7 It wasn't the case that people
8 were equal. There were still rich people
9 in this society, but everyone benefited
10 when the economy expanded over time, and
11 that's why I'm so happy to be here,
12 because we're turning a corner here.
13 It's only for 3,000 workers, but it's
14 important gains for them that as this
15 city prospers, they're going to see that
16 prosperity in their paychecks. They're
17 going to see that prosperity in having a
18 better time being able to get healthcare.
19 They're likely going to have a better
20 retirement. They're going to get
21 training. They're going to do their jobs
22 better. They're going to feel pride in
23 their work. That's a good thing. And
24 that's end of my comments.

25 Thank you.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
4 very much.

5 Robert Ryals and Keith Keys.

6 (Witnesses approached witness
7 table.)

8 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
9 afternoon. Please identify yourself for
10 the record.

11 MR. RYALS: Good afternoon. My
12 name is Robert E.L. Ryals Slay and I'm
13 currently a student at Lincoln University
14 and I'm employed with Allied Barton.

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Could you
16 do me a favor, could you pull that
17 microphone just a little down closer to
18 you and speak directly into it. Thank
19 you.

20 MR. RYALS: All right.

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

22 MR. RYALS: You're welcome.

23 Well, basically I'm just here
24 to just give my statement and the
25 testimony. And I was going to read it

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2 off the paper, but honestly, this is much
3 deeper.

4 There's a lot of people at my
5 job, my co-workers, people that come from
6 all walks of life, people that have
7 families, people that have children and
8 elderly people that they have to take
9 care of, and on a routine basis or
10 basically weekly basis, I hear the horror
11 stories that they have to go through.

12 When one of my supervisors was
13 telling me about how -- when one of the
14 supervisors, they were telling me about
15 how they have to make a choice each
16 check, is it food this week or is it
17 going to be, you know, healthcare for my
18 mom or, you know, choices. Is it going
19 to be -- are the lights going to be off
20 this week or will we have water, you
21 know. And then to think that within this
22 country, matter of fact, in this city,
23 this is where the Constitution, this is
24 where the Declaration of Independence,
25 all these key articles and bills and

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2 stuff were all signed and all executed
3 here. And then to think that the
4 different corporations that we dedicate
5 our lives to, it's like it doesn't apply
6 to them. You might as well say that the
7 Thirteenth Amendment doesn't apply to
8 them at all. Because the truth is, to
9 tell a woman who has a child more than --
10 over five kids, raising them on her own,
11 that she has to stay and do involuntary
12 overtime, I mean, and then you wonder why
13 you have children that's running around
14 here literally acting a fool and going
15 out to --

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. RYALS: You know, acting a
18 fool and they're out here committing all
19 these different crimes and stuff, because
20 the parents, the security guards, are
21 actually -- they have to work. They have
22 to work triple and double shifts like
23 this back to back in order to make sure
24 that they have food on the table and to
25 make sure that the Sheriff isn't coming

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2 to their door walking them off the
3 premises for their eviction.

4 I mean, yes, I'm fortunate
5 enough to not have different expenses
6 like that, but it's the fact that these
7 different stories and these voices
8 that -- just like my brother was saying
9 before, you know, about the fear and the
10 intimidation, it's very real, and there's
11 plenty of people that want to be here.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. RYALS: And there's plenty
14 of people that want to be here, but the
15 fact that in their mind, they're
16 thinking, Okay, well, if I were to go
17 here, I know I could possibly be
18 penalized or I could possibly lose my
19 job, which means I won't have the ten
20 cents to get food and the different
21 necessities that I need.

22 And overall -- I'm going to
23 finish with this statement right here.
24 32BJ, I'm not yet a part of it, but
25 that's why I'm here now, because I want

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2 to fight for everything that 32BJ has to
3 offer. I could go --

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. RYALS: I can go on and on
6 about the different horror stories, but
7 we won't leave until next week.

8 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

9 MR. RYALS: You're welcome.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. RYALS: 32!

12 (Audience members yelling

13 "BJ!")

14 (Standing ovation.)

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good
16 afternoon. Please identify yourself for
17 the record.

18 MR. KEYS: My name is Keith
19 Keys.

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Please
21 proceed.

22 MR. KEYS: I'd like to thank
23 you all this afternoon for this
24 opportunity to speak here.

25 I moved to Philadelphia in 1980

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2 after graduating from college. I've been
3 a security officer at one of the
4 universities here in the City for the
5 last three years. I enjoy my job as a
6 security officer. What I like best is
7 being an officer and also interacting
8 with the people that I protect.

9 I used to have a living-wage
10 job with General Electric, but when I was
11 laid off, being a security officer was
12 the only job that I could find. The pay
13 is extremely low, a lot less than what I
14 was accustomed to making, and it
15 wasn't -- if it wasn't for working as a
16 musician around the area and also being
17 the organist at a church, I couldn't even
18 get by off of what they paid.

19 This is why we're all here
20 together. We need livable wages. In my
21 neighborhood, North Central Philadelphia,
22 and also in the sector of the country in
23 which we live, the Northeast corridor,
24 the cost of living is rising every day.
25 Everything is getting more expensive, but

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2 the paycheck hasn't risen. That's a
3 problem. It's a real problem.

4 At my church, I hear the same
5 stories coming together with my
6 co-workers and security officers around
7 the City. I have realized that this is
8 not a small problem, but a major problem
9 affecting all of us. I have also
10 realized how many of my fellow officers
11 live in my community and I realize how
12 that our effort is really a community
13 effort to create good jobs. It's not a
14 personal thing; it's a community effort.
15 If not, we wouldn't have all been here
16 today.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. KEYS: I know that the
19 union is the solution not only for the
20 security officers but the City as a
21 whole. I grew up in Pittsburgh in a
22 union family, steel workers. Everything
23 was union there. They didn't take any
24 crap. It put more money in the
25 marketplace and it made the playing field

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2 a little more equal. Everyone benefited,
3 and we had healthcare, which was paid by
4 the company. The average people were
5 buying homes, spending and getting things
6 that their family needed, just the daily
7 everyday necessities, and it wasn't a
8 problem. And the students -- and the
9 children were going to school, becoming
10 college students and picking their
11 professions and being good at it. I was
12 fortunate. My mother taught school. My
13 father was one of the higher-ups in the
14 steel company.

15 The union made the economy work
16 for everyone. I know with the union 32BJ
17 SEIU, we can win for security officers
18 what my parents and unions won for their
19 generation.

20 The thriving businesses in our
21 city are propelled by the working people.
22 You know, us. The ones that put money
23 into the taxes here, us, who don't get
24 the fair share back. Us. Okay. When
25 you take a look around the neighborhoods,

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2 the ones who put money in and go to work,
3 but we have to do what? Take the bus.
4 Because what? Can't afford the car, and
5 because somehow this city has a tendency
6 to be the highest in the nation when it
7 comes to car insurance, so you have to
8 have a job almost for the car.

9 But when you look at the
10 companies that we work for and if it
11 wasn't for people like, who, us, where do
12 you think they would be stature-wise?

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. KEYS: So you have us --
15 they have us working. And there's an
16 analogy I usually use at work, but I'm
17 not going to use it here today. What I
18 compare it to, it's low wages and they
19 are the stock exchange, they have the
20 private equity funds and other things,
21 the sources of capital. They get the
22 money, but they're successful because
23 their company was built on whose back?
24 Our back. Us again. But yet somehow the
25 success rate is being held here. If the

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2 hand is open, as we say in our church,
3 God can't drop nothing in. It can't
4 trickle down to where it should to the
5 other people. Us. So, in other words,
6 it's almost like free labor, because with
7 the small amount they're paying, you have
8 the nerve to pull taxes out.

9 So we live in a city that is
10 hard-pressed for money and you pulling
11 back how much of it? At least 28 percent
12 in taxes? That's a total thing, but you
13 got your hand in it too.

14 So you have people like Martin
15 Luther King, which is almost like the
16 callus on the foot. When inequality
17 comes and it rubs, it creates a callus.
18 Then you have the union like SEIU 32BJ.
19 It acts as the same thing. And not only
20 does it speak for the people who are here
21 and for the workers, but it speaks for
22 that sector of the population that can't
23 speak for itself.

24 You're going to always have
25 poor people, but at some point in time in

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2 the extremely near future, that has to
3 change, and it needs to change really
4 quick.

5 This is not a joke. It's a
6 fight for life. You have people here
7 with ailments who don't have health
8 insurance. That's not good.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. KEYS: That's a problem.
11 But then you have people who want to
12 shoot down what the President has put
13 together health-wise.

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Well, that
15 ain't us.

16 MR. KEYS: No, not you. No,
17 I'm not saying it's you, but you know who
18 it is. Let's get real.

19 But working together, we can
20 all get together and fix the wrong. So
21 if you get more money out of us, you get
22 more in the community. You get more in
23 the stores downtown. You have a city
24 that can attract more businesses
25 downtown, and you have more money going

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2 into taxes.

3 So on that note, I'd like to
4 thank you.

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
6 very much.

7 (Standing ovation.)

8 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Could I ask
9 if Mr. MacManiman could come back to the
10 table just for a second, just for a
11 couple of followups.

12 (Witness approached witness
13 table.)

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

15 It's been a pleasure to host
16 you here today. This is your building,
17 your room. We work for you, and we're
18 very happy to give you a forum to discuss
19 your issues and to get some publicity and
20 some coverage of what we're all talking
21 about.

22 During the course of the folks'
23 testimony, I became a little bit
24 confused. Could you give me the status
25 of what the organizing efforts are for

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2 32BJ SEIU when it comes to the security
3 guard? Some people said we're happy to
4 have won the union and some people said I
5 can't wait until I can be part of it.

6 What's the current status of
7 the organization?

8 MR. MacMANIMAN: Okay. So
9 currently, after a year and a half battle
10 going back and forth, we have been,
11 through Card Check, been recognized from
12 quite a few of the security companies out
13 there. Where the testimony that you
14 heard on the issues at work and the
15 harassing in the workplace is one
16 specific company, U.S. Security
17 Associates. This company is -- without
18 having the information in front of me, I
19 don't want to put something out there
20 that would be inaccurate, but, you know,
21 things from sexual harassment to
22 intimidation on the job because workers
23 want to choose a union, I mean, these are
24 the things that we're dealing with, and
25 these are the bottom feeders.

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2 We know that just from the
3 City's perspective, the nursing home out
4 on, I think it's, on City Line Avenue,
5 they're the contractor there. So we've
6 been in contact with the City, with City
7 Controller Butkovitz and all that stuff
8 to make a point to say that this is a
9 contractor that the City is using, when
10 they treat their workers and they do not
11 respect their workforce.

12 And, again, there's two issues
13 with that company. One is, they're
14 bottom feeders and they pay people the
15 lowest wage possible, but the second and
16 most important issue is, they don't
17 respect their employees. They mistreat
18 their employees, and they'll do anything
19 they can for that almighty dollar.

20 But from the perspective of the
21 overall campaign, we have been recognized
22 by the employers. That's only half the
23 battle. The other half of the battle
24 comes now to sit down and try to bargain
25 a contract.

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2 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What period
3 of time does that take place in? Is it
4 ongoing now or is there a starting point
5 for that process?

6 MR. MacMANIMAN: We hope to
7 start the process probably by mid June,
8 early June, mid June. What we're doing
9 right now is serving our members. We
10 want to know what they want to see in
11 their first contract. So we're doing
12 meetings. We're compiling surveys to
13 find out what the workers want to see in
14 their contract, what are their terms and
15 conditions of employment.

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Okay. In
17 addition to providing a forum for your
18 views and for your effort, do you have
19 any suggestions on what we could do as a
20 body to help move you forward? Because,
21 for example, one of the issue that always
22 comes up is the issue of training and
23 certification. We can require -- and we
24 have in various industries and various
25 contracts that people have with the

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2 City -- a certain level of training and
3 certification that's either recognized by
4 a national association of some type. So,
5 for example, in the construction
6 industry, we're dealing now with hand
7 signalization of tower cranes and mobile
8 cranes, and there's a certain number of
9 certifying organizations that train or
10 that certify that the worker is in fact
11 trained properly to hand-signal a large
12 load going up in the tower crane.

13 Do you have any similar kind of
14 things in your national association that
15 you could point to that would be an
16 appropriate level of training and
17 certification that we could perhaps
18 require when it comes to when we contract
19 with security companies?

20 MR. MacMANIMAN: 32BJ
21 specifically in New York does a
22 comprehensive training for security
23 officers, which is done through
24 collective bargaining. So I would
25 imagine at some point we will -- in our

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2 first contract, we're going to try to use
3 the same model to get training, but from
4 the perspective of requirements from the
5 City, I mean, I'm not prepared to talk
6 about what we'd like to see today, but I
7 can assure you that there are -- there
8 would be requests that we would have of
9 the City to require certain training
10 aspects, and I certainly will have my
11 political people speak to you directly.

12 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: As
13 Chairperson of the Committee -- and you
14 can see we have a very good attendance
15 and everyone stayed the entire hearing,
16 so there's an interest here in trying to
17 move you forward and move your folks
18 forward into a better standard of living.

19 (Applause.)

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: With that,
21 I want to recognize Councilman Goode, who
22 has a question or a statement.

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
24 Mr. Chairman.

25 Very briefly, U.S. Securities

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2 has a contract with the City?

3 MR. MacMANIMAN: It's my
4 understanding they have a contract at the
5 nursing home on City Line Avenue.

6 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Do you know
7 the amount?

8 MR. MacMANIMAN: Corinthian and
9 Girard. I'm sorry. The City nursing
10 home.

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Do you know
12 the amount of the contract?

13 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Point of
14 information.

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY:
16 Councilwoman Sanchez, point of
17 information.

18 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
19 you, Wayne, and I appreciate your work.
20 This is a matter that we've brought up to
21 the Administration on various occasions.
22 We experienced this when the City decided
23 to take out the security contract from
24 our Ridge homeless shelter and they
25 went -- they sidestepped our current

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2 legislation, and that contract became a
3 subcontract, and we saw many people get
4 fired there.

5 As it relates to U.S.
6 Securities, we've brought this to the
7 attention of the Administration. We've
8 asked them to review it. They've wanted
9 to stay at arm's length because they say
10 that they're not fully aware of all the
11 issues with U.S. Security Associates.

12 So it's a matter that we've
13 brought to their attention and we've
14 asked the City to use their authority to
15 get U.S. Securities to treat the
16 employers well and potentially threaten
17 them with their contract if they don't
18 deal well.

19 So this is something the
20 Administration is aware of, but has been
21 slow to act on. So I just wanted to put
22 that on the record.

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: My question
24 is whether they are not in compliance
25 with the living wage law or whether the

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2 Administration actually waived it. I'd
3 really like to dig into that.

4 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Because
5 of the way they're subcontracted, just
6 like they did with the Ridge center,
7 they're claiming they don't have to. So
8 this is one of those technicalities that
9 we have to enforce.

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I would be
11 happy to continue this hearing to a date
12 to be determined to ask them to come in
13 at the Committee's request, the
14 Administration, to get the current status
15 of what it is they're doing or not doing.

16 So what I would like to do is
17 just recess the hearing, and then we'll
18 do the notifications on the date certain
19 for the additional hearing just to
20 discuss that specific. Because, again,
21 look, Councilwoman Sanchez has been
22 involved in this for a little while now.
23 I've just become the Chairman of the
24 Labor Committee. Councilman Goode had a
25 question about this prevailing -- not

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2 prevailing wage, but living wage
3 ordinances we have. So I just think it's
4 time maybe to kind of put it in proper
5 context, and we can do that at an
6 additional hearing soon, not next fall,
7 but before we go out on budget. Okay?

8 MR. MacMANIMAN: We would be
9 appreciative of that.

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So without
11 any complaint, we'll recess the hearing
12 to a -- can we get a date certain or no?

13 What we'll do is, we'll recess
14 the hearing and then we'll quickly
15 identify another date to reconvene the
16 hearing to discuss that specifically.

17 MR. MacMANIMAN: Okay. Thank
18 you.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.
20 Thank you for coming, everyone.
21 (Applause.)

22 (Committee on Labor and Civil
23 Service recessed at 2:40 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
proceedings, evidence and objections are
contained fully and accurately in the
stenographic notes taken by me upon the
foregoing matter on May 21, 2012, and that
this is a true and correct transcript of same.

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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