

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Via Microsoft Teams
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, June 2, 2021
9:49 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE L. PARKER, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

BILLS 210283, 210284, 210285, 210320, 210321,
210322, 210323, 210324, and 210442
RESOLUTION 210336

- - -

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
3 you. Good morning.

4 I understand that state law
5 currently requires that the following 00:00:10
6 announcement be made at the beginning of
7 every remote public hearing as follows:

8 Due to the current public
9 health emergency, City Council committees
10 are currently meeting remotely. We are 00:00:23
11 using Microsoft Teams to make these
12 remote hearings possible. Instructions
13 for how the public may view and offer
14 public testimony at public hearings of
15 Council committees are included in the 00:00:38
16 public hearing notices that are published
17 in the Daily News, Inquirer, and Legal
18 Intelligencer prior to the hearings, and
19 can also be found on PHLCouncil.com.

20 I now note that the hour has 00:00:52
21 come. Mr. McDermott, will you please
22 call the roll to take attendance. To
23 members that are in attendance, we'll ask
24 that you please indicate that you are
25 present when your name is called. Also, 00:01:04

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 3

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 please say a few brief words when
3 responding so that your image will be
4 displayed on the screen when you speak.

5 Thank you. 00:01:13

6 THE CLERK: Councilmember Bass.

7 (No response.)

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember

9 Brooks.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Good 00:01:26

11 morning. I'm present.

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good

13 morning.

14 THE CLERK: Councilmember Domb.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Councilmember 00:01:33

16 Domb present. Good morning, Madam Chair
17 and colleagues.

18 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good

19 morning.

20 THE CLERK: Councilmember 00:01:39

21 Gauthier.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good

23 morning, Madam Chair and colleagues and
24 to the public. Present.

25 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good 00:01:44

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 4

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 morning.

3 THE CLERK: Councilmember

4 Gilmore Richardson.

5 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Good 00:01:47

6 morning, Madam Majority Leader and

7 colleagues. I'm present.

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember

9 Green.

10 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Present. 00:01:57

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good

12 morning.

13 THE CLERK: Councilmember Gym.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Good

15 morning, Madam Chair. Good morning, 00:02:04

16 colleagues. I am present.

17 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good

18 morning.

19 THE CLERK: Councilmember

20 Henon. 00:02:09

21 (No response.)

22 THE CLERK: Councilmember

23 Johnson.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good

25 morning, Madam Chair. Good morning, 00:02:15

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 5

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 colleagues.
3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good
4 morning.
5 THE CLERK: Councilmember 00:02:19
6 Jones.
7 (No response.)
8 THE CLERK: Councilmember
9 O'Neill.
10 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Good 00:02:26
11 morning, everyone.
12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good
13 morning.
14 THE CLERK: Councilmember Oh.
15 (No response.) 00:02:34
16 THE CLERK: Councilmember
17 Quinones-Sanchez.
18 (No response.)
19 THE CLERK: Councilmember
20 Squilla. 00:02:45
21 (No response.)
22 THE CLERK: And Councilmember
23 Thomas.
24 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
25 morning, Madam Chair. Good morning, 00:02:49

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 6

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 colleagues. Good morning to the

3 listening public.

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good

5 morning. 00:02:55

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good

7 morning also. This is Councilwoman Bass.

8 I am present as well.

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good

10 morning, Councilwoman. 00:03:01

11 Thank you. This is the public

12 hearing of the Committee of the Whole

13 regarding Bill Nos. 210320, 210321,

14 210322, 210323, 210324, 210442, 210283,

15 210284, 210285, and Resolution No. 00:03:26

16 210336.

17 I want to thank the Clerk for

18 calling the roll. A quorum of this

19 Committee is present and this hearing is

20 now formally called to order. 00:03:39

21 Mr. McDermott, will you please

22 read the titles of the bills and

23 resolution.

24 THE CLERK: Bill No. 210320, an

25 ordinance to adopt a Capital Program for 00:03:50

6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
six Fiscal Years 2022 to 2027 inclusive.

Bill No. 210321, an ordinance
to adopt a Fiscal Year 2022 Capital
Budget.

00:03:59

Bill No. 210322, an ordinance
adopting the Operating Budget for Fiscal
Year 2022.

Bill No. 210323, an ordinance amending Chapter 19-2600 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Business Income and Receipts Taxes," by revising certain tax rates, under certain terms and conditions.

00:04:07

Bill No. 210324, an ordinance amending Chapter 19-1500 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Wage and Net Profits Tax," by revising certain tax rates, under certain terms and conditions.

00:04:15

Bill No. 210442, amending Chapter 19-1200 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Parking Tax," by revising certain tax rates, under certain terms and conditions.

00:04:26

00:04:36

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Bill No. 210283, amending
3 Chapter 19-2600 of The Philadelphia Code,
4 entitled "Business Income and Receipts
5 Taxes," by changing the manner of 00:04:44
6 imposition, all under certain terms and
7 conditions.
8 Bill No. 210284, amending
9 Chapter 19-2600 of The Philadelphia Code,
10 entitled "Business Income and Receipts 00:04:54
11 Taxes," by revising certain tax rates,
12 under certain terms and conditions.
13 Bill No. 210285, amending
14 Chapter 19-1500 of The Philadelphia Code,
15 entitled "Wage and Net Profits Tax," by 00:05:05
16 revising certain tax rates, under certain
17 terms and conditions.
18 And Resolution No. 210336,
19 resolution providing for the approval by
20 the Council of the City of Philadelphia 00:05:17
21 of a Revised Five Year Financial Plan for
22 the City of Philadelphia covering Fiscal
23 Years 2022 through 2026, and
24 incorporating proposed changes with
25 respect to Fiscal Year 2021, which is to 00:05:26

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 be submitted by the Mayor to the
3 Pennsylvania Intergovernmental
4 Cooperation Authority pursuant to the
5 Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement, 00:05:34
6 authorized by an ordinance of this
7 Council approved by the Mayor on
8 January 3rd, 1992, by and between the
9 City and the Authority.

10 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 00:05:43
11 you.

12 Today we continue the public
13 hearing of the Committee of the Whole to
14 consider the bills read by the Clerk that
15 constitute proposed operating and capital 00:05:52
16 spending measures for Fiscal Year 2022, a
17 Capital Program, and a forward-looking
18 Capital Program for Fiscal Year 2022
19 through Fiscal Year 2027.

20 Before we begin to hear 00:06:08
21 testimony from the witnesses we have for
22 today, everyone who has been invited to
23 this meeting to testify should be aware
24 that this public hearing is being
25 recorded. Because the hearing is public, 00:06:18

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 participants and viewers have no
3 reasonable expectation of privacy. By
4 continuing to be in the meeting, you are
5 consenting to being recorded. 00:06:28

6 Additionally, prior to
7 recognizing members for questions or
8 comments they have for witnesses, I will
9 note for the record at this time that we
10 will use the Chat feature available in 00:06:39
11 Microsoft Teams to allow members to
12 signify that they wish to be recognized.
13 In order to comply with the Sunshine Act,
14 the Chat feature must only be used for
15 this purpose. 00:06:51

16 So on today, we are hearing
17 testimony on Bill Nos. 210442, 210283,
18 210284, and 210285.

19 Members of each panel will hear
20 a bell ring at five minutes. Again, for 00:07:09
21 the record, members of each panel will
22 hear a bell ring at five minutes. We ask
23 that you begin to wrap up your testimony
24 after hearing the bell.

25 Mr. McDermott, will you please 00:07:23

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 read the names on our first panel.

3 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm sorry,
4 Chairperson. Could I interrupt for one

5 second? I'd like to be recognized as 00:07:31

6 present for the meeting. This is
7 Councilman David Oh.

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
9 you, Councilmember Oh.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you. 00:07:36

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The
12 record will reflect Councilmember Oh is
13 present.

14 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you.

15 THE CLERK: And the only person 00:07:42

16 in our first panel testifying is Rob
17 Dubow, Finance Director.

18 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Well,
19 thank you.

20 Good morning, Mr. Dubow. Are 00:07:50
21 you connected?

22 MR. DUBOW: Yes, I am, I think.

23 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

24 you. Okay. We can hear you. Thank you

25 very much for being here. Please state 00:08:01

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 your name for the record and proceed with
3 your testimony.

4 MR. DUBOW: Good morning,

5 Majority Chair Parker and members of the 00:08:08

6 Committee. My name is Rob Dubow. I'm

7 the Finance Director. I'm joined here

8 today by Revenue Commissioner Frank

9 Breslin and Budget Director Marisa

10 Waxman. I'm going to be offering 00:08:23

11 testimony on Bills 210285, 210283,

12 210284, and 210442.

13 Do you have any preference for
14 which order we take them in?

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: No, 00:08:42

16 Mr. Dubow. You can start with both of

17 Councilmember Domb's bills.

18 MR. DUBOW: Okay. So I'm here

19 to testify in opposition to Bill 210285,

20 which proposes to reduce the rate of the 00:08:58

21 wage and net profits tax.

22 Like the Administration's

23 proposal, the bill seeks to reduce the

24 burden on workers by lowering the wage

25 and net profits tax. Unlike the 00:09:08

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Administration's proposal, the bill makes
3 resident and commuters wait longer for
4 relief, with no reductions in FY22.

5 Given the tremendous economic stress 00:09:17

6 Philadelphia families are under due to
7 the pandemic and the desire to help
8 convince commuters to come back to the
9 City, we wanted to do as much as we can

10 right away by implementing a reduction 00:09:27
11 starting less than a month from now.

12 At the same time, Bill 210285
13 has much larger cuts in the future, which
14 will dramatically reduce funds available
15 for critical service delivery. Over the 00:09:43
16 course of the Five Year Plan, this
17 legislation would reduce collections by
18 about \$95 million compared to the
19 Administration's proposal.

20 The issue of cost is the 00:09:54
21 leading concern for the Administration.

22 While Philadelphia has received a
23 lifeline in the form of the American
24 Rescue Plan, the federal funds aren't

25 enough to maintain existing service and 00:10:04

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 operations, make all of the desired new
3 investments, and reduce the tax burden.
4 The proposal put forth by the
5 Administration balanced cuts in the areas 00:10:13
6 identified by economists as having the
7 biggest impact on economic growth,
8 maintaining existing services, and
9 partially restoring some, like library
10 hours and summer pools following 00:10:24
11 pandemic-driven cuts in those areas, and
12 making new investments in critical areas
13 like violence prevention and education.
14 But these choices were not
15 without pain. Several City departments 00:10:35
16 absorbed deeper cuts on top of the cuts
17 from last year to support new
18 investments, like the additional 18
19 million for violence prevention. This
20 legislation would reduce annual revenues 00:10:45
21 by a multiplier of that amount, forcing
22 us to step back from these new
23 investments, eliminating existing
24 programs or staff, and/or increase other
25 taxes. 00:10:56

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 For that reason, we request
3 that Council not proceed with this bill.
4 We believe that the reductions the
5 Administration has proposed balance
6 raising the funds we need to support our
7 communities with reducing tax burdens in
8 a way that will lead to more job
9 creation.

00:11:04

10 We're available to answer any
11 questions you have. But I'll go on to
12 the business tax bills, if that makes
13 sense.

00:11:13

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Madam Chair?

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes. 00:11:27

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: I just want
17 to be recorded as present, and I've put
18 my opportunity to speak after all of the
19 testimony.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 00:11:37
21 you.

22 Councilmember Jones will be
23 recorded as present.

24 And, Councilmember Domb, once
25 we finish hearing the testimony of Rob 00:11:45

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Dubow, we will call you first,
3 Councilmember Domb, for comments. Thank
4 you.

5 Please proceed, Mr. Dubow. 00:11:52

6 MR. DUBOW: So my understanding
7 is that Bill 210283 is going to be held,
8 so I'll focus this testimony on 210284.

9 We greatly appreciate the
10 sponsor's efforts to address the 00:12:06
11 challenges faced by the large businesses
12 operating here, the 25 percent of local
13 and national firms that are required to
14 pay and file the BIRT. Unfortunately, we
15 think the bill's approach is too costly. 00:12:19

16 As you know, Philadelphia is in
17 the unique position of having both the
18 gross receipts and the net income portion
19 of its business income and receipts tax,
20 making us an outlier and hindering 00:12:33
21 business and job growth and attraction.
22 And for the few cities that do have local
23 business taxes, they don't have both.
24 It's one or the other. This makes the
25 tax hard to comply with since there are 00:12:45

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 more computations and complex rules to
3 contend with, creating a particular
4 burden for smaller companies without the
5 resources for an in-house tax team of 00:12:52
6 accountants and lawyers.

7 Because about 75 percent of the
8 tax comes from the net profits side, it's
9 very sensitive to wider economic forces
10 and the careful tax planning of 00:13:04
11 individual firms. With those factors
12 combined, the BIRT sees more variation in
13 collection from year to year than more
14 stable taxes like the sale or property
15 tax. 00:13:16

16 The vulnerability of business
17 income taxes during the pandemic explains
18 why Philadelphia saw estimated tax
19 collections drop by nearly 15 percent in
20 FY21 while property tax-reliant Boston 00:13:25
21 estimates less than a 2 percent
22 reduction, according to an analysis by
23 Pew.

24 While the tax is weird,
25 complicated, and volatile compared to our 00:13:37

6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

peers, it also provides us with a substantial amount of revenue that we depend on to fund programs and staff and salaries across City government. 00:13:47

Additionally, in recent years, we've made significant changes to make the tax less burdensome. We introduced the single-sales-factor apportionment, which makes it less complicated and removes disincentives to locate in the City. The hundred thousand exemption now means that over 75 percent of businesses in Philadelphia don't have to pay or even file a return. Notwithstanding pauses during the economic shocks, we remained steadfast in our commitment across decades to reduce our business tax burden without simultaneously decimating City programs and services that businesses and residents depend on. What this approach lacks in boldness, it achieves in predictability and balance by meeting the needs of our many diverse stakeholders. 00:13:57

The proposed legislation 00:14:07

00:14:20

00:14:32

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 attempts to get at the expensive nature
3 of Philadelphia business taxes compared
4 to other places, but at the same time, it
5 will reduce the funds available for 00:14:44
6 critical services. We estimate that the
7 bill would cost about \$53 million over
8 the life of the plan.

9 I talked a little bit before
10 about what the American Rescue Plan meant 00:14:57
11 and what it didn't mean and what kind of
12 choices we have to make if we lose
13 additional revenues, so I won't go back
14 into that again.

15 And with that, I'll conclude my 00:15:08
16 testimony, and I'm happy to answer any
17 questions you may have.

18 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
19 you.

20 Mr. Dubow, just for a matter of 00:15:14
21 process here, because our panels are
22 going to go pretty quickly in order, why
23 don't you provide testimony for us also
24 right now on Bill No. 210442, and then
25 you will have gotten all of the 00:15:30

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Administration's testimony for these
3 three bills on the record and then we can
4 move accordingly.

5 MR. DUBOW: Great. Thank you 00:15:38
6 very much.

7 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
8 you.

9 MR. DUBOW: So I will now
10 provide the testimony on 210442, which 00:15:43
11 would lower the parking tax by roughly a
12 third compared to the FY21 rate and more
13 than double the reduction already
14 proposed by the Administration as part of
15 the FY22 budget. The Administration's 00:15:56
16 bills will return the rate to its
17 pre-pandemic level. Bill 210442 is too
18 costly and we believe not the optimal tax
19 reduction strategy for Philadelphia even
20 if we were able to forego \$90 million 00:16:11
21 over the coming five years, which is what
22 we estimate the cost of the bill would
23 be.

24 We also think that while in
25 some cases lowering the tax rate may grow 00:16:21

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 the tax base and result in more
3 collections, or at least less of a loss
4 than the reduced rate would translate
5 into, we don't think that's the 00:16:29
6 expectation for a reduction in the
7 parking tax. For previous changes in the
8 tax rate of the parking tax, we didn't
9 see a big impact on the level of parking
10 activity, which we think demonstrates 00:16:40
11 that it's a fairly inelastic tax type.
12 If the parking operators chose to let
13 savings from lower tax go to the drivers'
14 pockets rather than increased profits,
15 those savings to a driver are unlikely to 00:16:56
16 dramatically shift the math on the
17 affordability of car ownership, which is
18 more heavily concentrated in whiter and
19 wealthier households. Reducing the
20 parking tax could simply increase profits 00:17:07
21 for parking lot owners and operators,
22 although the owners could choose to
23 reallocate those profits by reducing fees
24 for drivers or increasing wages and
25 benefits for parking lot workers, but the 00:17:18

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 bill does not guarantee that outcome.

3 The issue of cost is a real one
4 for the reasons that I've talked about in
5 the other two bills, so we won't go back 00:17:28
6 into that, but that is our key concern
7 about the bill, which would reduce
8 revenues by about \$90 million over the
9 five years.

10 Last year the increase in the 00:17:40
11 parking tax was a necessary change to be
12 able to sustain services as our revenues
13 plummeted while community needs expanded.
14 As the City is now on sounder fiscal
15 footing, the Administration proposed to 00:17:54
16 undue that increase and return to the
17 pre-pandemic level. This bill goes
18 beyond that, reducing revenues, and we
19 think it will not have the sort of
20 widespread economic benefits of other tax 00:18:04
21 reductions at that cost.

22 For that reason, we ask that
23 Council not proceed with this ordinance,
24 but we do remain committed to working
25 with you on other paths to improve pay 00:18:14

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 and conditions for Philadelphia's

3 low-wage workers in the parking industry

4 and others.

5 Thank you for your 00:18:20

6 consideration, and we're available to

7 answer any questions.

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

9 you, Mr. Dubow, for your testimony.

10 The Chair now recognizes 00:18:28

11 Councilmember Domb for a statement.

12 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,

13 Madam Chair. I want to thank also

14 Council President Clarke and you for

15 scheduling and supporting this hearing 00:18:38

16 today and my colleagues for joining today

17 to discuss the important opportunities

18 before us.

19 Our city faces a challenging

20 but unique time. Either we can use this 00:18:49

21 moment to continue down the same path

22 we've been on for at least the last ten

23 years or we can take bold actions to help

24 grow our city, create new opportunities

25 for jobs, expand small- and medium-sized 00:19:01

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 businesses, invest more in our Black and
3 minority-owned businesses, and make
4 Philadelphia an attractive place to live,
5 work, and raise a family. 00:19:13

6 I recently read this week, May
7 27th, it was over the weekend, Memorial
8 Day weekend, the Philadelphia Business
9 Journal that studied -- the headline
10 studied the King of Prussia development 00:19:25
11 boom in Upper Merion where they've
12 invested over four billion in new
13 projects, with another one and a half
14 billion over the next 18 months. This is
15 in the last ten years, transforming this 00:19:34
16 suburban community.

17 These suburban development
18 projects, including a manufacturing
19 facility, the expansion of an indoor and
20 outdoor sports complex, the expansion of 00:19:45
21 Children's Hospital of Philadelphia in
22 Valley Forge, a new medical office
23 complex, a new townhouse community, and a
24 new senior housing complex, these
25 development projects have really 00:19:58

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 transformed the King of Prussia area and,
3 as the article stated, solidified it as
4 the center of Philadelphia's western
5 suburbs and positioned it to rival the 00:20:09
6 City of Philadelphia for employers and
7 residents.

8 This is a wake-up call. The
9 fact alone should raise awareness for
10 everyone in this Council and government. 00:20:21

11 And why is this occurring in
12 our suburbs? King of Prussia does not
13 have a 6.2 percent net income tax on
14 companies, and it does not have a 3.87
15 wage tax on individuals, which one of the 00:20:33
16 major reasons is why the investment is
17 occurring of over \$4 billion in King of
18 Prussia. It's not the only reason, but
19 it is one of the impactful ones.

20 Companies are locating and 00:20:47
21 expanding in this area, creating
22 family-sustaining jobs that pay over
23 35,000 to 100,000 and more. They're
24 creating tens of thousands of jobs, many
25 of which could have been in Philadelphia. 00:20:59

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 And I say this because in the chart we
3 recently saw, in the last ten years,
4 Philadelphia, of the jobs we created,
5 over 60 percent pay less than 35,000, 00:21:08
6 over 60 percent, while the national
7 average is 29 percent.

8 As I've discussed with many of
9 you these last few months, the City of
10 Philadelphia is failing on most of the 00:21:22
11 economic indicators. It is true that
12 when we compared ourselves in 2018 and
13 2019 to 20 years ago, we're doing better,
14 but that's like comparing us to a
15 classroom with only one student. When 00:21:35
16 you compare us to 15 other students and
17 cities across the country, we have not
18 done well.

19 I know Rob Dubow spoke about
20 the Pew study where we have a shortage in 00:21:43
21 our budget 14.7 compared to Detroit,
22 which was the number one city of
23 shortage. We're number two. And we have
24 seen Center City studies come out on the
25 economy and how bad we're doing compared 00:21:56

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 to other cities. We know that at the top
3 20 cities, only New York City, only New
4 York, has a higher combined income tax on
5 businesses. They're at 17.2. We're at 00:22:07
6 16.2. And every other city is below 8.8,
7 including Chicago at 7 percent. We're at
8 16.2.

9 We know that Philadelphia
10 hasn't performed well in many categories. 00:22:22
11 We're always at the bottom of small- to
12 mid-sized businesses per 1,000. We have
13 the least number of Black-owned
14 businesses on the East Coast when we
15 compare Philadelphia, and we're one of 00:22:33
16 the few cities, in fact maybe the only
17 one, where jobs in the City are far less
18 than jobs in the suburbs.

19 This is our opportunity, a
20 moment in time. We'll never have this 00:22:40
21 again where we're going to get an influx
22 of federal money. We're receiving
23 1.4 billion from Washington to assist our
24 city's General Fund. We need to take
25 this moment and look beyond just the next 00:22:50

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 five years or next ten years even. I'm
3 asking you all to take a look well into
4 the future and think about what we could
5 gain.

00:23:00

6 This is really forward thinking
7 10, 15, 20 years down the road. If we
8 had done this 10, 15 years ago, we
9 wouldn't be where we are today. I'm
10 asking that we invest in job growth and
11 better-paying jobs for Philadelphians.

00:23:10

12 I initially introduced three
13 bills, with the goal of growing jobs in
14 part by chipping away at the general
15 higher tax rates we have in Philadelphia
16 that make us less competitive. This
17 included reducing our rates with wage
18 taxes, net income taxes, and eliminating
19 the need for businesses to pay both a net
20 income and gross receipts tax, paying
21 only the higher of the two.

00:23:21

00:23:32

22 After introducing these bills,
23 we've had many discussions with my
24 colleagues, with businesses, with the
25 City's various chambers of commerce, and

00:23:41

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 many other people across the City. We
3 also had a study conducted on the
4 potential impact of these bills. What we
5 heard is that people and businesses want 00:23:50
6 to see a more immediate impact than even
7 our initial bold wage and BIRT
8 legislation provides. However, when we
9 ran the numbers internally and with the
10 consultant, which is the benefit of doing 00:24:03
11 a financial study, we found that our
12 original package would be very demanding
13 on the budget, without having the impact
14 on the tax structure Philadelphians want
15 and need. So through our conversations, 00:24:14
16 it became clear that our BIRT net income
17 tax is essentially a tax on local
18 businesses. We need to stop punishing
19 local small businesses with a tax that
20 their competitors in the City don't have 00:24:27
21 to pay. So we've amended our bill to
22 eliminate the net income portion of BIRT
23 over the next ten years.
24 But something else we learned
25 from the study of our initial proposal 00:24:36

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 and, that is, by adjusting this single
3 tax, you can have a positive impact on
4 revenues from other taxes. Econsult can
5 speak to this in which how these taxes
6 interrelate, but it's my goal and in fact
7 what I believe Philadelphia has failed to
8 do historically is to grow good-paying
9 jobs here in the City.

00:24:46

10 We learned from this pandemic
11 that we can no longer depend on people
12 being here and coming here just because
13 of the lifestyle. We have to compete for
14 them. The reality is we're competing
15 with cities and towns that exist just
16 across our border, like King of Prussia.

00:24:57

17 I'd be remiss if I didn't
18 mention the other concerns that set us
19 back - safety, gun violence, and I'm a
20 big supporter, schools, I'm a big
21 supporter. They're all significant.
22 They're all reasons why people will
23 choose Philadelphia. It's not just one
24 or the other. It's all of these issues.

00:25:07

00:25:17

25 So we must really think about the kind of

00:25:27

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 future, the kind of jobs we want to grow
3 here, and I believe our tax structure
4 deserves being fixed this year. This is
5 our time.

00:25:36

6 Today we're going to hear from
7 some individuals you've heard from
8 before, but here are some who were unable
9 to attend. I want to share their
10 comments.

00:25:44

11 The testimony of Della Clark,
12 President of The Enterprise Center, in
13 her testimony she says, "At The
14 Enterprise Center, we focus on increasing
15 assets and raising capital for small
16 Black and Brown-owned businesses. We
17 know firsthand that putting money
18 directly into the pockets of business
19 owners helps them to hire more staff,
20 purchase equipment or real estate, and
21 pay down existing debt to facilitate
22 further growth."

00:25:52

00:26:04

23 Testimony from Jennifer
24 Rodriguez from the historic Chamber of
25 Commerce, Jennifer said, "Improving the

00:26:14

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 business environment in the City would
3 encourage entrepreneurs to invest in
4 growing locally and would attract new
5 businesses.

00:26:23

6 "This is an important long-term
7 goal worthy of a bold strategy and the
8 proposed elimination of the income
9 portion of the business income and
10 receipts tax within a 10- to 12-year
11 period. This is a good step in that
12 direction," end of quote.

00:26:31

13 Pam Henshall, the President of
14 the Greater Northeast Chamber of
15 Commerce, said, "As a result of the
16 increase of small businesses taking the
17 brunt of the tax burden, we have seen in
18 the Northeast 9 percent of the membership
19 relocate their operations to the
20 surrounding counties."

00:26:42

00:26:52

21 And, lastly, here's a reality,
22 Nancy Morozin, you may know her. She
23 owns a restaurant called The Dining Car
24 in the Northeast. It is a beloved spot
25 to eat in in the Northeast section of the

00:27:04

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 City. As she looked to expand and open
3 another location, she went to Delaware
4 County, where she could make more money
5 and invest in expanding her business. 00:27:14
6 The final line in her letter will forever
7 stay with me. She said -- this is a
8 heartbreak -- "We feel our future lies
9 outside the City limits."
10 To me, this is a wake-up call. 00:27:27
11 We can't keep doing what we've done in
12 the past. People who have choices will
13 make them, and we'll have to deal with
14 the reality of many of them not choosing
15 our City of Philadelphia. 00:27:37
16 I look forward to discussing
17 these bills today and working with my
18 colleagues to create an open dialogue and
19 start thinking outside the box for
20 better-paying jobs in our city. We see 00:27:46
21 what's happening just across our City
22 borders, and we'll need to do everything
23 we can to make our city, Philadelphia,
24 more competitive in the region and across
25 other U.S. cities. 00:27:57

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank
3 you for your time today.

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
5 you, Councilmember Domb. 00:28:03

6 Just a tad bit of housekeeping
7 before we proceed, as the sponsor of Bill
8 No. 210442, which is the parking tax rate
9 bill, I am going to reserve my comments
10 until we begin Panel 3, at the beginning 00:28:19
11 of Panel 3. So for all of our colleagues
12 now who have comments for Mr. Dubow
13 and/or questions, I just want to note for
14 the record that the order will be Jones,
15 Gym, and then Gilmore Richardson, but I'm 00:28:39
16 going to ask you to specify all of your
17 questions for Bill Nos. 210284 and
18 210285. Mr. Dubow will stay with us
19 during the duration of our hearing.

20 And with that being said, the 00:28:55
21 Chair recognizes Councilmember Jones.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
23 Madam Chair.

24 I want to thank the sponsor of
25 these bills, yourself and Member Domb, 00:29:04

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 for your forward thinking and your
3 big-picture view, and the reason I say
4 that is, this may come as a shock to many
5 people, but I often agree with Member 00:29:17
6 Domb on his insight to economic
7 development in the City of Philadelphia.

8 Most recently with the stimulus
9 money coming in to individuals in our
10 city, I observed several things. 00:29:34
11 people wound up at Saks to buy high-end
12 pocketbooks. The line went around the
13 corner, out the door, up the street.

14 Other people decided that they
15 would take this opportunity, this 00:29:53
16 available capital, to buy a car. In my
17 opinion, a little more prudent than the
18 pocketbook, but still not the type of
19 investment I would have recommended.

20 A smaller group of people 00:30:07
21 decided to pay bills and even invest in
22 homeownership. I thought they were the
23 wisest of the bunch.

24 I draw that analogy to the City
25 of Philadelphia. We have a 00:30:26

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 once-in-a-lifetime, or in our lifetime,
3 stimulus opportunity, reimbursement
4 opportunity, and all too often what I
5 heard was more of the same. The rich 00:30:37
6 tended to get richer. And what do I mean
7 by that? That there are certain
8 industrial parks that always get first
9 crack at opportunity. No disrespect to
10 the Navy Yard, but there's a Hunting 00:30:53
11 Park, there's an American Street, there's
12 a paper mill that also need these types
13 of federal investments to prime the pump
14 to get small businesses going there as
15 well. A lot of times I heard 00:31:10
16 conversations about patching potholes
17 when we should be building light rail,
18 small businesses, and others.

19 So I support Domb's vision
20 about looking at this opportunity as once 00:31:28
21 in a lifetime, making the most out of it.

22 All too often during this
23 holiday, I talked to people and people of
24 means. All of my family isn't broke.
25 Some actually have a couple of dollars, 00:31:44

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Member Domb and Member Parker, and they
3 were talking about their small business
4 and they were talking about Philadelphia.

5 And I said how wonderful Philadelphia is 00:31:56
6 as an opportunity, being strategically
7 located between the financial capital of
8 the world, New York, and the government
9 capital of the world, Washington, DC.

10 And they said, yes, but Bala 00:32:13
11 Cynwyd allows me those same amenities
12 without your high taxes. And I was
13 stunned that people are thinking and
14 voting with their location of their
15 businesses. 00:32:29

16 A lot of my family were talking
17 about they put it up to a vote with their
18 workforce, and they talked about the wage
19 tax here versus the wage tax in our
20 surrounding counties, and it was a 00:32:42
21 no-brainer.

22 So I recall being a part of a
23 group that went to Incheon, Korea, and we
24 met with -- and I often talk to Member Oh
25 about that visit. We must have met with 00:32:59

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 50 businesses to try to attract them to
3 the City of Philadelphia. We wound up
4 out of that 50 getting one, and it was
5 Rotem, and they made railcars for SEPTA. 00:33:12

6 One of the things that we had
7 to do was sweeten the pot and be able to
8 offer them particular incentives to go
9 after them to make them make a corporate
10 decision to choose Philadelphia. Well, 00:33:28
11 we need to use what we have coming from
12 the federal government to sweeten the
13 pot, to be able to go to like we did with
14 Amazon with representatives from the
15 Chamber, with representatives from the 00:33:45
16 City, with representatives from this
17 Council and pitch businesses about the
18 benefits of locating within the City of
19 Philadelphia.

20 So I want to take this 00:33:57
21 opportunity to suggest that we shouldn't
22 be nipping around the edges, that we
23 should be taking bold-stroke
24 opportunities to enhance our city's
25 position and competitive nature. 00:34:11

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 When we look at Atlanta, their
3 business density compared to ours is
4 amazing, and they are able to withstand
5 bumps in the road economically because of 00:34:25
6 it.

7 So I look forward to hearing
8 the testimony and for us to not think
9 just in the immediate, but like
10 businesses, think in quarters, think in 00:34:36
11 ten-year increments.

12 Thank you, Madam Chair.

13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
14 you, Councilmember Jones.

15 The Chair recognizes 00:34:44
16 Councilmember Gym.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes. Thank
18 you so much, Madam Chair.

19 I'd like to reserve a few
20 minutes for a general comment. I hadn't 00:34:51
21 planned to make a comment, but I think
22 it's important to do so. And then I have
23 several questions for Mr. Dubow. So I
24 just want to make that distinction and
25 separate my time on the team, if I could. 00:35:03

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 You know, this budget is about
3 choices, and in a time when Philadelphia
4 has barely survived the concurrent crises
5 of a health pandemic, an economic 00:35:18
6 bottoming out, and a gun violence crisis
7 that has ravaged communities all across
8 the City of Philadelphia, it is our
9 responsibility as a government to be the
10 American rescue, the Philadelphia rescue 00:35:32
11 that the American Rescue Plan promised.
12 This is not the time to be doing tax
13 cuts. It is not. It is the time to be
14 investing in businesses.

15 We are pursuing a strategy 00:35:45
16 where on the table are hundreds of
17 millions of dollars in tax cuts that will
18 overwhelmingly benefit the largest
19 corporations, because the majority of
20 businesses in the City are exempt from 00:35:58
21 some of these tax cuts -- from some of
22 these taxes, and meanwhile we have put
23 less than -- we barely put a million
24 dollars into the Commerce Department.

25 We should be doing a targeted 00:36:11

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 strategy, not a broad-based strategy, a
3 targeted strategy to save Black and Brown
4 businesses in Philadelphia.

5 I am proud to call myself a 00:36:21
6 Philadelphian. I chose not to raise my
7 kids or live in King of Prussia, in
8 Havertown, in Jenkintown, because I
9 believe that Philadelphia gave my family,
10 my children the opportunities that I 00:36:36
11 would not have gotten elsewhere.

12 I also believe that when we
13 look to cities -- and, Councilman Jones,
14 I take to heart your investment in
15 Atlanta. Atlanta invests in Black 00:36:48
16 businesses. That is why Atlanta is as
17 strong as it is. Philadelphia needs a
18 Black business recovery plan that invests
19 in local strong businesses. And I refuse
20 to take this conversation from the point 00:37:02
21 of a deficit standpoint where we are just
22 begging for external businesses who are
23 not run by people of color, who are not
24 organically grown, who can pick up and
25 move when there are new incentives that 00:37:17

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 come down the pike or shiny new things
3 that come from another city.

4 We have always known that our
5 power and our untapped potential lies in 00:37:25
6 the neighborhoods, communities, and the
7 boundless creativity of our own
8 residents, but we do not give them
9 opportunities.

10 When we pursue broad-based, 00:37:35
11 non-targeted tax pursuits when an
12 American Rescue Plan sits within our
13 grasp, we are telling our own people
14 that -- let me take this back.

15 We need to tell people with an 00:37:54
16 American Rescue Plan that we are the
17 rescue for ourselves and our communities.
18 We can tap into the boundless creativity
19 and potential of young people, of Black
20 creators who have for the last 16 months 00:38:10
21 filled in the gaps of what government
22 could not provide, whether it's around
23 education, childcare, food delivery,
24 resources, home support care, technology,
25 music and entertainment, and life that 00:38:27

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 comes out of communities.

3 We should be -- if we have
4 enough to give a billion dollars in a
5 proposal to Amazon, if we have enough to 00:38:38

6 offer out-of-state companies a return on
7 picking either gross receipts or net
8 income, then we should be telling our
9 Black businesses you should get these
10 grants. We can convert these into grants 00:38:57

11 front-ended, front-loaded and be that
12 rescue. But I guarantee you that
13 broad-based tax cuts will take large
14 amounts of money, control, and
15 opportunity that we have right now that 00:39:13
16 should be directed back into communities.

17 This will be a matter of
18 choices, and I appreciate our Chair and
19 our City Council partners and our
20 leadership for taking these choices 00:39:26
21 seriously, and I look forward to this
22 process.

23 I do, on a personal note, think
24 that the timeline that we've been given
25 to take a look at the bill before us 00:39:39

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 right now is simply too short to be able
3 to weigh in on something this serious.
4 We should be talking about improving tax
5 collection overall. I think that's a 00:39:54
6 longer conversation. It should involve
7 way more players. There should be a
8 committee formed at looking at all of
9 this. It should not be done on the quick
10 in the last two, three weeks of session, 00:40:06
11 even though it's been a conversation.
12 This needs to be a longer conversation.

13 On the issue of the American
14 Rescue Plan, though, on the issue of the
15 spending of \$1.4 billion when so many 00:40:16
16 communities struggled, that is our
17 conversation for right now, and I will
18 say on that, broad-based tax cuts are not
19 the pursuit that we need to do when it
20 spreads the rescue part thin and wide. 00:40:28
21 Actually, I'm not even going to say wide.
22 It concentrates it in the majority of
23 larger businesses.

24 We should be investing local,
25 investing small, and investing in small 00:40:41

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 45

6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
business and investing big. Our local
businesses should say, I feel rescued,
not only by Joe Biden and our Congress
but by Philadelphia City Council. 00:40:56

I have a set of questions for Mr. Dubow, and I will keep them brief.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Point of information.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes. 00:41:06

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair recognizes Councilmember Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES: My comments
were not "or." They were "and." We
should do both. 00:41:14

Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
you, Councilmember Jones.

The Chair recognizes Councilmember Gym for her questions. And 00:41:20
I do just want to state for the record
for the benefit of all of our colleagues,
again, right now we want your comments
and questions for Panel No. 1, which is
Rob Dubow, on Bill No. 210285 and 210284. 00:41:33

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Councilmember Gym, please

3 proceed.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so

5 much, Madam Chair. 00:41:43

6 So, Mr. Dubow, I think you said

7 that -- City Council has been a wonderful

8 leader, Councilmember Quinones-Sanchez,

9 among many others, and Councilman Jones

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10      introduced single-sales-factor          00:41:57
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11 apportionment -- or the \$100,000

12 exemption. Could you clarify what

13 percent of businesses do not pay that

14 tax?

15 MR. DUBOW: It's about 00:42:08

16 75 percent.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And that's

18 based on the size of the business; is

19 that correct?

20 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. That's 00:42:15

21 correct.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And do you

23 have any characterization on the

24 75 percent of businesses that do not pay

25 that tax? Are they mostly local? Are 00:42:22

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 they mostly out of Philadelphia?

3 MR. DUBOW: I think it's

4 actually a wide variety of companies. I

5 have both the Revenue Commissioner and 00:42:33

6 the Budget Director on. They may have a

7 better sense of the makeup of those, so

8 I'll -- if they have any more detail

9 other than it's a wide variety of

10 businesses, I'd like either one of them 00:42:42

11 to jump in.

12 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Hi.

13 Frank Breslin, Revenue Commissioner.

14 I don't have the data on that.

15 We can take a look at that data for 00:42:55

16 local, but as Finance Director said, I

17 think it is a wide variety. Certainly

18 many local businesses will get that

19 benefit, but certainly there's some

20 outside of Philadelphia that are also 00:43:10

21 under that hundred thousand dollars of

22 gross receipts and are not liable for the

23 tax. But we can get back with the

24 details of that.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And it's 00:43:20

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 basically based on revenue; is that

3 right?

4 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: That's

5 correct. It's based on revenue, yes. 00:43:25

6 It's based on -- that hundred thousand,

7 just for clarification, is \$100,000 of

8 taxable sales. So a business that has

9 \$100,000 or less of taxable sales in

10 Philadelphia is not required to file or 00:43:39

11 pay the business income and receipts tax.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. Thank

13 you very much.

14 And so the largest 25 percent

15 of businesses in Philadelphia pay BIRT; 00:43:51

16 is that correct?

17 MR. DUBOW: The largest --

18 correct.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. This

20 will primarily -- the reduction on the 00:44:03

21 BIRT taxes will primarily benefit the

22 25 percent largest businesses based on

23 revenue in the City of Philadelphia?

24 MR. DUBOW: With revenues of

25 over \$100,000. 00:44:17

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Correct,
3 with revenues of over \$100,000. Is that
4 correct?

5 MR. DUBOW: Yes. 00:44:23

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay.

7 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER:

8 Councilmember Gym, I just want to note
9 for the record that it is our norm during
10 the budget hearings, the first round is 00:44:31
11 seven minutes for each member. The Chair
12 has been very flexible in the latitude
13 provided, but I would ask you if you
14 could wrap up this line of questioning
15 and then get in queue for our second 00:44:48
16 round.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes,
18 absolutely. And are we talking about
19 210442, Madam Chair?

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: 210442, 00:44:56
21 we will talk about that when we get to
22 Panel 3.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Got it.
24 Okay.

25 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Madam 00:45:07

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Chair, point of information.

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes,
4 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

5 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Thank 00:45:11
6 you, Madam Chair. I just had a quick
7 question relative to the question
8 Councilmember Gym had around the
9 businesses that pay are the ones that
10 have -- and, Rob, can you repeat that -- 00:45:23
11 over 100,000?

12 MR. DUBOW: Yeah, in taxable
13 revenue.

14 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: In
15 taxable revenue. So for the record, 00:45:29
16 though, can you notate how the City
17 breaks down a small business versus a
18 medium-sized business versus a large
19 business?

20 MR. DUBOW: I'm not sure I 00:45:44
21 understand the question.

22 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON:
23 Meaning if they have over \$100,000 in
24 taxable revenue, is that considered a
25 small business, if they have a million, 00:45:52

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 if they have 5 million? What is the

3 breakdown from the City perspective?

4 Because \$100,000 in taxable revenue

5 versus \$50 million is two different 00:46:02

6 numbers.

7 MR. DUBOW: Right. And I

8 actually -- that's a good question. I

9 don't know those classifications. I

10 don't know whether any of the other 00:46:11

11 Administration folks on the meeting do.

12 I don't know how that breakdown is, how

13 that classification works.

14 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: I guess

15 it varies for different analysis that we 00:46:31

16 do. So generally when we do an analysis,

17 we'll stratify the revenues and put them

18 in two categories, generally businesses

19 under a million dollars of gross

20 receipts, a million to 10 million, 10 00:46:44

21 million and above. And that's kind of a

22 general breakdown, but we generally

23 footnote that in an analysis that we

24 would create.

25 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Okay. 00:46:59

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Thank you for the response. I think it
3 would be helpful, though, if we had that
4 information based on Councilmember Gym's
5 question. 00:47:08

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so
7 much, Councilmember.

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
9 you, Councilmember Gym, and we'll ask the
10 Administration to forward that 00:47:15
11 information to the office of the
12 President for distribution to all members
13 of Council.

14 The Chair recognizes
15 Councilmember Gym. 00:47:23

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so
17 much, Madam Chair. I had just one last
18 question and also just wanted to confirm
19 that Mr. Dubow would be present after
20 Panel 3. 00:47:30

21 My last question is, could you
22 just clarify for us what the impact on
23 the budget of the bill would be for
24 210283 and 210284?

25 MR. DUBOW: So for 210284, it's 00:47:47

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 about a \$53 million cost over five years.
3 The initial version of 210283, as I
4 understand it, is being held and actually
5 have not seen the new -- it sounds like 00:48:03
6 it's being amended and I have not seen
7 the new version, but if it's phasing out
8 the net income portion, that would be
9 much more expensive, but we'd have to go
10 back and look at that. I think I heard 00:48:15
11 that for the first time at this hearing.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So you're
13 hearing it for the first time?

14 MR. DUBOW: Yes.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And your 00:48:24
16 reference to in FY22 we expect companies
17 a loss of over 200 to 300 million over
18 the Five Year Plan, that's coming from
19 what amount?

20 MR. DUBOW: So I said 53 00:48:36
21 million compared to the rates that the
22 Administration proposed. The larger
23 number was the original version of
24 210283, but that's being held, so that
25 number isn't relevant anymore. So 53 00:48:51

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 million, and then we'd have to go back in
3 and analyze the net income proposal.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. I

5 just want to -- 53 million, again, for 00:49:05

6 marginal tax relief for the 25 percent of
7 companies who pay the BIRT with 75 -- for
8 only 25 percent of businesses in

9 Philadelphia; is that correct? Like when

10 we say the 75 to 25, we mean 75 percent 00:49:23

11 of all businesses do not pay BIRT because
12 they fall below the 100,000 -- they fall
13 within the \$100,000 exemption; is that
14 correct?

15 MR. DUBOW: Correct. Yes. 00:49:35

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So only

17 25 percent of businesses in Philadelphia

18 pay BIRT, and they are generally

19 considered -- I mean, proportionally

20 they're just going to be the larger 00:49:44

21 businesses in Philadelphia, whether or
22 not they are large --

23 MR. DUBOW: They are larger in

24 terms of sales than the companies that

25 don't pay, but to Councilwoman Gilmore 00:49:54

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Richardson's question, we need to get
3 back to you with that classification so
4 you can see how they fit into
5 definitions.

00:50:03

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Understood.

7 And, again, our understanding
8 is is that the Commerce Department
9 currently has under the Mayor's proposal
10 has a million dollars for small business
11 grants?

00:50:18

L2 MR. DUBOW: I'm going to ask
L3 the Budget Director to answer that
L4 question.

L5 MS. WAXMAN: Hi. Marisa
L6 Waxman, Budget Director.

00:50:31

17 So there's a couple different
18 things in the Commerce Department budget,
19 some of it which has already moved
20 through the economic stimulus program for 00:50:41
21 grant programs. There's also the
22 2.99 million for programs for select
23 Black businesses.

24 I can get back to you with each
25 of the new additions and how they're -- 00:50:54

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 as well as how they're reprogramming the
3 existing.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. So
5 we're talking about smaller figures, 00:51:07
6 though. We're not talking about 10
7 million or anything like that?

8 MS. WAXMAN: Correct.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. Thank
10 you very much, Madam Chair, and I'll wait 00:51:15
11 for another round.

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
13 recognizes Councilmember Gilmore
14 Richardson.

15 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Thank 00:51:22
16 you so much, Madam Chair, and thank you,
17 colleagues.

18 I agree that the COVID-19
19 pandemic has really highlighted a number
20 of very significant structural 00:51:33
21 disparities that our communities continue
22 to face across the City of Philadelphia,
23 and I think this is an important moment
24 to talk about not only just how we
25 recover now but really setting our city 00:51:46

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 on a path moving forward and being able
3 to consider a wide range of local
4 policies that can really help us create
5 family-supporting and sustaining jobs and 00:51:58
6 really grow our neighborhoods,
7 particularly those that have been
8 historically disadvantaged, and to
9 support small and medium-sized
10 businesses, especially the Black and 00:52:09
11 Brown businesses.

12 I was actually just reading the
13 proposal from the Black Businesses
14 Coalition, and that will really be
15 crucial to us creating and having a 00:52:19
16 diverse, vibrant economy here in the City
17 of Philadelphia.

18 So I want to pause to thank our
19 colleagues Councilmember Domb and all of
20 you who have presented proposals that 00:52:31
21 will allow us to start this much-needed
22 conversation about how we address these
23 issues moving forward. It is a time for
24 us to do that, because we have
25 unprecedented opportunity with the 00:52:43

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 American Rescue Plan.

3 I'm going to go even further to

4 talk about the American Jobs Plan. We

5 just had a briefing with U.S. Senator 00:52:51

6 Casey with my office and all the

7 workforce development providers. We have

8 much opportunity at this moment. So as

9 Councilmember Jones stated in the line of

10 Councilmember Quinones-Sanchez, it's not 00:53:04

11 an "or." It's an "and." We can do it

12 all with a vision of what we want to see

13 for the City of Philadelphia moving

14 forward. We can do it all, and I think

15 this is a wonderful opportunity and 00:53:17

16 moment for us to do that.

17 With that said, I wanted to ask

18 a quick question to Rob Dubow around just

19 our overall long-term strategy, because I

20 heard Councilmember Domb in his opening 00:53:31

21 remarks talk about being forward thinking

22 and if we had taken an opportunity ten

23 years ago, where we could have been in

24 this moment even with the American Rescue

25 Plan. 00:53:45

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 So can you speak to really our
3 long-term strategy of our overall
4 business tax structure, particularly for
5 me relative to job creation for the City. 00:53:55

6 And I heard Councilmember Domb talk about
7 all the investments happening in
8 Montgomery County, but I will tell you
9 this: I was particularly struck and very
10 heartbroken by an Inquirer article that I 00:54:10

11 read back in late May that talked about
12 the University of Pennsylvania Gene
13 Therapy Program moving to a 150,000
14 square foot space out in King of Prussia,
15 and I'll tell you why. Because recently 00:54:25

16 we've been working with the School
17 District of Philadelphia to talk about
18 the label market indicators for our city
19 and the job opportunities for us to tie
20 into career and technical education and 00:54:37

21 other workforce development
22 opportunities, and gene and cell
23 immunotherapy has been one of the
24 consistent labor market indicators where
25 we have potential growth around, 00:54:49

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 including that curriculum in our
3 educational system.

4 So when I read that article in
5 the Inquirer that University of Penn 00:54:56
6 based here in Philadelphia was setting up
7 their Gene Therapy Program expansion in
8 King of Prussia, I was heartbroken,
9 because I'm pushing for a cell
10 immunotherapy program within our CTE 00:55:08
11 portfolio in the District.

12 So can you just speak to our
13 long-term strategy of our overall
14 business tax structure in Philadelphia.
15 And I don't mean looking at it in a 00:55:20
16 three-year range or to the end of 2023
17 because it's a new term. I mean long
18 term, ten years. What is our overall
19 strategy and process for our business tax
20 structure to make it advantageous for 00:55:38
21 real job growth in Philadelphia and not
22 the jobs where we tell our young people,
23 okay, here's a job for you, but you're
24 only making \$11 or \$12 an hour. I'm
25 talking about those six-figure jobs that 00:55:52

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 they would be able to get into if they
3 move into a cell or gene immunotherapy
4 program.

5 So can you speak to that 00:56:02

6 long-term strategy, how it relates to
7 overall job creation for higher-paying
8 jobs so that we can increase our middle
9 class in Philadelphia and help

10 individuals to support their families? 00:56:14

11 MR. DUBOW: Sure. And there's
12 kind of a catch, because our big issue is
13 that we are overly reliant on wage and
14 business taxes, which tax things that can
15 move. But because we're overly reliant 00:56:29
16 on them, it's hard to make really
17 dramatic changes quickly without
18 impacting our ability to provide

19 services, because I think studies that
20 will look at the job impact of tax 00:56:42
21 reductions will say you create more jobs

22 when you reduce your taxes, but at the
23 same time, there's an assumption that
24 you're maintaining or improving services,
25 right? There are kind of two sides to 00:56:53

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 the ledger. One is what it costs to be
3 here and two is what are the benefits of
4 being here.

5 So we have to make sure that 00:56:59
6 while we're reducing taxes, we're doing
7 it in a way that still allows us -- to
8 Councilman Jones' point, that it's an
9 "and" rather than an "or."

10 So we've taken kind of a 00:57:12
11 long-term approach. If you look at where
12 taxes started when this tax rate
13 reduction program started, the wage tax
14 was almost 5 percent, right? Now it's
15 about 3.8 percent. So kind of steadily 00:57:26
16 chipping away has gotten us a full
17 percent lower, made us more competitive.

18 On the business tax side, the
19 gross receipts portion of the BIRT was, I
20 think, like 0.32. Now it's 0.14. So 00:57:41
21 that's come down dramatically, and the
22 whole structure of the BIRT has changed.

23 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Rob,
24 pardon me for the interruption and
25 pardon, Madam Chair, but I want to ask 00:57:57

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 the question, because I've noticed this
3 since being a staffer in Council. I was
4 a legislative aide when we dealt with the
5 last stimulus money under Obama. I think 00:58:06
6 it's a very dangerous game that we have
7 to stop playing here. Okay? Let's stop
8 pitting people against each other. Let's
9 stop pitting communities and industries
10 against one another and let's talk about 00:58:18
11 the facts. Okay?

12 What is the largest percentage
13 of our budget?

14 So I think what's happening is
15 is that we pit communities against one 00:58:27
16 another for small rations of the budget.
17 We should not be in that game. Let's
18 talk about what's really going on.

19 What's the largest part or
20 portion of our budget? We're talking 00:58:40
21 about -- you're saying, okay, we can
22 only -- for instance, I'll give you this
23 for an example. We want a \$100 million
24 investment for gun violence prevention
25 and intervention. Okay? Which is a drop 00:58:53

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 in the bucket with our overall \$5 billion
3 budget, which has ballooned over the last
4 four years.

5 So we have pension costs that 00:59:02

6 we need to take care of. We have

7 employee costs, Class 100 costs, we need

8 to take care of, right? But we want to

9 pivot this conversation to say, oh, we

10 can't invest in this or we can't invest 00:59:14

11 in that because if we look at our

12 long-term tax strategy around overall job

13 creation, we're going to create so many

14 winners and losers.

15 So I hear the bell. I will 00:59:26

16 circle back on the second round, because

17 I think we have to stop this. Okay?

18 Enough is enough. We're pitting these

19 communities and industries against each

20 other. Let's talk about the facts. 00:59:36

21 Let's talk about where we can reduce the

22 budget so that we can realize actual

23 savings, come up with a real long-term

24 strategy. And in that vein, I do agree

25 with Councilmember Gym that we do need to 00:59:47

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 come up with a long-term strategy, right,
3 ten years down the line, have all the
4 parties at the table that have a stake in
5 this.

00:59:57

6 But we're unnecessarily pitting
7 communities against each other to say we
8 can't do this if we do that when we can
9 do it all, because we have support and
10 help from the American Rescue Plan. If
11 we had an opportunity to have a full
12 workforce development office, okay, that
13 can help us with the workforce
14 development strategy and have the
15 infrastructure to be ready for the
16 American Jobs Plan, we could get more
17 federal funding from that as well. Why
18 are we doing this? It is frustrating.
19 We can do all of it.

01:00:07

01:00:19

20 MR. DUBOW: It is frustrating,
21 but just to provide some context, we were
22 looking at a \$1.5 billion gap before the
23 American Rescue Plan. So that
24 1.4 billion is great, it saved us from a
25 devastating budget, but it didn't

01:00:32

01:00:46

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

5 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair 01:00:55
6 thanks Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.
7 And, Councilmember, we will immediately
8 get back to you on Round 2. Thank you so
9 much for your very thoughtful line of
10 questioning. 01:01:07

L3 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
L4 you, Madam Chair.

acknowledging the work that Councilmember
Domb and his team put into his proposal.
A lot has been said about how these tax
cuts will put money into the pockets of
Black and Brown businesses and spur job
creation. So a lot has been said about
how these tax cuts will put money into
the pockets of Black and Brown businesses
and spur job creation, but, Rob, you just
noted with several Councilmembers that

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 75 percent of businesses in our city are
3 exempt from this tax. And so I'd like to
4 know if we have any estimate of what
5 proportion of Black and Brown businesses 01:02:00
6 actually pay BIRT and will benefit from
7 this bill over the next five years, and
8 I'd like to also know the approximate
9 average benefit.

10 MR. DUBOW: Yeah, and I'm not 01:02:14
11 sure that we keep the information that
12 way, but I'll defer to my colleagues to
13 see whether they have any information on
14 that.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Okay. 01:02:26
16 If you could get back to us on that, that
17 would be helpful.

18 And sort of as was touched on
19 in Councilmember Gym's line of
20 questioning, although a lot has been said 01:02:35
21 about how these proposals will benefit
22 Black and Brown businesses, on its face
23 it doesn't seem like a BIRT tax cut is
24 the most efficient way to support Black
25 and Brown-owned businesses in our city, 01:02:50

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 and it seems that perhaps dedicating the
3 American Rescue Plan funds to Commerce to
4 provide targeted investments in
5 commercial corridors will do more to 01:03:02
6 ensure that our Black and Brown-owned
7 businesses are best supported through
8 this recovery.

9 I visited my commercial
10 corridors in the Third District several 01:03:11
11 times throughout the pandemic, and I can
12 say that they've been stitching -- they
13 are grateful for the support from the
14 City and from the state and the federal
15 government, but they've been stitching 01:03:22
16 together that support and also borrowing
17 from friends and families to stay afloat.
18 They need real cash to sustain their
19 revenues, and that would be a part of my
20 push for this budget cycle. 01:03:37

21 And so I'd like, Rob, for you
22 to speak to if City Council enacts these
23 tax cuts, will the City have funds
24 available to make additional targeted
25 investments in Black and Brown 01:03:50

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 businesses?

3 MR. DUBOW: So with these cuts,
4 we would have less revenue, so there
5 would be less resources to make the kind 01:03:59
6 of investments that you're talking about.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
8 you.

9 I agree with the sentiment
10 expressed by my colleagues, in particular 01:04:10
11 Councilmember Gym, that we have to think
12 really critically about our tax structure
13 and bold, long-term investments in our
14 historically underserved and marginalized
15 communities. In this moment, we most 01:04:28
16 need critical investments in gun violence
17 prevention, housing, and in the future
18 and the viability of Black and
19 Brown-owned businesses, and this proposal
20 in the context of this budget does not 01:04:42
21 seem to support those investments and is
22 not a plan that does it all.

23 And so I do appreciate
24 Councilmember Domb's thoughtfulness, and
25 I appreciated the opportunity even before 01:04:57

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 today to sit with his team, and also I
3 appreciate his willingness to put forward
4 a bold proposal for the future of the
5 City, but I don't think these tax cuts 01:05:09
6 are the best way to provide the support
7 that our communities most need in this
8 moment, and we do have to think about
9 this as choices, right? We have to look
10 at these tax cuts in terms of the revenue 01:05:20
11 that it's going to cost the City and in
12 terms of who it benefits, right? And
13 we're coming out of a moment where people
14 in our Black and Brown neighborhoods have
15 been suffering the most from the 01:05:33
16 pandemic. They've been suffering the
17 most from gun violence. They've been
18 suffering the most economically. And if
19 we're putting forward tax cuts that don't
20 primarily benefit those folks and that 01:05:44
21 are more advantageous to larger
22 businesses who haven't been struggling
23 the most or to people who don't even live
24 in this city, I would question whether
25 that's a wise investment in this moment 01:05:58

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 in time.

3 Thank you so much.

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

5 you, Councilmember Gauthier. 01:06:05

6 The Chair recognizes

7 Councilmember OH.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very

9 much, Chair.

10 So I just want to start with 01:06:13

11 Rob Dubow just kind of -- but for

12 conversation's sake, I'd just like to

13 kind of present an ecosystem.

14 Small neighborhood businesses

15 cannot survive if people in the community 01:06:31

16 don't have money. Those are

17 consumer-oriented businesses. People

18 have to have money to go to their local

19 stores.

20 The people who get hired at 01:06:44

21 these local businesses are still on the

22 consumer retail side of goods and

23 services. It's larger businesses that

24 employ lots of people that invest -- that

25 hire lots of people that put money into 01:07:03

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 the community that then goes to local
3 businesses.

4 So the level of tax cuts in
5 Philadelphia, which is a well-known city 01:07:13
6 of high, unpredictable, unstable taxes,
7 is a serious consideration.

8 There's two things that I'm
9 aware of that I think Councilmember
10 Curtis Jones is also aware of when we 01:07:28
11 talk about bringing large manufacturers,
12 production, and other things into our
13 city. One is high, unstable taxes, hence
14 tax breaks. The other is workforce,
15 which is poor public education and the 01:07:44
16 lack of proper job training, career
17 training, which is usually up-to-date
18 career training, technology. People
19 don't want to retrain folks that have
20 learned something that's obsolete. 01:08:00

21 But the other thing is that the
22 people don't want to learn certain
23 things. They don't want to learn certain
24 things. There's things that young people
25 want to do, like music production, audio. 01:08:13

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 They want to go into filmmaking. They
3 like graphics. They like computers,
4 those type of things.

5 So the statement that I used to 01:08:22
6 believe in, tax what doesn't move, don't
7 tax what moves, is somewhat no longer
8 valid, because everything moves. It's
9 virtual. And in Philadelphia, we have a
10 lot of things that are non-profit, so we 01:08:42
11 can't tax them in real estate. And then
12 we have the highest population of poor
13 people living in our city who can't
14 afford the real estate tax.

15 So from that background, when 01:08:54
16 we look at the strategy of jobs and
17 people being employed, which I think is
18 the goal of tax structure or tax reform,
19 in light of the American Rescue funds
20 that are available, what is the City 01:09:16
21 doing to ensure that we don't lose good
22 jobs that already have a platform in
23 Philadelphia and what are we doing to
24 create new jobs in the community?

25 MR. DUBOW: So I just want to 01:09:37

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 make clear that we are proposing tax
3 reductions. We're proposing reductions
4 in the BIRT rates over the Five Year
5 Plan. It would go from 6.2 down to 01:09:48
6 5.25 percent. So we agree with you that
7 reducing those taxes is a way to increase
8 the number of jobs. We're also proposing
9 wage tax reductions.

10 I think where we differ with 01:10:07
11 these proposals is just the pace of them,
12 that we don't think we can go quite as
13 fast as these proposals would have us go.

14 COUNCILMAN OH: What about the
15 amount of jobs and revenues, tax 01:10:28
16 revenues, and the amount of people coming
17 into the City that we would lose if we do
18 not support our creative arts and culture
19 economy?

20 MR. DUBOW: Right. So we 01:10:47
21 did -- one of the things that we do in
22 this budget is restore some of the
23 funding to the arts and culture economy,
24 including money to the Cultural Fund,
25 including money to museums. So that's 01:11:00

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 part of what we did as we looked at how
3 to use some of the American Rescue Plan
4 money.

5 COUNCILMAN OH: I appreciate 01:11:13

6 it. I'm going to stop my line of
7 questioning. I will point out for
8 another conversation that a million

9 dollars added to the Philadelphia

10 Cultural Fund to distribute \$15,000 01:11:24

11 grants to non-profits is very important,
12 but that's not what I'm talking about.

13 I'm talking about the platform that

14 brings in \$3.4 billion annually to our

15 city and creates \$930 million in annual 01:11:40

16 household income and gives the City

17 \$157 million annually in local taxes.

18 That's not going to be resolved after

19 COVID-19, crime, and other things through

20 the Philadelphia Cultural Fund. 01:11:55

21 MR. DUBOW: Yeah, and that's a

22 good point. There's also money in the

23 Rescue Plan separate from the federal

24 funding, the flexible funding we

25 received, that's specifically for the 01:12:08

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 venues that suffered over the course of
3 the year. And so that's another avenue
4 for help for the community and that we
5 want to make sure that we take advantage 01:12:19
6 of.

7 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. Thank
8 you very much. It's a small fund, but
9 thank you.

10 Thank you, Chairperson. 01:12:26

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
12 you, Councilmember Oh.

13 The Chair recognizes
14 Councilmember Green.

15 (No response.) 01:12:43

16 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER:
17 Councilmember Green, are you connected?
18 I know some folks have been having some
19 technical difficulties.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Can you hear 01:12:51
21 me now?

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes,
23 Councilmember Green, we can hear you.
24 Please proceed.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yeah. I'm 01:12:56

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 having to use multiple devices this
3 morning.

4 Thank you, Madam Chair. I want
5 to thank all of my colleagues in Council 01:13:02
6 for their comments this morning and the
7 legislation that's been put forth and
8 being debated this morning. I want to
9 thank Councilmember Domb as well as
10 Councilmember Parker for the bills that 01:13:16
11 we are discussing this morning and also
12 for a lot of the commentary this morning.

13 Mr. Dubow, I have a question.
14 What work and efforts is the City doing
15 to promote the life sciences industry in 01:13:28
16 the City of Philadelphia?

17 MR. DUBOW: So I probably need
18 to get back to you and get a response
19 from Commerce on that.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. But 01:13:40
21 from the perspective of how we're putting
22 together our tax structure, do you have a
23 perspective on what we're doing to grow
24 different industries in the City of
25 Philadelphia from a tax structure 01:13:52

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 perspective?

3 MR. DUBOW: From a tax
4 structure perspective because of --

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Let me add a 01:13:59
6 little more to that question.

7 Considering that life sciences are
8 growing in the street and our city, what
9 steps are we doing in reference to how
10 we're adjusting our tax structure to help 01:14:08
11 grow that industry in the City of
12 Philadelphia or other industries in
13 reference to how we're looking at our
14 wage or other taxes like the business
15 income and receipts tax? How are those 01:14:20
16 taxes being addressed to help grow
17 industries and jobs in the City of
18 Philadelphia?

19 MR. DUBOW: Right. One of the
20 things that studies have shown repeatedly 01:14:28
21 is that reducing those rates helps to
22 produce jobs. So it's part of the reason
23 that we want to reduce rates. It's --

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: But --

25 MR. DUBOW: I understand your 01:14:43

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 question. I'm just starting, and I'm
3 probably going to actually flip over to
4 Revenue Commissioner in a second, because
5 there are specific things we've done with 01:14:49
6 factor apportionment for specific
7 companies. Other than that, because of
8 the Uniformity Clause, it's hard to
9 target industries, but I'm going to ask
10 the Revenue Commissioner to talk about 01:15:05
11 specific things we've done over time with
12 apportionments to help with specific
13 industries.

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, before
15 you go to Mr. Breslin, I want to shift 01:15:12
16 the focus. I understand the Uniformity
17 Clause, but in addition to talking about
18 the challenges that we have with the
19 Uniformity Clause, what is Finance doing
20 along with the Commerce Department to 01:15:25
21 market our business climate to those
22 industries in ways to help to grow those
23 industries in the City of Philadelphia?

24 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. And so I
25 think what I'm going to ask the Revenue 01:15:35

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Commissioner to talk about is, Commerce
3 will come to us and say, for example,
4 this industry is really important to us,
5 can we look at ways to change some of the 01:15:45
6 way BIRT is applied that would help them
7 out, and then we'll try to work with them
8 to make that happen. I think the Revenue
9 Commissioner hopefully can give a couple
10 of examples of that. 01:15:59

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, I know
12 you want to bring in Mr. Breslin. The
13 reason I ask the question and the concern
14 is that in your testimony during the
15 budget process, you talked about reducing 01:16:09
16 the wage tax as a way of bringing
17 businesses back to the City of
18 Philadelphia, and then I asked you
19 specifically what was the basis of that,
20 and you said from the Tax Reform 01:16:19
21 Commission work of 2008, 2009. My
22 question is that that model is -- yes, we
23 do have to address the wage tax because
24 that is an issue, but we're in a much
25 different business climate even 01:16:32

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 pre-pandemic, and most employees will
3 say, yes, the wage tax is a concern, but
4 more and more talent, especially younger
5 talent, wants to be in the City of 01:16:41
6 Philadelphia and not be in the suburbs.
7 And so the issue has been less and less
8 the wage tax and more and more of the
9 BIRT.

10 So I just want to get some 01:16:55
11 perspective why would you base it on a
12 more outdated perspective as opposed to a
13 more current perspective which is based
14 on how we reduce business income and
15 receipts taxes. That's why it's a 01:17:06
16 question about life sciences as well as
17 other industries, because it seems like
18 it was a more broad-based approach as
19 opposed to trying to grow industries in
20 the City of Philadelphia. 01:17:16

21 (Background noise.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Excuse
23 me. If I may, can I ask all members to
24 please mute. Thank you so very much.

25 I apologize, Councilmember 01:17:27

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Green. Please continue.

3 MR. DUBOW: And we are
4 proposing reductions in the BIRT. That's
5 part of what our budget does. We propose 01:17:33
6 taking the net income rate down from
7 where it is now over 6 percent down to 5
8 and a quarter over time. So that is part
9 of what we're proposing.

10 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right. And 01:17:48
11 I do understand that, but why would you
12 not put a larger percentage on reducing
13 the business income and receipt tax as
14 opposed to the wage tax when you know the
15 wage tax has such a larger base that it 01:17:57
16 takes a lot more to do much less?

17 MR. DUBOW: We still hear from
18 the business community the wage tax is
19 important. So that's why we proposed
20 both. We hear both of them a lot. So 01:18:12
21 that was the rationale between having --
22 for including wage tax reduction also.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right. But
24 the real impact of that reduction in the
25 wage tax for those companies is very 01:18:28

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 minimal as opposed to you're going to
3 have a much deeper impact by reducing the
4 business income receipt tax, correct?

5 MR. DUBOW: So, yeah. The wage 01:18:40

6 tax generates multiples of what the
7 business tax generates. So, right. If
8 you took the same dollars, you could make
9 steeper reductions in the BIRT, and

10 that's definitely a strategy. We chose 01:18:56

11 this strategy because we've heard from
12 this community that both of these taxes
13 are inhibitors to our having more jobs in
14 the City.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Again, what 01:19:11

16 were the types of the businesses that you
17 heard from that said -- so you're saying
18 you heard from businesses that the wage
19 tax reduction was more important than the
20 BIRT? 01:19:20

21 MR. DUBOW: No. We've heard
22 that they're both important, and that's
23 why we proposed both.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right.

25 They're both important, but did you ask 01:19:27

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 any of the businesses what was more
3 important or you just left that open?

4 MR. DUBOW: You know, in
5 conversations we've had -- this is with 01:19:36
6 the Chamber and with -- we basically have
7 heard that they think they're both
8 important and they want to see them both
9 reduced.

10 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. And 01:19:46
11 then give some more perspective from your
12 department, because I've asked this of
13 various departments throughout this whole
14 budget process, what's your process of
15 how you grow Black wealth in the City of 01:19:58
16 Philadelphia?

17 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. So there are
18 a number of ways that are available. One
19 is through making it less expensive to do
20 business here. Another is making it less 01:20:12
21 complex. So, for example, not having
22 businesses have to do returns for the
23 BIRT is a help. It makes it easier to be
24 here. I think we can also leverage money
25 that the City spends itself to make sure 01:20:33

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 that that money is going to Black and
3 Brown businesses. I think that's another
4 important way to help grow wealth in the
5 City.

01:20:41

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Madam Chair,
7 I know my time is up and I'm going to
8 close this round and more likely not come
9 back in the second round, but I did want
10 to make a comment based on some of the
11 other commentary that was made earlier
12 today regarding this budget process and
13 this tax policy.

01:20:52

14 This week we have had a lot of
15 conversation regarding Tulsa, in
16 particular what happened in Tulsa and how
17 this massacre occurred in the United
18 States. But prior to that occurring,
19 Tulsa became what was known as Black Wall
20 Street because of two factors. One, the
21 growth of oil and gas in Tulsa, Oklahoma,
22 which provided an opportunity for a
23 number of Black residents in the
24 Greenwich section of Tulsa to be able to
25 get employed and be able to bring income

01:21:05

01:21:21

01:21:36

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 into their households, but because of the
3 segregation of that time, they were not
4 able to spend that in majority
5 communities and had to spend those 01:21:46
6 dollars within Tulsa with Black business
7 merchants.

8 So the concept that we're
9 talking about -- and I think
10 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson talked 01:21:55
11 about this is not an either/or. We have
12 to grow businesses in the City of
13 Philadelphia of small, medium, and large
14 to help employ more of our citizens,
15 provide them with the resources that they 01:22:07
16 need, but at the same point, we also have
17 to grow African American businesses,
18 Hispanic businesses, and other businesses
19 in our city, not just on our commercial
20 corridors but also throughout the entire 01:22:18
21 City of Philadelphia.

22 And so it's a combination
23 approach of not just growing businesses
24 to do business in the City of
25 Philadelphia so more of our residents 01:22:27

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 will be able to have an income, like what
3 happened in Tulsa, but also growing
4 businesses so that our residents can
5 spend their dollars with those 01:22:36
6 businesses. And from my perspective, I
7 don't believe this Administration has
8 done a strong job in reference to growing
9 our Commerce Department.

10 I've asked this question 01:22:46
11 regarding wealth and how we're trying to
12 create Black wealth with every department
13 that's testified, but when you have a
14 Commerce Department that has been really
15 decimated through the pandemic, and we 01:22:56
16 did use CDBG CARES dollars to kind of
17 bring back resources, but for the most
18 part, the Commerce Department has not
19 been provided the resources that it needs
20 to really help provide the technical 01:23:08
21 assistance for a lot of the type of
22 businesses that we've been talking about
23 this morning.

24 And so that's why this debate
25 is very important. We do have to find 01:23:17

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 ways to reduce our taxes to make it
3 easier for businesses in the City of
4 Philadelphia to grow, both from an
5 African American and Hispanic community 01:23:27
6 perspective, but also majority community
7 perspective and also to ensure that those
8 majority companies as they grow are doing
9 businesses with businesses in the City of
10 Philadelphia, especially from a Black and 01:23:39
11 Brown perspective.

12 And with that, I will reserve
13 my additional comments for the next
14 round.

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair 01:23:46
16 thanks Councilmember Green for his
17 comments.

18 I want to note for the record
19 that in our second round, it will be four
20 minutes, and the order is as follows: 01:23:56
21 Gym, Gilmore Richardson, Domb, and then
22 Green. However, before we start our
23 second round of questioning, we want to
24 hear the testimony coming from Panel No.
25 2. So we will start the second round for 01:24:11

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 questioning on Bill Nos. 210284 and
3 210285 immediately after we hear the
4 testimony from Panel No. 2.

5 For the benefit of our 01:24:25
6 colleagues, I do want you to know that
7 Mr. Dubow and members of the
8 Administration will stay with us during
9 the duration of this hearing, so don't
10 worry about whether or not they will be 01:24:35
11 here to answer your questions.

12 With that being said,
13 Mr. McDermott, will you please state the
14 names of our next panel.

15 THE CLERK: Our next panel will 01:24:45
16 consist of Rebecca DeJoseph from Econsult
17 Solutions, Jabari Jones from West
18 Philadelphia Corridor Collaborative,
19 Brian Murray from Shift Capital, Ben
20 Fileccia from the Pennsylvania Restaurant 01:24:59
21 and Lodging Association, Isis Lester from
22 Styled by a Goddess Salon, and Michelle
23 Vaughn, Kanvas Event Center.

24 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
25 so very much, Mr. McDermott. The first 01:25:09

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 person you noted was Rebecca from

3 Econsult Solutions.

4 Rebecca, are you connected?

5 MS. DeJOSEPH: Yes, I am. 01:25:18

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

7 you, Rebecca. Just please state your

8 name for the record and proceed with your

9 testimony.

10 MS. DeJOSEPH: Sure. 01:25:26

11 Good morning, Majority Leader

12 Parker and members of City Council

13 Committee of the Whole. My name is

14 Rebecca DeJoseph and I am a Director at

15 Econsult Solutions here in Philadelphia. 01:25:34

16 Our firm was tasked with completing an

17 independent analysis of Bill No. 210284

18 and 210285.

19 I will share my screen so that

20 we can take a look at a few slides. 01:25:48

21 Is everybody able to see this?

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes, we

23 can see it, Rebecca.

24 MS. DeJOSEPH: Great. Thank

25 you so much. 01:26:07

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 So in the next few slides, I
3 will go over our analysis, methodology,
4 and findings.

5 What we see here is Bill No. 01:26:16

6 210285, which sets the applicable rates
7 on taxes and wages for net profits for
8 both City residents and non-residents.

9 Under this bill, the resident wage and

10 NPT rate would be reduced from the 01:26:28

11 current rate of 3.8712 percent to

12 2.9 percent by Fiscal Year 2041, for an

13 annual reduction of 0.0486 percent

14 starting in Fiscal Year 2022. The

15 reduction would take place over the next 01:26:43

16 20 years.

17 The non-resident wage and NPT

18 rate would be reduced from the current

19 rate of 3.5019 percent to 2.8 percent by

20 Fiscal Year 2041, for an annual reduction 01:26:53

21 of 0.0236 percent starting in Fiscal Year

22 2023. This reduction would take place

23 over 19 years. The Fiscal Year 2022 rate

24 in this analysis will match the Five Year

25 Plan proposed rate. 01:27:09

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Bill No. 210284 sets the
3 applicable rates for both components of
4 the BIRT tax. Under this bill, the net
5 income rate would be reduced from the 01:27:18
6 current rate of 6.2 to 3 percent by 2031
7 starting in tax year 2022, for an annual
8 reduction of 0.32 percent. The current
9 gross receipts tax would remain
10 maintained through this time. 01:27:31

11 It is important to note here
12 that the rate schedules within this
13 analysis have been slightly modified from
14 the original proposed bills, so that the
15 starting date of the reductions will 01:27:41
16 begin in Fiscal Year 2022. Because the
17 Five Year Plan included rate reductions
18 starting in this year, we reached out to
19 the sponsors of the bill and adjusted the
20 rate schedules for what was originally 01:27:51
21 introduced to be aligned with the timing
22 of the Five Year Plan.

23 Additionally, we have also
24 created two alternative tax rate
25 reduction scenarios that will analyze the 01:27:59

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 effects of eliminating the net income tax
3 within seven years with an annual
4 reduction of 1 percent per year, as well
5 as a 13-year elimination schedule with an 01:28:08
6 annual reduction of 0.5 percent, which we
7 will review at the end of the deck.

8 So in the simplest form; that
9 is, all else equal, a reduction in any
10 tax rate will result in a revenue loss 01:28:23
11 from those taxes. However, economic
12 theory shows that a reduction in tax
13 rates will make an area more attractive
14 to both businesses and workers. This
15 increased attractiveness will work to 01:28:33
16 offset some of those losses in tax
17 revenue by increasing the economic base
18 for which the tax rate is pulling. The
19 important question is, of course, how
20 much revenue will be lost and how much 01:28:43
21 positive economic impact will the tax cut
22 actually have.

23 To aid in answering these
24 questions, we modeled three scenarios.
25 The first scenario is no impact. These 01:28:53

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 estimates are just the arithmetic
3 associated with the rate differentials.
4 There is no adjustment for the supply
5 side effect, and can be thought of as 01:29:01
6 just the maximum revenue loss without any
7 business from the tax rate reduction
8 within the economy. However, it is
9 important to note that this static or
10 no-impact estimate does not fit well with 01:29:11
11 economic theory.

12 Our low and high estimates then
13 take into consideration the supply side
14 effects of the tax reduction; that is,
15 the increased economic activity and 01:29:22
16 employment associated with the tax change
17 that will have an additional effect on
18 revenues, mitigating the overall loss.
19 The low and high estimates are based on
20 previous analyses done by ESI on the 01:29:32
21 relationship between tax rate and
22 economic activity within Philadelphia
23 over many years.

24 Our analysis has shown
25 statistically significant elasticities 01:29:42

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 for Philadelphia's wage tax and business
3 tax rates over time, meaning that
4 decreases in the rate have led to
5 relative increases in the tax base, 01:29:50
6 consistent with proposed economic theory.

7 This slide shows a summary of
8 the potential costs and benefits that
9 must be evaluated to get a clear, full
10 picture of the effects of the two 01:30:05
11 proposed bills. On the left column of
12 the slide, we see the static or no-impact
13 scenario in which there are no economic
14 or fiscal benefits, only costs to the
15 City. On the right side of the slide, we 01:30:16
16 see the supply side impact scenarios.

17 The reduction in wage and BIRT
18 tax makes the area more competitive and
19 attractive to work. This increase in
20 economic activity leads to increased 01:30:27
21 employment and earnings, which in turn
22 has fiscal implications as the tax bases
23 grow. In addition to the direct effects
24 on their own bases, the increase in
25 economic base will also have an effect on 01:30:37

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 the gross receipts, sales, and property
3 tax from overall increased economic
4 activity.

5 This increase in economic basis 01:30:44

6 other than the base for which the direct
7 tax rate change is happening are called
8 cross tax effects, and it works in the
9 following way: Gross and related tax

10 bases generate an offsetting tax revenue 01:30:59

11 in both the low and high impact

12 scenarios, while increases in business
13 activity for reductions in the net income

14 taxes increase the level of employment

15 and earnings and ultimately additional 01:31:09

16 wage tax revenues.

17 NPT collections also increase

18 due to the reduction in the net income

19 tax deductions that offset the NPT, while

20 increased business activity also 01:31:21

21 increases commercial property values and

22 associated tax revenues over time, while

23 increased wages create greater household

24 spending power, increasing the gross

25 receipts tax, sales tax, and property tax 01:31:32

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 collections for the City and School
3 District. While these other taxes will
4 have small impacts, they will have real
5 mitigating effects on the overall total 01:31:40
6 revenue loss.

7 Now, before we get into the
8 revenue losses associated with the tax
9 rate reductions in the two proposed
10 bills, let's first take a look at the 01:31:54
11 economic effects that will make their way
12 back into the revenue stream through the
13 expanded tax bases.

14 As you can see, we do not have
15 any employment or earning impacts in the 01:32:02
16 static scenario, so they are not
17 represented on the screen, and we only
18 see two scenarios for each proposal
19 represented, a high and low estimate for
20 only the wage tax bill, which we can see 01:32:13
21 on the left of each of the graphs, as
22 well as a high and low estimate for the
23 wage and BIRT tax bills.

24 Our estimates show that in
25 2031, which we are down in this area, by 01:32:24

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 2031, potential earnings increases range
3 from 1.5 billion in just the low impact
4 scenario for only the wage bill to
5 6.3 billion in the high impact scenario 01:32:38
6 from both bills combined. We arrive at
7 these estimates by calculating the
8 increased resident and non-resident wage
9 bases based on the low and high
10 elasticity estimates. 01:32:49

11 We then translate these
12 earnings into employment, and we estimate
13 that the potential employment increases
14 range from 15,000 jobs in just the low
15 impact scenario for the wage bill to 01:32:59
16 61,000 jobs in the high impact scenario
17 from both bills combined.

18 Now, taking a look at the
19 revenue effects. If we just take a look
20 at the revenue effects of only Bill No. 01:33:11
21 210285, within the no-impact scenario,
22 revenue decrease would be proportional to
23 the rate reduction and would result in
24 approximately 112 million in reduced
25 revenue nearly in Year 5 relative to the 01:33:25

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 City's Five Year Plan. By 2031, this
3 loss is estimated to be roughly 320
4 million.

5 If we take a look at the impact 01:33:34
6 scenarios, we see that the expanded
7 employment and earnings growth does
8 offset some of the wage and NPT tax
9 revenue loss. For our low impact
10 scenarios, revenue losses are reduced to 01:33:44
11 94 million in Year 5 and 272 million in
12 Year 10, while our high impact scenarios
13 these revenue losses are reduced to 76
14 million in Year 5 and 208 million in Year
15 10. 01:33:58

16 And it's important to note here
17 that this slide is just showing the
18 revenue reductions from and on the wage
19 and NPT tax base. In a few slides, we
20 will bring it all together and look at 01:34:07
21 the additional reduction in the other
22 taxes, which will include those cross tax
23 effects.

24 If we look at the same thing,
25 here we will see the revenue effects of 01:34:17

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 only Bill No. 210284. Within the
3 no-impact scenario, the revenue decrease
4 would be proportional to the rate
5 reduction, resulting in approximately 45 01:34:28
6 million in reduced revenue nearly in Year
7 5 relative to the City's Five Year Plan.
8 By 2030, the loss is estimated to be
9 roughly 208 million.

10 In the impact scenarios to the 01:34:39
11 right, we see that the growth in business
12 attractiveness and activity offsets a
13 portion of this loss. For our low impact
14 scenarios, revenue losses are estimated
15 to be reduced to 39 million in Year 5 and 01:34:49
16 193 million in Year 10. For our high
17 impact scenarios, this reduction is 193
18 million in Year 5 and 178 million in Year
19 10.

20 Again, it's important to note 01:35:02
21 that this slide is just showing the
22 revenue reductions from and on the BIRT
23 base from the reduction given in Bill No.
24 210284.

25 Now, in this next slide, we 01:35:13

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 will bring it all together and take a
3 look at the Year 5 overall impacts.

4 So this slide shows our
5 estimated all-in impacts. The revenue 01:35:23
6 losses are compared to the City's Five
7 Year Plan baseline under each of the
8 three scenarios.

9 In our no impact gray bar, we
10 see that the revenue losses for the wage 01:35:33
11 tax in Year 5 are estimated at 112

12 million, and 145 million for both bills,
13 the wage and the BIRT. In our high and
14 low estimate impact scenarios, revenue
15 losses in Year 5 are estimated to be both 01:35:47

16 lowered between 70 and 91 billion for the
17 wage bill, and 59 and a 102 million for
18 both bills combined. And cumulatively
19 over the five-year period, so from Fiscal
20 Year 2022 to 2026, we estimate the total 01:36:03

21 losses in the no-impact scenario to be
22 roughly 400 million. The high and low
23 impact scenarios estimate this loss to be
24 lowered to 270 million in the low impact
25 scenario and 140 in the high impact 01:36:15

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 scenario.

3 Moving out to Year 10, in
4 Fiscal Year 2031, the revenue losses are
5 compared to the City's Five Year Plan 01:36:28
6 baseline in the three scenarios, and we
7 see here that with our no-impact scenario
8 with just the wage bill, we have a
9 reduction of 320 million in Year 10.

10 When we take a look at both bills 01:36:43
11 combined, we see that we have a reduction
12 of 475 million for both bills.

13 In our high and low estimates,
14 revenue losses in Year 10 are estimated
15 to be lowered to between 208 and 264 01:36:54
16 million for the wage bill and 193 to 334
17 for both bills.

18 So in summary, you'll see that
19 this slide shows a summary of all the
20 costs and benefits associated with the 01:37:15
21 two proposed bills. As we can see by
22 Year 10, in the no-impact scenario for
23 wage and BIRT tax bills combined, the
24 cost of the proposals would be roughly
25 475 million in revenue, reduced to 193 01:37:26

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 million in the high impact scenario.
3 However, the benefits associated with the
4 bill is estimated to generate up to
5 60,000 jobs and \$6.3 billion in wages. 01:37:37

6 This increase in activity
7 earnings and employment would have the
8 potential to lower poverty levels among
9 Philadelphia residents, reducing
10 expenditure pressures, as well as create 01:37:50
11 local demand for businesses through
12 additional spending power for households
13 and businesses.

14 Lastly, we did take a look in
15 addition to the proposed bills analyzed 01:38:01
16 above, we created two alternate rate
17 schedules, one in which the net impact
18 would be completely eliminated in seven
19 years and one in which it would be
20 completely eliminated in 13 years. And 01:38:11
21 as you can see from the slide, what we
22 expect to happen does happen. The
23 accelerated rate of the schedules will
24 have two effects. An increase in the
25 overall revenue loss will be much quicker 01:38:23

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 by Year 10 and the -- as well as an
3 increase in the employment and earnings,
4 which we would see at a much faster pace
5 than the current rate schedules reviewed 01:38:37
6 above.

7 Thank you.

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
9 so very much, Rebecca, for your
10 testimony. 01:38:48

11 We're now going to turn to
12 Jabari Jones from the West Philadelphia
13 Corridor Collaborative.

14 Jabari, are you connected?

15 MR. JONES: I am connected, 01:38:57
16 Councilwoman. Can you hear me?

17 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Oh, yeah.
18 We can hear you well, Jabari. Just state
19 your name for the record and feel free to
20 proceed with your testimony. 01:39:04

21 MR. JONES: Absolutely. My
22 name is Jabari Jones and I'll proceed
23 testifying on 210284 and 210285.

24 Good morning, Majority Leader
25 Parker and members of City Council. My 01:39:15

6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

name is Jabari Jones and I'm the
President of the West Philadelphia
Corridor Collaborative, West Philly's
largest coalition of small businesses. 01:39:23

Today I'm appearing virtually to give
testimony because our City Council has a
unique opportunity to build back better.
We have an opportunity to reform our tax
goals and for the decades-long complaint 01:39:35
of businesses in the City and invest in
new neighborhood jobs.

As the President of the
business association, I have
unfortunately seen the negative impacts 01:39:45
of our city's current tax code. I have
seen promising high-growth companies
driven to relocate out of our city. They
open locations across City Line Avenue
and in the surrounding suburbs. I have 01:39:56
seen lifelong Philadelphia residents
decide to choose New Jersey as a space to
open their business. And I have seen
larger companies take a pass on Philly
and go elsewhere. 01:40:06

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 In all of these circumstances,
3 these companies take with them the
4 employment opportunities and investments
5 that would have come with their growth. 01:40:13

6 This has kept our city stagnant,
7 prevented the creation of new jobs, and
8 kept our unemployment and poverty rates
9 where they've been for decades. It's
10 time to try something new. 01:40:23

11 These tax bills give us an
12 opportunity to change the direction of
13 our city. Among large cities,
14 Philadelphia is known for its relatively
15 high tax burden. We're the only city 01:40:33

16 that taxes business revenue and business
17 profits. If residents were taxed at the
18 same structure, it means the City would
19 not only take the wage tax at the
20 beginning of each paycheck, but at the 01:40:44

21 end of the year after residents' annual
22 bills are paid, the City would assess
23 another tax on any money that hasn't been
24 spent. These taxes are so burdensome
25 that it makes businesses not want to come 01:40:53

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 here and causes growing companies to
3 move.

4 I know one of these bills has
5 already been held, 210283, but I support 01:40:59
6 businesses only having to pay either the
7 tax on revenue or on profits along with
8 the reductions in the net income tax.

9 There are some that would argue
10 that these kinds of reductions will only 01:41:11
11 help large companies, but we've seen in
12 our position that these large companies
13 are already avoiding taxes. They hire
14 expensive teams of accountants and
15 lawyers, develop complex accounting of 01:41:20
16 financial structures, and expose the tax
17 loopholes that we aren't even aware of.
18 It's the small businesses who can't
19 afford those resources that have to pay
20 the full brunt of our local taxes. 01:41:31

21 The proposed reductions would
22 decrease the tax burden on small
23 businesses and allow these companies to
24 reinvest those dollars into their
25 business. For existing Philadelphia 01:41:41

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 businesses, those reinvestments could
3 take the form of a new job, something
4 that our city needs now more than ever.

5 The Philadelphia Department of 01:41:50

6 Commerce has already estimated that over
7 208,000 residents have filed for pandemic
8 unemployment assistance during the
9 COVID-19 crisis. Many of those jobs have

10 gone forever as businesses closed 01:42:01

11 permanently during the pandemic.

12 Everyone on this call, every

13 Councilmember and resident, can easily

14 think of one business in their

15 neighborhood that unfortunately didn't 01:42:10

16 make it.

17 We need to replace those jobs.

18 No social program alone will put a dent

19 in the City's poverty problem. We need

20 to solve these problems by putting 01:42:19

21 residents to work and putting money into

22 their pockets through the creation of new

23 jobs.

24 Those reinvestments could also

25 take shape in new wage increases. As 01:42:27

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 businesses recovering from the COVID-19
3 pandemic face worker shortages and are
4 searching for reasonable ways to
5 incentivize and reward workers, a tax 01:42:36
6 reduction could give businesses the
7 financial confidence that they need and
8 to voluntarily boost wages. Businesses
9 will be able to offset those wage
10 increases through these new tax savings. 01:42:46

11 Important still, these new tax
12 adjustments will help restore the
13 confidence of the region's business
14 community that our city, our City
15 Councilmembers stand beside them and will 01:42:57
16 support their recovery. Trust me when I
17 tell you that sometimes that confidence,
18 the confidence that someone has your
19 back, can be the factor for businesses to
20 choose to remain open or close when 01:43:06
21 things get tough.

22 Thank you for allowing me to
23 testify today, and I urge all members of
24 City Council to make the decision that
25 will invest in the future growth of our 01:43:16

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 city.

3 Thank you, and I'm happy to
4 answer any questions.

5 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Jabari, 01:43:20
6 thank you so very much for your
7 testimony.

8 We're going to ask all members
9 of this panel to make sure you stay
10 around until we've heard all of the 01:43:30
11 testimony, and then we'll start our Round
12 2 and then questions from our colleagues.

13 Bob, I have Brian Murray of
14 Shift Capital next. Is that still
15 accurate? 01:43:42

16 THE CLERK: Yes. That's
17 correct.

18 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Brian
19 Murray, are you still connected?

20 MR. MURRAY: Yes. I'm here. 01:43:47

21 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
22 you, Brian. State your name for the
23 record and proceed with your testimony.

24 MR. MURRAY: Sure. This is
25 Brian Murray. I'm the CEO of Shift 01:43:55

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Capital.

3 Good morning, Majority
4 Councilwoman Parker and distinguished
5 Councilmembers. I'm happy to be here to 01:44:02
6 chat with you all.

7 So Shift Capital is a
8 B-certified impact real estate company.
9 We're located in the Harrowgate section
10 of Kensington. Our mission is to create 01:44:13
11 more equitable and just neighborhoods.

12 In addition to our investments
13 in Kensington, we've invested in and
14 worked the intersection of Broad and
15 Erie. We work in Sharswood with our 01:44:23
16 partners, Mosaic Development Partners and
17 PHA, and we consult with a variety of
18 partners across the City like Norris
19 Square Community Association and
20 Centennial Parkside CDC. We also work 01:44:33
21 outside of Philadelphia in Washington, DC
22 and Newark, New Jersey where we partner
23 with minority developers to help increase
24 their access to capital and strengthen
25 their execution. 01:44:42

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 As one of the largest private
3 holders of commercial real estate in
4 North Philadelphia that have invested
5 over \$150 million in these neighborhoods, 01:44:50
6 we've been at the forefront of attracting
7 businesses to some of the most important
8 corridors in underserved neighborhoods in
9 the City.

10 During 2020, we lost many small 01:45:00
11 businesses in our ecosystem. However, we
12 were able to attract 26 new small
13 businesses to Harrowgate in the middle of
14 the opioid crisis on Kensington Avenue
15 and in the middle of the pandemic. 01:45:13

16 What's interesting is, 22 of those small
17 businesses were minority, women, or
18 LGBTQ-owned businesses, and they
19 collectively brought 57 jobs into
20 Kensington. 01:45:23

21 However, many of these small
22 businesses are not thinking about the tax
23 burdens of locating their business in
24 Philadelphia. They are often sole
25 proprietors just getting started. They 01:45:33

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 want to be here, but as they grow, hire
3 employees in neighborhoods, and they
4 struggle to make their businesses work,
5 this is when they learn that it is not 01:45:43
6 cheap to do business in the City.

7 Many of our most successful
8 small businesses at the moment that have
9 the capacity to make long-term strategic
10 decisions about their businesses have 01:45:54
11 left our ecosystem. They've crossed the
12 river in Jersey or other parts of PA.

13 I'll also add that it takes a
14 village of businesses to lift our
15 communities out of poverty. And while we 01:46:03
16 are winning in some categories, we are
17 losing very badly in others. Our
18 business corridors are one such area.
19 Our lack of Marshall Plan in critical
20 neighborhoods is another. Our 01:46:15
21 competitiveness in the larger marketplace
22 is also difficult to swallow.

23 Just in 2019, we were competing
24 to put the largest indoor farm on the
25 East Coast in Juniata and Kensington. 01:46:26

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 The California-based urban agriculture
3 group called Crop One Holdings was

4 interested in a space at I Street and

5 Erie. We spent more than a year and a 01:46:37

6 half working with the Commerce

7 Department, PIDC, our Councilmembers,

8 Councilwoman Sanchez and Councilman

9 Squilla, to plan and attract them to

10 Philadelphia. They wanted to be part of 01:46:46

11 the Philadelphia story of responsible

12 growth. They wanted to be in the

13 neighborhood, and they cared about

14 equitable development, not to mention the

15 various mentorship programs that they 01:46:57

16 planned to bring to the residents of the

17 area. But in the end, their investor

18 decided to take them elsewhere, and one

19 major reason was the competitiveness of

20 our overall business environment. 01:47:07

21 When I think -- what is most

22 devastating about this is that ripple

23 effect that it would have had for the

24 dozens and dozens of other small

25 businesses in the neighborhood. 01:47:19

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 One of those worrying
3 components of our job is knowing that as
4 our small and mid-sized businesses grow,
5 they might turn elsewhere as they become 01:47:26
6 more successful and as they become more
7 financially adept with their business,
8 which is what we all want to see happen.
9 And, yes, the Navy Yard is doing great
10 and University City seems to be roaring, 01:47:38
11 but it's our neighborhoods that could be
12 benefiting from better policy. They're
13 getting starved by a lack of funds just
14 for better quality of life in the
15 neighborhoods, and they are also getting 01:47:49
16 strangled by the inability to compete
17 against not just New Jersey but
18 surrounding counties and places like Iowa
19 and Atlanta and other areas of the
20 country that are just more aggressive in 01:47:59
21 attracting businesses.

22 In conclusion, at the macro
23 level, this proposal will have the effect
24 of boosting economic activity in the City
25 that benefits everyone, and for 01:48:08

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 individual businesses, it will allow them
3 to spend more money on the successful
4 future of their business. They may
5 choose to hire more additional people, 01:48:15
6 fix up the inside or outside of their
7 business, or it may provide some seed
8 money for a second location that they
9 choose to put into the City and not
10 outside the City. 01:48:24

11 Relatedly, these proposals are
12 no longer -- will no longer penalize
13 these businesses for being here. They
14 want to be here. Some of these small
15 businesses have been here a long time, 01:48:34
16 and we want them to grow here as well.

17 I thank you all for your time.
18 I appreciate the opportunity to chat with
19 you all.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Brian, 01:48:42
21 thank you so very much for your
22 testimony.

23 The Chair is going to ask
24 Robert McDermott, if you would, Bob, call
25 the next person. 01:48:50

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 THE CLERK: The next person to
3 testify is Ben Fileccia, Pennsylvania
4 Restaurant and Lodging Association.

5 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Ben, are 01:48:59
6 you connected?

7 MR. FILECCIA: I am. Thank
8 you.

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
10 you, Ben. Please state your name for the 01:49:03
11 record and proceed with your testimony.

12 MR. FILECCIA: Absolutely. My
13 name is Ben Fileccia. I'm the Director
14 of Operations and Strategy with the
15 Pennsylvania Restaurant and Lodging 01:49:11
16 Association. I'm based here in beautiful
17 Philadelphia. We represent 347 members
18 in Philadelphia, which represent over 600
19 restaurants and many hotels. We have
20 about 2,800 members statewide, but we do 01:49:27
21 represent everybody in hospitality with
22 over 28,000 restaurants across the state.

23 So the PRLA supports Bill
24 210284 and Bill 210285. It's also worth
25 noting that the PRLA supports the 01:49:44

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 outright elimination of the net income
3 tax.

4 Philadelphia is significantly
5 behind other cities and suburbs in terms 01:49:51
6 of economic performance. Philly has the
7 least number of Black-owned businesses
8 when compared to other East Coast cities
9 before the pandemic, the fewest number of
10 small and mid-sized businesses per 01:50:04
11 capita, fewer jobs than surrounding
12 suburbs, and Philly ranks 26 in
13 employment growth.

14 Currently, Philly depends on
15 wage and business taxes, which are less 01:50:14
16 stable during economic downturns, you
17 know, which we noticed during the
18 pandemic. And as the pandemic ends and
19 mitigation restrictions are lifted,
20 competition and business is heating up. 01:50:26
21 There needs to be a new way forward to
22 attract and retain both businesses and
23 residents.

24 We know Philadelphia has
25 limited options to grow revenue in 01:50:37

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Philly. You could either increase the
3 tax rate, which is too burdensome for the
4 City coming out of a pandemic especially,
5 or you can grow the tax base. That is 01:50:47
6 where our focus should be.

7 We support this because the
8 goal of this legislation is to grow jobs,
9 and the pandemic has highlighted the
10 difficulty businesses have setting up in 01:51:00
11 the City and staying in the City. Tax
12 rates are too high, and the tax structure
13 is extremely complicated. This plan will
14 decrease taxes by reducing the net income
15 tax rate and eliminating the BIRT and for 01:51:14
16 businesses to pay both the net income and
17 gross receipts taxes.

18 The net income tax would be
19 eliminated completely. Elimination of
20 the net income tax sends the message that 01:51:26
21 this is a city that wants to grow, a city
22 that can compete for jobs in the region.
23 The restrictive nature of Philadelphia
24 hurts businesses.

25 Also of note, there are no 01:51:39

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 local net income taxes in the region
3 surrounding Philadelphia. They have
4 state income tax, but no local income
5 tax. Eliminating this would be huge for 01:51:48
6 businesses.

7 This legislation will make
8 Philadelphia more competitive in the
9 region compared to other major cities.
10 This will send a message to all 01:51:57
11 Philadelphians that the City is serious
12 about wanting people and businesses to
13 return.

14 We also know that even the
15 Kenney Administration had said they 01:52:08
16 expect 15 percent of suburban commuters
17 to not return to working in the City and,
18 therefore, will not go back to paying the
19 wage tax. This move would significantly
20 shift Philadelphia's reliance off of the 01:52:21
21 wage tax, something that the pandemic
22 showed us is really important to do,
23 especially since those funds may not
24 always be there.

25 Philly experienced a revenue 01:52:32

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 shortfall of almost 15 percent last year,
3 which is worse than any major city other
4 than Detroit. If we are growing jobs in
5 various industries, it benefits the 01:52:41
6 hospitality industry. The growth would
7 lead to millions of dollars in additional
8 profit for hotel owners, restaurants, and
9 all the hospitality jobs out there.

10 Philadelphia is receiving 01:52:55
11 \$1.4 billion in federal stimulus money.
12 There's an opportunity here to combine
13 that in terms of timing with tax cuts to
14 make a truly significant change to the
15 Philadelphia economy. These federal 01:53:06
16 stimulus dollars provides Philadelphia
17 with a rare chance to fight for economic
18 growth. This will make Philly more
19 competitive in attracting people and
20 fostering job growth, and it's going to 01:53:19
21 eliminate the burden for businesses to
22 pay a variety of different taxes and will
23 allow lower tax liabilities to help
24 Philly businesses grow and reinvest their
25 business. 01:53:30

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 I also want to note that PRLA
3 also supports Councilmember Parker's Bill
4 210442, which is a proposed plan to
5 dramatically reduce Philly's parking tax 01:53:39
6 rate from 25 to 17 percent. Philly's
7 parking tax is currently more than 6
8 percent higher than any other major city
9 in the Mid-Atlantic. Off-street rates
10 are \$16 to \$22, on-street is \$2 to \$3, 01:53:51
11 which causes people to spend time
12 searching for meters. We want folks to
13 come into the City. We want to make it
14 easier for them to come in the City. We
15 want them to spend their money at 01:54:02
16 restaurants. We want them to spend money
17 at hotels. We want the tourists back in
18 Philly, and this is going to help us do
19 that.

20 And, finally, I just want to 01:54:10
21 thank all of City Council for the support
22 given to the restaurant industry. We
23 were hit really hard the past 15 months,
24 and we're going to lose -- Pennsylvania
25 is going to lose about 20 percent of all 01:54:28

6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
restaurants, which is unfortunate, but
that would have been a lot higher if it
wasn't for the grants that you guys were
able to provide us, which was a
significant amount of money for the
restaurant industry, and we just ask that
you invest a small amount more in helping
reduce taxes and to redesign the City's
tax structure.

11 Thank you very much for having
12 me on this morning.

13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
14 you, Ben, for your testimony.

15 And, Bob, I'm going to ask you 01:54:59
16 to call the next person on this panel.

17 THE CLERK: The next person on
18 this panel is Isis Lester, Styled by a
19 Goddess Salon.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Isis, are 01:55:11
21 you connected?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Isis
24 Lester?

25 (No response.) 01:55:20

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Isis

3 Lester?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Isis, if 01:55:26

6 you are on and you are just trying to

7 unmute or something, note that we will

8 proceed to the next person on our list,

9 but please stay on if you're just having

10 some technical difficulties. 01:55:34

11 The next person, Bob.

12 THE CLERK: The next person to

13 testify is Michelle Vaughn, Kanvas Event

14 Center.

15 MS. VAUGHN: Good morning, 01:55:46

16 Majority Chairwoman Parker and

17 distinguished Councilmen. I am Michelle

18 Vaughn, owner and operator of Kanvas

19 Event Center based in West Philadelphia,

20 University City area. We are a 01:55:53

21 multi-purpose event center where we host

22 a variety of events and memorable

23 moments.

24 The effects of the pandemic

25 were and still are a catastrophe for our 01:56:03

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 business and industry. Without any
3 resources coming in and bills going out
4 for over a year put a tremendous burden
5 and strangled us financially. We had to 01:56:16
6 lay off or furlough our work staff as
7 well as use our own resources to keep our
8 business afloat, and shutting our doors
9 was not an option for us. Reduced
10 capacity mandates meant reduced income 01:56:29
11 when we were allowed to operate again,
12 and the effects are still relevant today.

13 We continue -- we support the
14 Bill 210284 and 210285. The wage tax
15 reductions may very well have been seen 01:56:44
16 as an incentive to prospective employees
17 to seek employment. With the rate being
18 what it is, potential employees are
19 disgruntled, because at the end of the
20 pay week, they see so much of their 01:56:56
21 weekly wages absorbed in taxes. There is
22 less money available to funnel back into
23 the economy.

24 Like many of you, we continue
25 to look at the City of Philadelphia as a 01:57:05

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 competitive city that encourages job and
3 business growth. Therefore, it's very
4 important that we retain our employees
5 and encourage continued business growth. 01:57:15

6 If the business tax was
7 reduced, it may allow for businesses to
8 hire more employees and to be able to pay
9 decent and fair wages. Because of the
10 current structure, we have consistent 01:57:27
11 employee turnover, not only in our
12 industry but across the board in general.
13 A reduced rate would definitely serve as
14 an incentive to stay within the City
15 limits as well as serve as a dual purpose 01:57:38
16 in keeping our workforce in place as
17 opposed to constant turnover in
18 employees. It would also give us the
19 opportunity to expand our business,
20 modernize our facility, and offer higher 01:57:50
21 wages to prospective employees.

22 With the current situation as
23 it stands, both the high wage and BIRT
24 tax, it deters businesses and potential
25 employees from coming into the City and 01:58:05

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 can cause people to move to the suburbs
3 and spend their money in the suburbs,
4 which is not, as a business owner and
5 homeowner in Philadelphia, what I want to 01:58:12
6 see continue to happen.

7 The reduction proposal helps
8 all businesses in Philadelphia to support
9 one another, be it small or large. We
10 can buy Philadelphia while supporting 01:58:23
11 Philadelphia.

12 In conclusion, the benefit of
13 the reduction proposal will serve as an
14 incentive to keep the City thriving
15 during the pandemic -- yes, we're still 01:58:32
16 in the pandemic -- and an outcome of
17 maintaining entrepreneurial growth as
18 well as sparking the recovery of our
19 economy.

20 I would like to thank you all 01:58:43
21 for allowing me to testify today, and I
22 look forward to much help from any of you
23 on the Council.

24 Thank you.

25 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 01:58:50

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 you, Michelle, for your testimony.

3 Isis Lester, are you connected
4 yet, Isis?

5 (No response.) 01:59:01

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay. So
7 if Isis is connected, we will give you an
8 opportunity to testify.

9 Bob, is there anyone else
10 scheduled for this panel? 01:59:12

11 THE CLERK: There are no other
12 names for Panel 2.

13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
14 Thank you so very much.

15 We're now going to turn to our 01:59:19
16 colleagues who are on the list for the
17 second round. Just a reminder that the
18 Administration is also still with us.

19 So we'll start with
20 Councilmember Gym. 01:59:29

21 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes. Thank
22 you very much, Madam Chair. I had just a
23 few questions to just get on the record.
24 They have been recorded before, and these
25 are all for Rob Dubow and probably Marisa 01:59:39

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 as well.

3 Could we just clarify on
4 210285, the wage tax reduction, for the
5 median household or median wage earner in 01:59:55
6 Philadelphia, what is the savings of the
7 wage tax reduction annually?

8 MR. DUBOW: So I think we'd
9 have to calculate that, unless, Marisa,
10 you've already done that. 02:00:13

11 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: We did that
12 in the last hearing, I believe.

13 MS. WAXMAN: We did that on the
14 Administration's proposal. We have not,
15 I believe, done that on the wage tax bill 02:00:21
16 that we testified on this morning, but we
17 certainly can.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: You haven't
19 calculated the financial impact of the
20 wage tax bill that's before us right now? 02:00:36

21 MS. WAXMAN: Oh, yeah. We've
22 done that. We haven't calculated the
23 impact on the median individual wage, but
24 give me 11 minutes and I'll do it.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you. 02:00:45

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Could you clarify on the
3 Administration's proposal what the median
4 savings would have been?

5 MS. WAXMAN: That was -- 02:00:56

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: What the
7 savings would have been on the median
8 income in Philadelphia. My apologies.

9 MS. WAXMAN: Yes. That was
10 roughly \$15 annually. I can go back and 02:01:03
11 pull up the dollars exactly, but that was
12 around \$15 for FY23 for median income,
13 which I think we had it in around --
14 somewhere between \$45,000 to \$55,000.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And so \$15 02:01:20
16 annually; is that right?

17 MS. WAXMAN: Yes.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And then I
19 think the Councilmember Chair had
20 clarified about using the previous bill, 02:01:36
21 two-thirds of that money would have gone
22 to out-of-state residents --
23 non-Philadelphia residents. So that
24 would be approximately like 100-some
25 million out of the 150; is that correct? 02:01:52

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: The
7 Administration's wage tax bill. And then
8 I'm going to ask the same question about
9 whether those proportions have changed
10 with this current one.

L1 MS. WAXMAN: I cannot off the
L2 top of my head speak to the
L3 Administration. So the Administration's
L4 bill, the wage tax impact over the Five
L5 Year Plan is about \$186 million. About 02:02:24
L6 60 percent of that would accrue to
L7 non-residents, 40 percent to residents.
L8 I would need to do math to --

19 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: That's okay.
20 Does that same proportion hold 02:02:40
21 with the 210285?

22 MS. WAXMAN: That's the one
23 that I don't know because I haven't done
24 that calculation yet.

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 know how the distribution would occur
3 between non-Philadelphia and Philadelphia
4 residents?

5 MS. WAXMAN: We do know. I 02:02:55
6 don't know the percentages off the top of
7 my head, but let me pull up -- I think,
8 Rob, we had this this morning. So, yeah,
9 we can pull that for you.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And 02:03:14
11 then while we're waiting, Rob, the last
12 question I had on BIRT, one of the things
13 that we've heard repeatedly from small
14 businesses, local businesses, and Black
15 businesses in particular is the need for 02:03:30
16 us to also invest in entrepreneurship on
17 the ground. A lot of our large
18 companies, while we certainly want them
19 to see and find a home here in
20 Philadelphia, often have abysmal 02:03:46
21 participation at the leadership level of
22 people of color, women, certainly of
23 Black leadership at the largest
24 businesses. This is certainly not
25 Black-owned, Black-led for many of the 02:04:06

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 large businesses. And so one of the
3 things that's been talked about a lot is
4 the importance of communities and
5 Philadelphia in particular supporting 02:04:17
6 Black entrepreneurship.

7 Now, technically the BIRT would
8 not actually help with that, right,
9 because you kind of already have to have
10 a company in order to see a benefit? 02:04:27

11 MR. DUBOW: That's right,
12 although it would help with a new
13 company, for an example, because if their
14 taxes are lowered, that would be a
15 benefit. 02:04:39

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: But that's
17 only if their revenues are greater than
18 100,000.

19 MR. DUBOW: Correct.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And we are 02:04:48
21 talking about the importance of
22 supporting through front-end grants some
23 of the entrepreneurship efforts,
24 incubators, those kinds of things that
25 would be of significant assistance. An 02:05:00

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 incubator would not necessarily fall
3 under the BIRT, though; is that correct?

4 MR. DUBOW: That's correct,
5 depending on what its revenue stream 02:05:10
6 looked like.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay.

8 MR. DUBOW: Yeah.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: All right.

10 Those are all my questions, Madam Chair, 02:05:16
11 and we'll just wait for Ms. Waxman, our
12 Revenue Director, to give us back those
13 numbers.

14 Thank you so much, Madam Chair.

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 02:05:26
16 you, Councilmember Gym. And when Marisa
17 Waxman gets that information relative to
18 this bill, we will make sure that it is
19 distributed to all members of Council
20 from the Council President's office. 02:05:39

21 The Chair recognizes
22 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

23 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Thank
24 you so much, Madam Chair.

25 I just wanted to circle back to 02:05:47

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 my question from last round around the
3 long-term strategy of our overall
4 business tax structure and allow

5 Mr. Dubow an opportunity to respond to 02:05:58
6 that more fully before I ask any
7 additional questions.

8 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. And I think
9 the long-term strategy is to keep
10 reducing the rates and to make them more 02:06:10
11 competitive. I think we've done
12 important things on the structure with
13 moving to single-factor apportionment and
14 exempting that first hundred thousand
15 dollars, and I think what we need to do 02:06:23
16 now is keep reducing the rates to make
17 them more competitive over time.

18 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: And
19 then again for that continuance of
20 reduction, can you talk about the 02:06:36
21 long-term part of that process? Because
22 we're looking at this in sort of a Five
23 Year Plan process.

24 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. And the long
25 term is kind of why I was going back to 02:06:48

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 looking at what's happened to the rates
3 since we started, which is the wage tax
4 rate going down a full percent, from
5 almost 5 percent to now in the 3.8's for 02:06:57
6 residents and the gross receipts rate on
7 BIRT going from 0.32 to 0.14 and the
8 gradual reductions on the net income side
9 and structural changes.

10 So the goal is to keep doing 02:07:13
11 that over time. The difference -- we're
12 looking at the difference between the
13 City and surrounding areas, and then that
14 gap has reduced significantly over time.
15 We want to keep reducing it to make it 02:07:28
16 more and more that there's not a
17 detriment to businesses to be in
18 Philadelphia. That's the long-term goal,
19 but it's going to take some time.

20 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: And 02:07:41
21 then to your point, Mr. Dubow, when
22 thinking about the overall long-term
23 business tax structure in Philadelphia,
24 how do you incorporate the workforce
25 development part of that into the 02:07:54

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 conversation? Meaning when you're making
3 these decisions, how are you specifically
4 looking at workforce development as a
5 part of the decision structure? 02:08:04

6 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. So part of
7 what we're looking at is what resources
8 we have to put into various investments.
9 So this year, one of the things that we
10 invested in was workforce. So there's 02:08:16
11 about \$3 million that we added this year
12 for the Office of Workforce Development.
13 So that was part of the calculus for what
14 we were doing with this year's budget.

15 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Thank 02:08:31
16 you. I did see that in the proposed
17 budget, but to your point, that was
18 mostly in Class 200, right, and not
19 really around Class 100 investment in
20 having a workforce development 02:08:42
21 infrastructure that will assist us with
22 any additional federal investment around
23 the American Jobs Plan. So I just wanted
24 to get that on the record relative to the
25 proposal and workforce development. 02:08:55

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 And then, lastly, regarding
3 Black businesses, how have you
4 specifically looked at the Black business
5 ecosystem here in Philadelphia to 02:09:06
6 determine your continued reduction and
7 how that's either helping or hurting
8 Black business?

9 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. And I think
10 a couple of things that have happened 02:09:19
11 over time that will really help Black
12 businesses and small businesses is that
13 hundred thousand dollar threshold, both
14 in terms of not paying taxes and not
15 having to even file. So not having to go 02:09:35
16 through that process I think is part of
17 making the process simpler, which is
18 really important in the long run. And
19 then reducing rates helps all businesses.
20 So that's part of the strategy too. 02:09:49

21 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Thank
22 you, Madam Chair.

23 And thank you, Mr. Dubow.

24 MR. DUBOW: Thank you.

25 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 02:09:59

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 you, Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

3 And the Chair recognizes

4 Councilmember Domb.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you, 02:10:04

6 Madam Chair.

7 Most of my questions are for

8 Rob Dubow. First, I do want to thank the

9 witnesses who appeared today. I

10 appreciate their time and their 02:10:14

11 testimony. I also want to comment on

12 Councilmember Jones and on the bold

13 agreement with him that we can do both.

14 It's not an either/or. It's "and."

15 But to Kathy Gilmore 02:10:25

16 Richardson, absolutely, we shouldn't be

17 picking winners and losers. Everyone we

18 should be helping here.

19 To Councilmember Oh's

20 statement, it is true that small, medium, 02:10:32

21 and large businesses employ people who

22 spend money all over the City, including

23 in small neighborhoods. So we want all

24 employment here. All employment helps.

25 It's called an economic job multiplier. 02:10:42

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 And to Councilman Green's
3 comments, I could not agree with him
4 more. The benefits of the net income tax
5 is really the key piece that I saw in the 02:10:52
6 Econsult report that shows job growth.

7 And so, Rob, my questions to
8 you, have you seen the charts that show
9 on the East Coast cities we're the lowest
10 in Black-owned business formation, that 02:11:04
11 when we look at our suburbs, we're the
12 only city on the East Coast where we have
13 less jobs in the City versus our suburbs?
14 And then when you look at the statistics
15 of jobs that we created in Philadelphia 02:11:16
16 for the last ten years, 60.5 percent pay
17 less than \$35,000. We're creating
18 poverty jobs. Compared to the U.S.
19 average of 29 percent and compared to the
20 top 25 cities of 28 percent, we're 02:11:32
21 double. And where we're missing here is
22 in those \$35,000 to \$100,000 jobs that my
23 colleagues have talked about.

24 And then when you look at the
25 business income taxes on businesses, 02:11:44

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 clearly New York takes the lead at 17.2,
3 but we're right up there at 16.2, and
4 every other city is below 8.8, including
5 California, who I thought would have the 02:11:57
6 highest taxes. Even Chicago is at 7.

7 Why would a company want to
8 expand here or come here in that
9 scenario? And I think these statistics
10 have shown the problems we're having. 02:12:08

11 If there's a better idea, I'd
12 love to hear it, but we need to take bold
13 steps to fix this, otherwise we're going
14 to be talking about this for the next
15 five to ten years. 02:12:18

16 And I will say this: This is
17 an investment. Yes, it will cost us
18 money. Every investment costs money to
19 get a return. Will it turn in five
20 years, ten years? Well, in most 02:12:30
21 optimistic research, it showed over
22 100,000 jobs could come to Philadelphia,
23 but the real returns will be after 10
24 years, will be in 15 and 20 years. I
25 probably won't be here then, but the City 02:12:40

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 will benefit from this, and that
3 long-term thinking is what we haven't had
4 in our city.

5 So, Rob, based on that, tell me 02:12:48
6 what other ideas the Administration could
7 put forth that's going to accomplish and
8 change the trajectory of these statistics
9 that I've just shared?

10 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. So the one 02:12:58
11 really important thing, if you look at
12 where spending has increased the most
13 during this Administration, it's in
14 education, which is developing our future
15 workforce, starting through pre-K, 02:13:11
16 additional investment in the School
17 District, and additional investment in
18 Community College, including starting the
19 Catto Scholarship, which provides last
20 dollar scholarship and additional 02:13:25
21 supports for students.

22 So in terms of the long-term
23 trajectory, there's really, I don't
24 think, anything more important you can do
25 than invest in education. So I think 02:13:35

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 that's a crucial part of what we want to
3 do. So I think when you're talking about
4 other investments, I think that's really
5 crucial.

02:13:41

6 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. I'm in
7 agreement with education. What I'm
8 talking about is creating more jobs in
9 the City that are going to cut down on
10 the poverty, create stable housing, and

02:13:49

11 good-paying jobs. The problem is the
12 jobs we've created are low-level-income
13 jobs. We're not getting the good-paying
14 jobs, and that's really the challenge I
15 think for myself and my colleagues, how

02:14:00

16 do we get those jobs. When we see that
17 the Hospital of the University of Penn
18 signs a 150,000-square foot lease, as
19 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson stated,
20 to have genetic offices, gene therapy out

02:14:11

21 in King of Prussia, that's like putting a
22 knife in my heart. Like I want them in
23 the City of Philadelphia. I don't want
24 them out there. We all want them in the
25 City of Philadelphia.

02:14:22

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 MR. DUBOW: Right. And

3 obviously we agree with you that we need
4 to reduce taxes because we proposed it in

5 our budget. We do think that's an 02:14:32

6 important part of the overall strategy to
7 attract more businesses. We're just

8 balancing that in our plan with other

9 investments, like the investment in

10 education, like putting more money into 02:14:46

11 workforce development.

12 Remember, we came into this

13 looking at a one and a half billion

14 dollar gap. So we can't -- we would love

15 to be able to do everything we want to 02:14:59

16 do. We can't. So we understand and

17 agree with you we should be reducing

18 taxes. That's why we're proposing it.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I understood,

20 and I'm appreciative of that. I just 02:15:09

21 want us to be bolder, because time is not

22 on our side. These are wake-up calls.

23 Time is not on our side. I just want us

24 to be bolder. Anyone, anyone who has

25 become successful is bolder in the 02:15:20

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 choices they make, and I want the City to
3 take that on.

4 I'll give you an example in

5 many ways. I mean, we need to give 02:15:27

6 people and businesses a pathway, whether

7 it's 10, 15, 20 years, so they'll stay

8 here, open here, and know what's coming

9 down the pike. Having things that go out

10 two, three, and four years doesn't help a 02:15:40

11 business. It's like taking out -- I'll

12 use a real estate example. Taking out an

13 adjustable rate mortgage when the rates

14 are going to change every one or

15 two years. Any expert will probably tell 02:15:48

16 you that in today's environment, getting

17 a fixed rate, knowing what your payments

18 are going to be is what you want to do.

19 In many ways, I'm trying to get that --

20 I'm trying to propose that for businesses 02:16:00

21 so they know what their future is going

22 to be.

23 Anyway, my time is up. I

24 appreciate the work the Administration is

25 doing. 02:16:07

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 And, Madam Chair, thank you for
3 the time. Thank you very much.

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
5 you, Councilmember Domb. 02:16:12

6 The Chair recognizes
7 Councilmember Green.

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
9 Madam Chair.

10 I just wanted to follow up on 02:16:21
11 some information and some data. I know
12 people earlier talked about the city of
13 Atlanta. I think, Mr. Dubow, you talked
14 about Atlanta in particular in reference
15 to African American businesses. 02:16:31

16 The reason why Atlanta as well
17 as cities like DC and then states like
18 Florida, Texas, and Georgia have a
19 combination of not only significant
20 African American population, but also 02:16:47
21 those are states that have low tax rates.
22 But then a third piece on that dynamic,
23 they've had historical administrations
24 that have helped to grow businesses and
25 specifically African American-owned 02:16:59

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 businesses.

3 You can look at the District of

4 Columbia and you can go back to the

5 legacy of Marion Barry in reference to 02:17:04

6 what he's done from an economic

7 development perspective, as well as

8 Parren Mitchell, a Congressman from

9 Maryland, where you have a number of

10 Black businesses located in Maryland but 02:17:14

11 also in business in DC. And then you can

12 go to Atlanta and the State of Georgia

13 and you can go back to the lineage and

14 the history of Maynard Jackson.

15 So the combination of having 02:17:24

16 strong African American populations,

17 having strong corporations in those

18 cities, going back to my point earlier

19 about Tulsa, that can help employ people

20 of color and specifically African 02:17:37

21 Americans in those companies, as well as

22 having lower tax rates, but also

23 administrations that help provide the

24 assistance to help those businesses to

25 grow are very important. 02:17:48

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 So from a budget perspective,
3 Mr. Dubow, can you give some perspective
4 on the proposal that was provided for the
5 Commerce Department and how that connects 02:18:00
6 to the opportunity to grow businesses,
7 especially businesses of color, African
8 American-owned businesses, and combine
9 that with the reductions you're
10 suggesting for the wage and BIRT. 02:18:12

11 MR. DUBOW: Sure. So we
12 provided additional funding to Commerce
13 that included for commercial corridors,
14 for workforce, for storefront
15 improvements. Probably it would be 02:18:30
16 better to have the Commerce Director talk
17 about exactly how he's going to use that
18 to give that detail, but we provided
19 additional funding for their department
20 so that they -- 02:18:43

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And I know
22 the Commerce Department -- I mean, Mr.
23 Rashid is quite adept at providing
24 information on how to use those dollars,
25 but can you give some perspective on why 02:18:52

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 you allocated those dollars as opposed to
3 a greater amount of dollars in the
4 Commerce Department if we're really
5 trying to grow Black wealth in the City 02:18:59
6 of Philadelphia?

7 MR. DUBOW: Why -- I mean, we
8 did --

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Let me say,
10 you did provide some additional dollars 02:19:07
11 to the Commerce Department, but if you're
12 saying -- you said this is all about
13 choices. You said that at various times,
14 we've got to make choices, and I don't
15 disagree with you. But if our choice is 02:19:16
16 to try to grow businesses and grow wealth
17 in the City of Philadelphia, especially
18 in African American, Hispanic, and other
19 communities, if we're not providing
20 dollars to our Commerce Department from a 02:19:27
21 budget perspective, we're not going to
22 have the resources as a city to provide
23 that assistance to those businesses which
24 really help them to grow. So my question
25 is, why was there just a small amount of 02:19:39

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 dollars provided to the Commerce
3 Department as compared to other type of
4 departments, other type of investments if
5 we're really trying to make that choice 02:19:50
6 to grow businesses in the City of
7 Philadelphia, which ultimately will bring
8 more revenue into our city because we've
9 grown businesses?

10 MR. DUBOW: Right, and we did 02:19:59
11 provide -- as you said, we did provide
12 additional money to Commerce, and
13 beginning in FY23, we have an additional
14 13 million a year going to economic
15 stimulus. So we were trying to do both 02:20:09
16 in terms of providing more funding on the
17 Commerce side and reducing rates on the
18 wage tax and the BIRT to make it less
19 expensive to do business here.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: But just 02:20:23
21 like you said you made that investment in
22 education, and I commend the
23 Administration for seeing that
24 perspective, why are we not making that
25 same level of investment in our Commerce 02:20:31

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Department to really help grow those
3 businesses beyond just a small amount of
4 dollars considering we do have the
5 American Rescue Plan? And I acknowledge 02:20:39
6 the fact that we did have a significant
7 deficit because of the pandemic, but why
8 are we not making a deeper investment in
9 the Commerce Department not only for
10 staffing but also providing some of those 02:20:51
11 other resources to help grow those
12 businesses?

13 MR. DUBOW: Right. And
14 actually we did provide additional
15 funding. In the out years of the plan, 02:20:59
16 we provide even more. And you're right,
17 there are choices. So through these
18 discussions we could decide, okay, it
19 makes sense to put more money into
20 Commerce. We said all along that we are 02:21:10
21 open to talking to Council and making
22 changes.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
24 Madam Chair.

25 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 02:21:21

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 you, Councilmember Green.

3 For her first round, the Chair
4 recognizes Councilmember Brooks.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank 02:21:27

6 you, Madam Chair.

7 I have a question for Econsult.
8 Are they still here?

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes.

10 Rebecca is still on with us, 02:21:40

11 Councilmember Brooks.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Yes.

13 Thank you.

14 So my first question is about
15 the report. I was wondering who you were 02:21:47
16 in partnership with to create this
17 report.

18 MS. DeJOSEPH: This started
19 with City Council.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Okay. 02:21:56

21 Thank you so much.

22 And my question is, your
23 analysis shows a significant reduction in
24 City revenue in a time where so many
25 Black and Brown communities are 02:22:06

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 struggling. Those reductions in revenue
3 would inevitably result in the reduction
4 of City services. Did you do any
5 projections to show how the reduction in 02:22:17
6 revenue would impact the level of
7 services the City is able to provide in
8 communities, specifically Black and Brown
9 communities?

10 MS. DeJOSEPH: Our analysis did 02:22:28
11 not include that within this scope. We
12 do understand given economic theory that
13 these -- in addition to the reduction in
14 revenue, there are the commensurate
15 increases in employment and earnings, 02:22:46
16 which should offset some of the
17 expenditure pressures, but additional
18 analysis would need to be taken to do
19 that.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: 02:22:54
21 Councilmember Brooks, you went out for a
22 second, so start over for us.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Okay.
24 Can you hear me now?

25 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: We can 02:23:10

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 hear you now, Councilmember. Just start
3 over clearly so we can hear you.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Okay. So
5 my question was -- well, the point to 02:23:16
6 that was in a time where there's
7 uncertainty, just the thought of
8 reduction in City services in certain
9 areas would be pretty traumatic, and I
10 was wondering is there any way we can do 02:23:29
11 a deeper analysis on that?

12 MS. DeJOSEPH: Yes. That's
13 something that we would definitely be
14 able to look into. And, again, that's
15 why we wanted to present this definitely, 02:23:40
16 as you mentioned, as the costs and
17 benefits of each of the bills, to look at
18 both sides of what the benefits are of
19 both of the bills as well as what are the
20 impacts. So that would be something that 02:23:53
21 we would be able to look into as far as
22 the expenditure side.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Okay.
24 Thank you. I would like to have a little
25 bit more information on that. Thank you 02:24:03

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 so much.

3 MS. DeJOSEPH: Sure.

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Does that
5 conclude -- okay. It does. Thank you so 02:24:12
6 much, Councilmember Brooks, for your line
7 of questioning.

8 Bob, do we have any other
9 members or any other members of the prior
10 panel scheduled to testify? 02:24:24

11 THE CLERK: No. It appears
12 that everyone on Panel 2 has testified
13 who is available.

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
15 I'll ask for the record now, are there 02:24:34
16 any questions or comments from members of
17 the Committee for any of these witnesses?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
20 There being none, the next panel to 02:24:45
21 testify will, in essence -- the next
22 three panels we will hear from will be in
23 regards to Bill No. 210442, of which I am
24 the prime sponsor, and I will make some
25 comments beforehand. In addition to 02:25:03

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 that, I do want my colleagues and members
3 of the public to know that Rob Dubow and
4 the Administration is still present with
5 us. So if we have to direct any
6 questioning directly to them, we have the
7 ability to do so.

02:25:13

8 With that being said, let me
9 state for the record that Bill No. 210442
10 proposes that we lower the parking tax
11 rate to 17 percent with the start of the
12 new fiscal year, July 1st, 2021. This is
13 extremely important to me that the
14 viewing public know that this bill should
15 not have come as a surprise to anyone.

02:25:29

02:25:44

16 It is, in essence, a follow-up to Bill
17 No. 200288 that was signed by the Mayor
18 last June as part of the 2020 budget
19 negotiations. Bill No. 200288 raised the
20 parking tax rate from 22 and a half
21 percent to 25 percent for one year, from
22 July 1st, 2020 to July 1st, 2021.

02:26:02

23 And I also want the record to
24 reflect that Bill No. 200288 very
25 specifically stated that it is Council's

02:26:19

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 intent to establish a Good Parking Jobs
3 for Philadelphia Review Committee as an
4 agency of the Council comprised of
5 mayoral appointees, two of whom shall be 02:26:32
6 members of Council. In the event that
7 such committee determines to the
8 satisfaction of Council that the
9 conditions in the parking industry
10 favorably support the development of 02:26:45
11 stable jobs while providing a path to
12 advancement for workers in the
13 industry -- it's worth stating that
14 again, development of stable jobs,
15 parking industry favorably support the 02:27:00
16 development of stable jobs while
17 providing a path to advancement for
18 workers in the industry, it is Council's
19 intent beginning with respect to Fiscal
20 Year 2022 to reduce the rate of the tax, 02:27:14
21 with the goal of reducing the rate to
22 17 percent.

23 Now, subsequently my Bill No.
24 200387, it, in essence, created the Good
25 Parking Jobs for Philadelphia Review 02:27:26

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Committee. The Mayor appointed the
3 members in early 2021. The members of
4 the Committee, we have all been meeting
5 informally and communicating throughout 02:27:36
6 2020 and 2021. In fact, a quorum of the
7 members of the Committee are in
8 attendance at this hearing today and at
9 their first official meeting, which will
10 be and is scheduled for June 7th, 2021. 02:27:52

11 Let me note for you -- and this
12 is particularly for the benefit of the
13 viewing public, those Philadelphians who
14 are at home and they're watching this
15 hearing -- I view Bill No. 210442 as a 02:28:05
16 tool in the toolbox that Philadelphia
17 needs to help to get our economy back on
18 track. As Philadelphia continues to
19 recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, I do
20 view this as a tool in our toolbox that 02:28:27
21 will, in essence, help to incentivize
22 visitors to come back to Philadelphia and
23 help ensure our economic competitiveness
24 in the region.

25 As I have repeatedly stated 02:28:42

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 during budget hearings this spring, when
3 we are considering lowering tax rates, we
4 need to think carefully through the why,
5 why we are lowering these rates and who 02:28:55
6 may be the beneficiaries of lower tax
7 rates.

8 It is my hope that by lowering
9 the parking tax rate, that we can further
10 incentivize those who want to return to 02:29:06
11 our great city, including people who want
12 to enjoy what I consider to be our
13 amenities that are second to none; that
14 is, our arts and culture, our museums,
15 our restaurants, our hotels, our 02:29:19
16 Convention Center, and our overall
17 hospitality and tourism industries.

18 Cherelle, what do you mean when
19 you talk about improving working
20 conditions for those who actually work at 02:29:34
21 these parking lots? You will remember
22 that this issue is not one that we just
23 became interested in, the economic
24 self-sufficiency of parking workers,
25 because it's a sexy issue that came up in 02:29:48

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 the midst of this global pandemic and/or
3 our economic crisis. No. This City
4 Council of Philadelphia passed historic
5 precedent-setting just-cause bills 02:30:02
6 because we were interested in the quality
7 of life of parking workers, who are
8 primarily Black and Brown workers, many
9 immigrant workers and African American
10 men who are employed in that industry. 02:30:16

11 So I don't want it to get lost
12 on us that the foundation and the nucleus
13 of this legislation and part of its goal
14 is that lowering this tax rate is for
15 some of the benefits of this to flow 02:30:33
16 directly to the parking workers either --
17 how do you do it? By bringing back those
18 people who were laid off parking workers
19 or by improving the pay and the benefits
20 of the parking workers. 02:30:47

21 Cherelle, that means
22 self-sufficiency? Absolutely. A job
23 that pays you a living wage with access
24 to a retirement security where you can
25 have access to contribute to a 401(k) and 02:30:58

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 healthcare so that you can provide for
3 your family. Yes, that is the kind of
4 employment that can begin to help put
5 Philadelphians and the parking workers in 02:31:09
6 particular on a path to self-sufficiency.

7 That's why we were so happy to
8 have partnered not just with the industry
9 on this legislation but also with SEIU
10 32BJ, who represent many of the parking 02:31:27
11 lot and garage workers. And Lord knows
12 we wish more of them were represented.

13 I believe -- and I'm
14 unapologetic about this, Philadelphia --
15 that it is possible to be pro-worker, you 02:31:39
16 can be both pro-worker and pro-business,
17 and that industry, along with those who
18 are employed in the industry, they don't
19 have to be adversaries. I said this on
20 the public hearing when we were working 02:31:54
21 on our just-cause legislation, that
22 instead of workers being adversaries,
23 industry and workers should come together
24 to be each other's greatest allies.

25 That is why my bill states that 02:32:07

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 its, quote/unquote, passage will await
3 the outcome of a determination by the
4 Good Parking Jobs for Philadelphia Review
5 Committee that the conditions in the 02:32:19
6 parking industry favorably support the
7 development of stable jobs and provide a
8 path to advancement for workers in the
9 industry. Again, industry and workers at
10 the table, even in the midst of this 02:32:35
11 legislative process.

12 So let me be clear again. I
13 will not move for the adoption of this
14 bill unless and until the Good Parking
15 Jobs for Philadelphia Review Committee 02:32:47
16 determines that a lowering of the parking
17 tax rate will in fact not only help our
18 local economy rebound, help
19 Philadelphia's economic competitiveness
20 in our region, but that it will also 02:33:02
21 benefit workers.

22 For the record, I know the
23 industry, along with the workers, they're
24 going to put a lot of stats on the record
25 today about how Philadelphia compares. 02:33:14

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 There's just one in particular, a
3 question that I've heard from someone
4 that I've been dying to get on the
5 record. I heard someone state, why would 02:33:25
6 the City of Philadelphia, in essence, be
7 making an investment in trying to or
8 proposing to lower a tax rate in an
9 industry that will be null and void 10 to
10 15 years from now or even five years from 02:33:42
11 now as a result of AI? They're
12 referencing artificial intelligence, and
13 that the 2,000 workers that we had before
14 the pandemic, about 1,000 now, I'm
15 interested in hearing what those stats 02:33:58
16 are going to be from the workers, along
17 with the industry when they testify if
18 they have any updated numbers, but for
19 those people who mention that, I want you
20 to tell those Philadelphians, who work 02:34:09
21 hard in these parking lots, that use the
22 dollars that they earn at these jobs to
23 pay rent in neighborhoods, some to pay
24 mortgages, to take care of their
25 families, to buy groceries, I want you to 02:34:26

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 ask them whether or not this investment
3 in an industry that they take care of
4 their families of as a result of their
5 employment and whether or not for five or 02:34:37
6 ten years from now artificial
7 intelligence sort of consuming the
8 parking industry and there will no longer
9 be any parking workers, that is an
10 argument that I do not, I do not and I 02:34:52
11 cannot embrace.

12 I do think that the industry,
13 along with the workers, when they are
14 allies, they can be intentional, and if
15 we were thinking with innovation in mind, 02:35:04
16 we would be thinking about these workers
17 along with the expanded use of our
18 parking lots, particularly when we talk
19 about electric vehicles in the future and
20 some other activity that we see taking 02:35:19
21 place in parking lots in cities across
22 the nation who are trying like we are to
23 rebound and have their local economies
24 rebound as a result of the pandemic.

25 And so I just needed to state 02:35:34

6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
that for the record. With that being
said, Bob, will you please call the names
of the first panel scheduled to testify
on Bill No. 210442. 02:35:45

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Madam
Chair?

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair recognizes Councilmember Bass.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Before we 02:35:54
go to that, I was wondering if you could
address something that was in the paper
just recently regarding the bill, which
was that moving forward on this was
somehow not good in the sense that we're 02:36:08
trying to encourage people to use public
transportation or we're trying to
encourage people to ride bikes, all of
which I think is good and noble and great
for the environment, but also as someone 02:36:27
who recognizes the importance of these
jobs and also recognizes the importance
of being able to travel via car,
everybody is not riding a bike and
everybody is not on public 02:36:42

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 transportation.

3 So I don't know if you saw
4 there was some recent commentary
5 regarding this as being -- I forget 02:36:48
6 exactly how they phrased it, but sort of
7 like shortsighted, if you could address
8 that.

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
10 you, Councilmember Bass, for your 02:36:58
11 question. And, Councilmember, you and I
12 possibly agree on this issue because you
13 and I represent districts and regions and
14 have for some years that are not in close
15 enough proximity to Center City where 02:37:14
16 people are walking into town. Most of
17 the people who live in the communities
18 that we represent, because we are not far
19 from county lines, are very much like
20 Councilmember Jones where our folks 02:37:28
21 usually drive to get to the supermarket.
22 For the large number of Philadelphians
23 who are now reverse commuting to the
24 suburbs, along with those who are coming
25 in, we do know that the vehicle, despite 02:37:45

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 our personal beliefs, has not become
3 obsolete, but that does not mean that
4 this is an either/or selection,
5 Councilmember Bass. I would agree with 02:37:58
6 you. I want to see more -- I want us to
7 reduce our carbon footprint, right? I
8 want us to see more electric cars on the
9 road. I want to see more people focused
10 on public health and riding bikes. I 02:38:11
11 would love to see more people taking our
12 mass transit systems to and fro.

13 We support all of those things,
14 but we also know that there is also a
15 constituency when they're coming to enjoy 02:38:27
16 a show, coming into town to visit a
17 restaurant, if they're coming to a
18 convention, a hotel, who prefer -- and
19 let's be quite frank, even some who live
20 in Philadelphia, who choose to drive into 02:38:42
21 town. They make that choice.

22 So I would argue that very much
23 like we heard during testimony for the
24 prior two bills, Councilmember, that it's
25 not an either/or, it is an "and." 02:38:56

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 In addition to that, I would
3 also argue that we haven't even begun to
4 touch the tip of the iceberg as it
5 relates to how innovative that we can
6 become, particularly when we think about
7 congestion, with the use of parking lots,
8 in the use of our Ubers and our Lyfts,
9 our transportation networking systems.

02:39:07

10 If we're thinking innovatively,
11 Councilmember, we should be connecting
12 them to the parking industry. We should
13 be thinking about charging being
14 available at parking lots as more lines
15 of automobile makers decide that they're
16 going to make electric cars, and they
17 eventually will become standard and not
18 something that's out of reach for many
19 working-class people.

02:39:25

02:39:37

20 So we should be evolving and
21 not saying it's either/or, Councilmember
22 Bass, but trying to figure out how we can
23 help an industry who hires and employs
24 workers who live in Philadelphia and who
25 rent and own in our city. And if we can

02:39:50

02:40:04

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 keep these people at work in areas that
3 we hope will grow through innovation, I
4 think it's worth this Council's time and
5 energy to explore those opportunities. 02:40:15

6 Councilmember Bass, did I
7 answer your question, Councilmember?

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Absolutely.
9 I could not agree more. I think that
10 we're at a time where we want to -- we 02:40:29
11 have to, not even we want to, we have to
12 reduce our carbon footprint, but at the
13 same time, we also have to recognize that
14 there is a significant population of
15 Philadelphians where a car is not a 02:40:41
16 luxury, it is a necessity. And so for
17 those folks who need to come into town
18 and need those parking amenities, we need
19 to make those available.

20 So thank you. 02:40:53

21 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
22 you, Councilmember Bass.

23 And just for the record, I also
24 want to note that the commentary that I
25 think you're referencing, to me it also 02:41:02

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 conflates like on-street parking, which
3 is impacted by bus lanes, like restaurant
4 seating and bike lanes, to off-street
5 parking that is impacted by this tax 02:41:15
6 proposal. And I do want to note that for
7 the record. For those who like the
8 streetery feel, I like it and I love it
9 and I want it to be standard operating
10 procedure in the City, but I do not want 02:41:29
11 people conflating our off-street parking
12 with on-street parking, for the record.

13 And with that being said, Bob,
14 please call the first panel to testify.

15 THE CLERK: On this panel is 02:41:42
16 Ardy Wurtzel, Econsult Solutions; Rob
17 Zuritsky of Parkway Corporation; Will
18 Carter, the Chamber of Commerce of
19 Greater Philadelphia; Gabe Morgan, 32BJ;
20 and Jerry Sweeney, Brandywine Realty 02:41:57
21 Trust.

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
23 so very much.

24 And just as a matter of
25 personal privilege, Ardy, we're going to 02:42:04

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 ask you from Econsult if you would give
3 your economic analysis, similar to the
4 first panel we just heard, first, and
5 then we will proceed with Rob, Will. We 02:42:15
6 already heard from Ben. Gabe and Jerry
7 Sweeney.

8 Are you connected, Ardy?

9 MS. WURTZEL: Yes, I am.

10 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you 02:42:27
11 so very much for being here. State your
12 name for the record and proceed with your
13 testimony.

14 MS. WURTZEL: I'm Ardy Wurtzel
15 with Econsult Solutions. 02:42:34

16 Good afternoon, Chairwoman
17 Parker and City Councilmembers. Thank
18 you so much for having me here today. As
19 already stated, I'm a Director with
20 Econsult Solutions in Center City 02:42:44
21 Philadelphia. I'm a formerly trained and
22 educated economist hired as a third-party
23 consultant to analyze the potential
24 effects of the parking rate reduction.

25 As such, I think it's important 02:42:57

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 to point out that a reduction in the
3 parking tax rate will help support
4 Philadelphia's economic recovery. And in
5 that effort, it will also help support 02:43:05
6 Black and Brown communities, especially
7 as it relates to Black and Brown jobs.

8 To my first point, a
9 Philadelphia parking tax rate reduction
10 helps support the Philadelphia economic 02:43:17
11 recovery by reducing the cost of parking.
12 By reducing the cost of parking, we also
13 reduce the cost of traveling to and from
14 the City for the everyday person.
15 Reduced costs of traveling to the City 02:43:29
16 will increase traveling to the City, and
17 increase traveling to the City will
18 increase overall economic activity for
19 all businesses. This increase in
20 economic activity will increase 02:43:42
21 employment and earnings, leading to more
22 consumers spending more money in
23 Philadelphia's economy, which is economic
24 growth.

25 To shed some more detail on who 02:43:52

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 exactly will be affected by a parking tax
3 rate reduction, I would like to highlight
4 that Philadelphia residents who commute
5 to work are affected as well as regional 02:44:01
6 visitors, shoppers, diners, and event
7 attendees, tourists and business
8 travelers as well as small local
9 businesses, including Philadelphia
10 residents who travel within the City for 02:44:15
11 shopping and other activities and,
12 lastly, non-residential commuters.

13 Reducing the parking tax and
14 subsequently the cost of parking in the
15 City will draw regional visitors and 02:44:27
16 residents to Center City. City officials
17 are preparing to lift density
18 restrictions, reopen the economy, and
19 financially recover from this pandemic.
20 Center City businesses are eager to see 02:44:38
21 consumers, diners, and event attendees
22 back in the City and back through their
23 doors.

24 Philadelphia residents and
25 tourists have pent-up demand for months 02:44:47

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 under the pandemic lockdown, and the City
3 wants to capture this spending locally.
4 The missing component is transportation.
5 Mass transit ridership is far below 02:44:57
6 pre-pandemic levels, leaving people to
7 rely on driving as their means of coming
8 downtown. The City needs to alleviate
9 the cost of traveling to and from
10 Philadelphia to incentivize travel into 02:45:09
11 Center City. Lowering the parking tax
12 rate is one step towards making
13 Philadelphia a more attractive city to
14 frequent.
15 At such a critical tipping 02:45:19
16 point, a reduction in parking costs could
17 impel a fraction of people to return
18 downtown so they may catalyze a larger
19 group to follow suit. Having residents
20 and visitors resume their pre-pandemic 02:45:29
21 consumption behavior is key to
22 Philadelphia's support of local
23 businesses and its own economic recovery.
24 Additionally, reducing the parking tax
25 and subsequently the cost of parking will 02:45:41

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 encourage commuters to return back to
3 work.

4 By reducing the parking tax and
5 allowing parking lots and garages to 02:45:51

6 offer more competitive pricing, the City
7 will make it more convenient for

8 businesses and employees to resume

9 business as usual in Philadelphia. Many

10 businesses are uncertain if and when 02:46:02

11 their workforce will return to a physical

12 workplace. Offices in Center City are

13 reopening, but the Philadelphia's

14 workplace occupancy remains low as

15 employees are now in the routine of 02:46:13

16 working remotely. Non-resident workers

17 commuting into the City contribute wage

18 tax as well as spending in the

19 Philadelphia economy on food, retail, and

20 travel, which is lost when they work 02:46:24

21 remotely.

22 I'd like to move on to address

23 my second point. A Philadelphia parking

24 tax rate reduction supports Black and

25 Brown communities, specifically Black and 02:46:35

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Brown jobs. High parking costs
3 negatively affect Black and Brown
4 communities as Philadelphia's communities
5 of color rely on personal vehicles as 02:46:44
6 their primary means of commuting to work.
7 About half of all Black and Brown workers
8 in Philadelphia drive to work, and thus
9 they are negatively affected by high
10 parking costs every day they go into 02:46:55
11 work.

12 Historically parking lots and
13 garages have provided steady employment
14 to Black and Brown Philadelphians, jobs
15 that offer consistent pay, benefits, and 02:47:06
16 upward mobility. By reducing the parking
17 tax rate, these parking lots and garages
18 will increase the number of jobs they can
19 provide, possibly even at higher wage
20 rates than before this last recession. 02:47:19

21 In conclusion, a Philadelphia
22 parking tax reduction will help the
23 Philadelphia economy recover from the
24 pandemic recession and, to that effort,
25 will also help Black and Brown 02:47:29

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 communities by providing stable jobs with
3 good pay, benefits, and upward mobility.

4 Thank you so much.

5 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 02:47:38
6 you, Ardy, for your testimony.

7 Is Rob Zuritsky, are you
8 connected, Rob Zuritsky?

9 MR. ZURITSKY: I hope so. Can
10 you hear me? 02:47:44

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes, we
12 can hear you. Please state your name for
13 the record and proceed with your
14 testimony.

15 MR. ZURITSKY: Sure. 02:47:52

16 Good afternoon. I'm Robert
17 Zuritsky, President of the Philadelphia
18 Parking Association and Parkway
19 Corporation, a 91-year-old company
20 proudly headquartered here in 02:48:02
21 Philadelphia. I am here in support of
22 Council Majority Leader Cherelle Parker's
23 parking tax reform bill. This bill is
24 hugely important at this moment because
25 of a number of things. 02:48:19

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 First, it reduces one of the
3 highest business tax rates in the country
4 to a level that is more in line with
5 where we should be. Currently we are at 02:48:31
6 25 percent and it's proposed to go to
7 17 percent. To put this into
8 perspective, New York City's tax is lower
9 than ours. It's 18.35 percent, 18 and a
10 third percent. 02:48:48

11 Councilman Allan Domb mentioned
12 earlier about King of Prussia. King of
13 Prussia doesn't have parking rates or
14 parking taxes. But other neighboring
15 cities like Boston have zero parking tax. 02:49:03
16 Los Angeles has 17 percent. So
17 17 percent is really more in the middle
18 of the pack, a little higher in the
19 middle of the pack, but that's a good
20 place that makes sense for our industry. 02:49:19

21 It's also -- this bill is also
22 timed so that the parking industry can
23 hire back our employees so we can
24 properly handle returning business
25 demand. It will also enable our industry 02:49:34

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 to offer certain parking discounts to
3 encourage faster business returns.

4 We want to invite people back
5 to our city in every form of 02:49:46

6 transportation. We are big fans of SEPTA
7 and all forms of mobility, biking. I'm a
8 big biker. And they all are important to
9 the City, but parking needs to be healthy
10 in our city and needs to continue on with 02:50:05
11 its vital service.

12 At this -- the tax reform also
13 gives our industry some breathing room.
14 We have been one of the hardest hit
15 industries because of the pandemic. We 02:50:20
16 were down by 90 percent, and we're only
17 back to maybe about 60, 65 percent of
18 where we were before the pandemic. It
19 has been a devastating year. This tax
20 reform also gives the opportunity for 02:50:41
21 developers to build back some inventory
22 into our Center City.

23 Some cities are talking about
24 having no limits on parking going
25 forward, about forcing developers to have 02:51:01

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 parking in their developments. Some
3 cities have too much parking.
4 Philadelphia maybe 20 years ago did have
5 too much parking. I think that 02:51:12
6 Philadelphia has too few parking spaces,
7 and we're losing thousands of spaces
8 every year now, and I think that this tax
9 reform will give some developers the
10 ability to build back some limited amount 02:51:24
11 of capacity to neighborhoods that will
12 really need it going forward.

13 I think that this tax reform
14 also sends a message to job creators
15 across the country and the world that 02:51:38
16 Philadelphia is serious about being tax
17 competitive with other major business
18 centers. If this tax reform is passed, I
19 think it could be the first of its kind
20 in the country. It's very significant, 02:51:53
21 and I applaud Council Majority Leader
22 Parker and all Councilmembers who have
23 been supportive of this.

24 It's time to make some bold
25 moves with the City and put us back into 02:52:07

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 the category of not just the high -- to
3 put us back in a category where we have
4 better tax policy to create new jobs and
5 encourage businesses to flock here. 02:52:21

6 I'm available for any
7 questions. Thank you for letting me
8 testify.

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
10 you, Mr. Zuritsky, for your testimony. 02:52:31

11 The Chair now recognizes
12 William Carter from the Chamber of
13 Commerce. Are you connected, Will
14 Carter?

15 MR. CARTER: Can you hear me, 02:52:42
16 Councilwoman?

17 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes, we
18 can hear you now. Will, thank you for
19 being here. Just state your name for the
20 record and proceed with your testimony. 02:52:48

21 MR. CARTER: All right.
22 William Carter, Vice President of Local
23 Government Affairs for the Chamber of
24 Commerce for Greater Philadelphia.

25 Good morning, members of the 02:52:56

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Committee of the Whole. I'm William
3 Carter, once again, Vice President of
4 Local Government Affairs for the Chamber
5 of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia. 02:53:03
6 Thank you for this opportunity to testify
7 during today's hearing regarding Bill No.
8 210442.

9 The Chamber of Commerce is
10 fully in support of this legislation that 02:53:12
11 reduces taxes and helps workers. We
12 appreciate Councilmember Parker for
13 introducing this bill after working with
14 stakeholders to create a win-win for all.

15 As you're aware, last year the 02:53:24
16 Chamber launched the Recharge and
17 Recovery Task Force in collaboration with
18 the City of Philadelphia, the
19 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and four
20 other Southeastern Pennsylvania counties. 02:53:31
21 The overriding objective is to get the
22 City's economy back on track and growing
23 to maximize income earning, employment,
24 and business opportunities for the entire
25 workforce and all segments of business 02:53:42

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 communities, thereby improving the
3 quality of life for all City households
4 and residents.

5 One area of significant concern 02:53:49
6 is the recovery of several key industry
7 sectors hit particularly hard by the
8 pandemic and changes in people's
9 workforce and consumption behavior.

10 Local commercial office, discretionary 02:54:00
11 retail, dining, sports, entertainment,
12 tourist, hospitality activities virtually
13 ground to a halt during the pandemic.

14 Coming out of the pandemic, we must
15 ensure that our businesses thrive and 02:54:13
16 that we are as welcoming as possible for
17 residents and visitors alike to patronize
18 our great city.

19 I can't stress it enough, we
20 have to get our City back popping again. 02:54:22

21 The step Councilwoman Parker is taking
22 with this legislation will benefit the
23 parking industry and their employees and
24 is a great example of an "as well as" and
25 not an either/or scenario. 02:54:34

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Decreasing the parking rate

3 will allow for the reduction of parking

4 costs and thus greater access and

5 geographic mobility associated with 02:54:42

6 engaging in economic activity in the

7 City, including City residents commuting

8 to work, regional visitors, shoppers,

9 diners, and event attendees, tourists and

10 business travelers, small local 02:54:55

11 businesses, City residents shopping and

12 other activity, and non-resident

13 commuters.

14 Lowering this tax rate would

15 also help bring back laid off parking 02:55:08

16 workers, and the package seeks to improve

17 their pay and benefits. Legislation like

18 this signals that Philadelphia is serious

19 about our economic competitiveness.

20 Especially now, we are competing against 02:55:16

21 neighboring cities to attract residents,

22 visitors, and industry. The competition

23 is real, and the moves we make now will

24 determine the future of our workforce,

25 business climate, and overall economic 02:55:28

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 standing.

3 We once again support this
4 legislation and thank Councilwoman Parker
5 for her vision and leadership.

02:55:34

6 Thank you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
8 so much, Will Carter, for your testimony.

9 The Chair now recognizes Gabe
10 Morgan of SEIU 32BJ. Mr. Morgan, are you
11 connected?

02:55:42

12 MR. MORGAN: I am. Can you
13 hear me?

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes, we
15 can hear you now. Just please state your
16 name for the record and proceed with your
17 testimony.

02:55:49

18 MR. MORGAN: My name is Gabe
19 Morgan. I'm the Vice President of SEIU
20 32BJ.

02:55:59

21 I want to say at the beginning
22 of my testimony I'm not here on behalf of
23 the parking industry, parking business,
24 or business. I'm elected by 15,000
25 working people in Philadelphia, folks who

02:56:12

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 work in and around the service sector in
3 Center City.

4 I think there's a couple things

5 I want to point out I think that are 02:56:21

6 really important for Council to consider,
7 especially given the previous
8 conversation.

9 There are very few sectors of

10 employment in this city for Black and 02:56:29

11 Brown workers that pay a living wage that
12 have healthcare. Those industries are
13 almost all located in and around Center
14 City, University City, and Temple, and
15 almost all of them are union and 02:56:40
16 healthcare and commercial office
17 buildings and hotels.

18 When people talk about economic

19 development in the City and doing things
20 for business, people do not talk enough 02:56:52

21 about something I heard Councilman Oh say
22 earlier, that the foundation of small
23 business is how much money people in the
24 neighborhood have walking around in their
25 pocket and that most of those folks will 02:57:04

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 in fact go to work in the service sector,
3 because that's where most people in
4 America work for industries in places
5 like Center City, University City, and in 02:57:13
6 near North Philadelphia, and that if
7 there's going to be any pass, whatever
8 tax strategy Council takes from moving
9 people out of poverty in Philadelphia,
10 it's going to be greatly tied to creating 02:57:27
11 good jobs for people to actually work for
12 a living in Philadelphia. That is how
13 people move up out of poverty to work.

14 So the reason why we're
15 supportive of this tax cut is not 02:57:39
16 something people normally hear from SEIU
17 32BJ, and I don't think that my previous
18 speaking partner here, Will Carter,
19 whatever, from the Chamber will accuse
20 32BJ as being a pro-business lobby. The 02:57:52
21 reason we support this is, unlike most of
22 the other taxes being considered, this is
23 the only one that actually says to an
24 industry, you have to demonstrate to us
25 that you're going to move workers out of 02:58:06

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 poverty in order to see this reduction.

3 The City is committed to making

4 this industry work, and that's really

5 important, and I will come back to why 02:58:13

6 that is for a minute. But of all the

7 taxes being discussed, this is the only

8 one that actually sets some benchmarks

9 for workers coming back.

10 Previous tax cuts, some of 02:58:25

11 which we support -- we support the cut in

12 the wage tax. We think our members

13 should pay less, but these other taxes

14 that don't quantify anything (connection

15 issues.) They're the usual. Give 02:58:37

16 business a tax break and hope something

17 good happens to the rest of everyone

18 else. That is not what this is. This

19 says cut taxes significantly so that

20 these businesses can thrive, and they 02:58:48

21 commit and have to commit in a way that

22 they can prove to Council that they will

23 improve the lives of their workers, which

24 will in turn improve neighborhoods in

25 Philly. That's the premise of this tax. 02:59:00

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 And I say of all the ones that I've heard
3 at least today, it's by far and away the
4 most progressive tax cut that's on the
5 table and one of the most aggressive tax 02:59:10
6 cuts that's being offered anywhere that
7 we're aware of in 32BJ, which is the
8 entire Northeast of the United States of
9 America.

10 So I would really encourage 02:59:18
11 Council to support this, because really
12 this is a model. This is a way for
13 Council, the government to say to
14 business, we will work with you and your
15 concerns if you will work with us to lift 02:59:30
16 our people out of poverty in a concrete
17 way. So we do support that.

18 I think it is worth pointing
19 out as well, though, from 32BJ's
20 perspective, and keep in mind from City 02:59:45
21 Hall, we have 8,000 folks working within
22 15 blocks of City Hall and our region who
23 are -- the vast majority of whom are
24 African American and African American
25 owners, and what we see is that Center 02:59:57

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 City is really in big trouble. And I'm
3 not saying that lightly. We have -- I
4 am, our union, based on the idea of
5 fighting with folks like Jerry Sweeney to 03:00:09
6 insist that they pay workers X amount of
7 money and (connection issues) typically
8 just say we don't believe you. To be
9 fair to the commercial office building
10 owners of Philadelphia, they have worked 03:00:21
11 harder than anyone that I'm aware of in
12 the City in the private sector to create
13 standards for thousands and thousands of
14 security. That's been with us and the
15 other side I would think (connection 03:00:30
16 issues). I would say to you now that's
17 not the situation that Center City is in.
18 That's not the situation that many
19 downtowns are in.
20 This is a moment where if 03:00:41
21 Philadelphia doesn't take aggressive
22 action to figure out how to bring people
23 back into the City, folks in the suburbs
24 to come in and do that work, you're at
25 risk of losing really one of the biggest 03:00:52

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 private-sector job bases that you have
3 for working people of color. Not just
4 our members, in lots of different
5 sectors. But fundamentally people I say 03:01:02
6 often do not think of Center City that
7 way, and that's understandable given all
8 the gentrification wars that's going on
9 in Philadelphia, but if we don't turn
10 this around now, those gentrification 03:01:12
11 wars are going to be fond memories of a
12 different time.

13 So we support this tax cut
14 strongly because we believe it actually
15 sets benchmarks for workers moving out of 03:01:24
16 poverty, unlike almost every other tax
17 cut that I've heard discussed in Council,
18 has a concrete way for Council to verify
19 to itself that that's actually occurring.
20 And, frankly, in terms of the budgetary 03:01:36
21 impact that I heard earlier, if something
22 isn't done to save this industry, to save
23 Center City, whatever the Budget Office
24 projects right now, that revenue simply
25 will not exist in five years. 03:01:47

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Thank you very much.

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
4 you, Mr. Morgan, for your testimony.

5 Is Jerry Sweeney from 03:01:57
6 Brandywine, are you connected, Jerry?

7 MR. SWEENEY: I believe I am.
8 Can you hear me, Councilwoman?

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes, I
10 can hear you. Please state your name for 03:02:04
11 the record and proceed with your
12 testimony.

13 MR. SWEENEY: Sure. Certainly.
14 And Majority Leader Parker and members of
15 the City Council Committee on the Whole, 03:02:11
16 good afternoon. My name is Jerry Sweeney
17 and I'm President and Chief Executive of
18 Brandywine Realty Trust, and on behalf of
19 all of the employees of Brandywine, who
20 is headquartered here in the City of 03:02:23
21 Philadelphia, thank you for hearing our
22 testimony in strong support of
23 Councilmember Parker's proposed
24 legislation to reduce the Philadelphia
25 parking tax. 03:02:33

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 In addition to being

3 Philadelphia's largest office landlord,

4 we're also the third largest private

5 owner of parking in the City. Last year 03:02:40

6 we formed our own parking management

7 company called BexPark, and our primary

8 reason for doing that was because we view

9 our garages as very similar to our office

10 buildings, and that was important for our 03:02:52

11 tenants and customers to have a

12 consistent, positive experience.

13 We believe that every one of

14 our BexPark employees is a brand

15 ambassador for Brandywine, so it was key 03:03:04

16 for us to make sure that they were all

17 properly compensated and motivated.

18 Therefore, all of our garage personnel

19 are full-time Brandywine employees. They

20 receive Brandywine's full benefit 03:03:17

21 package, including health insurance and

22 performance bonuses. In fact, we provide

23 free health insurance for any BexPark

24 employee who makes less than \$38,000 a

25 year. We do this not just because it's 03:03:30

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 good for our business, but also it aligns
3 with our corporate mission of making
4 Philadelphia more competitive, and a
5 motivated labor force is a key part of 03:03:40
6 that competitive equation.

7 Brandywine is proud to build a
8 long and successful relationship with
9 32BJ. I know that's somewhat of an
10 anachronism, but it's something that we 03:03:51
11 worked in partnership years ago with our
12 cleaning and janitorial workers helping
13 them unionize to get better pay and
14 benefits, and we worked closely with SEIU
15 on this process and believe, as 03:04:04
16 Mr. Morgan mentioned, that this
17 legislation can serve as a national model
18 for business and labor working
19 collaboratively together to achieve both
20 economic and social objectives. And we 03:04:18
21 believe strongly that Philadelphia can
22 only succeed if the Philadelphia of
23 tomorrow is better than the Philadelphia
24 of today, and that belief is reflected
25 not just in our commitment to our 03:04:31

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 workers, all of our customers, but also
3 how we engage with our neighbors,
4 community members, and other
5 stakeholders.

03:04:38

6 As some of you know, we
7 launched a neighborhood engagement
8 initiative a number of years ago to
9 provide apprenticeship training for folks
10 to get a pathway to family-sustaining

03:04:47

11 jobs, capital to accelerate local
12 business growth primarily in West
13 Philadelphia, and a grant program
14 designed to help minority-owned real
15 estate contractors survive the COVID-19

03:05:01

16 pandemic. And with the pandemic, as
17 Mr. Zuritsky mentioned, as the parking
18 industry continues to reckon with the
19 reopening of the City, it's imperative
20 that Philadelphia rethink how it taxes

03:05:15

21 this industry, the parking industry, but
22 also globally the tax structure in the
23 City.

24 When we include real estate and
25 use and occupancy taxes, Brandywine's

03:05:26

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 standalone garages last year paid

3 74 percent of every dollar we took on --

4 it took into the City of Philadelphia.

5 It was normally 50 percent pre-pandemic. 03:05:38

6 That's an extraordinary tax burden for

7 any business or any industry and is well

8 outside the competitive set to make these

9 parking operators, including Brandywine,

10 economically sustainable and in a 03:05:52

11 position to allocate those benefits to

12 our working base, which really makes our

13 success a high probability.

14 So we must continue to invest

15 in initiatives that grow Philadelphia's 03:06:04

16 overall job base, create new pathways to

17 family-sustaining wages, and increase the

18 City's overall competitiveness.

19 Brandywine believes that this legislation

20 will help Philadelphia move in this 03:06:16

21 direction and strongly supports its

22 passage.

23 We sincerely thank

24 Councilmember Parker for introducing the

25 bill and applaud her and her staff for 03:06:24

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 the collaborative process they undertook
3 in preparing for this hearing and
4 crafting the mechanism to ensure its
5 ultimate passage. 03:06:33

6 Brandywine is a representative
7 on the Good Parking Jobs Committee. We
8 look forward to our engagement and,
9 again, thank the Councilwoman for her
10 steadfast leadership on this issue. And 03:06:43
11 I'm certainly available to answer any
12 questions that Committee members may
13 have.

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
15 very much, Jerry, for your comments. 03:06:51

16 We will start our first round
17 of questioning for this panel. I'll ask
18 members to please type their names in the
19 Chat. We have Councilmember Bass and
20 Councilmember Gym. 03:07:05

21 Before we start with them, I
22 want to start with you, Rob and Jerry,
23 and I want you to answer this question
24 for me on the record as it relates to the
25 future of the industry. What's your 03:07:19

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 response to the question that the parking
3 industry is not one that we should be
4 making this investment in because it will
5 be solely occupied by artificial 03:07:33
6 intelligence in five or ten years?
7 That's first.

8 The second one is, what's the
9 future of the infrastructure improvements
10 that you would have to make to your 03:07:48
11 existing jobs to ensure that electric
12 charging is available as the industry
13 evolves?

14 So I'm going to ask, Rob and
15 Jerry, if the two of you would both as 03:08:01
16 representatives from the industry please
17 respond to that.

18 MR. ZURITSKY: Jerry, if it's
19 all right, I'll go first.

20 The story that the parking 03:08:13
21 industry would not exist in the future
22 was really led mostly or started mostly
23 by the young fellows who started Uber and
24 Lyft, and they had a reason to say that
25 the parking industry didn't have a bright 03:08:33

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 future, and now they're actually trying
3 to buy parking lots in some markets.

4 But I think that the

5 advancement of AI, which is coming, 03:08:45

6 actually is not going to change -- I

7 think that our culture in our country,

8 people really want their freedoms and

9 their ability to have personal mobility,

10 and I think that if cars are cheaper to 03:09:03

11 maintain and to operate and cheaper to --

12 and last longer because there's fewer

13 parts and they're not pollutant and

14 they're smarter and they can fit into

15 smaller areas because they're smarter, I 03:09:18

16 think that people will always want cars.

17 And demand for cars now is at an all-time

18 high and it's projected to continue in

19 that direction.

20 So I think there will be a 03:09:32

21 strong need and demand for parking. It

22 is changing, and the cost of electric --

23 I was working with Councilman Oh a couple

24 years ago. He suggested for some tax

25 relief if we electrified all of our 03:09:48

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 spaces or some of our spaces, and we did
3 an exercise with him, and it is -- at
4 least back then, it was enormously
5 expensive to electrify just 10 or 03:09:58
6 20 percent of the spaces. It's a long,
7 complicated story, but you can't --
8 you're not just putting in these
9 chargers. You have to rebuild the
10 infrastructure of the garages to 03:10:12
11 (connection issues) that.

12 Our experience is that more and
13 more people are using charging stations,
14 and we would like to install more, and
15 that's something that we're going to 03:10:23
16 hopefully talk about next week, is
17 there's policies in the state that don't
18 allow us to charge -- the industry to
19 charge for charging. Just like you can
20 charge for gasoline at a gas station, but 03:10:36
21 we're not allowed to charge for
22 electricity. So we supply it for free to
23 our customers, which is expensive. So
24 you have to put in the machines and
25 supply the electricity. It doesn't make 03:10:48

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 sense. And other states are ahead of us.

3 We have to catch up in a lot of areas

4 with parking.

5 So I could go on for an hour or 03:10:56

6 two. I think about this all the time.

7 So another time we'll talk more about the

8 industry.

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

10 you. 03:11:03

11 Jerry, your response.

12 MR. SWEENEY: Sure. Look, I

13 think in a broader context, Councilwoman,

14 there is not one industry, not one

15 business that it will not be impacted by 03:11:13

16 artificial intelligence. I mean,

17 anything that is routine, non-repetitive

18 has a high risk of a massive shift in

19 employment bases. I mean, some of the

20 studies that have come out indicate that 03:11:28

21 legal and accounting work, potentially

22 north of 90 percent of those employees

23 will no longer be required. So the whole

24 economy is in a massive shift towards

25 technological innovation, whether that's 03:11:42

6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
through AI or through -- look at the
upsurge of quantum computing and the
impact that can have on everything we do
in our business. 03:11:50

But I think we're not as worried as maybe some will be about the disappearance of the parking industry. I think the parking industry will adapt, will modify, will be incorporated into mixed-use developments. For one, even though we haven't had any real attraction here in the City of Philadelphia, I'm a big believer in automated parking, which does apply technology and artificial intelligence. It's much better from a land use, much better from a security standpoint, and I do believe that at some point it will become more pervasive in its adoption.

Relative to electric chargers, all of our garages have them either in place or planned in place, and certainly our expectation would be to continue to provide that as an amenity for our

03:12:39

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 customers.

3 Certainly I think Rob makes a
4 great point in terms of taking a look at
5 the revenue models to provide more 03:12:45
6 flexibility for the industry to be justly
7 compensated for those additional services
8 that really reflect the pace of
9 accelerated technology, but I think every
10 parking lot operator will be moving more 03:12:57
11 towards a combination of gas and
12 electric-powered vehicle.

13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
14 you.

15 I'm also going to ask Gabe 03:13:03
16 Morgan if you will respond not only to
17 the line of questioning we just asked
18 Mr. Zuritsky and Mr. Sweeney, so we want
19 you to answer that, but I also want you
20 to answer the question about parking 03:13:16
21 workers who are working not in a Robert
22 Zuritsky or Jerry Sweeney parking lot,
23 but those parking workers that may be
24 working at a stadium, may be working for
25 a major healthcare system. I mean, there 03:13:35

6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
are other parking lots throughout the
City, and the goal is for us to increase
the quality of parking jobs through the
living wage, through available
healthcare, and if you're offering an
option for me to have retirement security
through a 401(k), that's
self-sufficiency. We want you to answer
both of those, if you will.

11 MR. MORGAN: I will. That's
12 actually very interrelated, but I would
13 say just so folks -- I can't speak to
14 electric machines in parking lots, but I
15 will tell you, as Jerry said, obviously 03:14:11
16 AI is going to affect everything, but
17 what we've seen is, for example, the
18 biggest employer of parking lot workers
19 in Philadelphia is actually a tech
20 start-up company called REEF that 03:14:24
21 received funding in billions and billions
22 of dollars from around the world to go
23 around, buy up parking companies --
24 bought up a couple big ones in
25 Philadelphia -- and now they are the 03:14:33

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 largest employer of parking lot workers
3 that there are. And their plans for
4 parking lots certainly include continuing
5 to have employees there, but figuring out 03:14:45
6 how parking lots fit into the
7 infrastructure of the marketplace in the
8 21st century.

9 So I don't believe the parking
10 lot workers are going away, that parking 03:14:54
11 lots are going away. I believe that that
12 will look different in different places,
13 in the same way that now most parking lot
14 workers, the vast majority, do not work
15 in Brandywine's buildings or in Parkway's 03:15:09
16 buildings. They in fact work for
17 contractors who bid to the lowest level
18 at higher ed institutional facilities,
19 you know, the stadiums, et cetera.

20 Part of the reason why this is 03:15:25
21 so important is because where it is true,
22 it just is factually true, that
23 Brandywine does do all the things for the
24 parking workers that Jerry just described
25 and that Parkway does pay significantly 03:15:38

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 more than most other companies in the
3 industry, the reality is most folks in
4 this industry pay people poverty wages
5 with no benefits, and this legislation 03:15:47
6 creates a path for that industry to move
7 forward on behalf of the thousand parking
8 lot workers who are there. And I don't
9 think there is another path for those
10 workers, candidly. 03:16:00

11 So I think where that
12 employment continues to grow is in
13 sectors where this sort of legislation
14 would be absolutely the most helpful.

15 The last thing I'll say is, 03:16:10
16 I'll just remind Council that Council
17 itself passed legislation requiring safe
18 levels of staffing at every parking lot
19 just two years ago. So unless Council
20 itself is going to change the law, there 03:16:23
21 will always be parking lot workers in
22 Philadelphia, and there needs to be
23 enough to make sure that people parking
24 their cars are safe and that people
25 working the lots are safe. 03:16:31

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

3 you.

4 MR. MORGAN: The question is

5 will they be poor or not. 03:16:36

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Well,
7 thank you so very much for your response.

8 My final question is for Ardy

9 from Econsult. Ardy, are you still

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10      connected with us?                                03:16:45
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11 MS. WURTZEL: I am.

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: So, Ardy,

13 I want you, if you will -- and I don't

14 have his actual testimony in front of me,

15 and unfortunately Microsoft only allows 03:16:55

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16 me to have two windows open at the same
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17 time. They need maybe through some

18 technical advancements and some

19 artificial intelligence, they'll let me

20 have five screens open at one time, but 03:17:05

21 nevertheless, in the Administration's

22 testimony on this bill, they clearly talk

23 about the cost-benefit analysis. Well,

24 actually the cost side of it. And we're

25 here about -- and, again, I don't have 03:17:21

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 the number in front of me, but I think it
3 was something like \$90 million, the cost
4 of the cut over five years.

5 I want you, if you will, Ardy, 03:17:30

6 from the analysis conducted by Econsult
7 talk to us about the positive

8 externalities associated with this tax
9 cut and this industry and how it will

10 impact other revenue streams for the 03:17:45

11 City.

12 MS. WURTZEL: Sure. Thank you

13 for your question. I don't have any

14 numbers prepared, but in a conceptual

15 way, we can absolutely address those 03:17:55

16 issues.

17 So essentially when we have

18 increased economic activity throughout

19 the City, not just for small businesses

20 but as consumers, it increases the 03:18:05

21 overall economic activity everywhere.

22 When businesses are making more money,

23 they can afford -- and not just the

24 parking lots and garages but all

25 businesses throughout Center City 03:18:17

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Philadelphia. When they're making more
3 money, they can afford to hire more
4 people. When more people are earning
5 higher incomes, they can afford to spend 03:18:23
6 more money within the local economy. So
7 that tax revenue base for local sales tax
8 and local income taxes, that should rise
9 higher than the reductions in the parking
10 tax revenues. 03:18:38

11 And so that's the general
12 concept, and I could run some numbers for
13 you and get those back to you shortly, if
14 you were looking for numbers.

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Please, 03:18:47
16 Ardy. We would greatly appreciate that,
17 and please --

18 MS. WURTZEL: You got it.

19 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: -- send
20 it to the office of the President, and we 03:18:55
21 will distribute to all members of
22 Council.

23 I'm going to recognize
24 Councilmember Bass, who is the first in
25 queue, but I do want to say to you, Jerry 03:19:01

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Sweeney, and I made a note of this, it's
3 the first in a long time that I've heard
4 a major employer in the City of

5 Philadelphia specifically reference a 03:19:14

6 motivated workforce that is inspired by
7 livable wages, right, and healthcare. We
8 need to have more employers in the City
9 of Philadelphia speaking your language.

10 So I want to thank you so very much for 03:19:29

11 just saying it on the record and, listen,
12 just for acknowledging not with a fancy
13 slogan on a website and particularly in
14 an industry where Black and Brown people

15 dominate those who are employed, saying 03:19:43

16 Black lives matter on a website, but
17 ensuring that your practices as a
18 business owner and how you treat the
19 employees and allowing them to have

20 access to self-sufficiency, that speaks 03:19:56

21 volumes, and for that, we are grateful.

22 The Chair recognizes

23 Councilmember Bass.

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair 03:20:14

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 recognizes Councilmember Gym. Are you
3 connected, Councilmember Gym? And if
4 Councilmember Bass is having any
5 technical challenges, Councilwoman, we 03:20:21
6 will call you as soon as we see your box
7 light up.

8 Are you still on, Councilmember
9 Gym?

10 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I am. I 03:20:30
11 have just a brief clarifying question for
12 Rob Dubow.

13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Sure.
14 Sure.

15 Rob, are you still present? 03:20:36

16 MR. DUBOW: I am.

17 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
18 so much.

19 Please proceed, Councilmember
20 Gym. 03:20:42

21 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so
22 much, Madam Chair.

23 Rob, could you please clarify
24 the impact of the bill? Because I think
25 it's unclear to me. Over the five years 03:20:51

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 it's mentioned an amount of \$90 million,
3 but is that 90 million over five years
4 total or is it 90 million in additional
5 to the 41 million that the Mayor's budget 03:21:06
6 has proposed, so the total would be 130
7 million, over 130 million?

8 MR. DUBOW: It's the latter.
9 So the Mayor's -- the Administration's
10 proposal would cost about 40 million over 03:21:18
11 the Five Year Plan, and then this bill
12 would cost about another 90 million.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And
14 then the Mayor's proposal proposes to
15 reduce it to how much? 03:21:31

16 MR. DUBOW: From 25 to 22 and a
17 half.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And
19 according to your research, is the
20 question about the lack of usage of 03:21:43
21 Center City lots and garages due to the
22 tax or is it primarily because we've had
23 a COVID pandemic for the last year?

24 MR. DUBOW: For the last year,
25 the biggest impact would have been the 03:22:02

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COVID pandemic.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And prior to
4 that, have there been relatively -- had
5 the industry been relatively stable or 03:22:10
6 had it been declining?

7 MR. DUBOW: I think the
8 industry kind of nationally had been
9 declining before last year. So I think
10 there have been declines, but I don't 03:22:23
11 think it was specific to Philadelphia.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And
13 could you clarify how many registered
14 business owners are part of this sector?
15 This is not individual lots. This is 03:22:40
16 just the number of owners and registered
17 businesses and not double counting --

18 MR. DUBOW: I understand the
19 question. We'd have to get back to you.
20 We have the number of lots, but not the 03:22:59
21 number of businesses, and we can get back
22 to you with that.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. So
24 you'll get back to the Council President
25 on all of that? Thank you. 03:23:08

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 MR. DUBOW: Yes.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Those are

4 all of my questions. Thank you very

5 much, Madam Chair. 03:23:12

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

7 you, Councilmember Gym.

8 Councilmember Bass, are you

9 connected, Councilmember?

10 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes, I am, 03:23:21

11 Madam Chair.

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.

13 Thank you.

14 The Chair recognizes

15 Councilmember Bass for questions. 03:23:25

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Oh, I

17 apologize. That question was from

18 earlier. That was my statement to you

19 when you opened up.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay. 03:23:33

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you

23 so much, Councilmember Bass.

24 I don't see anyone else in

25 queue. Are there any -- 03:23:42

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm in queue,
3 Council Chair. I'm in queue. Councilman
4 David Oh.

5 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay. 03:23:48

6 Thank you so much.

7 The Chair recognizes
8 Councilmember Oh.

9 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
10 much. It's really -- I was just making a 03:23:53
11 point of information. I just wanted to
12 clarify if there was any misunderstanding
13 that what we were talking about was
14 electric charging stations, so for
15 parking lots to install and have electric 03:24:08
16 charging stations for electric vehicles.

17 But in light of the last
18 conversation, I will say that my
19 understanding is that the very high
20 parking tax was a disincentive to build 03:24:20
21 underground parking appropriate to the
22 capacity that was necessary to deal with
23 the large buildings that were in
24 Philadelphia. And so lowering the tax
25 would create, I hope, an incentive to 03:24:36

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 build parking facilities for the proper
3 number of vehicles we anticipate coming
4 into Center City from vehicle travelers
5 who are hotel guests or business 03:24:51
6 travelers or things like that. So I
7 think that was the effect on the parking
8 and City's economy and jobs that we're
9 talking about from an overly high parking
10 tax. 03:25:04

11 Thank you very much.

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
13 you, Councilmember Oh. And just for the
14 record, Councilmember Oh, you heard me
15 raise the issue of charging stations for 03:25:12
16 electric vehicles. It was my having
17 overheard someone have a conversation
18 about the future of the parking industry
19 for off-street parking and that
20 artificial intelligence would totally 03:25:28
21 consume the industry, there would be no
22 need for these lots, and I said, where is
23 the innovation of particularly those who
24 from an environmental perspective who
25 support the use of electric vehicles and 03:25:40

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 efforts to reduce our carbon footprint
3 and make our city, state, and nation much
4 more environmentally friendly. That
5 wasn't an affirmative, positive outlook, 03:25:54
6 one that I would have expected. So
7 that's why I made the statement,
8 Councilmember Oh.

9 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes. Thank
10 you. Yeah. And I do understand that, of 03:26:06
11 course, electric vehicles will be
12 charged -- you still need attendants to
13 the people within the parking facility.

14 Thank you.

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 03:26:17
16 you. Thank you, Councilmember Oh.

17 Mr. Morgan from SEIU 32BJ,
18 Councilmember Gym's questions to the
19 Administration, I'm going to ask you, if
20 you will, from the worker perspective if 03:26:32
21 you have any comments about the
22 Administration's testimony on this issue
23 and/or the questions that were posed by
24 Councilmember Gym.

25 MR. MORGAN: Yeah. I just 03:26:44

6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

raise a couple issues, but I do want to
say on the front end, Councilwoman Gym
has obviously been an incredibly strong
supporter of workers in Philadelphia, and
so has the Mayor, but I sincerely doubt
the budget projections that the City is
raising, because I think they've been
projected on an industry that will not --
one has not met the revenue the City has
projected what happened in the past, and
I'll leave that to the parking industry
association and econ to address that. I
think those projections are not grounded
in the reality of what will happen in
parking if it does not get significant
help from the City.

But setting that aside,
particularly one of the things that
Councilwoman Gym said that I think is
really important in the previous
testimony was the idea of doing more
targeted tax cuts that are actually based
in completely helping people than just
across-the-board things. And I don't

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 know what would be more targeted than
3 saying to an industry that by any measure
4 is clearly overtaxed, under deep duress,
5 and critical to the infrastructure of 03:27:47
6 Philadelphia, listen, if you're willing
7 to work to pull a thousand people out of
8 poverty to hopefully thousands more once
9 the City does open back up out of
10 poverty, we're willing to work with you 03:28:00
11 to lower the tax burden. I'm struggling
12 with what would be more targeted, what
13 would be more progressive, what would be
14 less a blanket card to just give business
15 something that they're asking for, and 03:28:11
16 I'm unaware -- maybe there is. I'm not a
17 Councilperson. I'm elected by janitors
18 and security officers and parking lot
19 workers and wheelchair attendants, but I
20 am unaware of any other thing the City 03:28:24
21 has done to say to a business community,
22 we will work with you to cut your taxes
23 if you can prove to us you will lift
24 wages, and then have the two strongest
25 local actors show up here today to say, 03:28:38

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 yes, we're willing to do that, and then
3 when the majority in the growing part of
4 the industry is in the sector that's
5 actually seeing the most advancement in 03:28:51
6 technology. So I don't -- again, it
7 doesn't make any -- to me, it just
8 doesn't make any sense.

9 If the City is interested in
10 using tax cuts as a strategy to grow 03:29:00
11 business, to lift people out of poverty,
12 and create more wealth for working people
13 in Philadelphia, I don't know what would
14 come down the pike that would be a better
15 model than this, and we hope Council will 03:29:12
16 strongly consider it, because it is a
17 model and it would seem to me the sort of
18 model that really crosses into a lot of
19 the concerns that different Councilpeople
20 with very different points of view have 03:29:27
21 raised here today. So I just had to say
22 that.

23 Thank you very much.
24 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
25 so much for your response. And as I 03:29:32

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 noted in my opening comments, the Good
3 Parking Jobs Review Committee will be
4 meeting. I am going to, though, formally
5 on the record make an ask, and I don't 03:29:43
6 want the burdens on your shoulders to
7 feel too heavy, Robert Zuritsky and Jerry
8 Sweeney, as I read your names in your
9 boxes, but I will ask you all to do as
10 much as you possibly can over the next 03:29:58
11 week, as this process is moving along
12 rather quickly, that we do our best to
13 reach out to as many representatives,
14 owners in the parking industry so that
15 the industry in itself is speaking with a 03:30:16
16 united voice, and that we would love to
17 be able to see this tax rate lowered as
18 long as it is benefiting workers. And
19 the more folks from the industry who
20 support that perspective, it will clearly 03:30:33
21 help us in measurable ways. So I just
22 wanted to make that ask formally of you
23 two on the record.
24 There being no other comments,
25 are there any comments or questions from 03:30:47

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 members of the Committee for these

3 witnesses on this panel?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: I don't 03:30:55

6 see anything in the Chat, nothing via

7 text. With that being said, we want to

8 thank you all so very much for being here

9 and testifying.

10 And, Bob McDermott, I'm going 03:31:06

11 to ask you to please call the next panel

12 scheduled to testify.

13 THE CLERK: Our last panel

14 consists of Lawal Gaga, Parkway

15 Corporation; Abou Diori, EZ Park; Issa 03:31:18

16 Diakite, S&P Parking; Corie Moscow,

17 Rittenhouse Row; Larry Dubinski, Franklin

18 Institute; Kate Goodman, resident; and

19 Stanley Shapiro, resident.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 03:31:37

21 you.

22 Will you please state your name

23 for the record and proceed with your

24 testimony. Lawal, are you connected?

25 MR. SHAPIRO: Hello. 03:31:47

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes. Can
3 you hear us? Is this Lawal?

4 MR. SHAPIRO: Yes, I can hear
5 you. 03:31:53

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
7 Stan, I'll call your name when we're
8 ready for you to speak. I now want to
9 hear from Lawal.

10 Are you connected, Lawal? 03:32:05
11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Lawal,
13 are you connected? I see someone trying
14 to unmute. I wasn't sure if that was
15 you. 03:32:19

16 Abou Diori, are you here, Abou?
17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
19 Issa?

20 MR. DIAKITE: Issa is here. 03:32:29
21 Can you hear me?

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
23 Yes. Issa, please state your name for
24 the record and proceed with your
25 testimony, Issa. 03:32:36

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 MR. DIAKITE: Sure. Thank you.

3 I appreciate it. My name is Issa

4 Diakite. I work for SP Plus Corporation,

5 which is a parking company. I'm 03:32:47

6 currently a Vice President based out of

7 the New York market.

8 So I started in the parking

9 business back in 2005 in Philadelphia,

10 and I remember my first day working for 03:33:02

11 Central Parking, which is now SP Plus

12 Corporation. I was flagging at the

13 corner of 8th and Vine Street. I was

14 flagging cars to park at the 8th and

15 Market lot that some of you may be 03:33:21

16 familiar with 8th and Market lot. The

17 lot is between 8th and Market and 9th and

18 Market.

19 And really my story is one of

20 many, you know, African American or from 03:33:37

21 African descent. I came to this country

22 back in 2001, and really the parking

23 industry gave me the opportunity as a

24 great career here in Philadelphia. I

25 live in West Philadelphia. I went to 03:34:00

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Temple University, where I earned my
3 Bachelor in Finance and International
4 Business. And once I received my
5 Bachelor degree while working as a 03:34:14
6 parking attendant for Central Parking, I
7 applied for a supervisor position where I
8 oversaw the operation for the South
9 Street location and also the 2nd Street
10 location. I then, you know, working for 03:34:38
11 SP Plus/Central Parking, I moved up the
12 ladder, became an operation manager,
13 moved to Boston, and finally ended up
14 being in the New York market.

15 But as many of you may know, as 03:34:58
16 being a parking attendant and also being
17 in leadership role in the company,
18 someone opened the door for me. Someone
19 created an opportunity for me. And
20 living in West Philadelphia, I also 03:35:19
21 created the opportunity for many other
22 African American living in West
23 Philadelphia. And every time I go back
24 and visit Philadelphia, I go to see my
25 friends, my former colleagues. I'm proud 03:35:35

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 to see that many of them that started as
3 a parking attendant like me moved up the
4 ladder and are building family, and they
5 have their own house. It is a pride. 03:35:50
6 I'm really proud of that, because they
7 also opened opportunity for other African
8 American.

9 There are not a lot of Black in
10 the leadership role for some of the 03:36:09
11 parking companies, but we're starting to
12 see that improve significantly, because I
13 think it has to start somewhere, right?
14 So you start out as a valet attendant.
15 You move up the ladder. You become a 03:36:26
16 leader. And as a Black leader, I really
17 gave a lot -- I opened the door for a lot
18 of people in Philadelphia, and they
19 opened the door for a lot of other
20 people. 03:36:41

21 So I just wanted to tell you my
22 story and let everyone know that really,
23 you know, this gave me a great
24 opportunity, gave me -- it gave a great
25 opportunity to the community in West 03:36:58

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Philadelphia that I still visit.

3 And if you have any questions,
4 feel free, and I'll be glad to answer
5 those questions.

03:37:08

6 Thank you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
8 so very much, Issa.

9 Corie, is Corie Moscow on? Are
10 you connected, Corie?

03:37:18

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: What
13 about Larry Dubinski from the Franklin
14 Institute? I know you had another event.

15 (No response.) 03:37:31

16 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Kate
17 Goodman? Kate Goodman?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: And I did
20 hear Stan Shapiro. Stan Shapiro, are you 03:37:39
21 still connected?

22 MR. SHAPIRO: Yes, I am.

23 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
24 you, Stan. Stan, please state your name
25 for the record and feel free to proceed 03:37:48

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 with your testimony.

3 MR. SHAPIRO: Thank you. My

4 name is Stan Shapiro. I'm Vice Chair of

5 Philly Neighborhood Networks. So I'm 03:37:57

6 testifying on the wage and business tax

7 cuts, and I want to say that those

8 proposals before you are an echo of

9 Reaganomics at a time when our new

10 President has announced its operating 03:38:12

11 principal trickle-down economics as a

12 start to the rich. These times call for

13 something entirely different. To cite

14 Councilman Domb, boldness is indeed

15 needed. The legislation that robs the 03:38:25

16 City of the revenue it needs to fully

17 fund services is boldly going in the

18 wrong direction.

19 Today income inequality both

20 nationally and in Philadelphia is at 03:38:35

21 obscenely high levels. In addition to

22 its record high poverty rate,

23 Philadelphia has the third highest level

24 of income inequality in the country.

25 That injustice is compounded by a 03:38:47

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 particularly outrageous racial income
3 gap.

4 According to the Pennsylvania
5 Economy League, Black households made up 03:38:54
6 55.8 percent of all households earning
7 less than \$10,000 a year in 2019, which
8 is over twice the representation of White
9 households. With the City's median
10 household income at roughly 36,000 in 03:39:08
11 2019, it was only 32,000 for Black
12 households, less than half the median
13 level for Whites. However, some of us
14 did really well in 2019. For instance,
15 John Gauffers (ph) of Comcast earned a 03:39:24
16 cool \$3.4 million just in salary alone.

17 So what were demands for
18 (unintelligible) wage tax cut
19 comparatively to the median Black
20 household compared to Robert? That 03:39:36
21 normal households would get back the
22 gargantuan sum of \$102, but Rob Dubow
23 said it was only 15. In either case, not
24 that much, but Robert would do a bit
25 better, taking back 10,676 unneeded 03:39:49

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 dollars and exploding the income gap back
3 up.

4 On top of that, his company
5 would have its corporate taxes reduced by 03:39:59
6 a full one percent within five years, for
7 another windfall gain of unknown
8 proportions extending indefinitely into
9 the future.

10 Cutting business and wage taxes 03:40:09
11 is a proven loser of a policy. Since
12 1995, the gross receipts tax rate has
13 been cut 56 percent, the resident wage
14 tax rate by 22 percent, and the net
15 income tax rate by 4.6 percent. And now 03:40:22
16 25 years later, we are the poorest of the
17 top ten cities, way ahead of second place
18 Houston.

19 You all know the definition of
20 insanity, so I won't repeat it here, but 03:40:35
21 cutting taxes against that record clearly
22 qualifies.

23 And speaking of the proposed
24 BIRT cuts, they're also heavily targeted
25 to reward our largest corporations 03:40:48

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 because, as Rob Dubow testified,
3 three-quarters of local businesses, many
4 of them Black and Brown owned, don't pay
5 that tax at all. That's because Council 03:40:55
6 exempted the tax on the first hundred
7 thousand dollars of receipts a few years
8 ago. For that exemption, many other
9 businesses, it should be pointed out, pay
10 only half the stated rate or less because 03:41:07
11 their receipts are under 200,000.

12 Once again, this tax cut is
13 skewed to those who need no help, leaving
14 everyone else behind.

15 We've also heard that reducing 03:41:17
16 wage and business taxes helps the City
17 retain a steady revenue base because it
18 shifts the balance of City income to our
19 reliable property taxes, which are said
20 to be a steadier source of taxable 03:41:28
21 income. Proponents of the wage and
22 business tax cut proposals before Council
23 actually laud the fact that those cuts
24 will accelerate additional increases in
25 real estate tax collections. 03:41:38

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Real estate tax rates more than
3 tripled since the 1950s when the City
4 started its sharp drop in population and
5 jobs. Other stealth increases took place 03:41:47
6 in 2014 and '16 as well. Whether real
7 estate taxes are more reliable to the
8 City or not, what's definitely true is
9 that high real estate taxes are a potent
10 tool to expel people from their homes, 03:42:01
11 particularly poor people, and killing the
12 intergenerational accumulation of wealth
13 among Black and Brown families.

14 Of Philadelphia's total housing
15 stock, about 12 percent or 80,000 units 03:42:11
16 are unoccupied, according to a 2018 U.S.
17 Census estimate. The real estate tax is
18 not helping with that.

19 Further, Philadelphia doesn't
20 have a competitive business climate. I 03:42:22
21 want to praise the 12 members of this
22 Council who have co-sponsored
23 Councilmember Green's bill to create a
24 Philadelphia public bank, and we urge
25 Councilmember Domb to join them. 03:42:33

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 Creation of a public bank will enable the
3 City to sharply reduce the financing
4 costs of small Black and Brown businesses
5 without costing the City a penny. Indeed 03:42:43
6 a public bank would increase the City's
7 revenue and sharply cut the City's own
8 financing costs.

9 In addition, distinguished
10 Professor of Economics, Deb Figart, from 03:42:54
11 Stockton University has estimated that
12 when fully capitalized, a public bank
13 would create 10,755 new jobs and over
14 \$3 billion in new economic activity in
15 the City. Let's focus on building up 03:43:08
16 City services and at the same time the
17 ground-changing progress we can make by
18 becoming the first city in the country to
19 create its own bank.

20 In sum, we urge you to reject 03:43:21
21 the highly regressive tax proposals
22 offered by the Mayor and the even worse
23 ones proposed by Councilmember Domb and
24 get to the business of funding programs,
25 not enriching millionaires. 03:43:32

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Thank you for your time.

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
4 you, Mr. Shapiro, for your testimony.

5 I've been informed that Lawal 03:43:40
6 Gaga is now on. Lawal, are you
7 connected?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Lawal
10 Gaga, are you on? Are you connected? 03:43:53

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Abou
13 Diori, are you connected? Are you here?

14 MR. DIORI: Yes, I am.

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank 03:44:04
16 you, Abou. I apologize for the technical
17 difficulties. Please state your name for
18 the record and proceed with your
19 testimony.

20 MR. DIORI: Yeah. My name is 03:44:11
21 Abou Diori. I work for EZ Park.

22 I've been in the parking
23 industry for -- I've been working for the
24 parking industry for the past 15 years.

25 I worked for Central Parking as 03:44:23

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 attendant. I became a manager of -- last
3 working for -- I start working for EZ
4 Park as attendant, worked my way up. I
5 became managers. I'm a manager with EZ 03:44:40
6 Park for the past eight years.

7 I'm pretty happy with EZ Park.
8 We take care of our employees. You move
9 in rank, and then while I'm working with
10 them, I created my own cleaning company. 03:45:00
11 I have a lot of real estate buildings
12 that I maintain. I hire people. And EZ
13 Park is good company. The parking
14 industry is really -- they taking care.
15 We have -- they offer benefit, 401(k). 03:45:19
16 You move the ladder if you work hard and
17 you listen.

18 So while I'm a manager, I hire.
19 I'm the manager of hiring, and I give --
20 like Issa said, like we open the door for 03:45:37
21 other immigrant. I came in this country
22 in 2005 as a student, went to school and
23 started in Drexel, graduated from
24 Wilmington and still working for EZ Park
25 for the past eight years. 03:45:56

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
3 you, Abou. Thank you so very much for
4 your testimony. We appreciate your being
5 here.

03:46:03

6 Lawal, I hope I'm pronouncing
7 your name correctly. Lawal, please state
8 your name for the record and proceed with
9 your testimony.

10 MR. GAGA: My name is Lawal

03:46:13

11 Gaga. I'm a Senior Operation Manager
12 with Parkway Corporation, and I'm calling
13 in support for the -- to lower the
14 Philadelphia tax, parking tax, to
15 17 percent.

03:46:31

16 Now, I'm calling to affirm
17 actually what my company, Parkway, and
18 the parking industry in the whole does
19 for their employees.

20 Now, let me start with

03:46:45

21 retention, employees' retention. I came
22 here in 1993. I celebrated my 29th year
23 anniversary last month on the 5th of May.
24 I've been in this company since I
25 started -- since I came to this country.

03:47:03

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 I was -- are you listening? Oh, boy.

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes,
4 we're listening.

5 MR. GAGA: Okay. I'm sorry. I 03:47:17
6 thought I was off.

7 I came to this country to go to
8 school on scholarship. I started working
9 with Parkway Corporation at Civic Center
10 garage at the University City. I was a 03:47:29
11 mentalist (ph) guy overnight. I started
12 working as mentalist guy and I go to
13 school in the morning. I was sent here
14 to go on scholastic scholarship to go to
15 school. 03:47:47

16 Now, what I appreciate for this
17 parking industry is what it does to me
18 and the people like me. I came and I saw
19 a lot of people -- I got into Parkway
20 through my own friend, who was working 03:48:03
21 for Parkway at the time and he went to
22 St. Joseph University. He graduated with
23 Master's degree at that. Now he's back
24 home working there. I stay over.
25 Parkway gave me the opportunity to better 03:48:16

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 myself intellectually and then

3 professionally.

4 Parkway encourage people --

5 most of us in the parking industry, we 03:48:27

6 are encouraged to go farther, not just to

7 stay as a mentalist guy. From mentalist

8 guy, I was an attendant. I became a

9 supervisor. I was a valet supervisor. I

10 became assistant manager. I become a 03:48:42

11 manager. I was a CT manager. I become a

12 district manager, and now senior

13 operation manager.

14 What I'm trying to say is that

15 that is an opportunity for people like 03:48:54

16 us, Black and Brown, to better

17 themselves, not just to stay in one

18 place. I have my friends, a lot of

19 people, co-workers, that go farther than

20 when they started. 03:49:09

21 This industry, as far as I'm

22 concerned, and other people like me, they

23 support their family themselves. I

24 supported myself when I came here single,

25 but I'm in a family of five people with a 03:49:26

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 wife and three children.

3 Through this company, through

4 this parking industry, my wife also

5 graduated from Jefferson University 03:49:36

6 Hospital. She just passed her exam to be

7 a registered nurse and started working

8 already.

9 So we have people that are

10 encouraged. Parkway in particular not 03:49:51

11 only encourage you to further yourself

12 and even offer some advanced courses for

13 you to attend to better yourself and get

14 promoted to the next level.

15 Through our National Parking 03:50:06

16 Association being headed by our Parkway's

17 President, Robert Zuritsky, they offer a

18 scholarship to any individual interested

19 so that they can further their education

20 and better themselves to the next level. 03:50:23

21 This company, as I can see,

22 even though a lot of people that works in

23 this industry, especially in parking lot

24 and garages, are Brown and Black

25 individuals, but there is opportunity for 03:50:40

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 us to better ourself, not to be stagnant
3 or stay in one place. We have the
4 opportunity to better ourself, and we are
5 doing that.

03:50:51

6 So what I will suggest,
7 especially right now, I'm in support to
8 reduce this parking tax to 17 percent so
9 that my company and the other parking
10 industry companies can bring their 03:51:05
11 employees back to work. We have working
12 employees sitting at home. Now, as
13 business get improved and we get the
14 relief of this tax, we can bring people
15 back to work, hard-working people back to 03:51:19
16 work, who want to support their family
17 and themselves as well and their
18 education.

19 So I'm calling on this to show
20 in support of this tax reduction so that 03:51:32
21 you can see how it affects the employees
22 in this parking industry in general. It
23 can help us get better. It can help us
24 better with our family. It will help us
25 even raise our kids, because through that 03:51:52

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 job, there are opportunities. I mean, we
3 can get the opportunity to raise our
4 kids, to put our wives to go to school
5 and better themselves, ourself as well, 03:52:04
6 and even the people we supervise.

7 When you go to parking lots and
8 garages around the City, you will be
9 amazed to see that our attendants are
10 highly educated and they are in the 03:52:20
11 position to get promoted. That is what
12 happened at Parkway Corporation. They
13 give me the opportunity to raise your
14 salary. Not only that, they give you the
15 opportunity to raise your position in our 03:52:36
16 company, and they give you the
17 opportunity to better yourself, your
18 family, as well as your children.

19 So this is something I really
20 support wholeheartedly, and I encourage 03:52:50
21 the Council honorables to really embrace
22 this tax reduction so that it can benefit
23 especially the Black and Brown people
24 working in this industry.

25 I appreciate the time you gave 03:53:10

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 me to express my own feeling about this.

3 Thank you very much.

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

5 you, Lawal. Thank you so very much for 03:53:17

6 your testimony and for taking the time to

7 be here today.

8 Bob McDermott, Bob, does that

9 complete those people who were scheduled

10 to testify for this panel? 03:53:32

11 THE CLERK: I just received a

12 note from Council Support stating that

13 Kate Goodman is being called.

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.

15 THE CLERK: If she's available. 03:53:42

16 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: All

17 right. Well, while we're waiting to

18 connect Kate, let me ask, Rob Dubow, are

19 you still connected, Rob?

20 MR. DUBOW: I am. 03:53:52

21 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

22 you. Rob, just for the record, and I

23 should have asked this at the top of our

24 discussion, Rob, I remember seeing -- and

25 I don't have it in front of me, so you'll 03:54:04

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 have to help me -- PICA sent us a report.
3 Bob actually sent Council a report giving
4 a snapshot of where we were sort of in
5 the midst of COVID, and it noted cuts, 03:54:20
6 revenue sort of losses that the City was
7 experiencing as a result of where we
8 were. Do you happen to have access to
9 that number, Rob, in essence, what a hit
10 the industry took in terms of revenue 03:54:38
11 this past year?

12 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. So just
13 looking at our projections for the
14 parking tax, in FY20 the actual amount
15 recovered was -- the actual amount was 03:54:55
16 77.3 million, and that was a year that
17 had a quarter of the pandemic. In FY21,
18 we're projecting that we'll receive about
19 51 and a half million.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: 51 and a 03:55:12
21 half. And I still see you, Rob Zuritsky.
22 Rob, for some odd reason a number in my
23 mind is \$56 million in terms of a loss
24 that the industry faced. Does that
25 number ring a bell to you, Rob Zuritsky? 03:55:28

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 MR. ZURITSKY: I think it

3 probably would be much more than that.

4 You know, if the overall revenue for the

5 entire City was something like 400 03:55:42

6 million and it only did 30 percent of

7 what it was supposed to do for that year,

8 it's in the hundreds of millions of

9 dollars of losses industry-wide for the

10 parking industry. I've never seen 03:55:59

11 anything like this in my life.

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

13 you.

14 And, Bob McDermott, Bob, you'll

15 remember. I don't know if it was PICA's 03:56:10

16 second quarter or third quarter report.

17 Why is that number sticking in my mind,

18 Bob McDermott?

19 MR. ZURITSKY: That was

20 probably the parking tax collection part. 03:56:19

21 That's probably why.

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Oh, okay.

23 MR. ZURITSKY: The City's cut,

24 you know, that they didn't receive.

25 That's probably what it is, but I will 03:56:27

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 industry. This would just be some
3 reprieve for the industry.

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Got it.

5 Thank you. Thank you, Rob. And the 56 03:57:41
6 million was the City's Fiscal Year '22
7 parking tax projection.

8 Thank you, Rob Dubow, because
9 that number was -- it was -- and PICA.

10 Thank you, Rachel. The monthly tax 03:58:00
11 revenue update from March 2021. I knew
12 that 56 percent was in my brain for a
13 reason. It showed a 56 percent reduction
14 in parking tax revenues. So thank you.

15 We wanted to make sure we got that on the 03:58:16
16 record.

17 We also want to note that we've
18 received some letters in writing in
19 support of this legislation, Bill No.

20 210442. One letter from the Philadelphia 03:58:26
21 Convention Center and Visitors Bureau,
22 the Pennsylvania Convention Center
23 Authority, and Visit Philadelphia have
24 all submitted letters of support. They
25 were not here and could not testify, but 03:58:42

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 have submitted letters for the record in
3 support of this legislation.

4 And on all of the bills,

5 Councilmember Domb, along with this bill, 03:58:52

6 we have received letters for the record,

7 written testimony, from the Asian

8 American Chamber of Commerce, the

9 Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Della Clark

10 at The Enterprise Center, Pam Henshall of 03:59:08

11 the Greater Northeast Chamber of

12 Commerce, and The Dining Car restaurant.

13 And just for the record for all

14 those organizations, your testimony will

15 be added to the record. 03:59:20

16 Do we now have I think Kate?

17 Kate, are you connected?

18 MS. GOODMAN: Yes, I am.

19 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

20 you, Kate. Please state your name for 03:59:33

21 the record and proceed with your

22 testimony.

23 MS. GOODMAN: Great. My name

24 is Kate Goodman. I'm ready to go right

25 now? 03:59:43

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Yes,

3 Kate.

4 MS. GOODMAN: Okay. So my name

5 is Kate Goodman and I am a City Library 03:59:46

6 worker, a rank and file member of AFSCME

7 District Council 47 Local 2187, and a

8 member of the Unity Caucus. I'm one of

9 thousands of City workers who make our

10 city run every single day, because the 04:00:01

11 labor we do supporting residents to apply

12 for jobs, provide after-school care,

13 picking up trash, making sure we have

14 clean water, to mention a few, are what

15 we do every day. 04:00:14

16 My union slogan is "our city

17 works because we do," because nothing

18 could happen in our city without us.

19 Listening to testimony on these

20 proposed tax cut bills, which will 04:00:24

21 further de-fund City services and the

22 City in general, on the parking tax, the

23 business income and receipts tax, and the

24 wage tax, I can honestly say I'm

25 disgusted and dismayed that this is even 04:00:36

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 up for discussion. I am disgusted but
3 not surprised with the Chamber of
4 Commerce and corporate CEOs like Jerry
5 Sweeney are utilizing this moment of 04:00:46
6 crisis to push their agenda of tax cuts
7 for the wealthy while working people
8 suffer.

9 Despite what corporations like
10 Comcast and Brandywine Realty Trust, 04:00:55
11 massively profitable universities like
12 Penn and Drexel, and powerful law firms
13 like Cozen O'Connor tell City
14 Councilmembers behind closed doors during
15 lobbying visits, corporations are not 04:01:08
16 suffering during the pandemic. I have no
17 sympathy for them. They don't deserve
18 tax cuts or handouts from the government.

19 Mayor Kenney and the democrats
20 on City Council allowing this 04:01:20
21 conversation right now and caving to
22 Allan Domb basically, allowing the
23 conversation to happen today is a huge
24 disappointment and, frankly, it's a
25 rehashing of trickle-down economics we 04:01:29

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 know doesn't work. Philadelphia is the
3 poorest big city in the country because
4 we have been handing out massive tax
5 breaks to the wealthy by not taxing land, 04:01:38
6 real estate, corporate profits, or stock
7 market holdings for decades.

8 So what's the truth? U.S.
9 billionaires increased their wealth by
10 \$500 billion just in the first three 04:01:49
11 months of the pandemic. Brian Roberts,
12 the CEO of Comcast, grew his wealth by
13 17 percent during the pandemic. The net
14 worth of Comcast -- sorry. The net worth
15 of Brian Roberts is \$1.8 billion. His 04:02:02
16 compensation last year was \$36 million.
17 That's the same basically as the Library
18 budget this year, so that's insane.

19 Comcast built the second
20 Comcast building with a \$20 million tax 04:02:18
21 abatement that should have gone to
22 schools and City services.

23 And Brandywine's CEO, Jerry
24 Sweeney, he literally just testified. I
25 implore you to not believe anything he 04:02:29

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 said. His net worth is \$33 million. His
3 compensation last year was \$5.3 million.
4 His company, Brandywine Realty Trust,
5 signed a deal for \$3.5 billion in the 04:02:42
6 Schuylkill Yards February 1st that will
7 get a tax abatement from City Hall.

8 Listening to these people
9 testify about why they need government
10 handouts while people in our city starve 04:02:53
11 and City workers are barely able to
12 provide baseline City services is awful.
13 The economic push by corporate lobbyists
14 who spoke before have long ago been
15 debunked. The best and easiest way to 04:03:06
16 provide high-quality employment, economic
17 stimulus, stabilize our neighborhood, and
18 prevent gun and other types of violence
19 is to invest directly in permanent union
20 jobs and services provided by the Free 04:03:17
21 Library, Parks and Rec, the Public Health
22 Department, Sanitation, Homeless
23 Services, and Arts.

24 City services are in crisis,
25 and we've been forced to work tirelessly 04:03:28

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 and in huge danger to our own health and
3 our family's health during the pandemic.

4 I work in a library in North
5 Central in Sharswood neighborhood with no 04:03:39
6 librarians on staff. I work in a library
7 with a heating and cooling system from
8 the 1960s, with parts that need to be
9 sourced from literally Eastern Europe.

10 Elevators are broken that make our system 04:03:50
11 not handicapped accessible, computer labs
12 that are unstaffed. My library
13 constantly closes, even before the
14 pandemic, if just one person called out
15 sick or the numerous times our HVAC 04:04:02

16 system went down. Branch phones haven't
17 been working for months in South
18 Philadelphia. The entire programming
19 budget for one branch is \$112 per year.
20 Why? Underfunding. It's not that 04:04:16
21 complicated.

22 Mayor Kenney's proposal for
23 both the Library and Parks and Rec are
24 far below pre-pandemic levels. It's not
25 a restoration. It doesn't matter if 04:04:26

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Kenney calls it a restoration at his

3 budget address. It's a budget cut. The

4 budget is lower than it was before the

5 pandemic. 04:04:34

6 In Sharswood, I've seen it

7 raining inside rec centers. At many rec

8 centers, only one worker staffs an entire

9 building. It's not safe or appropriate

10 to sacrifice City services for tax breaks 04:04:46

11 for corporations and the super wealthy.

12 Our city is in crisis. We are

13 not in a new crisis, but City services

14 have been dramatically underfunded for

15 decades. But the crisis of poverty and 04:04:57

16 violence in our city has been exacerbated

17 by the pandemic. We need to generously

18 invest in City services to help residents

19 and workers recover.

20 We demand Mayor Kenney and City 04:05:09

21 Council reject these tax cut bills and

22 invest in community safety and City

23 services. At this moment in time, as

24 City Council, you have an opportunity to

25 make a truly progressive budget 04:05:20

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 counterproposal to the Kenney
3 Administration. I implore all of City
4 Council and especially Majority Leader
5 Parker and City Council President Clarke 04:05:29
6 to reject these tax cuts and direct some
7 of the 1 -- just some of the \$1.4 billion
8 in federal bailout money to City services
9 and City jobs, not to the super wealthy.

10 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you 04:05:46
11 so much, Kate Goodman, for your
12 testimony.

13 Bob, are there any other
14 witnesses scheduled to testify on this
15 panel? 04:06:01

16 THE CLERK: As far as I'm
17 aware, Corie Moscow and Larry Dubinski
18 are not connected. If Council Support is
19 aware of them being connected, if you
20 could please say something. Other than 04:06:12
21 that, that is the last of the panel.

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
23 Let me ask, are there any questions or
24 comments from members of the Committee
25 for these witnesses? 04:06:22

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Hearing

4 none, there being no further questions

5 from members of the Committee and no 04:06:32

6 other witnesses to testify, I will ask if

7 there is anyone else present in this

8 hearing whose name we have failed to call

9 and that wishes to offer testimony on

10 Bill Nos. 210442, 210283, 210284, and 04:06:44

11 210285?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Hearing

14 none, I want to thank all of the panels

15 and witnesses for their participation 04:06:59

16 today. We value your opinions.

17 We now invite all panels and

18 all witnesses to please disconnect from

19 the meeting before we go into our public

20 meeting. We're now going to pause our 04:07:12

21 proceedings briefly so that multiple

22 participants can leave the hearing.

23 Thank you for your patience.

24 (Pause.)

25 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Bob 04:07:50

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 and/or tech team, you guys give me a
3 signal when I can begin. Okay?

4 COUNCIL SUPPORT: We can move
5 forward, Madam Chair. 04:08:04

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.
7 Thank you.

8 This concludes the public
9 hearing of the Committee on Bill Nos.
10 210442, 210283, 210284, and 210285. We 04:08:12
11 will now go into a public meeting to
12 consider the action to be taken on these
13 legislative matters.

14 We will now reconvene the
15 public meeting. Mr. McDermott, will you 04:08:31
16 please call the roll to take attendance.
17 Members that are in attendance will
18 please indicate that you are present when
19 your name is called. Also, please say a
20 few brief words when responding so that 04:08:43
21 your image will be displayed on screen
22 when you speak.

23 THE CLERK: And, Councilmember
24 Parker, I wanted to note that Councilman
25 Domb requested a comment. 04:08:55

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 257

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.

3 Councilmember Domb, can you hear me?

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yes, I can

5 hear you, Madam Chair. 04:09:08

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: I wanted
7 to recognize you for a comment before --
8 you want to give a comment before we take
9 the roll?

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: It doesn't 04:09:16

11 matter. Whatever you think is

12 appropriate.

13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.

14 Mr. McDermott, can you please

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15         take the roll, and then after we take the 04:09:21
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16 roll, the Chair will recognize

17 Councilmember Domb for comments.

18 THE CLERK: Sure.

19 Councilmember Bass.

20 (No response.) 04:09:32

21 THE CLERK: Councilmember

22 Brooks.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Present.

24 THE CLERK: Councilmember Domb.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Present. 04:09:40

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 258

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 THE CLERK: Councilmember

3 Gauthier.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

5 Present. 04:09:44

6 THE CLERK: Councilmember

7 Gilmore Richardson.

8 (No response.)

9 THE CLERK: Councilmember

10 Green. 04:09:52

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Present.

12 THE CLERK: Councilmember Gym.

13 (No response.)

14 THE CLERK: Councilmember

15 Henon. 04:10:01

16 (No response.)

17 THE CLERK: Councilmember

18 Johnson.

19 (No response.)

20 THE CLERK: Councilmember 04:10:09

21 Jones .

22 (No response.)

23 THE CLERK: Councilmen O'Neill.

24 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Present.

25 THE CLERK: Councilmember Oh. 04:10:17

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 259

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 COUNCILMAN OH: Present.
3 THE CLERK: Councilmember
4 Quinones-Sanchez.
5 (No response.) 04:10:24
6 THE CLERK: Councilmember
7 Squilla.
8 (No response.)
9 THE CLERK: And Councilmember
10 Thomas. 04:10:29
11 (No response.)
12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Present.
13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
14 you. I see Councilmember Bass is still
15 with us, but remember she was having some 04:10:43
16 technical difficulties.
17 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Madam
18 Chair, I'm here. I didn't know if you
19 could hear me or not, but I am present.
20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay. We 04:10:53
21 knew you were here with us, Councilwoman.
22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.
23 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
24 you.
25 A quorum of the Committee is 04:11:01

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 present and we will now go into our
3 public meeting.

4 Before we take any action, the
5 Chair recognizes Councilmember Domb for 04:11:07
6 comments.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
8 Chairperson Parker. I just wanted to
9 thank you for holding this session today.
10 I want to thank everyone who testified 04:11:15
11 and I want to also thank all of my
12 colleagues for your participation,
13 knowledge, and input on all these topics.
14 It's really informative.

15 And, secondly, I'd like to also 04:11:25
16 acknowledge that we've had about 20 years
17 of conversations about why we have the
18 job issues we have here in Philadelphia,
19 and that includes many members of Council
20 who have raised this topic in previous 04:11:35
21 hearings, provided office research and
22 debated this over the years, including
23 former Councilmember Jim Kenney, now
24 Mayor.

25 I also wanted to especially 04:11:45

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 acknowledge the persistence of
3 Councilmember Quinones-Sanchez, who has
4 been down this road before and has been a
5 champion and an advocate of a lot of 04:11:55
6 these issues and has remained engaged on
7 this since joining Council, and I
8 appreciate her leadership, her advice,
9 and her ability to recognize all of her
10 work. She's done a great job. 04:12:07

11 And I kind of just want to say
12 we have this small window of time. This
13 is our time where we can make big changes
14 of the outcomes of the City of
15 Philadelphia. We have federal money 04:12:18
16 coming to us. We have increased our
17 budget dramatically. And this isn't an
18 either/or. It's an "and."

19 We cannot take this time of
20 funding and think short term. My 04:12:26
21 proposals are to think long term over a
22 ten-year period or longer, and I think
23 our residents and businesses deserve
24 long-term thinking so they can plan their
25 future. 04:12:37

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 For six years, we've now
3 increased our budget about \$1.2 billion,
4 but we really haven't seen the results we
5 should see. We need to invest a small 04:12:46
6 amount of money, and I say invest, a
7 small amount of money in the investment
8 in jobs. We know jobs help reduce crime.
9 We know jobs help move people into stable
10 housing. And we know jobs help pull 04:13:01
11 people out of poverty with direct skill
12 training. And for the City's benefit, we
13 know more jobs build our economic base.

14 I ask for your support on these
15 bills as we finalize this budget and 04:13:14
16 subsequent budgets for years to come, and
17 I see this as a tremendous opportunity to
18 expand the job programs for the City of
19 Philadelphia and its future.

20 Thank you very much, Madam 04:13:25
21 Chair, and thank you, colleagues. Thank
22 you.

23 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
24 you, Councilmember Domb, concluding your
25 remarks. Councilmember Domb, can you 04:13:31

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 just state for the record which -- is it
3 210285 or 210284 that you are seeking to
4 amend now?

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: It's the net 04:13:42
6 income tax bill. I think it's the
7 210825. Is that the net income?

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: I just
9 want to make sure that you're getting an
10 accurate note from your team, because we 04:13:56
11 have several of them in front of us
12 today, so I want to make sure I get to
13 that bill.

14 And I want to state for the
15 record for the benefit of the viewing 04:14:05
16 public, that is the only action the
17 Committee of the Whole here in the City
18 Council of Philadelphia will take today.
19 It will be the amendment to the bill as a
20 result of a request from the sponsor, at 04:14:20
21 which time after that amendment is
22 passed, we will then recess. So I just
23 want to note that that is the only action
24 taken.

25 I also needed to state for the 04:14:31

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 record that Councilmember Jones is here.

3 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Madam Chair?

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: He is

5 having some technical difficulties. 04:14:43

6 And tell me if this is correct.

7 Are you going to amend on June the 8th,

8 Councilmember Domb? I've got multiple

9 messages.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: 210284 is the 04:14:51

11 bill.

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: 210284.

13 And are you amending today or amending on

14 June 8th? I have a note here saying now

15 June 8th. 04:15:00

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: We're going

17 to do June 8th.

18 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay.

19 Thank you.

20 With that being said, this 04:15:06

21 Committee will stand in recess until

22 Tuesday, June 8th at 10:00 a.m., at which

23 time we will reconvene on Microsoft

24 Teams.

25 I want to say a special thank 04:15:16

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.
2 you to all of my colleagues for being
3 here today. All of the people and
4 witnesses who testified on all of our
5 panels, thank you so very much for 04:15:25
6 hanging in there with us. It's an
7 arduous task. It takes a lot of time,
8 but all of the information that you
9 provided to us today we needed to get on
10 the record. So thank each and every one 04:15:36
11 of you.

12 Have a good day, everyone.

13 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Madam
14 Chair?

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair 04:15:43
16 recognizes Councilmember Gilmore
17 Richardson.

18 COUNCILWOMAN RICHARDSON: Yes.
19 Madam Chair, for the record, I am present
20 and also wanted to thank you, Madam 04:15:49
21 Chair, for chairing this hearing. Thank
22 you very, very much for your work.

23 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
24 you.

25 The Chair notes the presence of 04:15:56

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 266

1 6/2/21 - WHOLE - BILL 210284, ETC.

2 Councilmember Katherine Gilmore

3 Richardson for the record.

4 And, once again, thank you all

5 for your participation. If we had any 04:16:04

6 other members of Council who we saw your

7 square but you could not speak because

8 you were having some technical

9 difficulties and we did not note it for

10 the record, please let us know, and we 04:16:17

11 will forward that information to our

12 stenographer for the benefit of our

13 public record.

14 Again, thank you all so much,

15 and have a good day. 04:16:27

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,

17 Madam Chair.

18 (Committee of the Whole

19 recessed at 2:05 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
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Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 1

A	210:20	208:18,21	addressed	advanceme...	28:8 58:23	200:21	225:22
a.m 1:7	243:8	233:14	78:16	207:18	180:4	allowing	226:8 247:8
264:22	accessible	actors 219:25	adept 115:7	advantage	194:11	109:22	American-...
abatement	252:11	actual 64:22	148:23	76:5	195:8	127:21	146:25
250:21	accomplish	207:14	adjustable	advantageo...	199:24	175:5	148:8
251:7	142:7	243:14,15	145:13	60:20 70:21	206:19	210:19	Americans
ability 61:18	accountants	adapt 202:9	adjusted	adversaries	231:8	249:20,22	147:21
156:7	17:6 107:14	add 78:5	92:19	161:19,22	251:14	allows 37:11	amount
180:10	accounting	113:13	adjusting	advice 261:8	agree 35:5	62:7 207:15	14:21 18:3
199:9 261:9	107:15	added 75:9	30:2 78:10	advocate	56:18 64:24	alternate	53:19 74:15
able 20:20	201:21	137:11	adjustment	261:5	69:9 74:6	103:16	74:16 123:6
22:12 38:7	accrue	247:15	94:4	Affairs	140:3 144:3	alternative	123:8 149:3
38:13 39:4	131:16	addition	adjustments	181:23	144:17	92:24	149:25
44:2 57:2	accumulati...	79:17 95:23	109:12	182:4	166:12	amazed	151:3
61:2 85:24	232:12	103:15	Administra...	affect 176:3	167:5 169:9	241:9	180:10
85:25 86:4	accurate	111:12	13:21 14:5	204:16	agreement	amazing 39:4	190:6 212:2
87:2 90:21	110:15	153:13	15:5 20:14	affirm 236:16	9:5 139:13	Amazon	243:14,15
109:9	263:10	155:25	22:15 51:11	affirmative	143:7	38:14 43:5	262:6,7
112:12	accurately	168:2 193:2	52:10 53:22	217:5	agriculture	ambassador	amounts
123:5 126:8	267:5	228:21	87:7 89:8	afford 73:14	114:2	193:15	43:14
144:15	accuse	233:9	120:15	107:19	ahead 201:2	amend 263:4	anachronism
153:7	187:19	additional	128:18	208:23	230:17	264:7	194:10
154:14,21	achieve	14:18 19:13	131:13	209:3,5	AI 163:11	amended	analogy
165:23	194:19	68:24 88:13	142:6,13	affordability	199:5 202:2	29:21 53:6	35:24
221:17	achieves	94:17 96:15	145:24	21:17	204:16	amending	analyses
251:11	18:22	99:21	150:23	afloat 68:17	aid 93:23	7:10,16,21	94:20
Abou 222:15	acknowledge	103:12	156:4	125:8	aide 63:4	8:2,8,13	analysis
223:16,16	151:5	116:5 121:7	217:19	African	aligned 92:21	264:13,13	17:22 51:15
234:12,16	260:16	135:7	254:3	86:17 88:5	aligns 194:2	amendment	51:16,23
234:21	261:2	137:22	Administra...	146:15,20	alike 183:17	263:19,21	90:17 91:3
236:3	acknowled...	142:16,17	12:22 13:2	146:25	all-in 101:5	amenities	91:24 92:13
absolutely	66:16	142:20	13:19 20:2	147:16,20	all-time	37:11	94:24
49:18	210:12	148:12,19	20:15	148:7	199:17	159:13	152:23
104:21	across-the-...	149:10	129:14	149:18	Allan 1:11	169:18	153:10,18
117:12	218:25	150:12,13	130:3 131:5	160:9	178:11	amenity	154:11
139:16	Act 10:13	151:14	131:7,13	189:24,24	249:22	202:25	171:3
160:22	action 190:22	153:17	207:21	224:20,21	alleviate	America	207:23
169:8	256:12	203:7 212:4	212:9	225:22	174:8	187:4 189:9	208:6
206:14	260:4	231:24	217:22	226:7	allies 161:24	American	analyze 54:3
208:15	263:16,23	Additionally	administra...	AFSCME	164:14	13:23 19:10	92:25
absorbed	actions 23:23	10:6 18:6	146:23	248:6	allocate	36:11 40:10	171:23
14:16	activities	92:23	147:23	after-school	196:11	40:11 42:12	analyzed
125:21	173:11	174:24	adopt 6:25	248:12	allocated	42:16 44:13	103:15
abysmal	183:12	additions	7:4	afternoon	149:2	58:2,4,24	and/or 14:24
132:20	activity 21:10	55:25	adopting 7:7	171:16	allow 10:11	65:10,16,23	34:13 160:2
accelerate	94:15,22	address	adoption	177:16	57:21	68:3 73:19	217:23
195:11	95:20 96:4	16:10 57:22	162:13	192:16	107:23	75:3 86:17	256:2
231:24	96:13,20	80:23	202:20	agency 157:4	116:2	88:5 137:23	267:23
accelerated	100:12	165:12	advanced	agenda 249:6	121:23	146:15,20	Angeles
103:23	103:6	166:7	239:12	aggressive	126:7 135:4	147:16	178:16
203:9	115:24	175:22	advancement	115:20	184:3	149:18	anniversary
access 111:24	164:20	208:15	157:12,17	189:5	200:18	151:5 160:9	236:23
160:23,25	172:18,20	218:13	162:8 199:5	190:21	allowed	189:24,24	announced
184:4	184:6,12	253:3	220:5	ago 26:13	125:11	224:20	228:10

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 2

announcem... 2:6	apportion... 18:9 46:11	183:5	association 89:21	100:12	54:2 55:3	64:3	214:10,15
annual 14:20	79:6 135:13	areas 14:5,11	105:14	audio 72:25	55:24 59:11	bank 232:24	214:16,21
75:15 91:13	apportion... 79:12	14:12	111:19	Authority 9:4	64:16 66:8	233:2,6,12	214:23
91:20 92:7	appreciate 16:9 43:18	115:19	117:4,16	9:9 246:23	67:16 77:18	233:19	257:19
93:3,6	annually 69:23 70:3	136:13	177:18	authorized 9:6	80:17 85:9	bar 101:9	259:14,17
106:21	75:5 116:18	154:9 169:2	218:13	automated 202:14	87:17 97:12	barely 40:4	259:22
annually 75:14,17	139:10	199:15	239:16	automobile 168:15	105:8	40:23	beautiful 117:16
129:7	145:24	201:3	assumption 61:23	available 10:10 13:14	109:19	251:11	becoming 233:18
130:10,16	182:12	argue 107:9	Atlanta 39:2	15:10 19:5	120:18	Barry 147:5	begging 41:22
answer 15:10	209:16	167:22	41:15,15,16	23:6 35:16	122:17	base 21:2	beginning 2:6
19:16 23:7	224:3 236:4	168:3	115:19	68:24 73:20	125:22	81:11 82:15	34:10
55:13 89:11	237:16	argument 164:10	146:13,14	84:18	130:10	93:17 95:5	106:20
110:4 169:7	241:25	arithmetic 94:2	146:16	125:22	134:12,25	95:25 96:6	150:13
197:11,23	261:8	arrive 98:6	147:12	155:13	135:25	99:19	157:19
203:19,20	article 25:3	article 25:3	attempts 19:2	168:14	147:4,13,18	100:23	185:21
204:9 227:4	59:10 60:4	artificial 163:12	attend 31:9	169:19	158:17,22	119:5	begun 168:3
answering 93:23	69:25	164:6 198:5	239:13	181:6	160:17	196:12,16	behalf 185:22
anticipate 216:3	144:20	201:16	attendance 2:22,23	197:11	173:22,22	209:7	192:18
anybody 245:16	195:9	202:15	158:8	198:12	175:2	231:17	206:7
anymore 53:25	16:15 18:21	207:19	256:16,17	204:5	178:23	262:13	behavior 174:21
Anyway 145:23	62:11 81:18	216:20	attendant 225:6,16	242:15	179:4,17,21	262:13	183:9
apologies 130:8	86:23	arts 74:18,23	226:3,14	avenue 76:3	180:10,25	based 46:18	belief 194:24
apologize 81:25	appropriate 215:21	159:14	235:2,4	105:19	181:3	48:2,5,6,22	beliefs 167:2
214:17	253:9	251:23	238:8	112:14	182:22	52:4 60:6	believe 15:4
234:16	257:12	Asian 247:7	attendants 217:12	average 26:7	183:20	81:13 85:10	20:18 30:7
appeared 139:9	approval 8:19	aside 218:18	219:19	67:9 140:19	184:15	94:19 98:9	31:3 41:9
appearing 105:6	approved 9:7	asked 80:18	241:9	avoiding 107:13	188:5,9	117:16	41:12 73:6
appears 155:11	approximate 67:8	84:12 87:10	attendees 173:7,21	await 162:2	190:23	124:19	87:7 129:12
applaud 180:21	approxima... 98:24 100:5	203:17	184:9	aware 9:23	200:4	142:5 190:4	129:15
196:25	130:24	242:23	attract 32:4	72:9,10	209:13	218:23	161:13
applicable 91:6 92:3	arduous 265:7	28:10 131:3	38:2 112:12	107:17	213:19,21	224:6	190:8
applied 80:6	Ardy 170:16	219:15	114:9	182:15	213:24	101:7 102:6	191:14
225:7	170:25	assess 106:22	118:22	189:7	219:9 224:9	251:12	192:7
apply 202:15	171:8,14	assets 31:15	144:7	190:11	224:22	bases 95:22	193:13
248:11	177:6 207:8	assist 27:23	184:21	254:17,19	225:23	95:24 96:10	194:15,21
267:21	207:9,12	137:21	attracting 112:6	awareness 25:9	229:21,25	97:13 98:9	202:18
appointed 158:2	208:5	assistance 87:21 108:8	115:21	awful 251:12	230:2	191:2	205:9,11
appointees 157:5	209:16	133:25	121:19	B	237:23	201:19	250:25
	209:16	147:24	attraction 16:21	B-certified 111:8	240:11,15	baseline 101:7 102:6	202:14
	area 25:2,21	149:23	202:12	Bachelor 225:3,5	240:15	251:12	202:18
	93:13 95:18	assistant 238:10	attractive 24:4 93:13	back 13:8	background 73:15 81:21	basis 80:19	205:9,11
	97:25	94:3,16	95:19	14:22 19:13	bad 26:25	96:5	250:25
	113:18	96:22 97:8	174:13	22:5 30:19	badly 113:17	Bass 1:10 3:6	202:14
	114:17	102:20	attractiven... 93:15	42:14 43:16	bailout 254:8	6:6,7 165:6	202:14
	124:20	208:8		47:23 53:10	Bala 37:10	165:9,10	202:14
					balance 15:5	166:10	202:14
					18:23	167:5	202:14
					231:18	168:22	202:14
					balanced 14:5	169:6,8,22	202:14
					balancing 144:8	197:19	202:14
					ballooned	209:24	202:14
						210:23	202:14
						211:4 214:8	202:14

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 3

123:14	202:16,17	20:17,22	110:1 111:1	191:1 192:1	98:5 101:16	126:23	blocks 189:22
171:6	220:14	21:1 22:1,2	112:1 113:1	193:1 194:1	103:5	132:12	board 126:12
benchmarks	229:25	22:7,17	114:1 115:1	195:1 196:1	121:11	133:7 134:3	Bob 110:13
188:8	237:25	23:1 24:1	116:1 117:1	196:25	144:13	136:7	116:24
191:15	238:16	25:1 26:1	117:23,24	197:1 198:1	233:14	148:10	123:15
beneficiaries	239:13,20	27:1 28:1	118:1 119:1	199:1 200:1	250:10,15	150:18	124:11
159:6	240:2,4,23	29:1,21	120:1 121:1	201:1 202:1	251:5 254:7	230:24	128:9 155:8
benefit 29:10	240:24	30:1 31:1	122:1,3	203:1 204:1	262:3	245:12	165:3
40:18 45:22	241:5,17	32:1 33:1	123:1 124:1	205:1 206:1	billionaires	bit 19:9 34:6	170:13
47:19 48:21	better-payi...	34:1,7,9,17	125:1,14	207:1,22	250:9	154:25	222:10
67:6,9,21	28:11 33:20	35:1 36:1	126:1 127:1	208:1 209:1	billions	229:24	242:8,8
70:20 89:5	BexPark	37:1 38:1	128:1 129:1	210:1 211:1	204:21,21	Black 24:2	243:3
127:12	193:7,14,23	39:1 40:1	129:15,20	211:24	bills 1:19	31:16 41:3	244:14,14
133:10,15	beyond 22:18	41:1 42:1	130:1,20	212:1,11	6:22 9:14	41:15,18	244:18
142:2	27:25 151:3	43:1,25	131:1,4,7	213:1 214:1	12:11,17	42:19 43:9	254:13
158:12	245:16	44:1 45:1	131:14	215:1 216:1	15:12 20:3	55:23 57:10	255:25
162:21	bid 205:17	45:25 46:1	132:1 133:1	217:1 218:1	20:16 22:5	57:13 66:20	bold 23:23
183:22	Biden 45:4	47:1 48:1	134:1,18	219:1 220:1	28:13,22	66:23 67:5	29:7 32:7
193:20	big 21:9	49:1 50:1	135:1 136:1	221:1 222:1	29:4 33:17	67:22,24	69:13 70:4
235:15	30:20,20	51:1 52:1	137:1 138:1	223:1 224:1	34:25 35:21	68:6,25	139:12
241:22	45:2 61:12	52:23 53:1	139:1 140:1	225:1 226:1	77:10 92:14	69:18 70:14	141:12
262:12	179:6,8	54:1 55:1	141:1 142:1	227:1 228:1	95:11 97:10	84:15 85:2	180:24
263:15	190:2	56:1 57:1	143:1 144:1	229:1 230:1	97:23 98:6	85:19,23	bold-stroke
266:12	202:14	58:1 59:1	145:1 146:1	231:1 232:1	98:17	86:6 87:12	38:23
benefiting	204:24	60:1 61:1	147:1 148:1	232:23	101:12,18	88:10	bolder
115:12	250:3	62:1 63:1	149:1 150:1	233:1 234:1	102:10,12	132:14,23	144:21,24
221:18	261:13	64:1 65:1	151:1 152:1	235:1 236:1	102:17,21	133:6 138:3	144:25
benefits	big-picture	66:1 67:1,7	153:1 154:1	237:1 238:1	102:23	138:4,8,11	boldly 228:17
21:25 22:20	35:3	68:1 69:1	155:1,23	239:1 240:1	103:15	147:10	boldness
38:18 62:3	biggest 14:7	70:1 71:1	156:1,9,14	241:1 242:1	106:11,22	149:5	18:22
70:12 95:8	190:25	72:1 73:1	156:16,19	243:1 244:1	107:4 125:3	152:25	228:14
95:14	204:18	74:1 75:1	156:24	245:1 246:1	154:17,19	153:8 160:8	bonuses
102:20	212:25	76:1 77:1	157:1,23	246:19	160:5	172:6,7	193:22
103:3	245:9	78:1 79:1	158:1,15	247:1,5	167:24	175:24,25	boom 24:11
115:25	bike 165:24	80:1 81:1	159:1 160:1	248:1 249:1	247:4	176:3,7,14	boost 109:8
121:5 140:4	170:4	82:1 83:1	161:1,25	250:1 251:1	248:20	176:25	boosting
154:17,18	biker 179:8	84:1 85:1	162:1,14	252:1 253:1	253:21	186:10	115:24
160:15,19	bikes 165:18	86:1 87:1	163:1 164:1	254:1 255:1	262:15	210:14,16	border 30:16
176:15	167:10	88:1 89:1,2	165:1,5,13	255:10	BIRT 16:14	226:9,16	borders
177:3	biking 179:7	90:1,17	166:1 167:1	256:1,9	17:12 29:7	229:5,11,19	33:22
184:17	bill 2:1 3:1	91:1,5,9	168:1 169:1	257:1 258:1	29:16,22	231:4	borrowing
194:14	4:1 5:1 6:1	92:1,2,4,19	170:1 171:1	259:1 260:1	48:15,21	232:13	68:16
196:11	6:13,24 7:1	93:1 94:1	172:1 173:1	261:1 262:1	54:7,11,18	233:4	Boston 17:20
206:5	7:3,6,9,15	95:1 96:1	174:1 175:1	263:1,6,13	62:19,22	238:16	178:15
best 68:7	7:21 8:1,2,8	97:1,20	176:1 177:1	263:19	67:6,23	239:24	225:13
70:6 221:12	8:13 9:1	98:1,4,15	177:23,23	264:1,11	74:4 80:6	241:23	bottom 27:11
251:15	10:1,17	98:20 99:1	178:1,21	265:1 266:1	81:9 82:4	Black-led	bottoming
better 26:13	11:1 12:1	100:1,2,23	179:1 180:1	bill's 16:15	83:9,20	132:25	40:6
47:7 105:8	12:19,23	101:1,17	181:1 182:1	billion 24:12	84:23 92:4	Black-owned	bought
115:12,14	13:1,2,12	102:1,8,16	182:7,13	24:14 25:17	95:17 97:23	27:13 118:7	204:24
141:11	14:1 15:1,3	103:1,4	183:1 184:1	27:23 43:4	100:22	132:25	boundless
148:16	16:1,7 17:1	104:1 105:1	185:1 186:1	44:15 64:2	101:13	140:10	42:7,18
181:4	18:1 19:1,7	106:1 107:1	187:1 188:1	65:22,24	102:23	blanket	box 33:19
194:13,23	19:24 20:1	108:1 109:1	189:1 190:1	75:14 98:3	119:15	219:14	211:6

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 4

boxes 221:9	bringing	49:10 52:23	125:4 196:6	138:4,8	55:23 57:10	151:3,12	204:20
boy 237:2	72:11 80:16	55:13,16,18	219:11	140:10,25	57:11,13	172:19	242:13
brain 246:12	160:17	63:13,16,20	245:9,15,20	145:11	66:20,23	173:9,20	252:14
branch	brings 75:14	64:3,22	burdens 15:7	147:11	67:2,5,22	174:23	256:19
252:16,19	Broad 111:14	65:25 66:3	112:23	150:19	67:25 68:7	175:8,10	calling 6:18
brand 193:14	broad-based	68:20 69:20	221:6	173:7 175:9	69:2,19	181:5	236:12,16
Brandywine	41:2 42:10	74:22 80:15	burdensome	178:3,24	70:22 71:14	183:15	240:19
170:20	43:13 44:18	82:5 84:14	18:8 106:24	179:3	71:17,21,23	184:11	calls 144:22
192:6,18,19	81:18	85:12	119:3	180:17	72:3 80:17	188:20	253:2
193:15,19	broader	137:14,17	Bureau	182:24,25	83:16,18	208:19,22	candidly
194:7 196:9	201:13	144:5 148:2	246:21	184:10,25	84:2,22	208:25	206:10
196:19	broke 36:24	149:21	bus 170:3	185:23,24	85:3 86:12	213:17,21	capacity
197:6	broken	156:18	business 7:11	186:20,23	86:17,18,18	231:3,9	113:9
205:23	252:10	159:2	8:4,10	188:16	86:23 87:4	233:4	125:10
249:10	Brooks 1:11	191:23	15:12 16:19	189:14	87:6,22	261:23	180:11
251:4	3:9,10	212:5 218:7	16:21,23	194:2,18	88:3,9,9	buy 35:11,16	215:22
Brandywin...	152:4,5,11	250:18	17:16 18:18	195:12	93:14	127:10	capita 118:11
193:20	152:12,20	252:19	19:3 24:8	196:7	103:11,13	163:25	capital 6:25
195:25	153:21,23	253:3,3,4	31:18 32:2	201:15	105:5,11	199:3	7:4 9:15,17
205:15	154:4,23	253:25	32:9 33:5	202:5	106:25	204:23	9:18 31:15
250:23	155:6	261:17	37:3 39:3	210:18	107:6,18,23		35:16 37:7
break 188:16	257:22,23	262:3,15	41:18 45:2	213:14	108:2,10	C	37:9 89:19
breakdown	brought	budgetary	46:18 48:8	216:5	109:2,6,8	calculate	110:14
51:3,12,22	112:19	191:20	48:11 50:17	219:14,21	109:19	129:9	111:2,7,24
breaks 50:17	Brown 41:3	budgets	50:18,19,25	220:11	112:7,11,13	calculated	195:11
72:14 250:5	57:11 66:20	262:16	55:10 59:4	224:9 225:4	112:17,18	129:19,22	capitalized
253:10	66:23 67:5	build 105:8	60:14,19	228:6	112:22	calculating	233:12
breathing	67:22 68:25	179:21	61:14 62:18	230:10	113:4,8,10	98:7	capture
179:13	70:14 85:3	180:10	78:14 79:21	231:16,22	113:14	calculation	174:3
Breslin 12:9	88:11	194:7	80:25 81:14	232:20	114:25	131:24	car 21:17
47:12,13	152:25	215:20	82:13,18	233:24	115:4,21	calculus	32:23 35:16
48:4 51:14	153:8 160:8	216:2	83:4,7	240:13	116:2,13,15	137:13	165:23
79:15 80:12	172:6,7	262:13	84:20 86:6	248:23	118:7,10,22	California	169:15
Brian 1:15	175:25	building	86:24 94:7	businesses	119:10,16	141:5	247:12
89:19	176:2,3,7	36:17 190:9	95:2 96:12	16:11 18:13	119:24	California-...	carbon 167:7
110:13,18	176:14,25	226:4	96:20	18:20 24:2	120:6,12	114:2	169:12
110:22,25	186:11	233:15	100:11	24:3 27:5	121:21,24	call 2:22 16:2	217:2
116:20	210:14	250:20	105:14,23	27:12,14	126:7,24	25:8 33:10	card 219:14
250:11,15	231:4	253:9	106:16,16	28:19,24	127:8	41:5 108:12	care 42:24
brief 3:2 45:7	232:13	buildings	107:25	29:5,18,19	132:14,14	116:24	64:6,8
211:11	233:4	186:17	108:14	31:16 32:5	132:15,24	123:16	163:24
256:20	238:16	193:10	109:13	32:16 36:14	133:2	165:3	164:3 235:8
briefing 58:5	239:24	205:15,16	112:23	36:18 37:15	136:17	170:14	235:14
briefly	241:23	215:23	113:6,18	38:2,17	138:3,12,12	211:6	248:12
255:21	Brown-ow...	235:11	114:20	39:10 40:14	138:19	222:11	cared 114:13
bright 198:25	31:16 67:25	built 250:19	115:7 116:4	40:20 41:4	139:21	223:7	career 59:20
bring 80:12	68:6 69:19	bumps 39:5	116:7	41:16,19,22	140:25	228:12	72:16,18
85:25 87:17	brunt 32:17	bunch 35:23	118:15,20	43:9 44:23	144:7 145:6	255:8	224:24
99:20 101:2	107:20	burden 12:24	121:25	45:3 46:13	145:20	256:16	careful 17:10
114:16	bucket 64:2	14:3 17:4	125:2,8	46:24 47:10	146:15,24	called 2:25	carefully
150:7	budget 7:5,7	18:18 32:17	126:3,5,6	47:18 48:15	147:2,10,24	6:20 32:23	159:4
184:15	12:9 20:15	106:15	126:19	48:22 50:9	148:6,7,8	96:7 114:3	CARES
190:22	26:21 29:13	107:22	127:4 135:4	51:18 54:8	149:16,23	139:25	87:16
240:10,14	40:2 47:6	121:21	136:23	54:11,17,21	150:6,9	193:7	cars 167:8

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 5

168:16	175:12	15:14 23:10	16:11 79:18	215:14,16	cite 228:13	86:12,19,21	179:5,9,10
199:10,16	179:22	23:13 34:2	211:5	216:15	cities 16:22	86:24 88:3	179:22
199:17	186:3,13	34:21,23	challenging	chart 26:2	26:17 27:2	88:9 90:12	180:25
206:24	187:5	39:12,15,18	23:19	charts 140:8	27:3,16	91:8 95:15	182:18
224:14	189:25	43:18 45:11	Chamber	chat 10:10,14	30:15 33:25	97:2 104:25	183:3,18,20
Carter	190:17	45:16,19	31:24 32:14	111:6	41:13	105:7,11,18	184:7,7,11
170:18	191:6,23	46:5 49:11	38:15 84:6	116:18	106:13	105:19	186:3,10,14
181:12,14	208:25	49:19 50:2	170:18	197:19	118:5,8	106:6,13,15	186:14,19
181:15,21	212:21	50:6 52:14	181:12,23	222:6	120:9 140:9	106:18,22	187:5,5
181:22	216:4 237:9	52:17 56:10	182:4,9,16	cheap 113:6	140:20	108:4	188:3
182:3 185:8	246:21,22	56:12,16	187:19	cheaper	146:17	109:14,14	189:20,22
187:18	247:10	62:25 66:5	247:8,9,11	199:10,11	147:18	109:24	190:2,12,17
case 229:23	centers	66:11,14	249:3	Cherelle 1:10	164:21	110:2	190:23
cases 20:25	180:18	71:6,9	chambers	159:18	178:15	111:18	191:6,23
Casey 58:6	253:7,8	76:13 77:4	28:25	160:21	179:23	112:9 113:6	192:15,20
cash 68:18	Central	85:6 88:15	champion	177:22	180:3	115:10,24	193:5
catalyze	224:11	116:23	261:5	Chicago 27:7	184:21	116:9,10	195:19,23
174:18	225:6	128:22	chance	141:6	230:17	119:4,11,11	196:4
catastrophe	234:25	130:19	121:17	Chief 192:17	citizens 86:14	119:21,21	202:13
124:25	252:5	134:10,14	change 22:11	childcare	city 1:2 2:9	120:11,17	204:3
catch 61:12	century	134:21,24	80:5 94:16	42:23	8:20,22 9:9	121:3 122:8	208:11,19
201:3	205:8	138:22	96:7 106:12	children	13:9 14:15	122:13,14	208:25
categories	CEO 110:25	139:3,6	121:14	41:10 239:2	18:5,11,19	122:21	210:4,8
27:10 51:18	250:12,23	146:2,6,9	142:8	241:18	22:14 23:19	124:20	212:21
113:16	CEOs 249:4	151:24	145:14	Children's	23:24 25:6	125:25	216:4 217:3
category	certain 7:13	152:3,6	199:6	24:21	26:9,22,24	126:2,14,25	218:7,10,17
181:2,3	7:13,18,19	165:7,8	206:20	chipping	27:3,6,17	127:14	219:9,20
Catto 142:19	7:24,24 8:6	181:11	changed	28:14 62:16	29:2,20	136:13	220:2
Caucus 248:8	8:11,12,16	185:9	62:22 131:9	choice 149:15	30:9 32:2	139:22	228:16
cause 127:2	8:16 36:7	210:22,25	changes 8:24	150:5	33:2,9,15	140:12,13	231:16,18
causes 107:2	72:22,23	211:22	18:7 21:7	167:21	33:20,21,23	141:4,25	232:3,8
122:11	154:8 179:2	214:5,11,14	61:17 136:9	choices 14:14	35:7,10,24	142:4 143:9	233:3,5,15
caving	certainly	215:3,7	151:22	19:12 33:12	38:3,16,18	143:23,25	233:16,18
249:21	47:17,19	228:4 256:5	183:8	40:3 43:18	40:8,20	145:2	237:10
CDBG 87:16	129:17	257:5,16	261:13	43:20 66:2	42:3 43:19	146:12	241:8 243:6
CDC 111:20	132:18,22	259:18	changing 8:5	66:4 70:9	45:5 46:7	149:5,17,22	244:5
celebrated	132:24	260:5	199:22	145:2	48:23 50:16	150:6,8	245:17,24
236:22	192:13	262:21	Chapter 7:10	149:13,14	51:3 56:22	152:19,24	248:5,9,10
cell 59:22	197:11	264:3	7:16,22 8:3	151:17	56:25 57:16	153:4,7	248:16,18
60:9 61:3	202:23	265:14,15	8:9,14	choose 21:22	58:13 59:5	154:8	248:21,22
Census	203:3 205:4	265:19,21	characteriz...	30:23 38:10	59:18 67:2	159:11	249:13,20
232:17	CERTIFIC...	265:25	46:23	105:22	67:25 68:14	160:3 163:6	250:3,22
Centennial	267:2	266:17	charge	109:20	68:22,23	166:15	251:7,10,11
111:20	certification	chairing	200:18,19	116:5,9	70:5,11,24	168:25	251:12,24
center 25:4	267:20	265:21	200:20,21	167:20	72:5,13	170:10	253:10,12
26:24 31:12	CERTIFY	Chairperson	charged	choosing	73:13,20	171:17,20	253:13,16
31:14 89:23	267:3	11:4 76:10	217:12	33:14	74:17 75:15	172:14,15	253:18,20
124:14,19	certifying	260:8	chargers	chose 21:12	75:16 77:14	172:16,17	253:22,24
124:21	267:24	Chairwoman	200:9	41:6 83:10	77:16,24	173:10,15	254:3,5,8,9
159:16	cetera 205:19	124:16	202:21	CINDY 1:10	78:8,11,17	173:16,16	261:14
166:15	Chair 1:10	171:16	charging	circle 64:16	79:23 80:17	173:20,22	262:18
171:20	3:16,23	challenge	168:13	134:25	81:5,20	174:2,8,11	263:17
173:16,20	4:15,25	143:14	198:12	circumstan...	83:14 84:15	174:13	city's 27:24
174:11	5:25 12:5	challenges	200:13,19	106:2	84:25 85:5	175:6,12,17	28:25 38:24

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 6

99:2 100:7	3:14,20 4:3	104:13	102:11,23	166:4	18:17	142:18	compared
101:6 102:5	4:8,13,19	105:4 197:2	Comcast	169:24	194:25	195:4	13:18 17:25
105:16	4:22 5:5,8	collaborati...	229:15	comments	committed	219:21	19:3 20:12
108:19	5:14,16,19	194:19	249:10	10:8 16:3	22:24 188:3	226:25	26:12,21,25
123:9 178:8	5:22 6:17	colleagues	250:12,14	31:10 34:9	committee	253:22	39:3 53:21
182:22	6:24 9:14	3:17,23 4:7	250:19,20	34:12 45:13	1:3 6:12,19	commute	101:6 102:5
196:18	11:15 89:15	4:16 5:2	come 2:21	45:23 77:6	9:13 12:6	173:4	118:8 120:9
216:8 229:9	110:16	6:2 23:16	13:8 26:24	88:13,17	44:8 90:13	commuters	140:18,19
233:6,7	117:2	28:24 33:18	35:4 42:2,3	140:3	155:17	13:3,8	150:3
244:23	123:17	34:11 45:22	62:21 64:23	155:16,25	157:3,7	120:16	229:20
246:6	124:12	56:17 57:19	65:2 80:3	197:15	158:2,4,7	173:12	compares
262:12	128:11	67:12 69:10	85:8 106:5	217:21	162:5,15	175:2	162:25
Civic 237:9	155:11	77:5 89:6	106:25	221:2,24,25	182:2	184:13	comparing
clarification	170:15	110:12	122:13,14	254:24	192:15	commuting	26:14
48:7	222:13	128:16	141:8,22	257:17	197:7,12	166:23	compensated
clarified	242:11,15	140:23	156:15	260:6	221:3 222:2	175:17	193:17
130:20	254:16	143:15	158:22	commerce	254:24	176:6 184:7	203:7
clarify 46:12	256:23	156:2	161:23	28:25 31:25	255:5 256:9	companies	compensati...
52:22 129:3	257:18,21	225:25	169:17	32:15 40:24	259:25	17:4 25:14	250:16
130:2	257:24	260:12	188:5	55:8,18	263:17	25:20 43:6	251:3
211:23	258:2,6,9	262:21	190:24	68:3 77:19	264:21	47:4 53:16	compete
213:13	258:12,14	265:2	201:20	79:20 80:2	266:18	54:7,24	30:13
215:12	258:17,20	collect 245:18	220:14	87:9,14,18	committees	79:7 82:25	115:16
clarifying	258:23,25	collection	262:16	108:6 114:6	2:9,15	88:8 105:17	119:22
211:11	259:3,6,9	17:13 44:5	comes 17:8	148:5,12,16	Commonw...	105:24	competing
Clark 31:11	climate 79:21	244:20	43:2	148:22	182:19	106:3 107:2	30:14
247:9	80:25	collections	coming 20:21	149:4,11,20	communica...	107:11,12	113:23
Clarke 23:14	184:25	13:17 17:19	30:12 35:9	150:2,12,17	158:5	107:23	184:20
254:5	232:20	21:3 96:17	38:11 53:18	150:25	communities	132:18	competition
class 61:9	close 85:8	97:2 231:25	70:13 74:16	151:9,20	15:7 40:7	147:21	118:20
64:7 137:18	109:20	collectively	88:24 119:4	170:18	42:6,17	204:23	184:22
137:19	166:14	112:19	125:3	181:13,24	43:2,16	206:2	competitive
classification	closed 108:10	College	126:25	182:5,9	44:16 56:21	226:11	28:16 33:24
51:13 55:3	249:14	142:18	145:8	247:8,9,12	63:9,15	240:10	38:25 62:17
classificatio...	closely	color 41:23	166:24	249:4	64:19 65:7	company	95:18 120:8
51:9	194:14	132:22	167:15,16	commercial	69:15 70:7	111:8	121:19
classroom	closes 252:13	147:20	167:17	68:5,9	86:5 113:15	133:10,13	126:2
26:15	co-sponsored	148:7 176:5	174:7	86:19 96:21	133:4	141:7	135:11,17
Clause 79:8	232:22	191:3	183:14	112:3	149:19	177:19	175:6
79:17,19	co-workers	Columbia	188:9 199:5	148:13	152:25	193:7	180:17
clean 248:14	238:19	147:4	216:3	183:10	153:8,9	204:20	194:4,6
cleaning	coalition	column 95:11	261:16	186:16	166:17	224:5	196:8
194:12	57:14 105:5	combination	commend	190:9	172:6	225:17	232:20
235:10	Coast 27:14	86:22	150:22	Commission	175:25	230:4	competitive...
clear 29:16	113:25	146:19	commensu...	80:21	176:4,4	235:10,13	113:21
74:2 95:9	118:8 140:9	147:15	153:14	Commissio...	177:2 183:2	236:17,24	114:19
162:12	140:12	203:11	comment	12:8 47:5	community	239:3,21	158:23
clearly 141:2	code 7:11,17	combine	39:20,21	47:12,13	22:13 24:16	240:9	162:19
154:3	7:22 8:3,9	121:12	85:10	48:4 51:14	24:23 71:15	241:16	184:19
207:22	8:14 105:16	148:8	139:11	79:4,10	72:2 73:24	251:4	196:18
219:4	collaboration	combined	256:25	80:2,9	76:4 82:18	comparativ...	competitors
221:20	182:17	17:12 27:4	257:7,8	commit	83:12 88:5	229:19	29:20
230:21	collaborative	98:6,17	commentary	188:21,21	88:6 109:14	compare	complaining
Clerk 3:6,8	89:18	101:18	77:12 85:11	commitment	111:19	26:16 27:15	245:14

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 7

complaint 105:10	220:19	211:3 214:9	216:21	41:20 44:6	correctly 236:7	127:23	82:23 83:15
complete 242:9	19:15 155:5	222:24	consumer 71:22	44:11,12,17	Corridor 89:18	134:19,20	83:24 84:10
completely 103:18,20	256:8	223:10,13	consumer-... 71:17	57:22 64:9	104:13	151:21	85:6 114:8
119:19	concluding 262:24	227:10,21	consumers 172:22	75:8 85:15	105:4	152:19	139:5 140:2
218:24	conclusion 115:22	234:7,10,13	173:21	137:2 186:8	corridors 68:5,10	157:4,6,8	143:6
completing 90:16	127:12	242:19	208:20	215:18	86:20 112:8	160:4	144:19
complex 17:2	176:21	247:17	consuming 164:7	216:17	113:18	177:22	146:8
24:20,23,24	concrete 189:16	254:18,19	consumption 174:21	249:21,23	148:13	180:21	148:21
84:21	191:18	connecting 168:11	183:9	conversatio... 71:12	cost 13:20	186:6 187:8	149:9
107:15	concurrent 40:4	connection 188:14	contained 267:5	conversatio... 29:15 36:16	19:7 20:22	188:22	150:20
complicated 17:25 18:10	conditions 7:14,20,25	connects 148:5	contend 17:3	84:5 260:17	22:3,21	189:11,13	151:23
119:13	8:7,12,17	consenting 10:5	context 65:21	convert 43:10	53:2 70:11	191:17,18	178:11
200:7	23:2 157:9	consider 9:14	69:20	convince 13:8	102:24	192:15	186:21
252:21	159:20	57:3 159:12	201:13	cool 229:16	141:17	206:16,16	199:23
comply 10:13	162:5	186:6	continuance 135:19	cooling 252:7	172:11,12	206:19	215:2,3,9
component 174:4	conducted 29:3 208:6	220:16	continue 9:12	Cooperation 9:4,5	172:13	209:22	217:9
components 92:3 115:3	confidence 109:7,13,17	256:12	23:21 56:21	Corie 222:16	173:14	213:24	228:14
compounded 228:25	109:18	considerati... 23:6 72:7	82:2 125:13	227:9,9,10	174:9,25	215:3	256:24
comprised 157:4	confirm 52:18	94:13	125:24	254:17	199:22	220:15	257:4,10,25
computatio... 17:2	conflates 170:2	considered 50:24 54:19	127:6	corner 35:13	207:24	231:5,22	258:11,24
computer 252:11	conflating 170:11	187:22	179:10	224:13	208:3	232:22	259:2,12
computers 73:3	congestion 168:7	considering 78:7 151:4	196:14	corporate 38:9 194:3	212:10,12	241:21	260:7 263:5
computing 202:3	Congress 45:4	159:3	199:18	230:5 249:4	cost-benefit 207:23	242:12	264:3,10,16
concentrated 21:18	Congressm... 147:8	consist 89:16	202:24	250:6	costly 16:15	243:3 248:7	266:16
concentrates 44:22	connect 242:18	consistent 59:24 95:6	continued 126:5 138:6	251:13	20:18	249:20	Councilme... 3:6,8,14,15
concept 86:8	connected 11:21 76:17	126:10	continues 158:18	Corporation 170:17	costs 62:2	253:21,24	3:20 4:3,8
209:12	90:4 104:14	176:15	195:18	177:19	64:5,7,7	254:4,5,18	4:13,19,22
conceptual 208:14	104:15	193:12	206:12	222:15	95:8,14	256:4	5:5,8,14,16
concern 13:21 22:6	110:19	consists 222:14	continuing 10:4 205:4	224:4,12	102:20	260:19	5:19,22
80:13 81:3	117:6	constant 126:17	contractors 195:15	236:12	141:18	261:7	11:9,12
183:5	128:3,7	constantly 252:13	205:17	237:9	154:16	263:18	12:17 15:22
concerned 238:22	171:8 177:8	constituency 167:15	contribute 160:25	241:12	172:15	266:6	15:24 16:3
concerns 30:18	181:13	constitute 9:15	175:17	corporations 40:19	174:16	Council's 156:25	23:11 34:5
189:15	192:6	consult 111:17	control 43:14	147:17	176:2,10	157:18	34:21 39:14
	207:10	consultant 29:10	267:23	230:25	184:4 233:4	169:4	39:16 45:12
		consume	convenient 175:7	249:9,15	233:8	Councilman 1:11,13,14	45:18,20
			convention 159:16	253:11	Council 1:2	1:14,15,15	46:2,8 49:8
			conversation	correct 46:19	2:9,15 8:20	1:16,16	50:4,8 52:4
				46:21 48:5	9:7 15:3	3:15 4:10	52:7,9,15
				48:16,18	22:23 23:14	4:24 5:10	56:13 57:19
				49:2,4 54:9	25:10 38:17	5:24 11:3,7	58:9,10,20
				54:14,15	43:19 45:5	11:10,14	59:6 64:25
				56:8 83:4	46:7 52:13	15:14,16	66:6,7,12
				110:17	63:3 68:22	23:12 34:22	66:16 67:19
				130:25	77:5 90:12	41:13 45:8	69:11,24
				133:19	104:25	45:13 46:9	71:5,7 72:9
				134:3,4	105:7	62:8 71:8	76:12,14,17
				264:6 267:8	109:24	74:14 75:5	76:23 77:9
					122:21	76:7,20,25	77:10 81:25
						77:20 78:5	86:10 88:16
						78:24 79:14	108:13
						80:11 82:10	122:3
							128:20

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 8

130:19	Councilmen	130:6,15,18	236:2 237:3	239:12	74:18	122:7 178:5	dangerous
134:16,22	124:17	131:6,19,25	242:4,14,16	covering 8:22	creativity	224:6	63:6
139:2,4,12	258:23	132:10	242:21	COVID	42:7,18	curriculum	data 47:14,15
139:19	Councilpeo...	133:16,20	243:20	212:23	creators	60:2	146:11
143:19	220:19	134:7,9,15	244:12,22	213:2 243:5	42:20	Curtis 1:14	date 92:15
146:5,7	Councilper...	134:23	245:4 246:4	COVID-19	180:14	72:10	David 1:15
152:2,4,11	219:17	135:18	247:19	56:18 75:19	crime 75:19	customers	11:7 215:4
153:21	Councilwo...	136:20	248:2	108:9 109:2	262:8	193:11	day 24:8
154:2 155:6	1:10,10,11	137:15	254:10,22	158:19	crises 40:4	195:2	176:10
165:9	1:12,12,13	138:21,25	255:3,13,25	195:15	crisis 40:6	200:23	224:10
166:10,11	2:2 3:10,12	146:4	256:6 257:2	Cozen 249:13	108:9	203:2	248:10,15
166:20	3:18,22,25	151:25	257:6,13,23	crack 36:9	112:14	cut 67:23	265:12
167:5,24	4:5,11,14	152:5,9,12	258:4	crafting	160:3 249:6	93:21 143:9	266:15
168:11,21	4:17 5:3,12	152:20	259:13,17	197:4	251:24	187:15	DC 37:9
169:6,7,22	6:4,6,7,9,10	153:20,23	259:20,21	create 23:24	253:12,13	188:11,19	111:21
182:12	9:10 11:8	153:25	259:22,23	33:18 51:24	253:15	189:4	146:17
192:23	11:11,18,23	154:4,23	262:23	57:4 61:21	critical 13:15	191:13,17	147:11
196:24	12:15 15:15	155:4,14,19	263:8 264:4	64:13 73:24	14:12 19:6	208:4,9	de-fund
197:19,20	15:20 19:18	165:6,8,10	264:12,18	87:12 96:23	69:16	219:22	248:21
209:24	20:7 23:8	166:9 169:8	265:13,15	103:10	113:19	229:18	deal 33:13
210:23	34:4 39:13	169:21	265:18,23	111:10	174:15	230:13	215:22
211:2,3,4,8	39:17 45:10	170:22	counterpro...	143:10	219:5	231:12,22	251:5
211:19	45:11,17	171:10	254:2	152:16	critically	233:7	dealt 63:4
214:7,8,9	46:4,17,22	177:5,11	counties	181:4	69:12	244:23	Deb 233:10
214:15,23	47:25 48:12	181:9,16,17	32:20 37:20	182:14	Crop 114:3	248:20	debate 87:24
215:8	48:19 49:2	183:21	115:18	190:12	cross 96:8	253:3,21	debated 77:8
216:13,14	49:6,7,17	185:4,7,14	182:20	196:16	99:22	cuts 13:13	260:22
217:8,16,18	49:20,23,25	192:3,8,9	counting	215:25	crossed	14:5,11,16	debt 31:21
217:24	50:3,5,14	197:9,14	213:17	220:12	113:11	14:16 40:13	debunked
232:23,25	50:22 51:25	201:9,13	country	232:23	crosses	40:17,21	251:15
233:23	52:6,8,16	203:13	26:17	233:13,19	220:18	43:13 44:18	decades
247:5	53:12,15	207:2,6,12	115:20	created 26:4	crucial 57:15	66:19,22	18:18 106:9
256:23	54:4,16,25	209:15,19	178:3	92:24	143:2,5	68:23 69:3	250:7
257:3,17,19	55:6 56:4,9	210:25	180:15,20	103:16	CT 238:11	70:5,10,19	253:15
257:21,24	56:12,15	211:5,10,13	199:7	140:15	CTE 60:10	72:4 121:13	decades-long
258:2,6,9	62:23 66:5	211:17,21	224:21	143:12	Cultural	188:10	105:10
258:12,14	66:13 67:15	212:13,18	228:24	157:24	74:24 75:10	189:6	decent 126:9
258:17,20	69:7 71:4	213:3,12,23	233:18	225:19,21	75:20	218:23	decide 105:22
258:25	76:11,16,22	214:3,6,10	235:21	235:10	culture 74:18	220:10	151:18
259:3,6,9	81:22 88:15	214:12,16	236:25	creates 75:15	74:23	228:7	168:15
259:14	89:24 90:6	214:20,21	237:7 250:3	206:6	159:14	230:24	decided
260:5,23	90:22 104:8	214:22	county 33:4	creating 17:3	199:7	231:23	35:14,21
261:3	104:16,17	215:5	59:8 166:19	25:21,24	cumulatively	243:5 249:6	114:18
262:24,25	110:5,18,21	216:12	couple 36:25	57:15	101:18	249:18	decimated
264:2,8	111:4 114:8	217:15	55:17 80:9	140:17	current 2:8	254:6	87:15
265:16	116:20	218:3,20	138:10	143:8	81:13 91:11	cutting	decimating
266:2	117:5,9	220:24	186:4	187:10	91:18 92:6	230:10,21	18:19
Councilme...	123:13,20	222:5,20	199:23	creation 15:9	92:8 104:5	cycle 68:20	decision
66:25	123:23	223:2,6,12	204:24	59:5 61:7	105:16	Cynwyd	38:10
109:15	124:2,5	223:18,22	218:2	64:13 66:21	126:10,22	37:11	109:24
111:5 114:7	127:25	227:7,12,16	course 13:16	66:24 106:7	131:10		137:5
171:17	128:6,13,21	227:19,23	76:2 93:19	108:22	currently 2:5	D	decisions
180:22	129:11,18	234:3,9,12	217:11	233:2	2:10 55:9	Daily 2:17	113:10
249:14	129:25	234:15	courses	creative	118:14	danger 252:2	137:3

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 9

deck 93:7	demanding 29:12	162:3	51:15 55:17	171:19	134:19	15:24 16:3	62:21 122:5
declines 213:10	demands 229:17	determine 138:6	77:24 80:25	disadvanta... 57:8	distribution 52:12 132:2	23:11,12	253:14
declining 213:6,9	democrats 249:19	184:24	121:22	disagree 149:15	district 59:17	34:5,25	261:17
decrease 98:22 100:3	demonstrate 187:24	determines 157:7	191:4,12	disappeara... 202:8	60:11 68:10	35:6 37:2	draw 35:24
107:22	demonstrates 21:10	162:16	205:12,12	disappoint... 249:24	97:3 142:17	57:19 58:20	173:15
119:14	density 39:3	deters 126:24	220:19,20	disconnect 255:18	147:3	59:6 66:17	Drexel 235:23
decreases 95:4	dent 108:18	detriment 136:17	228:13	discounts 179:2	238:12	77:9 88:21	249:12
Decreasing 184:2	department 40:24 55:8	Detroit 26:21	differentials 94:3	discretionary 183:10	248:7	139:4,5	drive 166:21
dedicating 68:2	55:18 79:20	121:4	difficult 113:22	discuss 23:17	districts 166:13	143:6	167:20
deductions 96:19	84:12 87:9	devastating 65:25	difficulties 76:19	discussed 26:8 188:7	diverse 18:24	144:19	176:8
deep 219:4	87:12,14,18	114:22	124:10	191:17	57:16	146:5	driven 105:18
deeper 14:16	108:5 114:7	179:19	234:17	discussing 33:16 77:11	doing 26:13	178:11	driver 21:15
83:3 151:8	148:5,19,22	107:15	259:16	discussion 242:24	26:25 29:10	228:14	drivers 21:24
154:11	149:4,11,20	developers 111:23	264:5 266:9	discussions 28:23	33:11 40:12	232:25	drivers' 21:13
defer 67:12	150:3 151:2	179:21,25	difficulty 119:10	151:18	40:25 62:6	233:23	driving 174:7
deficit 41:21	151:9	180:9	diners 173:6	disgruntled 125:19	65:18 73:21	247:5	drop 17:19
151:7	251:22	developing 142:14	173:21	disgusted 248:25	73:23 77:14	249:22	63:25 232:4
definitely 83:10	departments 14:15 84:13	development 24:10,17,25	184:9	dollar 138:13	77:23 78:9	256:25	dual 126:15
126:13	150:4	35:7 58:7	dining 32:23	142:20	79:19 88:8	257:3,4,10	Dubinski 222:17
154:13,15	depend 18:4	59:21 65:12	183:11	144:14	115:9	257:17,24	227:13
232:8	18:21 30:11	65:14	247:12	196:3	136:10	257:25	254:17
definition 230:19	depending 134:5	111:16	Diori 222:15	dollars 36:25	137:14	260:5,7	Dubow 11:17
definitions 55:5	depends 118:14	114:14	223:16	40:17,24	145:25	262:24,25	11:20,22
degree 225:5	DEREK 1:13	136:25	234:13,14	43:4 47:21	186:19	263:5 264:3	12:4,6,16
237:23	descent 224:21	137:4,12,20	234:20,21	51:19 55:10	193:8	264:8,10,16	12:18 16:2
DeJoseph 89:16 90:5	described 205:24	137:25	direct 95:23	75:9 83:8	218:22	266:16	16:5,6
90:10,14,24	deserve 249:17	144:11	96:6 156:5	86:6 87:5	240:5	dominate 210:15	19:20 20:5
152:18	desires 31:4	147:7	254:6	87:16	doors 125:8	door 35:13	20:9 23:9
153:10	designed 195:14	157:10,14	262:11	107:24	173:23	225:18	26:19 34:12
154:12	desire 13:7	157:16	267:23	121:7,16	249:14	226:17,19	34:18 39:23
155:3	desired 14:2	186:19	directed 43:16	130:11	double 20:13	235:20	45:7,25
Delaware 33:3	despite 166:25	developme... 180:2	direction 32:12	135:15	46:6,15,20	doers 125:8	47:3 48:17
delivery 13:15 42:23	detailed 47:8	202:11	106:12	148:24	48:24 49:5	173:23	50:12,20
Della 31:11	desires 31:4	devices 77:2	196:21	149:2,3,10	51:7 52:19	249:14	51:7 52:19
247:9	despite 172:25	Diakite 222:16	199:19	149:20	52:25 53:14	doubt 218:6	53:20 54:15
demand 103:11	details 47:24	223:20	228:18	distinguished 111:4	54:23 55:12	downtown 174:8,18	58:18 61:11
173:25	determinat...	224:2,4	directly 31:18 156:6	124:17	65:20 67:10	downtowns 190:19	69:3 71:11
178:25		dialogue 33:18	160:16	233:9	73:25 74:20	downturns 118:16	75:21 77:13
199:17,21		differ 74:10	251:19	distribute 75:10	77:17 78:3	dozens 114:24,24	78:19,25
253:20		difference 136:11,12	253:9	distributed	79:24 82:3	dramatic 61:17	82:17 83:5
		different 51:5	55:16 90:14		83:21 84:4	dramatically 13:14 21:16	84:17 89:7
			117:13				
			134:12				
			148:16				

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 10

128:25	earnings	economically	240:18	198:11	126:4,8,18	encouraged	environment
129:8	95:21 96:15	39:5 70:18	educational	199:22	126:21,25	238:6	32:2 114:20
133:11,19	98:2,12	196:10	60:3	202:21	175:8,15	239:10	145:16
134:4,8	99:7 103:7	economics	effect 94:5,17	204:14	178:23	encourages	165:20
135:5,8,24	104:3	228:11	95:25	215:14,15	183:23	126:2	environme...
136:21	153:15	233:10	114:23	215:16	192:19	ended 225:13	216:24
137:6 138:9	172:21	249:25	115:23	216:16,25	193:14,19	ends 118:18	environme...
138:23,24	easier 84:23	economies	216:7	217:11	201:22	energy 169:5	217:4
139:8	88:3 122:14	164:23	effects 93:2	245:20	205:5	engage 195:3	equal 93:9
142:10	easiest	economist	94:14 95:10	electric-po...	210:19	engaged	equation
144:2	251:15	171:22	95:23 96:8	203:12	235:8	261:6	194:6
146:13	easily 108:13	economists	97:5,11	electricity	236:19	engagement	equipment
148:3,11	East 27:14	14:6	98:19,20	200:22,25	240:11,12	195:7 197:8	31:20
149:7	113:25	economy	99:23,25	electrified	240:21	engaging	equitable
150:10	118:8 140:9	26:25 57:16	103:24	199:25	employees'	184:6	111:11
151:13	140:12	74:19,23	124:24	electrify	236:21	enhance	114:14
156:3	Eastern	94:8 121:15	125:12	200:5	employer	38:24	Erie 111:15
211:12,16	252:9	125:23	171:24	Elevators	204:18	enjoy 159:12	114:5
212:8,16,24	eat 32:25	127:19	efficient	252:10	205:2 210:4	167:15	ESI 94:20
213:7,18	echo 228:8	158:17	67:24	eliminate	employers	enormously	especially
214:2	econ 218:13	162:18	effort 172:5	29:22 66:2	25:6 210:8	200:4	57:10 81:4
229:22	economic	172:23	176:24	121:21	employment	enriching	88:10 119:4
231:2	13:5 14:7	173:18	efforts 16:10	eliminated	94:16 95:21	233:25	120:23
242:18,20	17:9 18:16	175:19	77:14	103:18,20	96:14 97:15	ensure 68:6	148:7
243:12	22:20 26:11	176:23	133:23	119:19	98:12,13	73:21 88:7	149:17
246:8	35:6 40:5	182:22	217:2	eliminating	99:7 103:7	158:23	172:6
due 2:8 13:6	55:20 93:11	201:24	eight 235:6	14:23 28:18	104:3 106:4	183:15	184:20
96:18	93:17,21	209:6 216:8	235:25	93:2 119:15	118:13	197:4	186:7
212:21	94:11,15,22	229:5	245:22	120:5	125:17	198:11	239:23
duration	95:6,13,20	Econsult 30:4	either 23:20	elimination	139:24,24	ensuring	240:7
34:19 89:9	95:25 96:3	89:16 90:3	43:7 47:10	32:8 93:5	153:15	210:17	241:23
duress 219:4	96:5 97:11	90:15 140:6	107:6 119:2	118:2	161:4 164:5	Enterprise	254:4
dying 163:4	115:24	152:7	138:7	119:19	172:21	31:12,14	260:25
dynamic	118:6,16	170:16	160:16	else's 245:16	176:13	247:10	essence
146:22	121:17	171:2,15,20	202:22	embrace	182:23	entertainm...	155:21
	139:25	207:9 208:6	229:23	164:11	186:10	42:25	156:16
E	147:6	ecosystem	either/or	241:21	201:19	183:11	157:24
eager 173:20	150:14	71:13	86:11	emergency	206:12	entire 86:20	158:21
earlier 85:11	153:12	112:11	139:14	2:9	251:16	182:24	163:6 243:9
146:12	158:23	113:11	167:4,25	employ 71:24	employs	189:8 244:5	essentially
147:18	159:23	138:5	168:21	86:14	168:23	252:18	29:17
178:12	160:3	ed 205:18	183:25	139:21	enable	253:8	208:17
186:22	162:19	edges 38:22	261:18	147:19	178:25	entirely	establish
191:21	171:3 172:4	educated	elasticities	employed	233:2	228:13	157:2
214:18	172:10,18	171:22	94:25	73:17 85:25	enacts 68:22	entitled 7:11	estate 31:20
early 158:3	172:20,23	241:10	elasticity	160:10	encourage	7:17,23 8:4	73:11,14
earn 163:22	174:23	education	98:10	161:18	32:3 126:5	8:10,15	111:8 112:3
earned 225:2	184:6,19,25	14:13 42:23	elected	210:15	165:16,18	entreprene...	145:12
229:15	186:18	59:20 72:15	185:24	employee	175:2 179:3	127:17	195:15,24
earner 129:5	194:20	142:14,25	219:17	64:7 126:11	181:5	entreprene...	231:25
earning	208:18,21	143:7	electric	193:24	189:10	32:3	232:2,7,9
97:15	233:14	144:10	164:19	employees	238:4	entreprene...	232:17
182:23	251:13,16	150:22	167:8	81:2 113:3	239:11	132:16	235:11
209:4 229:6	262:13	239:19	168:16	125:16,18	241:20	133:6,23	245:12

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 11

250:6	exam 239:6	expel 232:10	205:18	far 27:17	248:6	231:6	75:24
estimate 19:6	example	expenditure	216:2	154:21	Fileccia	233:18	flip 79:3
20:22 67:4	63:23 80:3	103:10	245:10	166:18	89:20 117:3	250:10	flock 181:5
94:10 97:19	84:21	153:17	facility 24:19	174:5 189:3	117:7,12,13	firsthand	Florida
97:22 98:12	133:13	154:22	126:20	238:21	filed 108:7	31:17	146:18
101:14,20	145:4,12	expensive	217:13	245:9	filled 42:21	fiscal 7:2,4,7	flow 160:15
101:23	183:24	19:2 53:9	fact 25:9	252:24	filmmaking	8:22,25	focus 16:8
232:17	204:17	84:19	27:16 30:6	254:16	73:2	9:16,18,19	31:14 79:16
estimated	examples	107:14	151:6 158:6	farm 113:24	final 33:6	22:14 91:12	119:6
17:18 99:3	80:10	150:19	162:17	farther 238:6	207:8	91:14,20,21	233:15
100:8,14	Excuse 81:22	200:5,23	187:2	238:19	finalize	91:23 92:16	focused 167:9
101:5,11,15	execution	experience	193:22	fast 74:13	262:15	95:14,22	folks 51:11
102:14	111:25	193:12	205:16	faster 104:4	finally 122:20	101:19	70:20 72:19
103:4 108:6	Executive	200:12	231:23	179:3	225:13	102:4	76:18
233:11	192:17	experienced	factor 79:6	favorably	Finance	156:12	122:12
estimates	exempt 40:20	120:25	109:19	157:10,15	11:17 12:7	157:19	166:20
17:21 94:2	67:3	experiencing	factors 17:11	162:6	47:16 79:19	246:6	169:17
94:12,19	exempted	243:7	85:20	feature 10:10	225:3	fit 55:4 94:10	185:25
97:24 98:7	231:6	expert 145:15	facts 63:11	10:14	financial 8:21	199:14	186:25
98:10	exempting	explains	64:20	February	29:11 37:7	205:6	189:21
102:13	135:14	17:17	factually	251:6	107:16	five 8:21	190:5,23
et 205:19	exemption	exploding	205:22	federal 13:24	109:7	10:20,22	195:9
Europe 252:9	18:12 46:12	230:2	failed 30:7	27:22 36:13	129:19	13:16 20:21	204:13
evaluated	54:13 231:8	explore 169:5	255:8	38:12 65:17	financially	22:9 28:2	206:3
95:9	exercise	expose	failing 26:10	68:14 75:23	115:7 125:5	53:2,18	221:19
event 89:23	200:3	107:16	fair 126:9	121:11,15	173:19	67:7 74:4	follow 146:10
124:13,19	exist 30:15	express 242:2	190:9	137:22	financing	91:24 92:17	174:19
124:21	191:25	expressed	fairly 21:11	254:8	233:3,8	92:22 99:2	follow-up
157:6 173:6	198:21	69:10	fall 54:12,12	261:15	find 87:25	100:7 101:6	156:16
173:21	existing	extending	134:2	feel 33:8 45:3	132:19	102:5	following 2:5
184:9	13:25 14:8	230:8	familiar	104:19	findings 91:4	131:14	14:10 96:9
227:14	14:23 31:21	external	224:16	170:8 221:7	finish 15:25	135:22	follows 2:7
events 124:22	56:3 107:25	41:22	families 13:6	227:4,25	firm 90:16	141:15,19	88:20
eventually	198:11	externalities	61:10 68:17	245:5	firms 16:13	163:10	fond 191:11
168:17	expand 23:25	208:8	163:25	feeling 242:2	17:11	164:5	food 42:23
everybody	33:2 126:19	extraordin...	164:4	fees 21:23	249:12	191:25	175:19
90:21	141:8	196:6	232:13	245:7	first 11:2,16	198:6	foot 59:14
117:21	262:18	extremely	family 24:5	fellows	16:2 36:8	207:20	143:18
165:24,25	expanded	119:13	36:24 37:16	198:23	49:10 53:11	208:4	footing 22:15
245:13	22:13 97:13	156:13	41:9 161:3	fewer 118:11	53:13 89:25	211:25	footnote
everyday	99:6 164:17	EZ 222:15	226:4	199:12	93:25 97:10	212:3,11	51:23
172:14	expanding	234:21	238:23,25	fewest 118:9	135:14	230:6	footprint
evidence	25:21 33:5	235:3,5,7	240:16,24	Figart 233:10	139:8 152:3	238:25	167:7
267:4	expansion	235:12,24	241:18	fight 121:17	152:14	five-year	169:12
evolves	24:19,20		family's	fighting	158:9 165:4	101:19	217:2
198:13	60:7	F	252:3	190:5	170:14	fix 116:6	force 182:17
evolving	expect 53:16	face 56:22	family-sup...	figure 168:22	171:4,4	141:13	194:5
168:20	103:22	67:22 109:3	57:5	190:22	172:8 178:2	fixed 31:4	forced 251:25
exacerbated	120:16	faced 16:11	family-sust...	figures 56:5	180:19	145:17	forces 17:9
253:16	expectation	243:24	25:22	figuring	197:16	flagging	forcing 14:21
exactly	10:3 21:6	faces 23:19	195:10	205:5	198:7,19	224:12,14	179:25
130:11	202:24	facilitate	196:17	file 16:14	209:24	flexibility	forefront
148:17	expected	31:21	fancy 210:12	18:15 48:10	210:3	203:6	112:6
166:6 173:2	217:6	facilities	fans 179:6	138:15	224:10	flexible 49:12	forego 20:20

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 12

foregoing 267:7,20	47:13 167:19	76:8 228:17	171:6 185:9	generally 51:16,18,22	256:2 257:8	123:19	245:22
forever 33:6	Franklin 222:17	fundament... 191:5	185:18	54:18	given 13:5	goes 22:17	255:20
108:10	227:13	funding 65:17 74:23	203:15	generate 96:10 103:4	43:24	72:2	264:7,16
Forge 24:22	frankly 191:20	75:24,24	Gaga 222:14	generates 83:6,7	100:23	going 12:10	good 2:3 3:10
forget 166:5	free 104:19	148:12,19	234:6,10	generously 253:17	122:22	16:7 19:22	3:12,16,18
form 13:23	249:24	150:16	236:10,11	genetic 143:20	153:12	27:21 31:6	3:22,25 4:5
93:8 108:3	193:23	151:15	237:5	gentrificati... 191:8,10	186:7 191:7	34:9,16	4:11,14,15
179:5	200:22	204:21	gain 28:5	geographic 184:5	gives 75:16	36:14 44:21	4:17,24,25
formally 6:20	227:4,25	233:24	230:7	Georgia 146:18	179:13,20	54:20 55:12	5:3,10,12
221:4,22	245:5	261:20	game 63:6,17	getting 38:4	giving 243:3	58:3 63:18	5:24,25 6:2
formation 140:10	251:20	funds 13:14	gap 65:22	112:25	glad 227:4	64:13 70:11	6:4,6,9
formed 44:8	freedoms 199:8	13:24 15:6	136:14	115:13,15	global 160:2	75:6,18	11:20 12:4
193:6	frequent 174:14	19:5 68:3	144:14	143:13	globally 195:22	79:3,9,25	32:11 51:8
former 225:25	friend 237:20	68:23 73:19	229:3 230:2	145:16	go 15:11	83:2 85:2,7	73:21 75:22
260:23	friendly 217:4	115:13	gaps 42:21	245:24	19:13,22	104:11	90:11
formerly 171:21	friends 68:17	120:23	garage 161:11	263:9	21:13 22:5	110:8	104:24
forms 179:7	225:25	funnel 125:22	193:18	Gilmore 1:12	38:8,13	116:23	111:3
forth 14:4	front 207:14	furlough 125:6	237:10	4:4 34:15	53:9 54:2	121:20	124:15
77:7 142:7	front-end 133:22	further 31:22	garages 175:5	50:4 54:25	58:3 71:18	122:18,24	157:2,24
forward 28:6	front-ended 43:11	58:3 159:9	176:13,17	56:13 66:6	73:2 74:5	122:25	162:4,14
33:16 35:2	front-loaded 43:11	232:19	193:9 196:2	147:12,13	74:12,13	123:15	165:15,19
39:7 43:21	frustrating 65:18,20	239:11,19	200:10	165:11	79:15 91:3	125:3	171:16
52:10 57:2	full 62:16	248:21	202:22	176:10	105:25	128:15	177:3,16
57:23 58:14	full-time 193:19	255:4	208:24	178:6 187:2	120:18	131:8	178:19
58:21 70:3	fully 135:6	future 13:13	212:21	198:19	130:10	135:25	181:25
70:19	245:10	28:4 31:2	239:24	201:5	138:15	136:4,7,19	187:11
118:21	27:24 74:24	33:8 69:17	241:8	204:22	145:9 147:4	141:13	188:17
127:22	75:10,20	70:4 109:25	gargantuan 229:22	225:23,24	147:12,13	142:7 143:9	192:16
165:14		116:4	gas 85:21	237:7,12,14	145:14,18	145:21	194:2 197:7
179:25		142:14	200:20	237:14	147:18	147:18	221:2
180:12		145:21	203:11	238:6,19	148:17	149:21	235:13
197:8 206:7		164:19	gasoline 200:20	241:4,7	149:21	150:14	265:12
256:5		184:24	Gauffers 229:15	247:24	150:14	162:24	266:15
266:11		197:25	Gauthier 1:12 3:21	255:19	good-paying 30:8 143:11	163:16	Goodman
forward-lo... 9:17		198:9,21	3:22 66:12	256:11	143:13	168:16	222:18
fostering 121:20		199:2	66:13 67:15	260:2	168:16	170:25	227:17,17
found 2:19		216:18	69:7 71:5	goal 28:13	170:25	179:24	242:13
29:11		230:9	258:3,4	30:6 32:7	179:24	180:12	247:18,23
foundation 160:12		261:25	gene 59:12,22	73:18 119:8	180:12	187:7,10,25	247:24
186:22		262:19	60:7 61:3	136:10,18	191:8,11	198:14	248:4,5
four 24:12		FY20 243:14	143:20	157:21	199:6	199:6	254:11
64:4 88:19		FY21 17:20	general 27:24	160:13	200:15	200:15	goods 71:22
145:10		20:12	28:14 39:20	204:3	203:15	203:15	gotten 19:25
182:19		243:17	51:22	goals 105:10	204:16	206:20	41:11 62:16
fraction 174:17		FY22 13:4	126:12	Goddess 89:22	205:10,11	209:23	government
frank 12:8		FY23 130:12	209:11		206:20	217:19	18:5 25:10
		150:13	240:22		209:23	221:4	37:8 38:12
		G	248:22		217:19	222:10	40:9 42:21
		Gabe 170:19			221:4	228:17	68:15
							181:23
							182:4

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 13

189:13	83:15,24	149:24	52:6,9,15	happen 80:8	203:25	182:7	172:3,5
249:18	84:10 85:6	150:6 151:2	52:16 53:12	103:22,22	204:6 210:7	192:21	176:22,25
251:9	88:16,22	151:11	53:15 54:4	115:8 127:6	healthy 179:9	197:3 255:3	184:15
gradual	146:7,8	169:3	54:16 55:6	218:15	hear 9:20	255:8,13,22	195:14
136:8	148:21	196:15	56:4,9	243:8	10:19,22	256:9	196:20
graduated	149:9	206:12	64:25 69:11	248:18	11:24 31:6	265:21	218:17
235:23	150:20	220:10	88:21	249:23	64:15 76:20	hearings 2:12	221:21
237:22	151:23	growing	128:20,21	happened	76:23 82:17	2:14,18	231:13
239:5	152:2	28:13 32:4	129:11,18	85:16 87:3	82:20 88:24	49:10 159:2	240:23,23
grant 55:21	258:10,11	78:8 86:23	129:25	136:2	89:3 104:16	260:21	240:24
195:13	Green's	87:3,8	130:6,15,18	138:10	104:18	heart 41:14	243:2
grants 43:10	140:2	107:2 121:4	131:6,19,25	218:11	141:12	143:22	253:18
43:10 55:11	232:23	182:22	132:10	241:12	153:24	heartbreak	262:8,9,10
75:11 123:4	Greenwich	220:3	133:16,20	happening	154:2,3	33:8	helped
133:22	85:24	grown 41:24	134:7,9,16	33:21 59:7	155:22	heartbroken	146:24
graphics 73:3	grew 250:12	150:9	197:20	63:14 96:7	177:10,12	59:10 60:8	helpful 52:3
graphs 97:21	groceries	growth 14:7	211:2,3,9	happens	181:15,18	heating	67:17
grasp 42:13	163:25	16:21 28:10	211:10,20	188:17	185:13,15	118:20	206:14
grateful	gross 16:18	31:22 59:25	211:21	happy 19:16	187:16	252:7	helping 123:8
68:13	28:20 43:7	60:21 85:21	212:13,18	110:3 111:5	192:8,10	heavily 21:18	138:7
210:21	47:22 51:19	99:7 100:11	213:3,12,23	161:7 235:7	223:3,4,9	230:24	139:18
gray 101:9	62:19 92:9	106:5	214:3,7	hard 16:25	223:21	heavy 221:7	194:12
great 20:5	96:2,9,24	109:25	217:24	61:16 79:8	227:20	held 16:7	218:24
65:24 90:24	119:17	114:12	218:3,20	122:23	257:3,5	53:4,24	232:18
115:9	136:6	118:13	258:12	163:21	259:19	107:5	helps 31:19
159:11	230:12	121:6,18,20	Gym's 52:4	183:7	heard 29:5	HELEN 1:13	78:21 127:7
165:19	ground	126:3,5	67:19	235:16	31:7 36:5	Hello 222:25	138:19
183:18,24	132:17	127:17	217:18	hard-worki...	36:15 53:10	help 13:7	139:24
203:4	183:13	140:6	H	240:15	58:20 59:6	23:23 57:4	172:10
224:24	ground-cha...	172:24	half 24:13	harder	83:11,17,18	61:9 65:10	182:11
226:23,24	233:17	195:12	114:6	190:11	83:21 84:7	65:13 76:4	231:16
247:23	grounded	guarantee	144:13	hardest	110:10	78:10,16	Henon 4:20
261:10	218:14	22:2 43:12	156:20	179:14	132:13	79:12,22	258:15
greater 32:14	group 35:20	guess 51:14	176:7	Harrowgate	163:3,5	80:6 84:23	Henshall
96:23	37:23 114:3	guests 216:5	212:17	111:9	167:23	85:4 86:14	32:13
133:17	174:19	gun 30:19	229:12	112:13	171:4,6	87:20	247:10
149:3	grow 20:25	40:6 63:24	231:10	Havertown	186:21	107:11	Hi 47:12
170:19	23:24 30:8	69:16 70:17	243:19,21	41:8	189:2	109:12	55:15
181:24	31:2 57:6	251:18	Hall 189:21	head 131:12	191:17,21	111:23	high 37:12
182:5 184:4	77:23 78:11	guy 237:11	189:22	132:7	210:3	121:23	72:6,13
247:11	78:16 79:22	237:12	251:7	headed	216:14	122:18	94:12,19
greatest	81:19 84:15	238:7,8	halt 183:13	239:16	231:15	127:22	96:11 97:19
161:24	85:4 86:12	guys 123:4	hand 183:13	headline 24:9	hearing 2:7	133:8,12	97:22 98:5
greatly 16:9	86:17 88:4	256:2	handicapped	headquarte...	2:16 6:12	138:11	98:9,16
187:10	88:8 95:23	Gym 1:13	252:11	177:20	6:19 9:13	145:10	99:12
209:16	113:2 115:4	4:13,14	handing	192:20	9:24,25	147:19,23	100:16
Green 1:13	116:16	34:15 39:16	250:4	health 2:9	10:16,24	147:24	101:13,22
4:9,10	118:25	39:17 45:10	handle	40:5 167:10	15:25 23:15	149:24	101:25
76:14,17,20	119:5,8,21	45:20 46:2	178:24	193:21,23	34:19 39:7	151:2,11	102:13
76:23,25	121:24	46:4,17,22	handouts	251:21	53:11,13	158:17,21	103:2
77:20 78:5	146:24	47:25 48:12	249:18	252:2,3	89:9 129:12	158:23	106:15
78:24 79:14	147:25	48:19 49:2	251:10	healthcare	158:8,15	161:4	119:12
80:11 82:2	148:6 149:5	49:6,8,17	hanging	161:2	161:20	162:17,18	126:23
82:10,23	149:16,16	49:23 50:8	265:6	186:12,16	163:15	168:23	176:2,9

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 14

181:2	146:23	hotels 117:19	image 3:3	95:22	inability	118:2	108:25
196:13	historically	122:17	256:21	implore	115:16	119:14,16	109:10
199:18	30:8 57:8	159:15	immediate	250:25	incentive	119:18,20	153:15
201:18	69:14	186:17	29:6 39:9	254:3	125:16	120:2,4,4	208:20
215:19	176:12	hour 2:20	immediately	importance	126:14	125:10	231:24
216:9	history	60:24 201:5	66:7 89:3	133:4,21	127:14	130:8,12	232:5
228:21,22	147:14	hours 14:10	immigrant	165:21,22	215:25	136:8 140:4	increasing
232:9	hit 122:23	house 226:5	160:9	important	incentives	140:25	21:24 31:14
high-end	179:14	household	235:21	23:17 32:6	38:8 41:25	182:23	93:17 96:24
35:11	183:7 243:9	75:16 96:23	immunothe...	39:22 56:23	incentivize	209:8	incredibly
high-growth	hold 131:20	129:5	59:23 60:10	75:11 80:4	109:5	228:19,24	218:4
105:17	holders 112:3	229:10,20	61:3	82:19 83:19	158:21	229:2,10	increments
high-quality	holding 260:9	households	impact 14:7	83:22,25	159:10	230:2,15	39:11
251:16	holdings	21:19 86:2	21:9 29:4,6	84:3,8 85:4	174:10	231:18,21	incubator
higher 27:4	114:3 250:7	103:12	29:13 30:3	87:25 92:11	Incheon	248:23	134:2
28:15,21	holiday 36:23	183:3 229:5	52:22 61:20	93:19 94:9	37:23	263:6,7	incubators
122:8 123:3	home 42:24	229:6,9,12	82:24 83:3	99:16	include 99:22	incomes	133:24
126:20	132:19	229:21	93:21,25	100:20	153:11	209:5	indefinitely
176:19	158:14	housekeepi...	95:16 96:11	109:11	195:24	incorporate	230:8
178:18	237:24	34:6	98:3,5,15	112:7	205:4	136:24	independent
205:18	240:12	housing	98:16 99:5	120:22	included 2:15	incorporated	90:17
209:5,9	Homeless	24:24 69:17	99:9,12	126:4	28:17 92:17	202:10	indicate 2:24
higher-payi...	251:22	143:10	100:10,13	135:12	148:13	incorporati...	201:20
61:7	homeowner	232:14	100:17	138:18	includes	8:24	256:18
highest 73:12	127:5	262:10	101:9,14,23	142:11,24	260:19	increase	indicators
141:6 178:3	homeowne...	Houston	101:24,25	144:6	including	14:24 21:20	26:11 59:18
228:23	35:22	230:18	103:2,17	147:25	24:18 27:7	22:10,16	59:24
highlight	homes 232:10	huge 120:5	111:8	156:13	60:2 74:24	32:16 61:8	individual
173:3	honestly	249:23	129:19,23	171:25	74:25 82:22	74:7 95:19	17:11 116:2
highlighted	248:24	252:2	131:14	177:24	139:22	95:24 96:5	129:23
56:19 119:9	honorable	hugely	153:6	179:8 186:6	141:4	96:14,17	213:15
highly 233:21	241:21	177:24	191:21	188:5	142:18	103:6,24	239:18
241:10	hope 159:8	hundred	202:4	193:10	159:11	104:3	individuals
hindering	169:3 177:9	18:12 47:21	208:10	205:21	173:9 184:7	111:23	25:15 31:7
16:20	188:16	48:6 135:14	211:24	218:21	193:21	119:2	35:9 61:10
hire 31:19	215:25	138:13	212:25	imposition	196:9	172:16,17	239:25
71:25	220:15	231:6	impacted	8:6	260:22	172:18,19	indoor 24:19
107:13	236:6	hundreds	170:3,5	improve	inclusive 7:2	172:20	113:24
113:2 116:5	hopefully	40:16 244:8	201:15	22:25	income 7:12	176:18	industrial
126:8	80:9 200:16	Hunting	impactful	184:16	8:4,10	196:17	36:8
178:23	219:8	36:10	25:19	188:23,24	16:18,19	204:3 233:6	industries
209:3	Hospital	hurting 138:7	impacting	226:12	17:17 25:13	increased	63:9 64:19
235:12,18	24:21	hurts 119:24	61:18	improved	27:4 28:18	21:14 93:15	77:24 78:12
hired 71:20	143:17	HVAC	impacts 97:4	240:13	28:20 29:16	94:15 95:20	78:17 79:9
171:22	239:6	252:15	97:15 101:3	improveme...	29:22 32:8	96:3,20,23	79:13,22,23
hires 168:23	hospitality		101:5	148:15	32:9 43:8	98:8 142:12	81:17,19
hiring 235:19	117:21	I	105:15	198:9	48:11 53:8	208:18	121:5
Hispanic	121:6,9	iceberg 168:4	154:20	improving	54:3 75:16	250:9	159:17
86:18 88:5	159:17	idea 141:11	impel 174:17	31:25 44:4	78:15 81:14	261:16	179:15
149:18	183:12	190:4	imperative	61:24	82:6,13	262:3	186:12
247:9	host 124:21	218:22	195:19	159:19	83:4 85:25	increases	187:4
historic 31:24	hotel 121:8	ideas 142:6	implementi...	160:19	87:2 92:5	95:5 96:12	industry 23:3
160:4	167:18	identified	13:10	183:2	93:2 96:13	96:21 98:2	77:15 78:11
historical	216:5	14:6	implications	in-house 17:5	96:18 107:8	98:13	80:4 121:6

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 15

122:22	industry-wi...	Inquirer 2:17	internally	142:16,17	J	196:16	Joe 45:4
123:7 125:2	244:9	59:10 60:5	29:9	144:9	J 1:15	241:2	John 229:15
126:12	inelastic	insane 250:18	International	150:21,25	Jabari 89:17	260:18	Johnson 1:14
157:9,13,15	21:11	insanity	225:3	151:8 163:7	104:12,14	261:10	4:23,24
157:18	inequality	230:20	interrelate	164:2 198:4	104:18,22	262:18	258:18
160:10	228:19,24	inside 116:6	30:6	262:7	105:2 110:5	jobs 23:25	join 232:25
161:8,17,18	inevitably	253:7	interrelated	investments	Jackson	25:22,24	joined 12:7
161:23	153:3	insight 35:6	204:12	14:3,12,18	147:14	26:4 27:17	joining 23:16
162:6,9,9	influx 27:21	insist 190:6	interrupt	14:23 36:13	JAMIE 1:12	27:18 28:11	261:7
162:23	informally	inspired	11:4	59:7 68:4	janitorial	28:13 30:9	Jones 1:14
163:9,17	158:5	210:6	interruption	68:25 69:6	194:12	31:2 33:20	5:6 15:14
164:3,8,12	information	install 200:14	62:24	69:13,16,21	janitors	57:5 58:4	15:16,22
168:12,23	45:9 50:2	215:15	intersection	106:4	219:17	60:22,25	34:14,21,22
178:20,22	52:4,11	instance	111:14	111:12	January 9:8	61:8,21	39:14 41:13
178:25	67:11,13	63:22	intervention	137:8 143:4	Jefferson	65:16 73:16	45:8,12,13
179:13	134:17	229:14	63:25	144:9 150:4	239:5	73:22,24	45:18 46:9
183:6,23	146:11	Institute	introduced	investor	Jenkintown	74:8,15	58:9 72:10
184:22	148:24	222:18	18:8 28:12	114:17	41:8	78:17,22	89:17
185:23	154:25	227:14	46:10 92:21	invests 41:15	Jennifer	83:13 98:14	104:12,15
187:24	215:11	institutional	introducing	41:18	31:23,25	98:16 103:5	104:21,22
188:4	265:8	205:18	28:22	invite 179:4	Jerry 170:20	105:12	105:2
191:22	266:11	Instructions	182:13	255:17	171:6 190:5	106:7 108:9	139:12
195:18,21	informative	2:12	196:24	invited 9:22	192:5,6,16	108:17,23	166:20
195:21	260:14	insurance	inventory	involve 44:6	197:15,22	112:19	258:21
196:7	informed	193:21,23	179:21	Iowa 115:18	198:15,18	118:11	264:2
197:25	234:5	245:20	invest 24:2	ISAIAH 1:16	201:11	119:8,22	Jones' 62:8
198:3,12,16	infrastruct...	intellectually	28:10 32:3	Isis 89:21	203:22	121:4,9	Joseph
198:21,25	65:15	238:2	33:5 35:21	123:18,20	204:15	137:23	237:22
200:18	137:21	intelligence	64:10,10	123:23	205:24	140:13,15	Journal 24:9
201:8,14	198:9	163:12	71:24	124:2,5	209:25	140:18,22	JR 1:14
202:8,9	200:10	164:7 198:6	105:11	128:3,4,7	221:7 249:4	141:22	July 156:12
203:6 206:3	205:7 219:5	201:16	109:25	Issa 222:15	250:23	143:8,11,12	156:22,22
206:4,6	inhibitors	202:16	123:8	223:19,20	Jersey	143:13,14	jump 47:11
208:9	83:13	207:19	132:16	223:23,25	105:22	143:16	June 1:7
210:14	initial 29:7	216:20	142:25	224:3 227:8	111:22	157:2,11,14	156:18
213:5,8	29:25 53:3	Intelligencer	196:14	235:20	113:12	157:16,25	158:10
216:18,21	initially	2:18	251:19	issue 13:20	115:17	162:4,7,15	264:7,14,15
218:9,12	28:12	intent 157:2	253:18,22	22:3 44:13	Jim 260:23	163:22	264:17,22
219:3 220:4	initiative	157:19	262:5,6	44:14 61:12	job 15:8	165:22	Juniata
221:14,15	195:8	intentional	invested	80:24 81:7	16:21 28:10	172:7 176:2	113:25
221:19	initiatives	164:14	24:12	159:22,25	59:5,19	176:14,18	just-cause
224:23	196:15	interested	111:13	166:12	60:21,23	177:2 181:4	160:5
234:23,24	injustice	114:4	112:4	197:10	61:7,20	187:11	161:21
235:14	228:25	159:23	137:10	216:15	64:12 66:20	195:11	justly 203:6
236:18	innovation	160:6	investing	217:22	66:24 72:16	197:7	
237:17	164:15	163:15	40:14 44:24	issues 30:24	87:8 108:3	198:11	K
238:5,21	169:3	220:9	44:25,25	57:23	115:3	204:4 216:8	Kanvas 89:23
239:4,23	201:25	239:18	45:2	188:15	121:20	221:3 232:5	124:13,18
240:10,22	216:23	interesting	investment	190:7,16	126:2	233:13	Kate 222:18
241:24	innovative	112:16	25:16 35:19	200:11	139:25	248:12	227:16,17
243:10,24	168:5	intergenera...	41:14 63:24	208:16	140:6	251:20	242:13,18
244:10	innovatively	232:12	70:25	218:2	160:22	254:9 262:8	247:16,17
245:7,15,16	168:10	Intergover...	137:19,22	260:18	180:14	262:8,9,10	247:20,24
246:2,3	input 260:13	9:3,5	141:17,18	261:6	191:2	262:13	248:3,5

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 16

254:11 Katherine 1:12 266:2 Kathy 139:15 keep 33:11 45:7 67:11 125:7 127:14 135:9,16 136:10,15 169:2 189:20 245:3 keeping 126:16 KENDRA 1:11 Kenney 120:15 249:19 253:2,20 254:2 260:23 Kenney's 252:22 Kensington 111:10,13 112:14,20 113:25 KENYATTA 1:14 kept 106:6,8 key 22:6 140:5 174:21 183:6 193:15 194:5 kids 41:7 240:25 241:4 killing 232:11 kind 19:11 30:25 31:2 51:21 61:12 61:25 62:10 62:15 69:5 71:11,13 87:16 133:9 135:25 161:3 180:19 213:8 261:11	kinds 107:10 133:24 King 24:10 25:2,12,17 30:16 41:7 59:14 60:8 143:21 178:12,12 knew 246:11 259:21 knife 143:22 know 16:16 26:19 27:2 27:9 31:17 32:22 40:2 51:9,10,12 67:4,8 76:18 80:11 82:14 84:4 85:7 89:6 107:4 118:17,24 120:14 131:23 132:2,5,6 145:8,21 146:11 148:21 156:3,14 162:22 166:3,25 167:14 194:9 195:6 205:19 219:2 220:13 224:20 225:10,15 226:22,23 227:14 230:19 244:4,15,24 250:2 259:18 262:8,9,10 262:13 266:10 knowing 115:3 145:17 knowledge 260:13 known 42:4 85:19	106:14 knows 161:11 Korea 37:23 L L 1:10 267:14 label 59:18 labor 59:24 194:5,18 248:11 labs 252:11 lack 72:16 113:19 115:13 212:20 lacks 18:22 ladder 225:12 226:4,15 235:16 laid 160:18 184:15 land 202:17 250:5 landlord 193:3 lanes 170:3,4 language 210:9 large 16:11 43:13 50:18 54:22 72:11 86:13 106:13 107:11,12 127:9 132:17 133:2 139:21 166:22 215:23 larger 13:13 44:23 53:22 54:20,23 70:21 71:23 82:12,15 105:24 113:21 174:18 largest 40:18 48:14,17,22 63:12,19 105:5 112:2 113:24	132:23 193:3,4 205:2 230:25 Larry 222:17 227:13 254:17 lastly 32:21 103:14 138:2 173:12 late 59:11 latitude 49:12 laud 231:23 launched 182:16 195:7 law 2:4 206:20 249:12 Lawal 222:14 222:24 223:3,9,10 223:12 234:5,6,9 236:6,7,10 242:5 lawyers 17:6 107:15 lay 125:6 lead 15:8 121:7 141:2 leader 4:6 46:8 90:11 104:24 177:22 180:21 192:14 226:16,16 254:4 leadership 43:20 132:21,23 185:5 197:10 225:17 226:10 261:8 leading 13:21 172:21 leads 95:20 League 229:5 learn 72:22	72:23 113:5 learned 29:24 30:10 72:20 lease 143:18 leave 218:12 255:22 leaving 174:6 231:13 led 95:4 198:22 ledger 62:2 left 84:3 95:11 97:21 113:11 legacy 147:5 legal 2:17 201:21 legislation 13:17 14:20 18:25 29:8 77:7 119:8 120:7 160:13 161:9,21 182:10 183:22 184:17 185:4 192:24 194:17 196:19 206:5,13,17 228:15 246:19 247:3 legislative 63:4 162:11 256:13 Lester 89:21 123:18,24 124:3 128:3 let's 63:7,8 63:10,17 64:20,21 97:10 167:19 233:15 letter 33:6 246:20 letters 246:18 246:24 247:2,6 letting 181:7 level 20:17	21:9 22:17 72:4 96:14 115:23 132:21 150:25 153:6 178:4 205:17 228:23 229:13 239:14,20 levels 103:8 174:6 206:18 228:21 252:24 leverage 84:24 LGBTQ-a... 112:18 liabilities 121:23 liable 47:22 librarians 252:6 library 14:9 248:5 250:17 251:21 252:4,6,12 252:23 lies 33:8 42:5 life 19:8 42:25 77:15 78:7 81:16 115:14 160:7 183:3 244:11 lifeline 13:23 lifelong 105:21 lifestyle 30:13 lifetime 36:2 36:21 lift 113:14 173:17 189:15 219:23 220:11 lifted 118:19 light 36:17 73:19 211:7 215:17 lightly 190:3	limited 118:25 180:10 limits 33:9 126:15 179:24 line 33:6 35:12 49:14 58:9 65:3 66:9 67:19 75:6 105:19 155:6 178:4 203:17 lineage 147:13 lines 166:19 168:14 list 124:8 128:16 listen 210:11 219:6 235:17 listening 6:3 237:2,4 248:19 251:8 literally 250:24 252:9 little 19:9 35:17 78:6 154:24 178:18 livable 210:7 live 24:4 41:7 70:23 166:17 167:19 168:24 224:25 lives 188:23 210:16 living 73:13 160:23 186:11 187:12 204:5 225:20,22 lobby 187:20 lobbying 249:15 lobbyists 251:13 local 16:12	16:22 29:17 29:19 41:19 44:24 45:2 46:25 47:16 47:18 57:3 71:18,21 72:2 75:17 103:11 107:20 120:2,4 132:14 162:18 164:23 173:8 174:22 181:22 182:4 183:10 184:10 195:11 209:6,7,8 219:25 231:3 248:7 locally 32:4 174:3 locate 18:11 located 37:7 111:9 147:10 186:13 locating 25:20 38:18 112:23 location 33:3 37:14 116:8 225:9,10 locations 105:19 lockdown 174:2 Lodging 89:21 117:4 117:15 long 60:17 116:15 135:24 138:18 194:8 200:6 210:3 221:18 251:14 261:21 long-term 32:6 58:19
---	---	---	--	---	--	--	--

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 17

59:3 60:13	209:14	224:17	253:4	266:17	225:12	237:23	137:2
61:6 62:11	243:13	226:9,17,17	lowered	maintain	235:2,5,18	match 91:24	means 18:12
64:12,23	loopholes	226:19	101:16,24	13:25	235:19	math 21:16	36:24
65:2 69:13	107:17	235:11	102:15	199:11	236:11	131:18	106:18
113:9 135:3	Lord 161:11	237:19	133:14	235:12	238:10,11	matter 19:20	160:21
135:9,21	Los 178:16	238:18	221:17	maintained	238:11,12	43:17	174:7 176:6
136:18,22	lose 19:12	239:22,23	lowering	92:10	238:13	170:24	267:22
142:3,22	73:21 74:17	261:5 265:7	12:24 20:25	maintaining	managers	210:16	meant 19:10
261:24	122:24,25	lots 71:24,25	159:3,5,8	14:8 61:24	235:5	252:25	125:10
longer 13:3	loser 230:11	159:21	160:14	127:17	mandates	257:11	measurable
30:11 44:6	losers 64:14	163:21	162:16	major 25:16	125:10	267:7	221:21
44:12 73:7	139:17	164:18,21	174:11	114:19	manner 8:5	matters	measure
116:12,12	losing 113:17	168:7,14	184:14	120:9 121:3	manufactu...	256:13	219:3
164:8	180:7	175:5	215:24	122:8	72:11	maximize	measures
199:12	190:25	176:12,17	lowest 140:9	180:17	manufactu...	182:23	9:16
201:23	loss 21:3	191:4 199:3	205:17	203:25	24:18	maximum	mechanism
261:22	53:17 93:10	204:2,14	luxury	210:4	March	94:6	197:4
look 27:25	94:6,18	205:4,6,11	169:16	majority 4:6	246:11	Maynard	median 129:5
28:3 33:16	97:6 99:3,9	206:25	Lyft 198:24	12:5 40:19	marginal	147:14	129:5,23
39:2,7	100:8,13	208:24	Lyfts 168:8	44:22 86:4	54:6	Mayor 9:2,7	130:3,7,12
41:13 43:21	101:23	212:21		88:6,8	marginalized	156:17	229:9,12,19
43:25 47:15	103:25	213:15,20	M	90:11	69:14	158:2 218:6	medical
53:10 61:20	243:23	215:15	machines	104:24	Marion 147:5	233:22	24:22
62:11 64:11	losses 93:16	216:22	200:24	111:3	Marisa 12:9	249:19	medium
70:9 73:16	97:8 99:10	241:7	204:14	124:16	55:15	252:22	86:13
80:5 90:20	99:13	love 141:12	macro 115:22	177:22	128:25	253:20	139:20
97:10 98:18	100:14	144:14	Madam 3:16	180:21	129:9	260:24	medium-siz...
98:19 99:5	101:6,10,15	167:11	3:23 4:6,15	189:23	134:16	Mayor's 55:9	23:25 50:18
99:20,24	101:21	170:8	4:25 5:25	192:14	MARK 1:16	212:5,9,14	57:9
101:3	102:4,14	221:16	15:14 23:13	205:14	market 59:18	mayoral	meeting 2:10
102:10	243:6 244:9	low 94:12,19	34:2,23	220:3	59:24 79:21	157:5	9:23 10:4
103:14	lost 93:20	96:11 97:19	39:12,18	245:25	224:7,15,16	McDermott	11:6 18:23
125:25	112:10	97:22 98:3	45:16 46:5	254:4	224:17,18	2:21 6:21	51:11 158:4
127:22	160:11	98:9,14	49:19,25	makers	225:14	10:25 89:13	158:9 221:4
140:11,14	175:20	99:9 100:13	50:6 52:17	168:15	250:7	89:25	255:19,20
140:24	lot 21:21,25	101:14,22	56:10,16	makeup 47:7	marketplace	116:24	256:11,15
142:11	36:15 37:16	101:24	62:25 66:14	making 14:12	113:21	222:10	260:3
147:3	66:18,21	102:13	77:4 85:6	16:20 36:21	205:7	242:8	member
154:14,17	67:20 73:10	146:21	128:22	60:24 84:19	markets	244:14,18	34:25 35:5
154:21	77:12 82:16	175:14	134:10,14	84:20 137:2	199:3	256:15	37:2,2,24
197:8	82:20 85:14	low-level-in...	134:24	138:17	Marshall	257:14	49:11 248:6
201:12	87:21 123:3	143:12	138:22	150:24	113:19	mean 19:11	248:8
202:2 203:4	132:17	low-wage	139:6 146:2	151:8,21	Maryland	36:6 54:10	members
205:12	133:3	23:3	146:9	163:7	147:9,10	54:19 60:15	2:23 10:7
looked 33:2	161:11	lower 20:11	151:24	174:12	mass 167:12	60:17 145:5	10:11,19,21
75:2 134:6	162:24	21:13 62:17	152:6 165:6	188:3 194:3	174:5	148:22	12:5 52:12
138:4	201:3	103:8	211:22	198:4	massacre	149:7	81:23 89:7
looking 36:20	203:10,22	121:23	214:5,11	208:22	85:17	159:18	90:12
44:8 60:15	204:18	147:22	256:5 257:5	209:2	massive	167:3	104:25
65:22 78:13	205:2,10,13	156:10	259:17	215:10	201:18,24	201:16,19	109:23
135:22	206:8,18,21	159:6 163:8	262:20	248:13	250:4	203:25	110:8
136:2,12	219:18	178:8	264:3	management	massively	241:2	117:17,20
137:4,7	220:18	219:11	265:13,19	193:6	249:11	meaning	134:19
144:13	224:15,16	236:13	265:20	manager	Master's	50:23 95:3	155:9,9,16

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 18

156:2 157:6	122:12	229:16	models 203:5	236:23	194:5 210:6	mute 81:24	necessity
158:3,3,7	methodology	243:16,19	modernize	monthly	move 20:4		169:16
181:25	91:3	243:23	126:20	246:10	41:25 61:3	N	need 15:6
188:12	MICHELE	244:6 246:6	modified	months 24:14	61:15 73:6	name 2:25	27:24 28:19
191:4	267:14	250:16,20	92:13	26:9 42:20	107:3	12:2,6 90:8	29:15,18
192:14	Michelle	251:2,3	modify	122:23	120:19	90:13	33:22 36:12
195:4	89:22	millionaires	202:10	173:25	127:2	104:19,22	38:11 42:15
197:12,18	124:13,17	233:25	moment	250:11	162:13	105:2	44:19 55:2
209:21	128:2	millions	23:21 27:20	252:17	175:22	110:22	64:6,7,25
222:2	Microsoft 1:6	40:17 121:7	27:25 56:23	Morgan	187:13,25	117:10,13	66:2 68:18
232:21	2:11 10:11	244:8	58:8,16,24	170:19	196:20	171:12	69:16 70:7
254:24	207:15	mind 164:15	69:15 70:8	185:10,10	206:6	177:12	77:17 86:16
255:5	264:23	189:20	70:13,25	185:12,18	226:15	181:19	108:17,19
256:17	Mid-Atlantic	243:23	113:8	185:19	235:8,16	185:16,18	109:7
260:19	122:9	244:17	177:24	192:4	256:4 262:9	192:10,16	131:18
266:6	mid-sized	minimal 83:2	190:20	194:16	moved 55:19	222:22	132:15
membership	27:12 115:4	minority	249:5	203:16	225:11,13	223:7,23	135:15
32:18	118:10	111:23	253:23	204:11	226:3	224:3	141:12
memorable	middle 61:8	112:17	moments	207:4	moves 73:7,8	227:24	144:3 145:5
124:22	112:13,15	minority-o...	124:23	217:17,25	180:25	228:4	153:18
Memorial	178:17,19	24:3 195:14	money 27:22	morning 2:3	184:23	234:17,20	159:4
24:7	midst 160:2	minute 188:6	31:17 33:4	3:11,13,16	moving 57:2	236:7,8,10	169:17,18
memories	162:10	minutes	35:9 43:14	3:19,23 4:2	57:23 58:13	247:20,23	169:18
191:11	243:5	10:20,22	63:5 66:19	4:6,12,15	59:13 102:3	248:4 255:8	180:12
men 160:10	mill 36:12	39:20 49:11	66:22 71:16	4:15,18,25	135:13	256:19	199:21
mentalist	million 13:18	88:20	71:18,25	4:25 5:4,11	165:14	names 11:2	207:17
237:11,12	14:19 19:7	129:24	74:24,25	5:13,25,25	187:8	89:14	210:8
238:7,7	20:20 22:8	missing	75:4,22	6:2,5,7,10	191:15	128:12	216:22
mention	40:23 50:25	140:21	84:24 85:2	11:20 12:4	203:10	165:3	217:12
30:18	51:2,5,19	174:4	106:23	77:3,6,8,11	221:11	197:18	231:13
114:14	51:20,20,21	mission	108:21	77:12 87:23	much-needed	221:8	251:9 252:8
163:19	53:2,17,21	111:10	116:3,8	90:11	57:21	Nancy 32:22	253:17
245:2	54:2,5	194:3	121:11	104:24	multi-purp...	nation 164:22	262:5
248:14	55:10,22	misunderst...	122:15,16	111:3	124:21	217:3	needed
mentioned	56:7 63:23	215:12	123:6	123:12	multiple 77:2	national	164:25
154:16	75:8,15,17	Mitchell	125:22	124:15	255:21	16:13 26:6	228:15
178:11	98:24 99:4	147:8	127:3	129:16	264:8	194:17	263:25
194:16	99:11,11,14	mitigating	130:21	131:4 132:8	multiples	239:15	265:9
195:17	99:14 100:6	94:18 97:5	139:22	181:25	83:6	nationally	needs 18:24
212:2	100:9,15,16	mitigation	141:18,18	237:13	multiplier	213:8	22:13 41:17
mentorship	100:18,18	118:19	144:10	Morozin	14:21	228:20	44:12 87:19
114:15	101:12,12	mixed-use	150:12	32:22	139:25	nature 19:2	108:4
merchants	101:17,22	202:11	151:19	mortgage	MURPHY	38:25	118:21
86:7	101:24	mobility	172:22	145:13	267:14	119:23	158:17
Merion 24:11	102:9,12,16	176:16	186:23	mortgages	Murray	Navy 36:10	174:8 179:9
message	102:25	177:3 179:7	190:7	163:24	89:19	115:9	179:10
119:20	103:2 112:5	184:5 199:9	208:22	Mosaic	110:13,19	near 187:6	206:22
120:10	130:25	model 80:22	209:3,6	111:16	110:20,24	nearly 17:19	228:16
180:14	131:15	189:12	254:8	Moscow	110:25	98:25 100:6	negative
messages	137:11	194:17	261:15	222:16	museums	necessarily	105:15
264:9	150:14	220:15,17	262:6,7	227:9	74:25	134:2	negatively
met 37:24,25	208:3 212:2	220:18	Montgomery	254:17	159:14	necessary	176:3,9
218:10	212:3,4,5,7	modeled	59:8	motivated	music 42:25	22:11	negotiations
meters	212:7,10,12	93:24	month 13:11	193:17	72:25	215:22	156:19

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 19

neighborho...	14:17,22	173:12	NPT 91:10	144:3	96:19 99:8	248:4	203:10
71:14	23:24 24:12	non-reside...	91:17 96:17	204:15	109:9	254:22	operators
105:12	24:22,23,24	91:8 131:17	96:19 99:8	218:4	153:16	256:3,6	21:12,21
108:15	27:3,3 32:4	non-targeted	99:19	occupancy	offsets 100:12	257:2,13	196:9
114:13,25	37:8 41:25	42:11	nucleus	175:14	offsetting	259:20	opinion 35:17
186:24	42:2 53:5,7	norm 49:9	160:12	195:25	96:10	264:18	opinions
195:7 228:5	55:25 60:17	normal	null 163:9	245:11	oh 1:15 5:14	Oklahoma	255:16
251:17	73:24	229:21	number	occupied	11:3,7,9,10	85:21	opioid 112:14
252:5	105:12,22	normally	26:22,23	198:5	11:12,14	on-street	opportunities
neighborho...	106:7,10	187:16	27:13 53:23	occur 132:2	37:24 64:9	122:10	23:17,24
42:6 57:6	108:3,22,25	196:5	53:25 56:19	occurred	71:7,8	170:2,12	38:24 41:10
70:14	109:10,11	Norris	74:8 84:18	85:17	74:14 75:5	once 15:24	42:9 59:19
111:11	111:22	111:18	85:23 118:7	occurring	76:7,12	36:20 182:3	59:22 106:4
112:5,8	112:12	north 112:4	118:9 147:9	25:11,17	104:17	185:3 219:8	169:5
113:3,20	115:17	187:6	166:22	85:18	129:21	225:4	182:24
115:11,15	118:21	201:22	176:18	191:19	186:21	231:12	241:2
139:23	133:12	252:4	177:25	odd 243:22	199:23	266:4	opportunity
163:23	141:2	Northeast	195:8 208:2	off-street	214:16	once-in-a-li...	15:18 27:19
180:11	156:12	32:14,18,24	213:16,20	122:9 170:4	215:2,4,8,9	36:2	35:15 36:3
188:24	178:8 181:4	32:25 189:8	213:21	170:11	216:13,14	ones 25:19	36:4,9,20
neighboring	196:16	247:11	216:3 243:9	216:19	217:8,9,16	50:9 189:2	37:6 38:21
178:14	224:7	Nos 6:13	243:22,25	offer 2:13	237:2	204:24	43:15 57:25
184:21	225:14	10:17 34:17	244:17	38:8 43:6	244:22	233:23	58:8,15,22
neighbors	228:9	89:2 255:10	246:9	126:20	258:25	open 33:2,18	65:11 69:25
195:3	233:13,14	256:9	numbers	175:6	259:2	84:3 105:19	85:22 105:8
net 7:17 8:15	253:13	notate 50:16	29:9 51:6	176:15	Oh's 139:19	105:23	105:9
12:21,25	Newark	note 2:20	134:13	179:2	oil 85:21	109:20	106:12
16:18 17:8	111:22	10:9 34:13	163:18	235:15	okay 11:24	145:8	116:18
25:13 28:18	News 2:17	43:23 49:8	208:14	239:12,17	12:18 48:12	151:21	121:12
28:19 29:16	nipping	88:18 92:11	209:12,14	255:9	48:19 49:6	207:16,20	126:19
29:22 43:7	38:22	94:9 99:16	numerous	offered 189:6	49:24 51:25	219:9	128:8 135:5
53:8 54:3	no-brainer	100:20	252:15	233:22	54:4 56:4,9	235:20	148:6
82:6 91:7	37:21	119:25	nurse 239:7	offering	60:23 63:7	opened	179:20
92:4 93:2	no-impact	122:2 124:7		12:10 204:6	63:11,21,25	214:19	182:6
96:13,18	94:10 95:12	158:11	O	office 24:22	64:17 65:12	225:18	224:23
103:17	98:21 100:3	169:24	O'Connor	52:11 58:6	67:15 76:7	226:7,17,19	225:19,21
107:8 118:2	101:21	170:6 210:2	249:13	65:12	77:20 84:10	opening	226:7,24,25
119:14,16	102:7,22	242:12	O'Neill 1:15	134:20	128:6,13	58:20 221:2	237:25
119:18,20	noble 165:19	246:17	5:9,10	137:12	131:19	operate	238:15
120:2 136:8	noise 81:21	256:24	258:23,24	183:10	132:10	125:11	239:25
140:4	non-Philad...	263:10,23	Obama 63:5	186:16	134:7 143:6	199:11	240:4 241:3
230:14	130:23	264:14	objections	190:9	151:18	operating 7:7	241:13,15
250:13,14	132:3	266:9	267:4	191:23	152:20	9:15 16:12	241:17
251:2 263:5	non-profit	noted 66:25	objective	193:3,9	153:23	170:9	253:24
263:7	73:10	90:2 221:2	182:21	209:20	154:4,23	228:10	262:17
networking	non-profits	243:5	objectives	260:21	155:5,14,19	operation	opposed
168:9	75:11	notes 265:25	194:20	officers	212:13,18	225:8,12	81:12,19
Networks	non-repetit...	267:6	obscenely	219:18	213:12,23	236:11	82:14 83:2
228:5	201:17	noticed 63:2	228:21	offices 143:20	214:12,20	238:13	126:17
never 27:20	non-resident	118:17	observed	175:12	215:5 223:6	operations	149:2
244:10	91:17 98:8	notices 2:16	35:10	official 158:9	223:18,22	14:2 32:19	opposition
nevertheless	175:16	noting 117:25	obsolete	officials	237:5	117:14	12:19
207:21	184:12	Notwithsta...	72:20 167:3	173:16	242:14	operator	optimal
new 14:2,12	non-reside...	18:15	obviously	offset 93:16	244:22	124:18	20:18

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 20

optimistic 141:21	61:7 64:2 64:12 94:18	29:12 184:16	170:14,15 171:4	152:9 153:20,25	Parker's 122:3	203:22,23 204:2,4,14	Parkway's 205:15
option 125:9 204:7	96:3 97:5 101:3	193:21 paid 106:22	197:17 222:3,11,13	155:4,14,19 165:8 166:9	177:22 192:23	204:18,23 205:2,4,6,9	239:16 Parren 147:8
options 118:25	103:25 114:20	196:2 pain 14:15	242:10 254:15,21	169:21 170:22	parking 7:23 20:11 21:7	205:10,13 205:24	part 20:14 28:14 37:22
order 6:20 10:13 12:14	135:3 136:22	Pam 32:13 247:10	panels 19:21 155:22	171:10,17 177:5,11	21:8,9,12 21:20,21,25	206:7,18,21 206:23	44:20 63:19 68:19 75:2
19:22 34:14 88:20	144:6 159:16	pandemic 13:7 17:17	255:14,17 265:5	180:22 181:9,17	22:11 23:3 34:8 122:5	208:24 209:9	78:22 82:5 82:8 87:18
133:10 188:2	172:18 184:25	30:10 40:5 56:19 68:11	paper 36:12 165:12	182:12 183:21	122:7 156:10,20	215:15,20 215:21	114:10 135:21
ordinance 6:25 7:3,6,9	196:16,18 208:21	70:16 87:15 108:7,11	pardon 62:24 62:25	185:4,7,14 192:3,9,14	157:2,9,15 157:25	216:2,7,9 216:18,19	136:25 137:5,6,13
7:15 9:6 22:23	244:4 overbearing	109:3 112:15	park 36:11 222:15	196:24 197:14	159:9,21,24 160:7,16,18	217:13 218:12,16	138:16,20 143:2 144:6
organically 41:24	245:21 overheard	118:9,18,18 119:4,9	224:14 234:21	201:9 203:13	160:20 161:5,10	219:18 221:3,14	156:18 160:13
organizatio... 247:14	216:17 overly 61:13	120:21 124:24	235:4,6,7 235:13,24	207:2,6,12 209:15,19	162:4,6,14 162:16	222:16 224:5,8,11	194:5 205:20
original 29:12 53:23	61:15 216:9 overnight	127:15,16 151:7	Parker 1:10 2:2 3:12,18	210:25 211:13,17	163:21 164:8,9,18	224:22 225:6,6,11	213:14 220:3
92:14 originally	237:11 overriding	158:19 160:2	3:25 4:11 4:17 5:3,12	214:6,12,20 214:22	164:21 168:7,12,14	225:16 226:3,11	244:20 partially 14:9
92:20 other's	182:21 oversaw	163:14 164:24	6:4,9 9:10 11:8,11,18	215:5 216:12	169:18 170:2,5,11	234:22,24 234:25	participants 10:2 255:22
161:24 ourself 240:2	225:8 overtaxed	173:19 174:2	11:23 12:5 12:15 15:15	217:15 220:24	170:12 171:24	235:13 236:14,18	participation 132:21
240:4 241:5 out-of-state	219:4 overwhelm...	176:24 179:15,18	15:20 19:18 20:7 23:8	222:5,20 223:2,6,12	172:3,9,11 172:12	237:17 238:5 239:4	255:15 260:12
43:6 130:22 outcome 22:2	40:18 owned 231:4	183:8,13,14 195:16,16	34:4 37:2 39:13 45:11	223:18,22 227:7,12,16	173:2,13,14 174:11,16	239:15,23 240:8,9,22	266:5 particular
127:16 162:3	owner 124:18 127:4 193:5	212:23 213:2	45:17 49:7 49:20 50:3	227:19,23 234:3,9,12	174:24,25 175:4,5,23	241:7 243:14	17:3 38:8 69:10 85:16
outcomes 261:14	210:18 owners 21:21	243:17 249:16	52:8 56:12 66:5 71:4	234:15 236:2 237:3	176:2,10,12 176:16,17	244:10,20 245:8,10,15	132:15 133:5
outdated 81:12	21:22 31:19 121:8	250:11,13 252:3,14	76:11,16,22 77:10 81:22	242:4,14,16 242:21	176:22 177:18,23	246:7,14 248:22	146:14 161:6 163:2
outdoor 24:20	189:25 190:10	253:5,17 pandemic...	88:15 89:24 90:6,12,22	243:20 244:12,22	178:13,14 178:15,22	parks 36:8 251:21	239:10 particularly
outlier 16:20 outlook 217:5	213:14,16 221:14	14:11 panel 10:19	104:8,17,25 110:5,18,21	245:4 246:4 247:19	179:2,9,24 180:2,3,5,6	252:23 Parkside	57:7 59:4,9 158:12
outrageous 229:2	ownership 21:17	10:21 11:2 11:16 34:10	111:4 116:20	248:2 254:5 254:10,22	183:23 184:2,3,15	111:20 Parkway	164:18 168:6 183:7
outright 118:2	owns 32:23 P	34:11 45:24 49:22 52:20	117:5,9 123:13,20	255:3,13,25 256:6,24	185:23,23 192:25	170:17 177:18	210:13 216:23
outside 33:9 33:19 47:20	p.m 266:19 PA 113:12	88:24 89:4 89:14,15	123:23 124:2,5,16	257:2,6,13 259:13,20	193:5,6 195:17,21	205:25 222:14	218:19 229:2
111:21 116:6,10	pace 74:11 104:4 203:8	110:9 123:16,18	127:25 128:6,13	259:23 260:8	196:9 197:7 198:2,20,25	236:12,17 237:9,19,21	232:11 parties 65:4
196:8 overall 44:5	pack 178:18 178:19	128:10,12 155:10,12	134:15 138:25	262:23 263:8 264:4	199:3,21 201:4 202:8	237:25 238:4	partner 111:22
58:19 59:3 60:13,18	package	155:20 165:4	146:4 151:25	264:12,18 265:15,23	202:9,14 203:10,20	239:10 241:12	187:18 partnered

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 21

161:8	121:22	71:24,25	people's	101:19	25:6,25	141:22	260:18
partners	125:20	72:18,22,24	183:8	261:22	26:4,10	143:23,25	261:15
43:19	126:8	73:13,17	percent 16:12	permanent	27:9,15	149:6,17	262:19
111:16,16	140:16	74:16 116:5	17:7,19,21	251:19	28:15 30:7	150:7 157:3	263:18
111:18	160:19	120:12	18:13 25:13	permanently	30:23 33:15	157:25	Philadelphi...
partnership	163:23,23	121:19	26:5,6,7	108:11	33:23 35:7	158:16,18	23:2 25:4
152:16	176:15	122:11	27:7 32:18	persistence	35:25 37:4	158:22	95:2 120:20
194:11	177:3	127:2	46:13,16,24	261:2	37:5 38:3	160:4	162:19
parts 113:12	184:17	132:22	48:14,22	person 11:15	38:10,19	161:14	172:4,23
199:13	186:11	139:21	54:6,8,10	90:2 116:25	40:3,8,10	162:4,15,25	174:22
252:8	188:13	145:6	54:17 62:14	117:2	41:4,9,17	163:6	175:13
pass 105:24	190:6	146:12	62:15,17	123:16,17	45:5 47:2	167:20	176:4 193:3
187:7	194:13	147:19	67:2 74:6	124:8,11,12	47:20 48:10	168:24	196:15
passage	205:25	159:11	82:7 91:11	172:14	48:15,23	170:19	232:14
162:2	206:4 231:4	160:18	91:12,13,19	252:14	54:9,17,21	171:21	Philadelphi...
196:22	231:9	163:19	91:19,21	personal	56:22 57:17	172:9,10	41:6
197:5	245:10,19	165:16,18	92:6,8 93:4	43:23 167:2	58:13 59:17	173:4,9,24	Philadelphi...
passed 160:4	paycheck	166:16,17	93:6 120:16	170:25	60:6,14,21	174:10,13	28:11 29:14
180:18	106:20	167:9,11	121:2 122:6	176:5 199:9	61:9 72:5	175:9,19,23	120:11
206:17	paying 28:20	168:19	122:8,25	personnel	73:9,23	176:8,21,23	158:13
239:6	120:18	169:2	131:16,17	193:18	75:9,20	177:17,21	161:5
263:22	138:14	170:11	136:4,5	perspective	77:16,25	180:4,6,16	163:20
patching	payments	174:6,17	140:16,19	51:3 77:21	78:12,18	181:24	166:22
36:16	145:17	179:4	140:20	77:23 78:2	79:23 80:18	182:5,18	169:15
path 23:21	pays 160:23	185:25	156:11,21	78:4 81:11	81:6,20	184:18	176:14
57:2 157:11	245:8,17	186:18,20	156:21	81:12,13	84:16 86:13	185:25	Philly 105:24
157:17	peers 18:2	186:23	157:22	84:11 87:6	86:21,25	187:6,9,12	118:6,12,14
161:6 162:8	penalize	187:3,9,11	178:6,7,9	88:6,7,11	88:4,10	190:10,21	119:2
206:6,9	116:12	187:13,16	178:10,16	147:7 148:2	89:18 90:15	191:9	120:25
paths 22:25	Penn 60:5	189:16	178:17	148:3,25	94:22 103:9	192:21,24	121:18,24
pathway	143:17	190:22	179:16,17	149:21	104:12	194:4,21,22	122:18
145:6	249:12	191:3,5	196:3,5	150:24	105:3,21	194:23	188:25
195:10	Pennsylvania	199:8,16	200:6	178:8	106:14	195:13,20	228:5
pathways	1:6 9:3	200:13	201:22	189:20	107:25	196:4,20	Philly's 105:4
196:16	59:12 89:20	206:4,23,24	229:6 230:6	216:24	108:5	202:13	122:5,6
patience	117:3,15	209:4,4	230:13,14	217:20	111:21	204:19,25	PHLCounc...
255:23	122:24	210:14	230:15	221:20	112:4,24	206:22	2:19
patronize	182:19,20	217:13	232:15	pervasive	114:10,11	209:2 210:5	phones
183:17	229:4	218:24	236:15	202:19	117:17,18	210:9	252:16
pause 57:18	246:22	219:7	240:8 244:6	Pew 17:23	118:4,24	213:11	phrased
255:20,24	penny 233:5	220:11,12	245:11,17	26:20	119:23	215:24	166:6
pauses 18:15	pension 64:5	226:18,20	245:24	ph 229:15	120:3,8	218:5 219:6	physical
pay 16:14	pent-up	232:10,11	246:12,13	237:11	121:10,15	220:13	175:11
18:14 22:25	173:25	235:12	250:13	PHA 111:17	121:16	224:9,24,25	PICA 243:2
25:22 26:5	people 29:2,5	237:18,19	percentage	phasing 53:7	124:19	225:20,23	246:9
28:19 29:21	30:11,22	238:4,15,19	63:12 82:12	Philadelphia	125:25	225:24	PICA's
31:21 35:21	33:12 35:5	238:22,25	percentages	1:2,6 7:11	127:5,8,10	226:18	244:15
46:13,24	35:11,14,20	239:9,22	132:6	7:17,22 8:3	127:11	227:2	pick 41:24
48:11,15	36:23,23	240:14,15	performance	8:9,14,20	129:6 130:8	228:20,23	picking 43:7
50:9 54:7	37:13 41:23	241:6,23	118:6	8:22 13:6	132:3,20	232:19,24	139:17
54:11,18,25	42:13,15,19	242:9 249:7	193:22	13:22 16:16	133:5	236:14	248:13
67:6 107:6	60:22 63:8	251:8,10	performed	17:18 18:14	136:18,23	246:20,23	picture 95:10
107:19	70:13,23	262:9,11	27:10	19:3 20:19	138:5	250:2	PIDC 114:7
119:16	71:15,17,20	265:3	period 32:11	24:4,8,21	140:15	252:18	piece 140:5

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 22

pike 42:2 145:9 220:14 pit 63:15 pitch 38:17 pitting 63:8,9 64:18 65:6 pivot 64:9 place 24:4 91:15,22 126:16 164:21 178:20 202:23,23 230:17 232:5 238:18 240:3 places 19:4 115:18 187:4 205:12 plan 8:21 13:16,24 19:8,10 40:11 41:18 42:12,16 44:14 53:18 58:2,4,25 65:10,16,23 68:3 69:22 74:5 75:3 75:23 91:25 92:17,22 99:2 100:7 101:7 102:5 113:19 114:9 119:13 122:4 131:15 135:23 137:23 144:8 151:5 151:15 212:11 261:24 planned 39:21 114:16 202:23 planning 17:10 plans 205:3	platform 73:22 75:13 players 44:7 playing 63:7 please 2:21 2:24 3:2 6:21 10:25 11:25 16:5 46:2 76:24 81:24 82:2 89:13 90:7 117:10 124:9 165:3 170:14 177:12 185:15 192:10 197:18 198:16 209:15,17 211:19,23 222:11,22 223:23 227:24 234:17 236:7 247:20 254:20 255:18 256:16,18 256:19 257:14 266:10 plummeted 22:13 Plus 224:4,11 Plus/Central 225:11 pocket 186:25 pocketbook 35:18 pocketbooks 35:12 pockets 21:14 31:18 66:19 66:23 108:22 point 41:20 45:8 50:2 62:8 75:7 75:22 86:16 136:21 137:17	147:18 154:5 172:2 172:8 174:16 175:23 186:5 202:19 203:4 215:11 pointed 231:9 pointing 189:18 points 220:20 245:22 policies 57:4 200:17 policy 85:13 115:12 181:4 230:11 pollutant 199:13 pools 14:10 poor 72:15 73:12 207:5 232:11 poorest 230:16 250:3 popping 183:20 population 73:12 146:20 169:14 232:4 populations 147:16 portfolio 60:11 portion 16:18 29:22 32:9 53:8 62:19 63:20 100:13 posed 217:23 position 16:17 38:25 107:12 196:11 225:7 241:11,15 positioned 25:5	positive 30:3 93:21 193:12 208:7 217:5 possible 2:12 161:15 183:16 possibly 166:12 176:19 221:10 pot 38:7,13 potent 232:9 potential 29:4 42:5 42:19 59:25 95:8 98:2 98:13 103:8 125:18 126:24 171:23 potentially 201:21 potholes 36:16 poverty 103:8 106:8 108:19 113:15 140:18 143:10 187:9,13 188:2 189:16 191:16 206:4 219:8 219:10 220:11 228:22 253:15 262:11 power 42:5 96:24 103:12 powerful 249:12 practices 210:17 praise 232:21 pre-K 142:15 pre-pande... 20:17 22:17 81:2 174:6 174:20	196:5 252:24 precedent-s... 160:5 predictabili... 18:23 prefer 167:18 preference 12:13 premise 188:25 prepared 208:14 preparing 173:17 197:3 presence 265:25 present 1:9 2:25 3:11 3:16,24 4:7 4:10,16 6:8 6:19 11:6 11:13 15:17 15:23 52:19 71:13 154:15 156:4 211:15 255:7 256:18 257:23,25 258:5,11,24 259:2,12,19 260:2 265:19 presented 57:20 President 23:14 31:12 32:13 52:12 105:3,13 177:17 181:22 182:3 185:19 192:17 209:20 213:24 224:6 228:10 239:17 254:5 President's	134:20 pressures 103:10 153:17 pretty 19:22 154:9 235:7 prevent 251:18 prevented 106:7 prevention 14:13,19 63:24 69:17 previous 21:7 94:20 130:20 186:7 187:17 188:10 218:21 260:20 pricing 175:6 pride 226:5 primarily 48:20,21 70:20 160:8 195:12 212:22 primary 176:6 193:7 prime 36:13 155:24 principal 228:11 prior 2:18 10:6 85:18 155:9 167:24 213:3 privacy 10:3 private 112:2 190:12 193:4 private-sec... 191:2 privilege 170:25 PRLA 117:23 117:25 122:2 pro-business 161:16 187:20 pro-worker	161:15,16 probability 196:13 probably 77:17 79:3 128:25 141:25 145:15 148:15 244:3,20,21 244:25 problem 108:19 143:11 problems 108:20 141:10 procedure 170:10 proceed 12:2 15:3 16:5 22:23 34:7 46:3 76:24 90:8 104:20 104:22 110:23 117:11 124:8 171:5 171:12 177:13 181:20 185:16 192:11 211:19 222:23 223:24 227:25 234:18 236:8 245:5 247:21 proceedings 255:21 267:4 process 19:21 43:22 60:19 80:15 84:14 84:14 85:12 135:21,23 138:16,17 162:11 194:15 197:2 221:11 produce	78:22 production 72:12,25 professiona... 238:3 Professor 233:10 profit 121:8 profitable 249:11 profits 7:18 8:15 12:21 12:25 17:8 21:14,20,23 91:7 106:17 107:7 250:6 program 6:25 9:17 9:18 55:20 59:13 60:7 60:10 61:4 62:13 108:18 195:13 programmi... 252:18 programs 14:24 18:4 18:20 55:21 55:22 114:15 233:24 262:18 progress 233:17 progressive 189:4 219:13 253:25 projected 199:18 218:9,11 projecting 243:18 projection 246:7 projections 153:5 218:7 218:14 243:13 projects 24:13,18,25 191:24 promised
--	---	---	---	--	---	--	---

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 23

40:11	propose 82:5	150:11,11	233:2,6,12	70:19 77:21	197:17	raining 253:7	176:17
promising	145:20	151:14,16	251:21	108:20,21	203:17	raise 24:5	184:2,14
105:17	proposed	153:7 161:2	255:19	143:21	questions	25:9 41:6	221:17
promote	8:24 9:15	162:7	256:8,11,15	144:10	10:7 15:11	216:15	228:22
77:15	15:5 18:25	176:19	260:3	200:8	19:17 23:7	218:2	230:12,14
promoted	20:14 22:15	193:22	263:16		34:13,17	240:25	230:15
239:14	32:8 53:22	195:9	266:13	Q	39:23 45:6	241:3,13,15	231:10
241:11	82:19 83:23	202:25	267:15	qualifies	45:20,24	raised 156:19	rates 7:13,19
pronouncing	91:25 92:14	203:5	published	230:22	89:11 93:24	220:21	7:24 8:11
236:6	95:6,11	248:12	2:16	quality	110:4,12	260:20	8:16 28:15
proper 72:16	97:9 102:21	251:12,16	pull 130:11	115:14	128:23	raising 15:6	28:17 53:21
216:2	103:15	provided	132:7,9	160:6 183:3	134:10	31:15 218:8	74:4 78:21
properly	107:21	49:13 85:22	219:7	204:4	135:7 139:7	ran 29:9	78:23 91:6
178:24	122:4	87:19 148:4	262:10	quantify	140:7	range 57:3	92:3 93:13
193:17	137:16	148:12,18	pulling 93:18	188:14	155:16	60:16 98:2	95:3 106:8
property	144:4 178:6	150:2	pump 36:13	quantum	181:7	98:14	119:12
17:14,20	192:23	176:13	punishing	202:3	197:12	rank 235:9	122:9
96:2,21,25	212:6	251:20	29:18	quarter 82:8	214:4,15	248:6	135:10,16
231:19	230:23	260:21	purchase	243:17	217:18,23	ranks 118:12	136:2
Proponents	233:23	265:9	31:20	244:16,16	221:25	rare 121:17	138:19
231:21	248:20	providers	purpose	quarters	227:3,5	Rashid	145:13
proportion	proposes	58:7	10:15	39:10	254:23	148:23	146:21
67:5 131:20	12:20	provides 18:2	126:15	question 50:7	255:4	rate 12:20	147:22
proportional	156:10	29:8 121:16	pursuant 9:4	50:7,21	queue 49:15	20:12,16,25	150:17
98:22 100:4	212:14	142:19	pursue 42:10	51:8 52:5	209:25	21:4,8 34:8	159:3,5,7
proportion...	proposing	providing	pursuing	52:18,21	214:25	62:12 82:6	176:20
54:19	74:2,3,8	8:19 148:23	40:15	55:2,14	215:2,3	91:10,11,18	178:3,13
proportions	82:4,9	149:19	pursuit 44:19	58:18 63:2	quick 44:9	91:19,23,25	232:2
131:9 230:8	144:18	150:16	pursuits	70:24 77:13	50:6 58:18	92:5,6,12	rationale
proposal	163:8	151:10	42:11	78:6 79:2	quicker	92:17,20,24	82:21
12:23 13:2	proprietors	157:11,17	push 68:20	80:13,22	103:25	93:10,18	rations 63:16
13:19 14:4	112:25	177:2	249:6	81:16 87:10	quickly 19:22	94:3,7,21	ravaged 40:7
29:25 43:5	prospective	proximity	251:13	93:19 131:8	61:17	95:4 96:7	reach 168:18
54:3 55:9	125:16	166:15	pushing 60:9	132:12	221:12	97:9 98:23	221:13
57:13 66:17	126:21	prudent	put 14:4	135:2	Quinones-S...	100:4	reached
69:19 70:4	proud 41:5	35:17	15:17 37:17	149:24	5:17 46:8	103:16,23	92:18
97:18	194:7	Prussia 24:10	40:22,23	152:7,14,22	58:10 259:4	104:5 119:3	read 6:22
115:23	225:25	25:2,12,18	51:17 66:17	154:5 163:3	261:3	119:15	9:14 11:2
127:7,13	226:6	30:16 41:7	66:19,22	166:11	quite 74:12	122:6	24:6 59:11
129:14	proudly	59:14 60:8	70:3 71:25	169:7	148:23	125:17	60:4 221:8
130:3	177:20	143:21	77:7 82:12	197:23	167:19	126:13	reading
137:25	prove 188:22	178:12,13	108:18	198:2	quorum 6:18	136:4,6	57:12
148:4 170:6	219:23	public 2:7,8	113:24	203:20	158:6	145:13,17	ready 65:15
212:10,14	proven	2:13,14,14	116:9 125:4	207:4,8	259:25	156:11,20	223:8
252:22	230:11	2:16 3:24	137:8 142:7	208:13	quote 32:12	157:20,21	247:24
proposals	provide	6:3,11 9:12	151:19	211:11	quote/unqu...	159:9	Reaganomics
57:20 67:21	19:23 20:10	9:24,25	161:4	212:20	162:2	160:14	228:9
74:11,13	42:22 61:18	72:15 156:3	162:24	213:19		162:17	real 22:3
102:24	65:21 68:4	156:14	178:7	214:17	R	163:8	31:20 60:21
116:11	70:6 86:15	158:13	180:25	questioning	Rachel	171:24	64:23 68:18
228:8	87:20 116:7	161:20	181:3	49:14 66:10	246:10	172:3,9	73:11,14
231:22	123:5	165:16,25	200:24	67:20 75:7	racial 229:2	173:3	82:24 97:4
233:21	147:23	167:10	241:4	88:23 89:2	rail 36:17	174:12	111:8 112:3
261:21	149:10,22	232:24	putting 31:17	155:7 156:6	railcars 38:5	175:24	141:23

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 24

184:23	249:10	225:4	104:19	174:23	173:13	78:13 87:8	254:6
195:14,24	251:4	242:11	110:23	182:17	174:24	146:14	related 96:9
202:12	reason 15:2	246:18	117:11	183:6	175:4	147:5 210:5	Relatedly
231:25	22:22 25:18	247:6	128:23	redesign	176:16	referencing	116:11
232:2,6,9	35:3 78:22	receiving	137:24	123:9	231:15	163:12	relates 61:6
232:17	80:13	27:22	155:15	reduce 12:20	reduction	169:25	168:5 172:7
235:11	114:19	121:10	156:9,23	12:23 13:14	13:10 17:22	reflect 11:12	197:24
245:12	146:16	recess 263:22	162:22,24	13:17 14:3	20:13,19	156:24	relationship
250:6	187:14,21	264:21	163:5 165:2	14:20 18:18	21:6 48:20	203:8	94:21 194:8
reality 30:14	193:8	recessed	169:23	19:5 22:7	62:13 82:22	reflected	relative 50:7
32:21 33:14	198:24	266:19	170:7,12	61:22 64:21	82:24 83:19	194:24	59:5 95:5
206:3	205:20	recession	171:12	78:23 81:14	91:13,15,20	reform 73:18	98:25 100:7
218:15	243:22	176:20,24	177:13	88:2 122:5	91:22 92:8	80:20 105:9	134:17
realize 64:22	246:13	Recharge	181:20	123:9 144:4	92:25 93:4	177:23	137:24
reallocate	reasonable	182:16	185:16	157:20	93:6,9,12	179:12,20	202:21
21:23	10:3 109:4	reckon	192:11	167:7	94:7,14	180:9,13,18	relatively
really 24:25	reasons 22:4	195:18	197:24	169:12	95:17 96:18	refuse 41:19	106:14
28:6 30:25	25:16 30:22	recognize	210:11	172:13	98:23 99:21	regarding	213:4,5
56:19,25	Rebecca	169:13	216:14	192:24	100:5,17,23	6:13 85:12	relevant
57:4,6,14	89:16 90:2	209:23	221:5,23	212:15	102:9,11	85:15 87:11	53:25
59:2 61:16	90:4,7,14	257:7,16	222:23	217:2 233:3	109:6 127:7	138:2	125:12
63:18 69:12	90:23 104:9	261:9	223:24	240:8	127:13	165:13	reliable
80:4 87:14	152:10	recognized	227:25	245:22	129:4,7	166:5 182:7	231:19
87:20	rebound	10:12 11:5	228:22	262:8	135:20	regards	232:7
120:22	162:18	recognizes	230:21	reduced 21:4	138:6	155:23	reliance
122:23	164:23,24	23:10 34:21	234:18	84:9 91:10	152:23	region 33:24	120:20
137:19	rebuild 200:9	39:15 45:12	236:8	91:18 92:5	153:3,5,13	119:22	reliant 61:13
138:11,18	rec 251:21	45:19 52:14	242:22	98:24 99:10	154:8	120:2,9	61:15
140:5	252:23	56:13 66:11	246:16	99:13 100:6	171:24	158:24	relief 13:4
142:11,23	253:7,7	71:6 76:13	247:2,6,13	100:15	172:2,9	162:20	54:6 199:25
143:4,14	recall 37:22	134:21	247:15,21	102:25	173:3	189:22	240:14
149:4,24	receipt 82:13	139:3 146:6	263:2,15	125:9,10	174:16	region's	relocate
150:5 151:2	83:4	152:4 165:9	264:2	126:7,13	175:24	109:13	32:19
178:17	receipts 7:12	165:21,22	265:10,19	136:14	176:22	regional	105:18
180:12	8:4,10	181:11	266:3,10,13	172:15	184:3 188:2	173:5,15	rely 174:7
186:6 188:4	16:18,19	185:9	recorded	230:5	240:20	184:8	176:5
189:10,11	28:20 32:10	210:22	9:25 10:5	reduces	241:22	regions	remain 22:24
190:2,25	43:7 47:22	211:2	15:17,23	178:2	246:13	166:13	92:9 109:20
196:12	48:11 51:20	214:14	128:24	182:11	reductions	registered	remained
198:22	62:19 78:15	215:7 260:5	recover	reducing	13:4 15:4	213:13,16	18:16 261:6
199:8 203:8	81:15 92:9	265:16	56:25	15:7 21:19	22:21 61:21	239:7	remains
215:10	96:2,25	recognizing	158:19	21:23 22:18	74:3,3,9	regressive	175:14
218:21	119:17	10:7	173:19	28:17 62:6	82:4 83:9	233:21	remarks
220:18	136:6	recommen...	176:23	74:7 78:21	92:15,17	rehashing	58:21
224:19,22	230:12	35:19	253:19	80:15 82:12	96:13 97:9	249:25	262:25
226:6,16,22	231:7,11	reconvene	recovered	83:3 103:9	99:18	reimburse...	remember
229:14	248:23	256:14	243:15	119:14	100:22	36:3	144:12
235:14	receive	264:23	recovering	135:10,16	107:8,10,21	reinvest	159:21
241:19,21	193:20	record 10:9	109:2	136:15	125:15	107:24	224:10
260:14	243:18	10:21 11:12	recovery	138:19	136:8 148:9	121:24	242:24
262:4	244:24	12:2 20:3	41:18 68:8	144:17	153:2 209:9	reinvestme...	244:15
Realty	received	34:14 45:21	109:16	150:17	REEF 204:20	108:2,24	259:15
170:20	13:22 75:25	49:9 50:15	127:18	157:21	reference	reject 233:20	remind
192:18	204:21	88:18 90:8	172:4,11	172:11,12	53:16 78:9	253:21	206:16

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 25

reminder 128:17	request 15:2 263:20	106:21	117:4,15	120:17	49:3 51:17	51:7 61:25	177:8
remiss 30:17	requested 256:25	resolution 1:20 6:15	122:22	141:19	68:19 74:15	62:14 64:8	197:22
remote 2:7 2:12	required 16:13 48:10	6:23 8:18	123:7	159:10	74:16 94:18	65:2 70:9	198:14
remotely 2:10 175:16	requires 2:5 201:23	8:19	167:17	174:17	96:16,22	70:12 74:20	203:3
175:21	requiring 206:17	resolved 75:18	170:3	175:2,11	133:17	78:19 82:10	211:12,15
removes 18:10	rescue 13:24 19:10 40:10	resources 17:5 42:24	247:12	returning 178:24	209:10	82:23 83:7	211:23
rent 163:23 168:25	rescued 45:3 40:10,11	rest 188:17	restaurants 117:19,22	returns 84:22 141:23	246:14	83:24 95:15	229:22
245:19	research 42:12,16,17	69:5 86:15	121:8	revenue 12:8 179:3	reverse 166:23	100:11	231:2
reopen 173:18	43:12 44:14	87:17,19	122:16	18:3 47:5	review 93:7 157:3,25	129:20	242:18,19
reopening 175:13	44:20 58:2	107:19	123:2	47:13 48:2	162:4,15	130:16	242:22,24
195:19	58:24 65:10	125:3,7	159:15	48:5,23	221:3	133:8,11	243:9,21,22
repeat 50:10 230:20	73:19 75:3	137:7	restoration 252:25	50:13,15,24	reviewed 104:5	134:9	243:25
repeatedly 78:20	75:23 151:5	149:22	253:2	51:4 69:4	Revised 8:21 141:3 144:2	137:18	246:5,8
132:13	rescued 45:3 141:21	151:11	restore 74:22 109:12	70:10 79:4	revising 7:12 7:18,23	150:10	Robert 116:24
158:25	research 212:19	respect 8:25 157:19	restoring 14:9	79:10,25	8:11,16	151:13,16	177:16
replace 108:17	260:21	respond 135:5	restrictions 118:19	80:8 93:10	reward 109:5 230:25	167:7	203:21
report 140:6 152:15,17	reserve 34:9 39:19 88:12	198:17	173:18	93:17,20	rich 36:5 228:12	181:21	221:7
243:2,3	resident 13:3 91:9 98:8	203:16	restrictive 119:23	94:6 96:10	Richardson 1:12 4:4,5	191:24	229:20,24
244:16	108:13	responding 3:3 256:20	result 21:2 32:15 93:10	97:6,8,12	34:15 49:25	198:19	239:17
reporter 267:24	222:18,19	response 3:7 4:21 5:7,15	98:23 153:3	98:19,20,22	50:4,5,14	210:7	Roberts 250:11,15
represent 117:17,18	230:13	5:18,21	163:11	98:25 99:9	50:22 51:25	226:13	250:11,15
117:21	residents 18:21 25:7	52:2 76:15	164:4,24	99:10,13,18	56:14,15	240:7	robs 228:15
161:10	42:8 85:23	77:18	243:7	99:25 100:3	62:23 66:6	242:17	Rodriguez 31:24
166:13,18	86:25 87:4	123:22,25	263:20	100:6,14,22	86:10 88:21	245:8	role 225:17
representat... 229:8	91:8 103:9	124:4 128:5	resulting 100:5	101:5,10,14	134:22,23	247:24	226:10
representat... 197:6	105:21	155:18	results 262:4 174:20	102:4,14,25	135:18	249:21	roll 2:22 6:18
representat... 38:14,15,16	106:17	198:2	resume 175:8	103:25	136:20	ring 10:20,22 243:25	256:16
198:16	108:7,21	201:11	retail 71:22 175:19	106:16	137:15	ripple 114:22	257:9,15,16
221:13	114:16	207:7	183:11	107:7	138:21	rise 209:8	room 179:13
represented 97:17,19	118:23	210:24	retain 118:22 126:4	108:25	139:2,16	risk 190:25 201:18	Rotem 38:5
161:12	130:22,23	220:25	231:17	118:25	143:19	roughly 20:11 99:3	roughly 20:11 99:3
reprieve 246:3	131:17	222:4	retention 236:21,21	120:25	258:7	Rittenhouse 222:17	100:9
reproduction 267:21	132:4 136:6	223:11,17	rethink 195:20	134:5,12	265:13,17	rival 25:5	101:22
reprogram... 56:2	173:4,10,16	227:11,15	retirement 160:24	150:8	265:18	river 113:12	102:24
	173:24	227:18	204:7	152:24	266:3	road 28:7 39:5 167:9	130:10
	174:19	234:8,11	retrain 72:19 18:15	153:2,6,14	Richardson's 55:2	261:4	229:10
	183:4,17	255:2,12	return 18:15 20:16 22:16	158:10	richer 36:6	roaring 115:10	round 49:10
	184:7,11,21	257:20	43:6 120:13	159:10	ride 165:18	Rob 11:16 12:6 15:25	49:16 56:11
	248:11	258:8,13,16		174:5	ridership 174:5	26:19 45:25	64:16 66:8
	253:18	259:5,8,11		245:18,25	riding 165:24 167:10	50:10 58:18	85:8,9
	261:23	responsibili... 40:9		246:11	right 13:10 19:24 43:15	62:23 66:24	88:14,19,23
	residents' 32:23 89:20	responsible 114:11			44:2,17	68:21 71:11	88:25
		restaurant 32:23 89:20			45:23 48:3	128:25	110:11
						132:8,11	128:17
						139:8 140:7	135:2 152:3
						142:5 156:3	197:16
						170:16	routine 175:15
						171:5 177:7	201:17
							Row 222:17
							RPR-Notary

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 26

267:15	219:3	77:15 78:7	102:21	187:16	233:16	short 44:2	significant
rules 17:2	264:14	81:16	103:21	194:14	248:21	261:20	18:7 30:21
run 41:23	says 31:13	scope 153:11	104:4 115:8	217:17	250:22	shortage	56:20 94:25
138:18	187:23	screen 3:4	125:20	select 55:22	251:12,20	26:20,23	121:14
209:12	188:19	90:19 97:17	127:6	selection	251:23,24	shortages	123:6
248:10	scenario	256:21	132:19	167:4	253:10,13	109:3	133:25
	93:25 95:13	screens	133:10	self-sufficie...	253:18,23	shortfall	146:19
S	97:16 98:4	207:20	137:16	159:24	254:8	121:2	151:6
S 1:13	98:5,15,16	searching	143:16	160:22	session 44:10	shortly	152:23
S&P 222:16	98:21 100:3	109:4	164:20	161:6 204:9	260:9	209:13	169:14
sacrifice	101:21,25	122:12	167:6,8,9	210:20	set 30:18 45:6	shortsighted	180:20
253:10	102:2,7,22	seating 170:4	167:11	Senator 58:5	196:8	166:7	183:5
safe 206:17	103:2 141:9	second 11:5	173:20	send 120:10	sets 91:6 92:2	shoulders	218:16
206:24,25	183:25	49:15 64:16	188:2	209:19	188:8	221:6	245:23
253:9	scenarios	79:4 85:9	189:25	sends 119:20	191:15	show 97:24	significantly
safety 30:19	92:25 93:24	88:19,23,25	211:6	180:14	setting 56:25	140:8 153:5	118:4
253:22	95:16 96:12	116:8	214:24	senior 24:24	60:6 119:10	167:16	120:19
sake 71:12	97:18 99:6	128:17	221:17	236:11	218:18	219:25	136:14
Saks 35:11	99:10,12	153:22	222:6	238:12	seven 49:11	240:19	188:19
salaries 18:5	100:10,14	159:13	223:13	sense 15:13	93:3 103:18	showed	205:25
245:19	100:17	175:23	225:24	47:7 151:19	sexy 159:25	120:22	226:12
salary 229:16	101:8,14,23	198:8	226:2,12	165:15	shape 108:25	141:21	signify 10:12
241:14	102:6	230:17	239:21	178:20	Shapiro	246:13	signs 143:18
sale 17:14	schedule 93:5	244:16	240:21	201:2 220:8	222:19,25	showing	similar 171:3
sales 48:8,9	scheduled	250:19	241:9	sensitive 17:9	223:4	99:17	193:9
54:24 96:2	128:10	secondly	243:21	sent 237:13	227:20,20	100:21	simpler
96:25 209:7	155:10	260:15	259:14	243:2,3	227:22	shown 78:20	138:17
Salon 89:22	158:10	section 32:25	262:5,17	sentiment	228:3,4	94:24	simplest 93:8
123:19	165:4	85:24 111:9	seed 116:7	69:9	234:4	141:10	simply 21:20
Sanchez	222:12	sector 186:2	seeing 150:23	separate	share 31:9	shows 93:12	44:2 191:24
114:8	242:9	187:2	220:5	39:25 75:23	90:19	95:7 101:4	simultaneo...
Sanitation	254:14	190:12	242:24	SEPTA 38:5	shared 142:9	102:19	18:19
251:22	schedules	213:14	seek 125:17	179:6	sharp 232:4	140:6	sincerely
satisfaction	92:12,20	220:4	seeking 263:3	serious 44:3	sharply 233:3	152:23	196:23
157:8	103:17,23	sectors 183:7	seeks 12:23	72:7 120:11	233:7	shutting	218:6
save 41:3	104:5	186:9 191:5	184:16	180:16	Sharswood	125:8	single 30:2
191:22,22	scheduling	206:13	seen 26:24	184:18	111:15	sick 252:15	238:24
saved 65:24	23:15	security	32:17 53:5	seriously	252:5 253:6	side 17:8	248:10
savings 21:13	scholarship	160:24	53:6 105:15	43:21	shed 172:25	62:18 71:22	single-factor
21:15 64:23	142:19,20	190:14	105:17,21	serve 126:13	shift 21:16	94:5,13	135:13
109:10	237:8,14	202:17	105:23	126:15	79:15 89:19	95:15,16	single-sales...
129:6 130:4	239:18	204:7	107:11	127:13	110:14,25	136:8	18:9 46:10
130:7	scholastic	219:18	125:15	194:17	111:7	144:22,23	sit 70:2
saw 17:18	237:14	see 21:9 29:6	140:8	service 13:15	120:20	150:17	sits 42:12
26:3 140:5	school 59:16	33:20 55:4	204:17	13:25	201:18,24	154:22	sitting 240:12
166:3	97:2 142:16	58:12 67:13	244:10	179:11	shifts 231:18	190:15	situation
237:18	235:22	84:8 90:21	253:6 262:4	186:2 187:2	shiny 42:2	207:24	126:22
266:6	237:8,13,15	90:23 91:5	sees 17:12	services 14:8	shock 35:4	sides 61:25	190:17,18
saying 63:21	241:4	95:12,16	segments	18:20 19:6	shocks 18:16	154:18	six 7:2 262:2
83:17	schools 30:20	97:14,18,20	182:25	22:12 61:19	shoppers	signal 256:3	six-figure
149:12	250:22	99:6,25	segregation	61:24 71:23	173:6 184:8	signals	60:25
168:21	Schuykill	100:11	86:3	153:4,7	shopping	184:18	size 46:18
190:3	251:6	101:10	SEIU 161:9	154:8 203:7	173:11	signed 156:17	skewed
210:11,15	sciences	102:7,11,18	185:10,19	228:17	184:11	251:5	231:13

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 27

skill 262:11	solely 198:5	187:18	spring 159:2	standpoint	164:25	126:14	115:16
slide 95:7,12	solidified	210:9	spur 66:20,24	41:21	171:11	145:7	125:5
95:15 99:17	25:3	221:15	square 59:14	202:18	177:12	237:24	strategic
100:21,25	Solutions	230:23	111:19	stands 126:23	181:19	238:7,17	113:9
101:4	89:17 90:3	speaks	266:7	Stanley	185:15	240:3	strategically
102:19	90:15	210:20	Squilla 1:16	222:19	192:10	staying	37:6
103:21	170:16	special	5:20 114:9	start 12:16	200:17	119:11	strategy
slides 90:20	171:15,20	264:25	259:7,12	33:19 57:21	217:3	steadfast	20:19 32:7
91:2 99:19	solve 108:20	specific 79:5	St 237:22	66:15 71:10	222:22	18:17	40:15 41:2
slightly 92:13	somewhat	79:6,11,12	stabilize	88:22,25	223:23	197:10	41:2,3
slogan 210:13	73:7 194:9	213:11	251:17	110:11	227:24	steadier	58:19 59:3
248:16	soon 211:6	specifically	stable 17:14	128:19	234:17	231:20	60:13,19
small 29:19	sorry 11:3	75:25 80:19	118:16	153:22	236:7	steadily	61:6 64:12
31:15 32:16	131:3 237:5	143:10	143:10	154:2	247:20	62:15	64:24 65:2
36:14,18	245:2	146:25	157:11,14	156:11	263:2,14,25	steady 176:13	65:14 73:16
37:3 44:25	250:14	147:20	157:16	197:16,21	stated 25:3	231:17	83:10,11
44:25 50:17	sort 22:19	153:8	162:7 177:2	197:22	58:9 143:19	stealth 232:5	117:14
50:25 55:10	67:18	156:25	213:5 262:9	226:13,14	156:25	steeper 83:9	135:3,9
57:9 63:16	135:22	175:25	stadium	228:12	158:25	stenographer	138:20
71:14 76:8	164:7 166:6	210:5	203:24	235:3	171:19	266:12	144:6 187:8
86:13 97:4	206:13	specify 34:16	stadiums	236:20	231:10	stenographic	220:10
105:5	220:17	spend 86:4,5	205:19	start-up	statement	267:6	stratify 51:17
107:18,22	243:4,6	87:5 116:3	staff 14:24	204:20	23:11 73:5	step 14:22	stream 97:12
112:10,12	souder	122:11,15	18:4 31:19	started 62:12	139:20	32:11	134:5
112:16,21	22:14	122:16	125:6	62:13	214:18	174:12	streams
113:8	sounds 53:5	127:3	196:25	112:25	217:7	183:21	208:10
114:24	source	139:22	252:6	136:3	states 85:18	steps 78:9	street 35:13
115:4	231:20	209:5	staffer 63:3	152:18	146:17,21	141:13	36:11 78:8
116:14	sourced	spending	staffing	198:22,23	161:25	sticking	85:20 114:4
118:10	252:9	9:16 44:15	151:10	224:8 226:2	189:8 201:2	244:17	224:13
123:8 127:9	South 225:8	96:24	206:18	232:4	statewide	stimulus 35:8	225:9,9
132:13	252:17	103:12	staffs 253:8	235:23	117:20	36:3 55:20	streetery
138:12	Southeastern	142:12	stagnant	236:25	static 94:9	63:5 121:11	170:8
139:20,23	182:20	172:22	106:6 240:2	237:8,11	95:12 97:16	121:16	strengthen
149:25	SP 224:4,11	174:3	stake 65:4	238:20	stating	150:15	111:24
151:3 173:8	225:11	175:18	stakeholders	239:7	157:13	251:17	stress 13:5
184:10	space 59:14	spends 84:25	18:24	starting	242:12	stitching	183:19
186:22	105:22	spent 106:24	182:14	13:11 79:2	station	68:12,15	strong 41:17
208:19	114:4	114:5	195:5	91:14,21	200:20	stock 232:15	41:19 87:8
233:4	spaces 180:6	spoke 26:19	Stan 223:7	92:7,15,18	stations	250:6	147:16,17
261:12	180:7 200:2	251:14	227:20,20	142:15,18	200:13	Stockton	192:22
262:5,7	200:2,6	sponsor 34:7	227:24,24	226:11	215:14,16	233:11	199:21
small- 23:25	sparkling	34:24	228:4	starve 251:10	216:15	stop 29:18	218:4
27:11	127:18	155:24	stand 109:15	starved	statistically	63:7,7,9	strongest
smaller 17:4	speak 3:4	263:20	264:21	115:13	94:25	64:17 75:6	219:24
35:20 56:5	15:18 30:5	sponsor's	standalone	state 2:4	statistics	storefront	strongly
199:15	59:2 60:12	16:10	196:2	11:25 45:21	140:14	148:14	191:14
smarter	61:5 68:22	sponsors	standard	68:14 89:13	141:9 142:8	stores 71:19	194:21
199:14,15	131:12	92:19	168:17	90:7 104:18	stats 162:24	story 114:11	196:21
snapshot	204:13	sports 24:20	170:9	110:22	163:15	198:20	220:16
243:4	223:8	183:11	standards	117:10,22	stay 33:7	200:7	struck 59:9
social 108:18	256:22	spot 32:24	190:13	120:4	34:18 68:17	224:19	structural
194:20	266:7	spreads	standing	147:12	89:8 110:9	226:22	56:20 136:9
sole 112:24	speaking	44:20	185:2	156:9 163:5	124:9	strangled	structure

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 28

29:14 31:3	25:12 27:18	57:9 61:10	supposed	250:24	113:13	7:18,23,24	96:7,8,9,10
59:4 60:14	81:6 105:20	65:9 67:24	244:7	sweeten 38:7	141:2 187:8	8:11,15,16	96:16,19,22
60:20 62:22	118:5,12	68:13,16	sure 50:20	38:12	265:7	12:21,25	96:25,25,25
69:12 73:18	127:2,3	69:21 70:6	61:11 62:5	sympathy	talent 81:4,5	14:3 15:7	97:8,13,20
77:22,25	140:11,13	74:18 107:5	67:11 76:5	249:17	talk 37:24	15:12 16:19	97:23 99:8
78:4,10	166:24	109:16	84:25 90:10	system 60:3	49:21 56:24	16:25 17:5	99:19,22
106:18	190:23	119:7	110:9,24	203:25	58:4,21	17:8,10,15	101:11
119:12	succeed	122:21	134:18	252:7,10,16	59:6,17	17:18,24	102:23
123:10	194:22	125:13	148:11	systems	63:10,18	18:7,18	105:9,16
126:10	success	127:8	155:3	167:12	64:20,21	20:11,18,25	106:11,15
135:4,12	196:13	157:10,15	177:15	168:9	72:11 79:10	21:2,7,8,8	106:19,23
136:23	successful	162:6	192:13		80:2 135:20	21:11,13,20	107:7,8,16
137:5	113:7 115:6	167:13	193:16	T	148:16	22:11,20	107:22
195:22	116:3	172:3,5,10	201:12	table 40:16	159:19	25:13,15	109:5,10,11
structures	144:25	174:22	206:23	65:4 162:10	164:18	27:4 28:15	112:22
107:16	194:8	177:21	208:12	189:5	186:18,20	28:20 29:14	118:3 119:3
struggle	suffer 249:8	182:10	211:13,14	tad 34:6	200:16	29:17,17,19	119:5,11,12
113:4	suffered 76:2	185:3	223:14	take 2:22	201:7	30:3 31:3	119:15,18
struggled	suffering	187:21	224:2	12:14 23:23	207:22	32:10,17	119:20
44:16	70:15,16,18	188:11,11	246:15	27:24 28:3	208:7	34:8 37:19	120:4,5,19
struggling	249:16	189:11,17	248:13	35:15 38:20	talked 19:9	37:19 40:12	120:21
70:22 153:2	suggest 38:21	191:13	257:18	41:14,20	22:4 36:23	40:17,21	121:13,23
219:11	240:6	192:22	263:9,12	42:14 43:13	37:18 59:11	42:11 43:13	122:5,7
student 26:15	suggested	216:25	surprise	43:25 47:15	80:15 86:10	44:4,18	123:10
235:22	199:24	221:20	156:15	64:6,8 76:5	133:3	46:14,25	125:14
students	suggesting	236:13	surprised	90:20 91:15	140:23	47:23 48:11	126:6,24
26:16	148:10	238:23	249:3	91:22 94:13	146:12,13	54:6 59:4	129:4,7,15
142:21	suit 174:19	240:7,16,20	surrounding	97:10 98:19	talking 37:3	60:14,19	129:20
studied 24:9	sum 229:22	241:20	32:20 37:20	99:5 101:2	37:4,16	61:14,20	131:3,7,14
24:10	233:20	242:12	105:20	102:10	44:4 49:18	62:12,13,18	135:4 136:3
studies 26:24	summary	246:19,24	115:18	103:14	56:5,6	64:12 66:18	136:23
61:19 78:20	95:7 102:18	247:3	118:11	105:24	60:25 63:20	66:22 67:3	140:4
201:20	102:19	254:18	120:3	106:3,19	69:6 75:12	67:23 68:23	146:21
study 26:20	summer	256:4	136:13	108:3,25	75:13 79:17	69:12 70:5	147:22
29:3,11,25	14:10	262:14	survive 71:15	114:18	86:9 87:22	70:10,19	150:18
stunned	Sunshine	supported	195:15	136:19	133:21	72:4,14	156:10,20
37:13	10:13	68:7 238:24	survived 40:4	141:12	141:14	73:6,7,11	157:20
Styled 89:22	super 253:11	supporter	sustain 22:12	145:3	143:3,8	73:14,18,18	159:3,6,9
123:18	254:9	30:20,21	68:18	163:24	151:21	74:2,9,15	160:14
submitted	supermarket	218:5	sustainable	164:3	179:23	77:22,25	162:17
9:2 246:24	166:21	supporting	196:10	190:21	215:13	78:3,10,15	163:8 170:5
247:2	supervise	23:15	sustaining	235:8	216:9	80:16,20,23	172:3,9
subsequent	241:6	127:10	57:5	256:16	tap 42:18	81:3,8	173:2,13
262:16	supervision	133:5,22	swallow	257:8,15,15	target 79:9	82:13,14,15	174:11,24
subsequently	267:23	248:11	113:22	260:4	targeted	82:18,22,25	175:4,18,24
157:23	supervisor	supportive	Sweeney	261:19	40:25 41:3	83:4,6,7,19	176:17,22
173:14	225:7 238:9	180:23	170:20	263:18	68:4,24	85:13 92:4	177:23
174:25	238:9	187:15	171:7 190:5	taken 58:22	218:23	92:7,9,24	178:3,8,15
substantial	supply 94:4	supports	192:5,7,13	62:10	219:2,12	93:2,10,12	179:12,19
18:3	94:13 95:16	117:23,25	192:16	153:18	230:24	93:16,18,21	180:8,13,16
suburban	200:22,25	122:3	201:12	256:12	task 182:17	94:7,14,16	180:18
24:16,17	support	142:21	203:18,22	263:24	265:7	94:21 95:2	181:4
120:16	14:17 15:6	175:24	210:2 221:8	267:6	tasked 90:16	95:3,5,18	184:14
suburbs 25:5	36:19 42:24	196:21	249:5	takes 82:16	tax 7:13,18	95:22 96:3	187:8,15

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 29

188:16,25	62:12 72:6	133:7	243:10,23	181:10,20	134:14,15	262:20,21	63:14 64:17
189:4,5	72:13 74:7	technological	testified	185:8,17,22	134:23	262:21,23	69:11 70:5
191:13,16	75:17 78:14	201:25	87:13	192:4,12,22	137:15	264:19,25	70:8 72:9
192:25	78:16 81:15	technology	129:16	207:14,22	138:21,23	265:5,10,20	73:17 74:10
195:22	83:12 88:2	42:24 72:18	155:12	217:22	138:24,25	265:21,23	74:12 79:25
196:6	91:7 93:11	202:15	231:2	218:22	139:5,8	266:4,14,16	80:8 84:7
199:24	96:14 97:3	203:9 220:6	250:24	222:24	146:2,3,4,8	thanks 66:6	84:24 85:3
208:8 209:7	99:22	tell 42:15	260:10	223:25	151:23,25	88:16	86:9 108:14
209:7,10	106:16,24	59:8,15	265:4	228:2 234:4	152:5,13,21	theory 93:12	114:21
212:22	107:13,20	60:22	testify 9:23	234:19	154:24,25	94:11 95:6	129:8
215:20,24	118:15	109:17	12:19	236:4,9	155:5 166:9	153:12	130:13,19
216:10	119:14,17	142:5	109:23	242:6 247:7	169:20,21	therapy	132:7 135:8
218:23	120:2	145:15	117:3	247:14,22	170:22	59:13 60:7	135:11,15
219:11	121:22	163:20	124:13	248:19	171:10,17	143:20	138:9,16
220:10	123:9	204:15	127:21	254:12	177:4,5	thin 44:20	141:9
221:17	125:21	226:21	128:8	255:9	181:7,9,18	thing 72:21	142:24,25
228:6	133:14	249:13	155:10,21	Texas 146:18	182:6 185:4	99:24	143:3,4,15
229:18	138:14	264:6	163:17	text 222:7	185:6,7	142:11	144:5
230:12,14	140:25	telling 42:13	165:4	thank 2:2 3:5	192:2,3,21	206:15	146:13
230:15	141:6 144:4	43:8	170:14	6:11,17	196:23	219:20	159:4
231:5,6,12	144:18	Temple	181:8 182:6	9:10 11:8	197:9,14	things 35:10	164:12
231:22,25	178:14	186:14	222:12	11:10,14,19	201:9	38:6 42:2	165:19
232:2,17	182:11	225:2	242:10	11:23,24	203:13	55:18 61:14	168:6 169:4
233:21	187:22	ten 23:22	246:25	15:20 16:3	207:2,7	72:8,12,23	169:9,25
236:14,14	188:7,13,19	24:15 26:3	251:9	19:18 20:5	208:12	72:24,24	171:25
240:8,14,20	195:20,25	28:2 29:23	254:14	20:7 23:5,8	210:10	73:4,10	180:5,8,13
241:22	209:8	58:22 60:18	255:6	23:12,13	211:17,21	74:21 75:19	180:19
243:14	219:22	65:3 140:16	testifying	34:2,2,4,22	213:25	78:20 79:5	186:4,5
244:20	230:5,10,21	141:15,20	11:16	34:24 39:12	214:4,6,13	79:11	187:17
245:8,11,12	231:16,19	164:6 198:6	104:23	39:13,17	214:21,22	109:21	188:12
246:7,10,14	232:7,9	230:17	222:9 228:6	45:16,17	215:6,9	132:12	189:18
248:20,22	245:7,12,13	245:6	testimony	46:4 48:12	216:11,12	133:3,24	190:15
248:23,24	245:18	ten-year	2:14 9:21	50:5 52:2,6	217:9,14,15	135:12	191:6 199:4
249:6,18	taxing 250:5	39:11	10:17,23	52:8,16	217:16	137:9	199:7,10,16
250:4,20	team 17:5	261:22	12:3,11	56:9,15,16	220:23,24	138:10	199:20
251:7	39:25 66:17	tenants	15:19,25	57:18 66:8	222:8,20	145:9	201:6,13
253:10,21	70:2 256:2	193:11	16:8 19:16	66:13 69:7	224:2 227:6	167:13	202:6,9
254:6 263:6	263:10	tended 36:6	19:23 20:2	71:3,4,8	227:7,23	177:25	203:3,9
tax-reliant	teams 1:6	tens 25:24	20:10 23:9	76:7,9,10	228:3 234:2	186:4,19	206:9,11
17:20	2:11 10:11	term 60:17	31:11,13,23	76:11 77:4	234:3,15	205:23	208:2
taxable 48:8	107:14	60:18	39:8 80:14	77:5,9	236:2,3	216:6	211:24
48:9 50:12	264:24	135:25	88:24 89:4	81:24 89:24	242:3,4,5	218:19,25	213:7,9,11
50:15,24	tech 204:19	261:20,21	90:9 104:10	90:6,24	242:21	think 11:22	216:7 218:8
51:4 231:20	256:2	terms 7:13,19	104:20	104:7,8	244:12	16:15 20:24	218:14,20
taxed 106:17	technical	7:24 8:6,12	105:7 110:7	109:22	246:5,5,8	21:5,10	226:13
taxes 7:12 8:5	59:20 76:19	8:17 54:24	110:11,23	110:3,6,21	246:10,14	22:19 28:4	244:2
8:11 14:25	87:20	70:10,12	116:22	116:17,21	247:19	30:25 39:8	247:16
16:23 17:14	124:10	118:5	117:11	117:7,9	254:10	39:10,10,21	257:11
17:17 19:3	207:18	121:13	123:14	122:21	255:14,23	43:23 44:5	261:20,21
28:18,18	211:5	138:14	128:2	123:11,13	256:7	46:6 47:3	261:22
30:4,5	234:16	142:22	139:11	127:20,24	259:13,22	47:17 52:2	263:6
37:12 40:22	259:16	150:16	167:23	127:25	259:23	53:10 56:23	thinking 28:6
48:21 61:14	264:5 266:8	191:20	171:13	128:14,21	260:7,9,10	58:14 61:19	33:19 35:2
61:22 62:6	technically	203:4	177:6,14	129:25	260:11	62:20 63:5	37:13 58:21

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 30

112:22	tie 59:19	timing 92:21	212:4,6	173:8	141:19	uncertain	189:8
136:22	tied 187:10	121:13	232:14	184:10	188:24	175:10	221:16
142:3	time 10:9	tip 168:4	totally 216:20	216:4,6	191:9	uncertainty	units 232:15
164:15,16	13:12 19:4	tipping	touch 168:4	traveling	turnover	154:7	Unity 248:8
168:10,13	23:20 27:20	174:15	touched	172:13,15	126:11,17	unclear	universities
261:24	31:5 34:3	tirelessly	67:18	172:16,17	twice 229:8	211:25	249:11
third 20:12	39:25 40:3	251:25	tough 109:21	174:9	two 22:5	underfunded	University
68:10	40:12,13	titles 6:22	tourism	treat 210:18	26:23 28:21	253:14	59:12 60:5
146:22	53:11,13	today 9:12,22	159:17	tremendous	44:10 51:5	Underfund...	115:10
178:10	57:23 61:23	10:16 12:8	tourist	13:5 125:4	51:18 61:25	252:20	124:20
193:4	71:2 79:11	23:16,16	183:12	262:17	62:3 72:8	underground	143:17
228:23	82:8 85:7	28:9 31:6	tourists	trickle-down	85:20 92:24	215:21	186:14
244:16	86:3 92:10	33:17 34:3	122:17	228:11	95:10 97:9	underserved	187:5 225:2
third-party	95:3 96:22	70:2 85:12	173:7,25	249:25	97:18	69:14 112:8	233:11
171:22	106:10	105:6	184:9	tripled 232:3	102:21	understand	237:10,22
Thomas 1:16	116:15,17	109:23	town 166:16	trouble 190:2	103:16,24	2:4 50:21	239:5
5:23,24	122:11	125:12	167:16,21	true 26:11	145:10,15	53:4 78:25	unknown
259:10	135:17	127:21	169:17	139:20	157:5	79:16 82:11	230:7
thought	136:11,14	139:9 158:8	townhouse	205:21,22	167:24	144:16	unmute
35:22 94:5	136:19	162:25	24:23	232:8 267:7	198:15	153:12	124:7
141:5 154:7	138:11	171:18	towns 30:15	truly 121:14	201:6	213:18	223:14
237:6	139:10	189:3	track 158:18	253:25	206:19	217:10	unnecessar...
thoughtful	144:21,23	194:24	182:22	Trust 109:16	207:16	understand...	65:6
66:9	145:23	219:25	trained	170:21	219:24	191:7	unneeded
thoughtful...	146:3	220:21	171:21	192:18	221:23	understand...	229:25
69:24	152:24	228:19	training	249:10	two-thirds	16:6 55:7	unoccupied
thousand	154:6 169:4	242:7	72:16,17,18	251:4	130:21	215:19	232:16
18:12 47:21	169:10,13	245:14	195:9	truth 250:8	type 21:11	understood	unprecede...
48:6 135:14	180:24	249:23	262:12	try 38:2 80:7	35:18 73:4	55:6 144:19	57:25
138:13	191:12	255:16	trajectory	106:10	87:21 150:3	undertook	unpredicta...
206:7 219:7	201:6,7	260:9	142:8,23	149:16	150:4	197:2	72:6
231:7	207:17,20	263:12,18	transcript	trying 81:19	197:18	undue 22:16	unstable 72:6
thousands	210:3	264:13	267:8,21	87:11 124:6	types 36:12	unemploy...	72:13
25:24 180:7	225:23	265:3,9	transformed	145:19,20	83:16	106:8 108:8	unstaffed
190:13,13	228:9	today's	25:2	149:5 150:5	251:18	unfortunate	252:12
219:8 248:9	233:16	145:16	transforming	150:15	typically	123:2	untapped
three 20:3	234:2	182:7	24:15	163:7	190:7	unfortunat...	42:5
28:12 44:10	237:21	tomorrow	transit	164:22		16:14	up-to-date
93:24 101:8	241:25	194:23	167:12	165:16,17	U	105:15	72:17
102:6	242:6	tool 158:16	174:5	168:22	U.S 33:25	108:15	update
145:10	253:23	158:20	translate	199:2	58:5 140:18	207:15	246:11
155:22	261:12,13	232:10	21:4 98:11	223:13	232:16	Uniformity	updated
239:2	261:19	toolbox	transportat...	238:14	250:8	79:8,16,19	163:18
250:10	263:21	158:16,20	165:17	245:3	Uber 198:23	unintelligible	Upper 24:11
three-quart...	264:23	top 14:16	166:2 168:9	Tuesday	Ubers 168:8	229:18	upsurge
231:3	265:7	27:2 131:12	174:4 179:6	264:22	ultimate	union 186:15	202:3
three-year	timed 178:22	132:6	trash 248:13	Tulsa 85:15	197:5	190:4	upward
60:16	timeline	140:20	traumatic	85:16,19,21	ultimately	248:16	176:16
threshold	43:24	230:4,17	154:9	85:24 86:6	96:15 150:7	251:19	177:3
138:13	times 36:15	242:23	travel 165:23	87:3 147:19	unable 31:8	unionize	urban 114:2
thrive 183:15	68:11	topic 260:20	173:10	turn 95:21	unapologetic	194:13	urge 109:23
188:20	149:13	topics 260:13	174:10	104:11	161:14	unique 16:17	232:24
thriving	228:12	total 97:5	175:20	115:5	unaware	23:20 105:8	233:20
127:14	252:15	101:20	travelers	128:15	219:16,20	united 85:17	usage 212:20

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 31

use 10:10	215:16	183:17	175:17	122:17,20	256:24	52:9 80:7	226:11
23:20 38:11	216:3,16,25	184:8,22	176:19	127:5	257:6 260:8	110:11	237:4
75:3 77:2	217:11	246:21	186:11	132:18	260:25	128:19	242:17
87:16 125:7	vein 64:24	visits 249:15	188:12	136:15	265:20	134:11	243:18
145:12	venues 76:2	vital 179:11	204:5 228:6	139:8,11,23	wanting	201:7	255:20
148:17,24	verify 191:18	voice 221:16	229:18	141:7 143:2	120:12	243:18	264:16
163:21	version 53:3	void 163:9	230:10,13	143:22,23	wants 81:5	we're 15:10	we've 18:6
164:17	53:7,23	volatile 17:25	231:16,21	143:24	119:21	23:6 26:13	23:22 28:23
165:16	versus 37:19	volumes	248:24	144:15,21	174:3	26:23,25	29:21 33:11
168:7,8	50:17,18	210:21	wages 21:24	144:23	wars 191:8	27:5,7,11	43:24 59:16
195:25	51:5 140:13	voluntarily	91:7 96:23	145:2,18	191:11	27:15,21,22	62:10 79:5
202:17	viability	109:8	103:5 109:8	156:2,23	Washington	30:14 31:6	79:11 83:11
216:25	69:18	vote 37:17	125:21	159:10,11	27:23 37:9	56:5,6	83:21 84:5
245:11	vibrant 57:16	voting 37:14	126:9,21	160:11	111:21	61:15 62:6	87:22
usual 175:9	Vice 181:22	vulnerability	196:17	163:19,25	wasn't 123:4	62:6 63:20	107:11
188:15	182:3	17:16	206:4 210:7	167:6,6,8,9	217:5	64:13,18	110:10
usually 72:17	185:19	W	219:24	169:10,11	223:14	65:6 70:13	111:13
166:21	224:6 228:4	wage 7:17	wait 13:3	169:24	watching	70:19 74:3	112:6
utilizing	view 2:13	8:15 12:21	56:10	170:6,9,10	158:14	74:8 77:21	129:21
249:5	35:3 158:15	12:24 25:15	134:11	179:4	water 248:14	77:23 78:10	132:13
V	158:20	28:17 29:7	waiting	185:21	Waxman	78:13 80:24	135:11
valet 226:14	193:8	37:18,19	132:11	186:5	12:10 55:15	82:9 86:8	143:12
238:9	220:20	61:13 62:13	242:17	197:22,23	55:16 56:8	87:11	149:14
valid 73:8	viewers 10:2	74:9 78:14	wake-up 25:8	199:8,16	129:13,21	104:11	150:8
Valley 24:22	viewing	80:16,23	33:10	203:18,19	130:5,9,17	106:15	204:17
value 255:16	156:14	81:3,8	144:22	204:9	131:2,11,22	110:8 111:9	212:22
values 96:21	158:13	82:14,15,18	walking	207:13	132:5	122:24	231:15
variation	263:15	82:22,25	166:16	208:5	134:11,17	127:15	246:17
17:12	village	83:5,18	186:24	209:25	way 15:8	128:15	251:25
varies 51:15	113:14	91:9,17	Wall 85:19	210:10	44:7 62:7	132:11	260:16
variety 47:4	Vine 224:13	95:2,17	want 6:17	218:2 221:6	67:12,24	135:22	262:2
47:9,17	violence	96:16 97:20	15:16 23:13	222:7 223:8	70:6 74:7	136:11	wealth 84:15
111:17	14:13,19	97:23 98:4	29:5,14	228:7	80:6,16	137:7 140:9	85:4 87:11
121:22	30:19 40:6	98:8,15	31:2,9	232:21	85:4 96:9	140:11,17	87:12 149:5
124:22	63:24 69:16	99:8,18	34:13,24	240:16	97:11	140:20,21	149:16
various 28:25	70:17	101:10,13	38:20 39:24	246:17	118:21	141:3,10,13	220:12
84:13	251:18	101:17	45:21,23	255:14	154:10	143:13	232:12
114:15	253:16	102:8,16,23	49:8 54:5	257:8	188:21	144:7,18	250:9,12
121:5 137:8	virtual 73:9	106:19	57:18 58:12	260:10,11	189:12,17	149:4,19,21	wealthier
149:13	virtually	108:25	62:25 63:23	261:11	191:7,18	150:5	21:19
vast 189:23	105:6	109:9	64:8 71:10	263:9,12,14	205:13	165:15,17	wealthy
205:14	183:12	118:15	72:19,22,23	263:23	208:15	168:10	249:7 250:5
Vaughn	vision 36:19	120:19,21	72:25 73:2	264:25	230:17	169:10	253:11
89:23	58:12 185:5	125:14	73:25 76:5	wanted 13:9	235:4	170:25	254:9
124:13,15	visit 37:25	126:23	77:4,8	52:18 58:17	245:15,15	179:16	website
124:18	167:16	129:4,5,7	78:23 79:15	114:10,12	251:15	180:7	210:13,16
vehicle	225:24	129:15,20	80:12 81:10	134:25	ways 79:22	187:14	Wednesday
166:25	227:2	129:23	84:8 85:9	137:23	80:5 84:18	189:7 193:4	1:7
203:12	246:23	131:3,7,14	88:18,23	146:10	88:2 109:4	200:15,21	week 24:6
216:4	visited 68:9	136:3	89:6 106:25	154:15	145:5,19	202:6	85:14
vehicles	visitors	148:10	113:2 115:8	215:11	221:21	207:24	125:20
164:19	158:22	150:18	116:14,16	221:22	we'll 2:23	216:8	200:16
176:5	173:6,15	160:23	122:2,12,13	226:21	27:20 33:13	219:10	221:11
	174:20		122:15,16	246:15	33:22 51:17	220:2 223:7	weekend 24:7

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 32

24:8	windfall	187:13	204:18	249:7	84:17	251:3	177:15,17
weekly	230:7	188:4	205:2,10,14	252:17	104:17	252:19	181:10
125:21	window	189:14,15	205:24	working-cl..	129:21	year's 137:14	195:17
weeks 44:10	261:12	190:24	206:8,10,21	168:19	132:8 134:8	years 7:2	198:18
weigh 44:3	windows	201:21	218:5	workplace	135:8,24	8:23 18:6	203:18,22
weird 17:24	207:16	205:14,16	219:19	175:12,14	137:6 138:9	20:21 22:9	221:7
welcoming	winners	219:7,10,22	221:18	works 51:13	142:10	23:23 24:15	239:17
183:16	64:14	224:4	248:9	96:8 239:22	217:10,25	26:3,13	243:21,25
well-known	139:17	234:21	251:11	248:17	234:20	28:2,2,7,8	244:2,19,23
72:5	winning	235:16	253:19	world 37:8,9	243:12	29:23 53:2	245:6
went 33:3	113:16	240:11,15	workforce	180:15	year 7:4,8	58:23 60:18	
35:12 37:23	wise 70:25	240:16	37:18 58:7	204:22	8:21,25	64:4 65:3	0
153:21	wisest 35:23	250:2	59:21 65:12	worried	9:16,18,19	67:7 91:16	0.0236 91:21
224:25	wish 10:12	251:25	65:13 72:14	202:7	13:16 14:17	91:23 93:3	0.0486 91:13
235:22	161:12	252:4,6	126:16	worry 89:10	17:13,13	94:23	0.14 62:20
237:21	wishes 255:9	261:10	136:24	worrying	22:10 31:4	103:19,20	136:7
252:16	withstand	265:22	137:4,10,12	115:2	53:18 74:4	140:16	0.32 62:20
West 89:17	39:4	worked	137:20,25	worse 121:3	76:3 91:12	141:15,20	92:8 136:7
104:12	witnesses	111:14	142:15	233:22	91:14,20,21	141:20,24	0.5 93:6
105:3,4	9:21 10:8	190:10	144:11	worth 117:24	91:23,24	141:24	00:00:10 2:5
124:19	139:9	194:11,14	148:14	157:13	92:7,16,17	145:7,10,15	00:00:23 2:10
195:12	155:17	234:25	175:11	169:4	92:18,22	151:15	00:00:38 2:15
224:25	222:3	235:4	182:25	189:18	93:4 98:25	163:10,10	00:00:52 2:20
225:20,22	254:14,25	worker 109:3	183:9	250:14,14	99:2,11,12	164:6	00:01:04 2:25
226:25	255:6,15,18	217:20	184:24	251:2	99:14,14	166:14	00:01:13 3:5
western 25:4	265:4	248:6 253:8	210:6	worthy 32:7	100:6,7,15	180:4	00:01:26 3:10
wheelchair	wives 241:4	workers	working	wouldn't	100:16,18	191:25	00:01:33 3:15
219:19	women	12:24 21:25	22:24 33:17	28:9	100:18	194:11	00:01:39 3:20
White 229:8	112:17	23:3 93:14	59:16 114:6	wound 35:11	101:3,7,11	195:8 198:6	00:01:44 3:25
whiter 21:18	132:22	109:5	120:17	38:3	101:15,20	199:24	00:01:47 4:5
Whites	wonderful	157:12,18	159:19	wrap 10:23	102:3,4,5,9	206:19	00:01:57 4:10
229:13	37:5 46:7	159:24	161:20	49:14	102:14,22	208:4	00:02:04 4:15
wholeheart..	58:15	160:7,8,9	175:16	writing	104:2	211:25	00:02:09 4:20
241:20	wondering	160:16,18	182:13	246:18	106:21	212:3 230:6	00:02:15 4:25
wide 44:20	152:15	160:20	185:25	written 247:7	114:5 121:2	230:16	00:02:19 5:5
44:21 47:4	154:10	161:5,11,22	189:21	wrong 228:18	125:4	231:7	00:02:26 5:10
47:9,17	165:11	161:23	191:3	Wurtzel	131:15	234:24	00:02:34 5:15
57:3	words 3:2	162:8,9,21	194:18	170:16	135:23	235:6,25	00:02:45 5:20
wider 17:9	256:20	162:23	196:12	171:9,14,14	137:9,11	260:16,22	00:02:49 5:25
widespread	work 24:5	163:13,16	199:23	207:11	150:14	262:2,16	00:02:55 6:5
22:20	66:16 77:14	164:9,13,16	203:21,24	208:12	156:12,21	York 27:3,4	00:03:01 6:10
wife 239:2,4	80:7,21	168:24	203:24	209:18	157:20	37:8 141:2	00:03:26 6:15
William	93:15 95:19	175:16	206:25		179:19	178:8 224:7	00:03:39 6:20
181:12,22	108:21	176:7	220:12	X	180:8	225:14	00:03:50 6:25
182:2	111:15,20	182:11	224:10	X 190:6	182:15	young 42:19	00:03:59 7:5
willing 219:6	113:4 125:6	184:16	225:5,10		193:5,25	60:22 72:24	00:04:07 7:10
219:10	145:24	186:11	234:23	Y	196:2	198:23	00:04:15 7:15
220:2	159:20	187:25	235:3,3,9	Yard 36:10	212:11,23	younger 81:4	00:04:26 7:20
willingness	163:20	188:9,23	235:24	115:9	212:24		00:04:36 7:25
70:3	169:2 173:5	190:6	237:8,12,20	Yards 251:6	213:9 229:7	Z	00:04:44 8:5
Wilmington	175:3,20	191:15	237:24	yeah 46:20	236:22	zero 178:15	00:04:54 8:10
235:24	176:6,8,11	194:12	239:7	50:12 67:10	243:11,16	Zuritsky	00:05:05 8:15
win-win	184:8 186:2	195:2	240:11	75:21 76:25	244:7 246:6	170:17	00:05:17 8:20
182:14	187:2,4,11	203:21,23	241:24	79:24 83:5	250:16,18	177:7,8,9	00:05:26 8:25

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 33

00:05:34 9:5	15:15	21:15	27:15	33:15	39:15	45:15	51:15
00:05:43 9:10	00:11:37	00:17:07	00:22:40	00:27:46	00:34:51	00:41:20	00:46:44
00:05:52 9:15	15:20	21:20	27:20	33:20	39:20	45:20	51:20
00:06:08 9:20	00:11:45	00:17:18	00:22:50	00:27:57	00:35:03	00:41:33	00:46:59
00:06:18 9:25	15:25	21:25	27:25	33:25	39:25	45:25	51:25
00:06:28 10:5	00:11:52 16:5	00:17:28 22:5	00:23:00 28:5	00:28:03 34:5	00:35:18 40:5	00:41:43 46:5	00:47:08 52:5
00:06:39	00:12:06	00:17:40	00:23:10	00:28:19	00:35:32	00:41:57	00:47:15
10:10	16:10	22:10	28:10	34:10	40:10	46:10	52:10
00:06:51	00:12:19	00:17:54	00:23:21	00:28:39	00:35:45	00:42:08	00:47:23
10:15	16:15	22:15	28:15	34:15	40:15	46:15	52:15
00:07:09	00:12:33	00:18:04	00:23:32	00:28:55	00:35:58	00:42:15	00:47:30
10:20	16:20	22:20	28:20	34:20	40:20	46:20	52:20
00:07:23	00:12:45	00:18:14	00:23:41	00:29:04	00:36:11	00:42:22	00:47:47
10:25	16:25	22:25	28:25	34:25	40:25	46:25	52:25
00:07:31 11:5	00:12:52 17:5	00:18:20 23:5	00:23:50 29:5	00:29:17 35:5	00:36:21 41:5	00:42:33 47:5	00:48:03 53:5
00:07:36	00:13:04	00:18:28	00:24:03	00:29:34	00:36:36	00:42:42	00:48:15
11:10	17:10	23:10	29:10	35:10	41:10	47:10	53:10
00:07:42	00:13:16	00:18:38	00:24:14	00:29:53	00:36:48	00:42:55	00:48:24
11:15	17:15	23:15	29:15	35:15	41:15	47:15	53:15
00:07:50	00:13:25	00:18:49	00:24:27	00:30:07	00:37:02	00:43:10	00:48:36
11:20	17:20	23:20	29:20	35:20	41:20	47:20	53:20
00:08:01	00:13:37	00:19:01	00:24:36	00:30:26	00:37:17	00:43:20	00:48:51
11:25	17:25	23:25	29:25	35:25	41:25	47:25	53:25
00:08:08 12:5	00:13:47 18:5	00:19:13 24:5	00:24:46 30:5	00:30:37 36:5	00:37:25 42:5	00:43:25 48:5	00:49:05 54:5
00:08:23	00:13:57	00:19:25	00:24:57	00:30:53	00:37:35	00:43:39	00:49:23
12:10	18:10	24:10	30:10	36:10	42:10	48:10	54:10
00:08:42	00:14:07	00:19:34	00:25:07	00:31:10	00:37:54	00:43:51	00:49:35
12:15	18:15	24:15	30:15	36:15	42:15	48:15	54:15
00:08:58	00:14:20	00:19:45	00:25:17	00:31:28	00:38:10	00:44:03	00:49:44
12:20	18:20	24:20	30:20	36:20	42:20	48:20	54:20
00:09:08	00:14:32	00:19:58	00:25:27	00:31:44	00:38:27	00:44:17	00:49:54
12:25	18:25	24:25	30:25	36:25	42:25	48:25	54:25
00:09:17 13:5	00:14:44 19:5	00:20:09 25:5	00:25:36 31:5	00:31:56 37:5	00:38:38 43:5	00:44:23 49:5	00:50:03 55:5
00:09:27	00:14:57	00:20:21	00:25:44	00:32:13	00:38:57	00:44:31	00:50:18
13:10	19:10	25:10	31:10	37:10	43:10	49:10	55:10
00:09:43	00:15:08	00:20:33	00:25:52	00:32:29	00:39:13	00:44:48	00:50:31
13:15	19:15	25:15	31:15	37:15	43:15	49:15	55:15
00:09:54	00:15:14	00:20:47	00:26:04	00:32:42	00:39:26	00:44:56	00:50:41
13:20	19:20	25:20	31:20	37:20	43:20	49:20	55:20
00:10:04	00:15:30	00:20:59	00:26:14	00:32:59	00:39:39	00:45:07	00:50:54
13:25	19:25	25:25	31:25	37:25	43:25	49:25	55:25
00:10:13 14:5	00:15:38 20:5	00:21:08 26:5	00:26:23 32:5	00:33:12 38:5	00:39:54 44:5	00:45:11 50:5	00:51:07 56:5
00:10:24	00:15:43	00:21:22	00:26:31	00:33:28	00:40:06	00:45:23	00:51:15
14:10	20:10	26:10	32:10	38:10	44:10	50:10	56:10
00:10:35	00:15:56	00:21:35	00:26:42	00:33:45	00:40:16	00:45:29	00:51:22
14:15	20:15	26:15	32:15	38:15	44:15	50:15	56:15
00:10:45	00:16:11	00:21:43	00:26:52	00:33:57	00:40:28	00:45:44	00:51:33
14:20	20:20	26:20	32:20	38:20	44:20	50:20	56:20
00:10:56	00:16:21	00:21:56	00:27:04	00:34:11	00:40:41	00:45:52	00:51:46
14:25	20:25	26:25	32:25	38:25	44:25	50:25	56:25
00:11:04 15:5	00:16:29 21:5	00:22:07 27:5	00:27:14 33:5	00:34:25 39:5	00:40:56 45:5	00:46:02 51:5	00:51:58 57:5
00:11:13	00:16:40	00:22:22	00:27:27	00:34:36	00:41:06	00:46:11	00:52:09
15:10	21:10	27:10	33:10	39:10	45:10	51:10	57:10
00:11:27	00:16:56	00:22:33	00:27:37	00:34:44	00:41:14	00:46:31	00:52:19

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 34

57:15	63:15	69:15	75:15	81:15	87:15	93:15	99:15
00:52:31	00:58:40	01:04:42	01:11:55	01:17:16	01:23:08	01:28:43	01:34:07
57:20	63:20	69:20	75:20	81:20	87:20	93:20	99:20
00:52:43	00:58:53	01:04:57	01:12:08	01:17:27	01:23:17	01:28:53	01:34:17
57:25	63:25	69:25	75:25	81:25	87:25	93:25	99:25
00:52:51 58:5	00:59:02 64:5	01:05:09 70:5	01:12:19 76:5	01:17:33 82:5	01:23:27 88:5	01:29:01 94:5	01:34:28
00:53:04	00:59:14	01:05:20	01:12:26	01:17:48	01:23:39	01:29:11	100:5
58:10	64:10	70:10	76:10	82:10	88:10	94:10	01:34:39
00:53:17	00:59:26	01:05:33	01:12:43	01:17:57	01:23:46	01:29:22	100:10
58:15	64:15	70:15	76:15	82:15	88:15	94:15	01:34:49
00:53:31	00:59:36	01:05:44	01:12:51	01:18:12	01:23:56	01:29:32	100:15
58:20	64:20	70:20	76:20	82:20	88:20	94:20	01:35:02
00:53:45	00:59:47	01:05:58	01:12:56	01:18:28	01:24:11	01:29:42	100:20
58:25	64:25	70:25	76:25	82:25	88:25	94:25	01:35:13
00:53:55 59:5	00:59:57 65:5	01:06:05 71:5	01:13:02 77:5	01:18:40 83:5	01:24:25 89:5	01:29:50 95:5	100:25
00:54:10	01:00:07	01:06:13	01:13:16	01:18:56	01:24:35	01:30:05	01:35:23
59:10	65:10	71:10	77:10	83:10	89:10	95:10	101:5
00:54:25	01:00:19	01:06:31	01:13:28	01:19:11	01:24:45	01:30:16	01:35:33
59:15	65:15	71:15	77:15	83:15	89:15	95:15	101:10
00:54:37	01:00:32	01:06:44	01:13:40	01:19:20	01:24:59	01:30:27	01:35:47
59:20	65:20	71:20	77:20	83:20	89:20	95:20	101:15
00:54:49	01:00:46	01:07:03	01:13:52	01:19:27	01:25:09	01:30:37	01:36:03
59:25	65:25	71:25	77:25	83:25	89:25	95:25	101:20
00:54:56 60:5	01:00:55 66:5	01:07:13 72:5	01:13:59 78:5	01:19:36 84:5	01:25:18 90:5	01:30:44 96:5	01:36:15
00:55:08	01:01:07	01:07:28	01:14:08	01:19:46	01:25:26	01:30:59	101:25
60:10	66:10	72:10	78:10	84:10	90:10	96:10	01:36:28
00:55:20	01:01:13	01:07:44	01:14:20	01:19:58	01:25:34	01:31:09	102:5
60:15	66:15	72:15	78:15	84:15	90:15	96:15	01:36:43
00:55:38	01:01:29	01:08:00	01:14:28	01:20:12	01:25:48	01:31:21	102:10
60:20	66:20	72:20	78:20	84:20	90:20	96:20	01:36:54
00:55:52	01:01:47	01:08:13	01:14:43	01:20:33	01:26:07	01:31:32	102:15
60:25	66:25	72:25	78:25	84:25	90:25	96:25	01:37:15
00:56:02 61:5	01:02:00 67:5	01:08:22 73:5	01:14:49 79:5	01:20:41 85:5	01:26:16 91:5	01:31:40 97:5	102:20
00:56:14	01:02:14	01:08:42	01:15:05	01:20:52	01:26:28	01:31:54	01:37:26
61:10	67:10	73:10	79:10	85:10	91:10	97:10	102:25
00:56:29	01:02:26	01:08:54	01:15:12	01:21:05	01:26:43	01:32:02	01:37:37
61:15	67:15	73:15	79:15	85:15	91:15	97:15	103:5
00:56:42	01:02:35	01:09:16	01:15:25	01:21:21	01:26:53	01:32:13	01:37:50
61:20	67:20	73:20	79:20	85:20	91:20	97:20	103:10
00:56:53	01:02:50	01:09:37	01:15:35	01:21:36	01:27:09	01:32:24	01:38:01
61:25	67:25	73:25	79:25	85:25	91:25	97:25	103:15
00:56:59 62:5	01:03:02 68:5	01:09:48 74:5	01:15:45 80:5	01:21:46 86:5	01:27:18 92:5	01:32:38 98:5	01:38:11
00:57:12	01:03:11	01:10:07	01:15:59	01:21:55	01:27:31	01:32:49	103:20
62:10	68:10	74:10	80:10	86:10	92:10	98:10	01:38:23
00:57:26	01:03:22	01:10:28	01:16:09	01:22:07	01:27:41	01:32:59	103:25
62:15	68:15	74:15	80:15	86:15	92:15	98:15	01:38:37
00:57:41	01:03:37	01:10:47	01:16:19	01:22:18	01:27:51	01:33:11	104:5
62:20	68:20	74:20	80:20	86:20	92:20	98:20	01:38:48
00:57:57	01:03:50	01:11:00	01:16:32	01:22:27	01:27:59	01:33:25	104:10
62:25	68:25	74:25	80:25	86:25	92:25	98:25	01:38:57
00:58:06 63:5	01:03:59 69:5	01:11:13 75:5	01:16:41 81:5	01:22:36 87:5	01:28:08 93:5	01:33:34 99:5	104:15
00:58:18	01:04:10	01:11:24	01:16:55	01:22:46	01:28:23	01:33:44	01:39:04
63:10	69:10	75:10	81:10	87:10	93:10	99:10	104:20
00:58:27	01:04:28	01:11:40	01:17:06	01:22:56	01:28:33	01:33:58	01:39:15

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 35

01:39:23	01:43:42	01:48:08	01:52:55	01:57:50	02:02:55	02:08:31	02:13:35
105:5	110:15	115:25	121:10	126:20	132:5	137:15	142:25
01:39:35	01:43:47	01:48:15	01:53:06	01:58:05	02:03:14	02:08:42	02:13:41
105:10	110:20	116:5	121:15	126:25	132:10	137:20	143:5
01:39:45	01:43:55	01:48:24	01:53:19	01:58:12	02:03:30	02:08:55	02:13:49
105:15	110:25	116:10	121:20	127:5	132:15	137:25	143:10
01:39:56	01:44:02	01:48:34	01:53:30	01:58:23	02:03:46	02:09:06	02:14:00
105:20	111:5	116:15	121:25	127:10	132:20	138:5	143:15
01:40:06	01:44:13	01:48:42	01:53:39	01:58:32	02:04:06	02:09:19	02:14:11
105:25	111:10	116:20	122:5	127:15	132:25	138:10	143:20
01:40:13	01:44:23	01:48:50	01:53:51	01:58:43	02:04:17	02:09:35	02:14:22
106:5	111:15	116:25	122:10	127:20	133:5	138:15	143:25
01:40:23	01:44:33	01:48:59	01:54:02	01:58:50	02:04:27	02:09:49	02:14:32
106:10	111:20	117:5	122:15	127:25	133:10	138:20	144:5
01:40:33	01:44:42	01:49:03	01:54:10	01:59:01	02:04:39	02:09:59	02:14:46
106:15	111:25	117:10	122:20	128:5	133:15	138:25	144:10
01:40:44	01:44:50	01:49:11	01:54:28	01:59:12	02:04:48	02:10:04	02:14:59
106:20	112:5	117:15	122:25	128:10	133:20	139:5	144:15
01:40:53	01:45:00	01:49:27	01:54:38	01:59:19	02:05:00	02:10:14	02:15:09
106:25	112:10	117:20	123:5	128:15	133:25	139:10	144:20
01:40:59	01:45:13	01:49:44	01:54:50	01:59:29	02:05:10	02:10:25	02:15:20
107:5	112:15	117:25	123:10	128:20	134:5	139:15	144:25
01:41:11	01:45:23	01:49:51	01:54:59	01:59:39	02:05:16	02:10:32	02:15:27
107:10	112:20	118:5	123:15	128:25	134:10	139:20	145:5
01:41:20	01:45:33	01:50:04	01:55:11	01:59:55	02:05:26	02:10:42	02:15:40
107:15	112:25	118:10	123:20	129:5	134:15	139:25	145:10
01:41:31	01:45:43	01:50:14	01:55:20	02:00:13	02:05:39	02:10:52	02:15:48
107:20	113:5	118:15	123:25	129:10	134:20	140:5	145:15
01:41:41	01:45:54	01:50:26	01:55:26	02:00:21	02:05:47	02:11:04	02:16:00
107:25	113:10	118:20	124:5	129:15	134:25	140:10	145:20
01:41:50	01:46:03	01:50:37	01:55:34	02:00:36	02:05:58	02:11:16	02:16:07
108:5	113:15	118:25	124:10	129:20	135:5	140:15	145:25
01:42:01	01:46:15	01:50:47	01:55:46	02:00:45	02:06:10	02:11:32	02:16:12
108:10	113:20	119:5	124:15	129:25	135:10	140:20	146:5
01:42:10	01:46:26	01:51:00	01:55:53	02:00:56	02:06:23	02:11:44	02:16:21
108:15	113:25	119:10	124:20	130:5	135:15	140:25	146:10
01:42:19	01:46:37	01:51:14	01:56:03	02:01:03	02:06:36	02:11:57	02:16:31
108:20	114:5	119:15	124:25	130:10	135:20	141:5	146:15
01:42:27	01:46:46	01:51:26	01:56:16	02:01:20	02:06:48	02:12:08	02:16:47
108:25	114:10	119:20	125:5	130:15	135:25	141:10	146:20
01:42:36	01:46:57	01:51:39	01:56:29	02:01:36	02:06:57	02:12:18	02:16:59
109:5	114:15	119:25	125:10	130:20	136:5	141:15	146:25
01:42:46	01:47:07	01:51:48	01:56:44	02:01:52	02:07:13	02:12:30	02:17:04
109:10	114:20	120:5	125:15	130:25	136:10	141:20	147:5
01:42:57	01:47:19	01:51:57	01:56:56	02:02:06	02:07:28	02:12:40	02:17:14
109:15	114:25	120:10	125:20	131:5	136:15	141:25	147:10
01:43:06	01:47:26	01:52:08	01:57:05	02:02:12	02:07:41	02:12:48	02:17:24
109:20	115:5	120:15	125:25	131:10	136:20	142:5	147:15
01:43:16	01:47:38	01:52:21	01:57:15	02:02:24	02:07:54	02:12:58	02:17:37
109:25	115:10	120:20	126:5	131:15	136:25	142:10	147:20
01:43:20	01:47:49	01:52:32	01:57:27	02:02:40	02:08:04	02:13:11	02:17:48
110:5	115:15	120:25	126:10	131:20	137:5	142:15	147:25
01:43:30	01:47:59	01:52:41	01:57:38	02:02:48	02:08:16	02:13:25	02:18:00
110:10	115:20	121:5	126:15	131:25	137:10	142:20	148:5

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 36

02:18:12	02:22:54	02:28:55	02:35:04	02:41:02	02:46:02	02:51:53	02:56:21
148:10	153:20	159:5	164:15	169:25	175:10	180:20	186:5
02:18:30	02:23:10	02:29:06	02:35:19	02:41:15	02:46:13	02:52:07	02:56:29
148:15	153:25	159:10	164:20	170:5	175:15	180:25	186:10
02:18:43	02:23:16	02:29:19	02:35:34	02:41:29	02:46:24	02:52:21	02:56:40
148:20	154:5	159:15	164:25	170:10	175:20	181:5	186:15
02:18:52	02:23:29	02:29:34	02:35:45	02:41:42	02:46:35	02:52:31	02:56:52
148:25	154:10	159:20	165:5	170:15	175:25	181:10	186:20
02:18:59	02:23:40	02:29:48	02:35:54	02:41:57	02:46:44	02:52:42	02:57:04
149:5	154:15	159:25	165:10	170:20	176:5	181:15	186:25
02:19:07	02:23:53	02:30:02	02:36:08	02:42:04	02:46:55	02:52:48	02:57:13
149:10	154:20	160:5	165:15	170:25	176:10	181:20	187:5
02:19:16	02:24:03	02:30:16	02:36:27	02:42:15	02:47:06	02:52:56	02:57:27
149:15	154:25	160:10	165:20	171:5	176:15	181:25	187:10
02:19:27	02:24:12	02:30:33	02:36:42	02:42:27	02:47:19	02:53:03	02:57:39
149:20	155:5	160:15	165:25	171:10	176:20	182:5	187:15
02:19:39	02:24:24	02:30:47	02:36:48	02:42:34	02:47:29	02:53:12	02:57:52
149:25	155:10	160:20	166:5	171:15	176:25	182:10	187:20
02:19:50	02:24:34	02:30:58	02:36:58	02:42:44	02:47:38	02:53:24	02:58:06
150:5	155:15	160:25	166:10	171:20	177:5	182:15	187:25
02:19:59	02:24:45	02:31:09	02:37:14	02:42:57	02:47:44	02:53:31	02:58:13
150:10	155:20	161:5	166:15	171:25	177:10	182:20	188:5
02:20:09	02:25:03	02:31:27	02:37:28	02:43:05	02:47:52	02:53:42	02:58:25
150:15	155:25	161:10	166:20	172:5	177:15	182:25	188:10
02:20:23	02:25:13	02:31:39	02:37:45	02:43:17	02:48:02	02:53:49	02:58:37
150:20	156:5	161:15	166:25	172:10	177:20	183:5	188:15
02:20:31	02:25:29	02:31:54	02:37:58	02:43:29	02:48:19	02:54:00	02:58:48
150:25	156:10	161:20	167:5	172:15	177:25	183:10	188:20
02:20:39	02:25:44	02:32:07	02:38:11	02:43:42	02:48:31	02:54:13	02:59:00
151:5	156:15	161:25	167:10	172:20	178:5	183:15	188:25
02:20:51	02:26:02	02:32:19	02:38:27	02:43:52	02:48:48	02:54:22	02:59:10
151:10	156:20	162:5	167:15	172:25	178:10	183:20	189:5
02:20:59	02:26:19	02:32:35	02:38:42	02:44:01	02:49:03	02:54:34	02:59:18
151:15	156:25	162:10	167:20	173:5	178:15	183:25	189:10
02:21:10	02:26:32	02:32:47	02:38:56	02:44:15	02:49:19	02:54:42	02:59:30
151:20	157:5	162:15	167:25	173:10	178:20	184:5	189:15
02:21:21	02:26:45	02:33:02	02:39:07	02:44:27	02:49:34	02:54:55	02:59:45
151:25	157:10	162:20	168:5	173:15	178:25	184:10	189:20
02:21:27	02:27:00	02:33:14	02:39:25	02:44:38	02:49:46	02:55:08	02:59:57
152:5	157:15	162:25	168:10	173:20	179:5	184:15	189:25
02:21:40	02:27:14	02:33:25	02:39:37	02:44:47	02:50:05	02:55:16	03:00:09
152:10	157:20	163:5	168:15	173:25	179:10	184:20	190:5
02:21:47	02:27:26	02:33:42	02:39:50	02:44:57	02:50:20	02:55:28	03:00:21
152:15	157:25	163:10	168:20	174:5	179:15	184:25	190:10
02:21:56	02:27:36	02:33:58	02:40:04	02:45:09	02:50:41	02:55:34	03:00:30
152:20	158:5	163:15	168:25	174:10	179:20	185:5	190:15
02:22:06	02:27:52	02:34:09	02:40:15	02:45:19	02:51:01	02:55:42	03:00:41
152:25	158:10	163:20	169:5	174:15	179:25	185:10	190:20
02:22:17	02:28:05	02:34:26	02:40:29	02:45:29	02:51:12	02:55:49	03:00:52
153:5	158:15	163:25	169:10	174:20	180:5	185:15	190:25
02:22:28	02:28:27	02:34:37	02:40:41	02:45:41	02:51:24	02:55:59	03:01:02
153:10	158:20	164:5	169:15	174:25	180:10	185:20	191:5
02:22:46	02:28:42	02:34:52	02:40:53	02:45:51	02:51:38	02:56:12	03:01:12
153:15	158:25	164:10	169:20	175:5	180:15	185:25	191:10

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 37

03:01:24	03:06:24	03:12:02	03:17:05	03:22:10	03:27:18	03:32:36	03:39:08
191:15	196:25	202:10	207:20	213:5	218:15	223:25	229:10
03:01:36	03:06:33	03:12:16	03:17:21	03:22:23	03:27:27	03:32:47	03:39:24
191:20	197:5	202:15	207:25	213:10	218:20	224:5	229:15
03:01:47	03:06:43	03:12:25	03:17:30	03:22:40	03:27:37	03:33:02	03:39:36
191:25	197:10	202:20	208:5	213:15	218:25	224:10	229:20
03:01:57	03:06:51	03:12:39	03:17:45	03:22:59	03:27:47	03:33:21	03:39:49
192:5	197:15	202:25	208:10	213:20	219:5	224:15	229:25
03:02:04	03:07:05	03:12:45	03:17:55	03:23:08	03:28:00	03:33:37	03:39:59
192:10	197:20	203:5	208:15	213:25	219:10	224:20	230:5
03:02:11	03:07:19	03:12:57	03:18:05	03:23:12	03:28:11	03:34:00	03:40:09
192:15	197:25	203:10	208:20	214:5	219:15	224:25	230:10
03:02:23	03:07:33	03:13:03	03:18:17	03:23:21	03:28:24	03:34:14	03:40:22
192:20	198:5	203:15	208:25	214:10	219:20	225:5	230:15
03:02:33	03:07:48	03:13:16	03:18:23	03:23:25	03:28:38	03:34:38	03:40:35
192:25	198:10	203:20	209:5	214:15	219:25	225:10	230:20
03:02:40	03:08:01	03:13:35	03:18:38	03:23:33	03:28:51	03:34:58	03:40:48
193:5	198:15	203:25	209:10	214:20	220:5	225:15	230:25
03:02:52	03:08:13	03:13:46	03:18:47	03:23:42	03:29:00	03:35:19	03:40:55
193:10	198:20	204:5	209:15	214:25	220:10	225:20	231:5
03:03:04	03:08:33	03:13:58	03:18:55	03:23:48	03:29:12	03:35:35	03:41:07
193:15	198:25	204:10	209:20	215:5	220:15	225:25	231:10
03:03:17	03:08:45	03:14:11	03:19:01	03:23:53	03:29:27	03:35:50	03:41:17
193:20	199:5	204:15	209:25	215:10	220:20	226:5	231:15
03:03:30	03:09:03	03:14:24	03:19:14	03:24:08	03:29:32	03:36:09	03:41:28
193:25	199:10	204:20	210:5	215:15	220:25	226:10	231:20
03:03:40	03:09:18	03:14:33	03:19:29	03:24:20	03:29:43	03:36:26	03:41:38
194:5	199:15	204:25	210:10	215:20	221:5	226:15	231:25
03:03:51	03:09:32	03:14:45	03:19:43	03:24:36	03:29:58	03:36:41	03:41:47
194:10	199:20	205:5	210:15	215:25	221:10	226:20	232:5
03:04:04	03:09:48	03:14:54	03:19:56	03:24:51	03:30:16	03:36:58	03:42:01
194:15	199:25	205:10	210:20	216:5	221:15	226:25	232:10
03:04:18	03:09:58	03:15:09	03:20:14	03:25:04	03:30:33	03:37:08	03:42:11
194:20	200:5	205:15	210:25	216:10	221:20	227:5	232:15
03:04:31	03:10:12	03:15:25	03:20:21	03:25:12	03:30:47	03:37:18	03:42:22
194:25	200:10	205:20	211:5	216:15	221:25	227:10	232:20
03:04:38	03:10:23	03:15:38	03:20:30	03:25:28	03:30:55	03:37:31	03:42:33
195:5	200:15	205:25	211:10	216:20	222:5	227:15	232:25
03:04:47	03:10:36	03:15:47	03:20:36	03:25:40	03:31:06	03:37:39	03:42:43
195:10	200:20	206:5	211:15	216:25	222:10	227:20	233:5
03:05:01	03:10:48	03:16:00	03:20:42	03:25:54	03:31:18	03:37:48	03:42:54
195:15	200:25	206:10	211:20	217:5	222:15	227:25	233:10
03:05:15	03:10:56	03:16:10	03:20:51	03:26:06	03:31:37	03:37:57	03:43:08
195:20	201:5	206:15	211:25	217:10	222:20	228:5	233:15
03:05:26	03:11:03	03:16:23	03:21:06	03:26:17	03:31:47	03:38:12	03:43:21
195:25	201:10	206:20	212:5	217:15	222:25	228:10	233:20
03:05:38	03:11:13	03:16:31	03:21:18	03:26:32	03:31:53	03:38:25	03:43:32
196:5	201:15	206:25	212:10	217:20	223:5	228:15	233:25
03:05:52	03:11:28	03:16:36	03:21:31	03:26:44	03:32:05	03:38:35	03:43:40
196:10	201:20	207:5	212:15	217:25	223:10	228:20	234:5
03:06:04	03:11:42	03:16:45	03:21:43	03:26:53	03:32:19	03:38:47	03:43:53
196:15	201:25	207:10	212:20	218:5	223:15	228:25	234:10
03:06:16	03:11:50	03:16:55	03:22:02	03:27:07	03:32:29	03:38:54	03:44:04
196:20	202:5	207:15	212:25	218:10	223:20	229:5	234:15

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 38

03:44:11 234:20	03:50:51 240:5	03:57:01 245:15	04:02:29 250:25	04:08:12 256:10	04:12:26 261:20	1,000 27:12 163:14	13-year 93:5
03:44:23 234:25	03:51:05 240:10	03:57:19 245:20	04:02:42 251:5	04:08:31 256:15	04:12:37 261:25	1.2 262:3	130 212:6,7
03:44:40 235:5	03:51:19 240:15	03:57:34 245:25	04:02:53 251:10	04:08:43 256:20	04:12:46 262:5	1.4 27:23 44:15 65:24	14.7 26:21
03:45:00 235:10	03:51:32 240:20	03:57:41 246:5	04:03:06 251:15	04:08:55 256:25	04:13:01 262:10	121:11	140 101:25
03:45:19 235:15	03:51:52 240:25	03:58:00 246:10	04:03:17 251:20	04:09:08 257:5	04:13:14 262:15	254:7	145 101:12
03:45:37 235:20	03:52:04 241:5	03:58:16 246:15	04:03:28 251:25	04:09:16 257:10	04:13:25 262:20	1.5 65:22 98:3	15 17:19
03:45:56 235:25	03:52:20 241:10	03:58:26 246:20	04:03:39 252:5	04:09:21 257:15	04:13:31 262:25	1.8 250:15	26:16 28:7
03:46:03 236:5	03:52:36 241:15	03:58:42 246:25	04:03:50 252:10	04:09:32 257:20	04:13:42 263:5	10 28:7,8 51:20,20	28:8 120:16
03:46:13 236:10	03:52:50 241:20	03:58:52 247:5	04:04:02 252:15	04:09:40 257:25	04:13:56 263:10	99:15	121:2
03:46:31 236:15	03:53:10 241:25	03:59:08 247:10	04:04:16 252:20	04:09:44 258:5	04:14:05 263:15	100:16,19	122:23
03:46:45 236:20	03:53:17 242:5	03:59:20 247:15	04:04:26 252:25	04:09:52 258:10	04:14:20 263:20	102:3,9,14	130:10,12
03:47:03 236:25	03:53:32 242:10	03:59:33 247:20	04:04:34 253:5	04:10:01 258:15	04:14:31 263:25	104:2	130:15
03:47:17 237:5	03:53:42 242:15	03:59:43 247:25	04:04:46 253:10	04:10:09 258:20	04:14:43 264:5	141:23	141:24
03:47:29 237:10	03:53:52 242:20	03:59:46 248:5	04:04:57 253:15	04:10:17 258:25	04:14:51 264:10	145:7 163:9	145:7
03:47:47 237:15	03:54:04 242:25	04:00:01 248:10	04:05:09 253:20	04:10:24 259:5	04:15:00 264:15	200:5	163:10
03:48:03 237:20	03:54:20 243:5	04:00:14 248:15	04:05:20 253:25	04:10:29 259:10	04:15:06 264:20	10- 32:10	189:22
03:48:16 237:25	03:54:38 243:10	04:00:24 248:20	04:05:29 254:5	04:10:43 259:15	04:15:16 264:25	10,000 229:7	229:23
03:48:27 238:5	03:54:55 243:15	04:00:36 248:25	04:05:46 254:10	04:10:53 259:20	04:15:25 265:5	10,676	234:24
03:48:42 238:10	03:55:12 243:20	04:00:46 249:5	04:06:01 254:15	04:11:01 259:25	04:15:36 265:10	10,755	15,000 75:10
03:48:54 238:15	03:55:28 243:25	04:00:55 249:10	04:06:12 254:20	04:11:07 260:5	04:15:43 265:15	10,000 229:7	98:14
03:49:09 238:20	03:55:42 244:5	04:01:08 249:15	04:06:22 254:25	04:11:15 260:10	04:15:49 265:20	10,775	185:24
03:49:26 238:25	03:55:59 244:10	04:01:20 249:20	04:06:32 255:5	04:11:25 260:15	04:15:56 265:25	100- 32:10	150 112:5
03:49:36 239:5	03:56:10 244:15	04:01:29 249:25	04:06:44 255:10	04:11:35 260:20	04:16:04 266:5	10,000 229:7	130:25
03:49:51 239:10	03:56:19 244:20	04:01:38 250:5	04:06:59 255:15	04:11:45 260:25	04:16:17 266:10	10,676	150,000
03:50:06 239:15	03:56:27 244:25	04:01:49 250:10	04:07:12 255:20	04:11:55 261:5	04:16:27 266:15	229:25	59:13
03:50:23 239:20	03:56:34 245:5	04:02:02 250:15	04:07:50 255:25	04:12:07 261:10		10,755	150,000-sq..
03:50:40 239:25	03:56:46 245:10	04:02:18 250:20	04:08:04 256:5	04:12:18 261:15	1	100:00 264:22	143:18
					1 45:24 93:4	100 63:23	157 75:17
					254:7	64:7 137:19	16 42:20
						245:11	122:10
						100-some	232:6
						130:24	16.2 27:6,8
						100,000	141:3
						25:23 46:11	17 122:6
						48:7,9,25	156:11
						49:3 50:11	157:22
						50:23 51:4	178:7,16,17
						54:12,13	236:15
						133:18	240:8
						140:22	250:13
						141:22	17.2 27:5
						102 101:17	141:2
						229:22	178 100:18
						11 60:24	18 14:18
						129:24	24:14 178:9
						112 98:24	18.35 178:9
						101:11	186 131:15
						252:19	19 91:23
						12 60:24	19-1200 7:22
						232:15,21	19-1500 7:16
						12-year 32:10	8:14
						13 103:20	19-2600 7:10
						150:14	8:3,9
							193 100:16

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 39

100:17	158:6	35:1 36:1	134:1 135:1	242:1 243:1	255:10	32BJ 161:10	500 250:10
102:16,25	2021 1:7 8:25	37:1 38:1	136:1 137:1	244:1 245:1	256:10	170:19	51 243:19,20
1950s 232:3	156:12,22	39:1 40:1	138:1 139:1	246:1 247:1	210825 263:7	185:10,20	53 19:7 53:2
1960s 252:8	158:3,6,10	41:1 42:1	140:1 141:1	248:1 249:1	2187 248:7	187:17,20	53:20,25
1992 9:8	246:11	43:1 44:1	142:1 143:1	250:1 251:1	21st 205:8	189:7 194:9	54:5
1993 236:22	2022 7:2,4,8	45:1,25	144:1 145:1	252:1 253:1	22 112:16	217:17	55 245:17
1995 230:12	8:23 9:16	46:1 47:1	146:1 147:1	254:1 255:1	122:10	32BJ's	55,000
1st 156:12,22	9:18 91:14	48:1 49:1	148:1 149:1	255:10	156:20	189:19	130:14
156:22	91:23 92:7	50:1 51:1	150:1 151:1	256:1,10	212:16	33 251:2	55.8 229:6
251:6	92:16	52:1,24,25	152:1 153:1	257:1 258:1	230:14	334 102:16	56 230:13
	101:20	53:1 54:1	154:1 155:1	259:1 260:1	246:6	347 117:17	243:23
2	157:20	55:1 56:1	156:1 157:1	261:1 262:1	25 16:12	35,000 25:23	246:5,12,13
2 1:7 17:21	2023 60:16	57:1 58:1	158:1 159:1	263:1,3	48:14,22	26:5 140:17	57 112:19
66:8 88:25	91:22	59:1 60:1	160:1 161:1	264:1,10,12	54:6,8,10	140:22	59 101:17
89:4 110:12	2026 8:23	61:1 62:1	162:1 163:1	265:1 266:1	54:17 122:6	36 250:16	5th 236:23
122:10	101:20	63:1 64:1	164:1 165:1	210285 1:19	140:20	36,000	
128:12	2027 7:2 9:19	65:1 66:1	166:1 167:1	6:15 8:13	156:21	229:10	6
155:12	2030 100:8	67:1 68:1	168:1 169:1	10:18 12:11	178:6	38,000	6 82:7 122:7
2,000 163:13	2031 92:6	69:1 70:1	170:1 171:1	12:19 13:12	212:16	193:24	6.2 25:13
2,800 117:20	97:25 98:2	71:1 72:1	172:1 173:1	34:18 45:25	230:16	39 100:15	74:5 92:6
2.8 91:19	99:2 102:4	73:1 74:1	174:1 175:1	89:3 90:18	26 112:12	3rd 9:8	6.3 98:5
2.9 91:12	2041 91:12	75:1 76:1	176:1 177:1	91:6 98:21	118:12		103:5
2.99 55:22	91:20	77:1 78:1	178:1 179:1	104:23	264 102:15	4	6/2/21 2:1 3:1
2:05 266:19	208 99:14	79:1 80:1	180:1 181:1	117:24	270 101:24	4 25:17	4:1 5:1 6:1
20 26:13 27:3	100:9	81:1 82:1	182:1 183:1	125:14	272 99:11	4.6 230:15	7:1 8:1 9:1
28:7 91:16	102:15	83:1 84:1	184:1 185:1	129:4	27th 24:7	40 131:17	10:1 11:1
122:25	208,000	85:1 86:1	186:1 187:1	131:21	28 140:20	212:10	12:1 13:1
141:24	108:7	87:1 88:1	188:1 189:1	255:11	28,000	400 101:22	14:1 15:1
145:7 180:4	210283 1:19	89:1,2 90:1	190:1 191:1	256:10	117:22	244:5	16:1 17:1
200:6	6:14 8:2	90:17 91:1	192:1 193:1	263:3	29 26:7	401(k) 160:25	18:1 19:1
250:20	10:17 12:11	92:1,2 93:1	194:1 195:1	210320 1:19	140:19	204:8	20:1 21:1
260:16	16:7 52:24	94:1 95:1	196:1 197:1	6:13,24	29th 236:22	235:15	22:1 23:1
200 53:17	53:3,24	96:1 97:1	198:1 199:1	210321 1:19	2nd 225:9	41 212:5	24:1 25:1
137:18	107:5	98:1 99:1	200:1 201:1	6:13 7:3		43 245:24	26:1 27:1
200,000	255:10	100:1,2,24	202:1 203:1	210322 1:19	3	45 100:5	28:1 29:1
231:11	256:10	101:1 102:1	204:1 205:1	6:14 7:6	3 34:10,11	45,000	30:1 31:1
2001 224:22	210284 1:19	103:1 104:1	206:1 207:1	210323 1:19	49:22 52:20	130:14	32:1 33:1
200288	2:1 3:1 4:1	104:23	208:1 209:1	6:14 7:9	92:6 122:10	47 248:7	34:1 35:1
156:17,19	5:1 6:1,15	105:1 106:1	210:1 211:1	210324 1:19	137:11	475 102:12	36:1 37:1
156:24	7:1 8:1,8	107:1 108:1	212:1 213:1	6:14 7:15	233:14	102:25	38:1 39:1
200387	9:1 10:1,18	109:1 110:1	214:1 215:1	210336 1:20	3.4 75:14		40:1 41:1
157:24	11:1 12:1	111:1 112:1	216:1 217:1	6:16 8:18	229:16	5	42:1 43:1
2005 224:9	12:12 13:1	113:1 114:1	218:1 219:1	210442 1:19	3.5 251:5	5 51:2 62:14	44:1 45:1
235:22	14:1 15:1	115:1 116:1	220:1 221:1	6:14 7:21	3.5019 91:19	64:2 82:7	46:1 47:1
2008 80:21	16:1,8 17:1	117:1,24	222:1 223:1	10:17 12:12	3.8 62:15	98:25 99:11	48:1 49:1
2009 80:21	18:1 19:1	118:1 119:1	224:1 225:1	19:24 20:10	3.8's 136:5	99:14 100:7	50:1 51:1
2014 232:6	20:1 21:1	120:1 121:1	226:1 227:1	20:17 34:8	3.87 25:14	100:15,18	52:1 53:1
2018 26:12	22:1 23:1	122:1 123:1	228:1 229:1	49:19,20	3.8712 91:11	101:3,11,15	54:1 55:1
232:16	24:1 25:1	124:1 125:1	230:1 231:1	122:4	30 244:6	136:5	56:1 57:1
2019 26:13	26:1 27:1	125:14	232:1 233:1	155:23	300 53:17	5.25 74:6	58:1 59:1
113:23	28:1 29:1	126:1 127:1	234:1 235:1	156:9	32,000	5.3 251:3	60:1 61:1
229:7,11,14	30:1 31:1	128:1 129:1	236:1 237:1	158:15	229:11	50 38:2,4	62:1 63:1
2020 112:10	32:1 33:1	130:1 131:1	238:1 239:1	165:5 182:8	320 99:3	51:5 196:5	64:1 65:1
156:18,22	34:1,17	132:1 133:1	240:1 241:1	246:20	102:9	245:17	66:1 67:1

Committee of the Whole
June 2, 2021

Page 40

68:1 69:1	176:1 177:1	7				
70:1 71:1	178:1 179:1	7 27:7 141:6				
72:1 73:1	180:1 181:1	70 101:16				
74:1 75:1	182:1 183:1	74 196:3				
76:1 77:1	184:1 185:1	75 17:7 18:13				
78:1 79:1	186:1 187:1	46:16,24				
80:1 81:1	188:1 189:1	54:7,10,10				
82:1 83:1	190:1 191:1	67:2				
84:1 85:1	192:1 193:1	76 99:13				
86:1 87:1	194:1 195:1	77.3 243:16				
88:1 89:1	196:1 197:1	7th 158:10				
90:1 91:1	198:1 199:1					
92:1 93:1	200:1 201:1	8				
94:1 95:1	202:1 203:1	8,000 189:21				
96:1 97:1	204:1 205:1	8.8 27:6				
98:1 99:1	206:1 207:1	141:4				
100:1 101:1	208:1 209:1	80,000				
102:1 103:1	210:1 211:1	232:15				
104:1 105:1	212:1 213:1	8th 224:13,14				
106:1 107:1	214:1 215:1	224:16,17				
108:1 109:1	216:1 217:1	264:7,14,15				
110:1 111:1	218:1 219:1	264:17,22				
112:1 113:1	220:1 221:1					
114:1 115:1	222:1 223:1	9				
116:1 117:1	224:1 225:1	9 32:18				
118:1 119:1	226:1 227:1	9:49 1:7				
120:1 121:1	228:1 229:1	90 20:20 22:8				
122:1 123:1	230:1 231:1	179:16				
124:1 125:1	232:1 233:1	201:22				
126:1 127:1	234:1 235:1	208:3 212:2				
128:1 129:1	236:1 237:1	212:3,4,12				
130:1 131:1	238:1 239:1	91 101:16				
132:1 133:1	240:1 241:1	91-year-old				
134:1 135:1	242:1 243:1	177:19				
136:1 137:1	244:1 245:1	930 75:15				
138:1 139:1	246:1 247:1	94 99:11				
140:1 141:1	248:1 249:1	95 13:18				
142:1 143:1	250:1 251:1	9th 224:17				
144:1 145:1	252:1 253:1					
146:1 147:1	254:1 255:1					
148:1 149:1	256:1 257:1					
150:1 151:1	258:1 259:1					
152:1 153:1	260:1 261:1					
154:1 155:1	262:1 263:1					
156:1 157:1	264:1 265:1					
158:1 159:1	266:1					
160:1 161:1	60 26:5,6					
162:1 163:1	131:16					
164:1 165:1	179:17					
166:1 167:1	60,000 103:5					
168:1 169:1	60.5 140:16					
170:1 171:1	600 117:18					
172:1 173:1	61,000 98:16					
174:1 175:1	65 179:17					