

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Thursday, June 3, 2021
9:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

RESOLUTION: 210169

1 - - -

2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good
3 morning. Today is Thursday, June 3rd.
4 This is the Joint Committee of the
5 Committee on Finance and Special
6 Committee on Gun Violence.

7 I understand that state law
8 currently requires that the following
9 announcement be made at the beginning of
10 every remote public hearing as follows:
11 Due to the current public health
12 emergency, City Council Committees are
13 currently meeting remotely. We are
14 using Microsoft Teams to make these
15 remote hearings possible.

16 Instructions for how the public
17 may view and offer public testimony at
18 public hearings of Council Committees
19 are included in the public hearing
20 notices that are published in the Daily
21 News, Inquirer and Legal Intelligencer
22 prior to the hearing and can be found on
23 PHLCouncil.com.

24 Modesto, for a microphone check
25 is my sound okay?

1 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: Yes,
2 your sound sounds good. Let me just
3 double check with the court reporter.

4 How does that sound, Taneha?

5 COURT REPORTER: The
6 Councilmember was clear.

7 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: Thank
8 you.

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.
10 I note that the hour has come.

11 Mr. Iannuzzi, will you please
12 call the roll to take attendance.
13 Members that are in attendance, will you
14 please indicate that you are present
15 when your name is called and say a few
16 brief words to indicate your response so
17 that your image will be displayed on
18 screen when you speak.

19 THE CLERK: Councilmember Cindy
20 Bass.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
22 morning, and I am present. Good
23 morning.

24 THE CLERK: Councilmember Allan
25 Domb.

1 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good morning,
2 Mr. Chair and colleagues. I'm present.

3 THE CLERK: Councilmember Helen
4 Gym.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Good
6 morning, Mr. Chair and Council
7 colleagues. I am present.

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember Bobby
9 Henon.

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: Morning,
11 Mr. Chair. And good morning,
12 colleagues.

13 THE CLERK: Councilmember Mark
14 Squilla.

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good
16 morning, Mr. Chair and colleagues. I'm
17 present.

18 THE CLERK: Chair of the
19 Special Committee, Kenyatta Johnson.

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Present.

21 THE CLERK: And, Chair Derek
22 Green.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Present.
24 Good morning.

25 Thank you, Mr. Iannuzzi. A

1 quorum of these Committees is present,
2 and this hearing is now called to order.
3 This is a public hearing of the Joint
4 Committees on Finance and the Special
5 Committee on Gun Violence regarding
6 Resolution No. 210169.

7 Mr. Iannuzzi, will you please
8 read the title of the resolution.

9 THE CLERK: Resolution No.
10 210169, authorizing the Committees on
11 Finance and on Gun Violence Prevention
12 to hold joint hearings regarding the
13 prevention -- I'm sorry, the connection
14 between poverty, gun violence and
15 systemic racism in Philadelphia.

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
17 Mr. Iannuzzi.

18 Before we begin to hear
19 testimony from the witnesses we have for
20 today, everyone who has been invited to
21 this meeting to testify should be aware
22 that the public hearing is being
23 recorded. Because the hearing is
24 public, participants and viewers have no
25 reasonable expectation of privacy. By

1 continuing to be in this meeting, you
2 are consenting to being recorded.

3 Additionally, prior to
4 recognizing Members for questions or
5 comments they have for witnesses, I will
6 note for the record at this time that we
7 will use the chat feature available in
8 Microsoft Teams to allow Members to
9 signify that they wish to be recognized.

10 In order to comply with the Sunshine
11 Act, the chat feature must only be used
12 for this purpose by members of Council.

13 Mr. Iannuzzi, will you please
14 call the first panel of witnesses that
15 we have to testify this morning.

16 THE CLERK: Michael Rashid,
17 Director of the Department of Commerce,
18 City of Philadelphia; Erica Atwood,
19 Senior Director of the Office of Policy
20 and Strategic Initiatives for Criminal
21 Justice and Public Safety, City of
22 Philadelphia; Bilal Abdul Qayyum,
23 President and Executive Director of
24 Father's Day Rally Committee, Inc.

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Mr. Chair.

1 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. Before
2 we begin, I would like to recognize
3 Councilmember Johnson for some opening
4 comments.

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
6 very much. Mr. Chair, first and
7 foremost, I just want to thank you for
8 your leadership in calling this hearing
9 so we can begin looking at the root
10 causes of why we have gun violence
11 plaguing the City and streets of
12 Philadelphia. And really a lot of times
13 we approach this from a law enforcement
14 standpoint with our District Attorney,
15 our Police Commissioner, Probation,
16 Parole and our Courts. But you have
17 stepped up to the plate and have taken a
18 unique approach to allow us to begin
19 looking at the root causes of why our
20 communities are in the condition that
21 they are in, rather it's from the years
22 of lack of investment in our public
23 school system, rather it's from the
24 years of investment into the economic
25 development of our small businesses and

1 our neighborhoods, rather it's years of
2 investments in supporting our young
3 people.

4 This gives us an opportunity to
5 reimagine gun violence prevention. And
6 so, I just want to say I salute you for
7 taking this unique approach. We know
8 that from statistics in the areas of
9 high poverty, there's high crime and
10 high violence. So this is an
11 opportunity for us to address this from
12 a paradigm shift as we go forward toward
13 the future.

14 So first and foremost, I wanted
15 to acknowledge you for your hard work.
16 Thank you. And I look forward to
17 hearing all of the panelists who are
18 participating today. Thank you,
19 Mr. Chair.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
21 Councilmember Johnson.

22 And to follow up on that point,
23 I will be remiss in not thanking
24 Mr. Bilal Qayyum for actually
25 introducing this concept, this

1 connection between both the issues of
2 gun violence and economic development.
3 Many people know Bilal's work in
4 reference to the Father's Day Rally
5 Committee. But others may not be as
6 familiar with his work as a member of
7 the City's Commerce Department for a
8 number of years. So he brings a unique
9 connection both in what I would say his
10 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. career, but also
11 his 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., if not later
12 work, in trying to address gun violence.
13 And this connection is something that --
14 I know I've seen it through various
15 aspects in my own personal career from
16 working in banking and also being in the
17 District Attorney's Office some years
18 ago.

19 So this issue as Councilmember
20 Johnson talked about of the connection
21 between the increase in gun violence and
22 then the lack of economic development is
23 something that's been here in this City.
24 Too often we talk about these issues in
25 silos. Well, if you focus on gun

1 violence or public safety, this is your
2 platform or this is your portfolio of
3 work. If you're someone who works on
4 economic development or business
5 development or trying to provide equity
6 for Black and Brown businesses, then
7 your portfolio of work is over here.
8 When all of these issues are
9 interconnected, and I think it's more
10 and more that we as members of Council
11 and the public are trying to move beyond
12 the various silos that people put us in
13 or sometimes we ourselves put ourselves
14 in, in trying to look at these things in
15 a comprehensive collective way.

16 In preparation for this
17 hearing, we've also had some outreach to
18 both Pew Charitable Trust as well as the
19 Annie E. Casey Foundation for them to
20 provide some real research on these
21 issues. I've had conversations with
22 them, so this is the first step in this
23 conversation. We look forward to having
24 additional conversations from a more
25 academic approach possibly regarding

1 looking at this issue.

2 We want to start this
3 conversation now, especially as we are
4 going into the summer months coming out
5 of the pandemic. I know a concern that
6 we had in reference to public safety,
7 especially regarding gun violence as we
8 go into the summer, but also looking at
9 the opportunity of the resources that
10 have come to the City from the American
11 Rescue Plan. And we saw what the
12 pandemic did to Black and Brown
13 businesses in the City of Philadelphia
14 across this nation, but here
15 specifically in the City of
16 Philadelphia.

17 And many people are familiar
18 with the statistics regarding Black and
19 Brown businesses where we only have 6
20 percent of businesses with employees
21 that are owned by African-Americans and
22 only 4 percent of businesses with
23 employees owned by people of Hispanic
24 decent, and that's from the U.S. Census
25 Bureau. So that gives an indication of

1 the connection between these issues and
2 concerns.

3 I look forward to this
4 conversation this morning and ongoing
5 conversations as we look to address this
6 concern and issue in a more holistic way
7 to address this systemic problem that's
8 plagued our City.

9 With that, we're going to call
10 our first panel. Mr. Iannuzzi has given
11 you the names of our first panelists.
12 We will start in this order. We'll
13 start with Mr. Bilal Qayyum, and then
14 our Commerce Director Michael Rashid,
15 and then we'll conclude the first panel
16 with Ms. Erica Atwood, the Senior
17 Director of the Office of Policy and
18 Strategic Initiatives for Criminal
19 Justice and Public Safety for our City.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Excuse
21 me, Mr. Chair.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Can I
24 be recognized as present.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. I see

1 Councilmember Jamie Gauthier is also
2 here. Please, thank you for joining us
3 here this morning.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
5 you.

6 MR. QAYYUM: Good morning. Can
7 you hear me?

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: We can hear
9 you. Just state your name for the
10 record and then please proceed with your
11 testimony.

12 MR. QAYYUM: Yes. I am Bilal
13 Qayyum, President of the Father's Day
14 Rally Committee. Good morning, members
15 of City Council. And I want to give a
16 special acknowledgment to Councilman
17 Derek Green and Councilman Kenyatta
18 Johnson for taking the leadership to
19 start this discussion in the City of
20 Philadelphia facing what I believe is a
21 major issue that's going to stop the
22 City from moving forward, and that is
23 addressing the issue of how White
24 institutional racism is affecting the
25 City and its movement forward for all of

1 the citizens in the City.

2 It's very interesting that
3 today's hearing is being held the same
4 week that we're nationally looking at
5 what happened in Tulsa and the burning
6 down of Wall Street 100 years ago and
7 America trying to figure out what is the
8 next steps in our society to address
9 racial divide in our country.

10 We in Philadelphia, if you
11 remember one year ago, had to address
12 this issue after the killing of George
13 Floyd and the uprising that was taking
14 place in Philadelphia but also across
15 the country, and then later after George
16 Floyd, the murder of Walter Wallace by
17 Philadelphia police. Racial tension in
18 Philadelphia still exists just one year
19 after the uprising. But most folks in
20 leadership, in my opinion, have failed
21 to address it in open forums. But today
22 Council has taken a bold move to start
23 the conversation in a public forum. So
24 I hope today's hearing will begin to
25 lead at least for us to agree as

1 citizens that racism has to be addressed
2 in the City of Philadelphia for this
3 City to move forward.

4 During my lifetime I have
5 witnessed and seen racism firsthand from
6 my days when I was growing up in West
7 Philly where I attended Shoemaker Junior
8 High School, and a White teacher told me
9 that I should be in general studies and
10 not in academics because she didn't feel
11 I could handle the workload of being in
12 academic classes.

13 Also, I used to play basketball
14 when I was growing up. And one of the
15 playgrounds we used to want to go to is
16 Tustin Playground which is at 59th and
17 Lancaster Avenue, and we would be run
18 home every other day if we would go to
19 play basketball by these White youth
20 because they didn't want us in the
21 neighborhoods.

22 And when I attended Overbrook
23 High School, Overbrook was 50 percent
24 Black and 50 percent White. Whites
25 would go out one door of the building

1 and Blacks would go out the other door
2 of the building. And then as I moved on
3 and went to college down South and I was
4 in Raleigh, North Carolina and I went to
5 Charlotte University, I used to visit my
6 brother who was at North Carolina
7 Central in Durham, North Carolina, and I
8 used to go down the strip. It's almost
9 like if you could vision in your mind
10 going from Philadelphia to Atlantic
11 City, that long Atlantic City
12 expressway.

13 Well, I was driving down that
14 expressway. I saw 15 cars parked on the
15 side of the expressway and I saw these
16 individuals in white hoods. And what
17 was happening was they were KKK. They
18 were getting ready to organize to do a
19 rally outside of Durham, North Carolina.
20 So I'm saying all that to say that we
21 have to deal with this issue about
22 racism and the fact as Councilman
23 Johnson said, the connection between
24 racism and the City of Philadelphia
25 locking individuals out as well as

1 trying to deal with the violence.

2 Racism in America has been held
3 in places by public policy that evolved
4 over the years by slavery,
5 sharecropping, Jim Crow, redlining, mass
6 incarceration, predatory subprime
7 lending and accepted. Also, I believe
8 very strongly that White institutional
9 racism in the City of Philadelphia has
10 helped drive the level of Black-on-Black
11 violence in this City.

12 Nationally and locally
13 statistics show that Black men are
14 jobless in Philadelphia, and Dr. Bernie
15 Anderson some of you well know who's a
16 major economist basically gives me these
17 numbers: 30 percent of Black males in
18 the City of Philadelphia are jobless.
19 Up to 50 percent of Black male youth are
20 jobless.

21 Councilman Johnson mentioned
22 about only 6 percent of Black business
23 ownership in the City of Philadelphia,
24 the health disparities going on in the
25 City and lack of job opportunities in

1 the public sector and private sector
2 help lead to a lot of young males in
3 particular and young women as well, the
4 hopelessness and lack of self-respect
5 for themselves.

6 If you look at -- there's three
7 reports that were done. One from the
8 Health Department called the Brotherly
9 Love: Health of Black Males and Boys in
10 Philadelphia. In that report, it's a
11 report about the disparity between Black
12 males particularly and Black boys
13 compared to every other ethnic group
14 around the health issue.

15 Look at the report that the
16 City has issued, the 2020 City of
17 Philadelphia Workforce -- excuse me one
18 second -- Diversity Profile and Annual
19 Report about how the lack of leadership
20 position in the Kenney Administration
21 for Black individuals. And also look at
22 the City of Commerce Report. I know we
23 have Michael Rashid on. Look at their
24 report on economy's opportunity report
25 about the lack of or dropping in Black-

1 owned businesses getting City contracts.

2 So I'm saying when a person is
3 locked out of inclusion and
4 opportunities, that person becomes a
5 walking time-bomb that can blow up at
6 any moment. And in most instances, in
7 the City of Philadelphia that person
8 that's a walking time-bomb is a Black
9 male. That's why shootings and
10 homicides in Philadelphia, the major
11 cause is arguments. It's argument-
12 related because people are uptight.

13 So let me end by saying I'm
14 giving a challenge to City Council today
15 to think boldly and take on this issue
16 and come up with solutions and policies
17 to change and help close the loopholes
18 that were being caused by racism in the
19 City of Philadelphia. And, yes, I
20 understand very clearly that a person's
21 heart -- we can't change a person's
22 heart of what they feel. But Council
23 can certainly, surely can change and
24 strike at the structure underpinning
25 racism and public space by developing

1 initiatives and public policy that will
2 change the effect of racism in the City
3 of Philadelphia, particularly as it
4 relates to trying to solve the violence
5 problem in the City of Philadelphia.

6 So with that statement,
7 Councilman Green, I thank you once again
8 and the members of Council for allowing
9 me to open up this session today. Thank
10 you very much.

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
12 Mr. Qayyum.

13 We would like to acknowledge
14 that we have also been joined by
15 Councilmember Kendra Brooks.

16 I did not know that you
17 attended Shaw University. You also made
18 reference to an institution that's close
19 to my heart, North Carolina Central
20 where my wife attended, so she's always
21 reminded me of how well the Eagles do in
22 a lot of different areas. But when she
23 talks about Eagles, she's talking about
24 North Carolina Central, not the
25 Philadelphia Eagles.

1 So with that, I would like
2 to -- then we'll have questions for
3 Mr. Qayyum and other members of this
4 panel. Next, we'll hear from
5 Mr. Michael Rashid, our Commerce
6 Director, and then Ms. Erica Atwood.

7 MR. RASHID: Good morning,
8 members of the Committees on Finance and
9 on Gun Violence Prevention. My name is
10 Michael Rashid and I'm the Director of
11 Commerce for the City of Philadelphia.
12 I'm here to provide testimony on
13 Resolution 210169 regarding the
14 connection between poverty, gun violence
15 and systemic racism in Philadelphia.

16 The responsibility of reducing
17 gun violence cannot be put on a single
18 program or initiative. Every agency,
19 every business has a role to play. The
20 public health system must be involved.
21 The school system must be involved.
22 Obviously, the police must be involved.
23 Even early child care centers must be
24 involved in reducing gun violence. The
25 business community especially, since it

1 controls access to jobs, wage rates,
2 access to training programs, new
3 business locations and much more.

4 The business community plays a
5 gigantic role in helping to reduce gun
6 violence. And investments and equity
7 and justice for everyone will pay off
8 for everyone, including pay off for the
9 business community. You know, the young
10 people have a slogan where they say No
11 Justice No Peace. More and more our
12 friends in the business community of
13 Philadelphia are coming to understand a
14 similar phrase, and that is, No Justice
15 No Profits.

16 As the City is more and more
17 safe, businesses will have more and more
18 customers. As they have more and more
19 customers, we would expect that their
20 profits will increase. As incomes rise,
21 as more and more people have fair wages
22 and they're able to build up their
23 wealth, customers will have more money
24 to spend and business profits will rise.
25 So economic justice for all is a good

1 business tactic and the prevention of
2 any kind of violence, especially gun
3 violence will help businesses make more
4 money.

5 My friend Ms. Erica Atwood is
6 going to talk to you in a few minutes
7 and she says a lot of times the
8 following statement, she says that
9 investments, we should build coalitions
10 to work for investments to help people
11 who built this country for free, did not
12 get paid a penny for 300 years to build
13 our country, and we should make
14 investments in those people and if we do
15 so, we will have more economic justice
16 in our society. That's a message that
17 truly resonates with me, and our
18 Commerce Department takes that message
19 to the business community.

20 For too many young people in
21 our City, opportunity feels scarce and
22 it feels out of reach. Their reality is
23 that the rich is getting richer and the
24 poorer are getting poorer. They see the
25 party and they hear the music, but they

1 did not get an invitation. They feel
2 excluded and they feel isolated, and
3 that's a recipe for violence and social
4 unrest.

5 Here is how the Commerce
6 Department seeks to change these things.
7 First of all, we invest in places. We
8 make meaningful investments to sustain
9 commercial corridors in our
10 neighborhoods. Commercial corridors
11 such as Germantown Avenue, Woodland
12 Avenue, Girard Avenue, North 52nd
13 Street, Kensington and Allegheny and
14 many more. All have benefited from
15 streetscape enhancements, storefront
16 improvements and more. The work that we
17 do on commercial corridors is based on
18 relationships.

19 In 2020 alone, our business
20 service managers provided one-on-one
21 support to almost 12,000 businesses.
22 Commerce targets 90 commercial corridors
23 and funds 48 community-based
24 organizations. We promote economic
25 development by renovating commercial

1 properties. We connect businesses with
2 City programs and technical assistance.
3 We help businesses connect with their
4 communities.

5 Ownership, ownership creates
6 neighborhood stability and community
7 wealth. We use federal funds to support
8 acquisition loan programs. We will be
9 directing proceeds from the Neighborhood
10 Preservation Initiative to support
11 grants for business owners looking to
12 purchase buildings.

13 The Commerce Department also
14 invests in people. Every year our team
15 connects with thousands of businesses of
16 all sizes. We serve as a broker
17 connecting the dots between businesses
18 who need employees and motivated
19 employees. During the last 18 months,
20 we connected 7,000 employees to 189
21 companies looking to locate or retain
22 their locations in our City. We can do
23 better.

24 Commerce finances the building
25 of pipelines that connect residents to

1 high growth industries like life
2 sciences and advanced manufacturing. We
3 train Philadelphians as part of the PHL
4 Taking Care of Business program to
5 connect returning citizens to employment
6 through the Fair Chance Hiring
7 Initiative.

8 We see entrepreneurship as a
9 growth and wealth-building strategy.
10 Self-employment is the right fit for
11 many Philadelphians, and we establish
12 entrepreneurship as a career option and
13 a pathway out of poverty. Finally, the
14 Commerce Department facilitates
15 collaboration and accountability among
16 the City's large corporations and
17 institutions.

18 Our job is not done until we
19 can leverage the billions of dollars in
20 public and private sector resources to
21 create economic justice for our
22 communities. We take our mission very
23 seriously, and we look forward to
24 working with the Council to make
25 violence prevention a top priority for

1 all institutions in our great City.
2 Thank you for the opportunity to testify
3 today, and I'm happy to answer any
4 questions that you may have for me.

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
6 Mr. Rashid.

7 Ms. Atwood.

8 MS. ATWOOD: Good day, Chair
9 Green and Chair Johnson as well as
10 members of the Finance Committee and
11 Special Committee on Gun Violence
12 Prevention. I am Erica Atwood, Senior
13 Director for the Policy and Strategic
14 Initiatives for Criminal Justice and
15 Public Safety. Thank you for the
16 opportunity to testify today on
17 Resolution No. 210169.

18 On the hills of the 100th
19 anniversary of the Tulsa massacre, today
20 I give context of structural violence,
21 specifically poverty and the lack of
22 economic opportunity to the literal
23 violence we see that plague our
24 neighborhoods daily. As you may recall
25 in the Roadmap to Safer Communities, we

1 laid out that gun violence in
2 Philadelphia is largely concentrated in
3 communities that also experience
4 structural violence.

5 Structural violence refers to
6 harm that individuals, families and
7 communities experience from economic and
8 social structures that prevent them from
9 meeting basic needs. This includes
10 social institutions, relationships of
11 power, privilege, inequality and
12 inequity. I would argue that gun
13 violence isn't the core problem. It is
14 a symptom. It is a symptom of
15 historical divestment and structural
16 racism, specifically in Black
17 communities that has existed for
18 generations.

19 The neighborhoods that are most
20 vulnerable to gun violence where young
21 Black men and boys live, these
22 communities have experienced decades of
23 discrimination and lack of investment
24 shutting them out of opportunities.
25 Businesses, banks and government

1 agencies have often chosen not to invest
2 in Black communities. Black
3 Philadelphians account for 44 percent of
4 the City's population, yet only 5
5 percent of small employer businesses.

6 Gun violence status shows a
7 correlation between neighborhoods with
8 concentrated poverty and concentrated
9 community violence. In these
10 neighborhoods, schools may not have the
11 resources they need or infrastructure,
12 including housing and roads may have
13 fallen in disrepair.

14 Businesses have been closed or
15 denied funds required to keep up with
16 community needs. Banks may not operate
17 forcing community members to rely on
18 more expensive payday lenders or check
19 cashing businesses. Low graduation
20 rates and high incarceration rates
21 contribute to an unemployment rate for
22 Black males at roughly 13 percent. That
23 is more than double White male
24 unemployment rate.

25 Generational unemployment that

1 affects Black men may also mean that
2 young people grow up without role models
3 or social networks that could help them
4 successfully access sustainable jobs and
5 careers, a clear indicator of the simple
6 fact that poverty and violent crime
7 continue to afflict cities and
8 communities across this country. The
9 fact is, especially true for
10 Philadelphia, where the poverty rate has
11 hovered at about 25 percent since the
12 2008 great recession, the highest among
13 our cities in the U.S. according to the
14 2018 Census, and where homicide rate is
15 at the highest point since 2007.

16 An actual study from 2007
17 compared neighborhoods with a median
18 family income of about 12,000 with
19 neighborhoods with a median of about
20 30,000 to evaluate the differences in
21 socioeconomic impact and distress.
22 Based on this data, characteristics of
23 communities with a median income of
24 \$12,000 on average show nearly 54
25 percent of the families live before the

1 poverty rate. 42 percent of households
2 are on public assistance, and the
3 unemployment rate is roughly around 30
4 percent. 35 percent of single parent
5 homes translating to single parent
6 incomes -- single home incomes. And 6
7 percent has a Bachelor's degree or
8 higher.

9 This data compared to
10 communities with a median income of
11 \$30,000, which experience on average 11
12 percent of families living below the
13 poverty rate, 10 percent of households
14 on public assistance, 8 percent
15 unemployment rate, 7 percent single-
16 parent, single-income households and 15
17 percent with a Bachelor's degree or
18 higher.

19 Every day young Black men and
20 boys are working hard to put themselves
21 on a path to success and well-being.
22 They are attending and graduating from
23 school, aspiring toward jobs and careers
24 and taking care of their families and
25 communities. Unfortunately all too

1 often, they run the gauntlet of violence
2 that cut short to their dreams and
3 homes. Homicides are the leading cause
4 of death for young Black men and boys
5 ages 15 to 24.

6 Research shows their experience
7 with violence, whether as a victim, a
8 survivor or a witness sets them apart
9 from nearly every other demographic
10 group, including Black men over 24,
11 White men and Black women and girls. In
12 addition to the devastating impact on
13 young Black men themselves, violence
14 inflicts trauma on entire families,
15 neighborhoods and the City.

16 If we participate -- if we view
17 participation and gun violence and crime
18 through an economic lens where
19 individuals make decisions around
20 illegal activity based on personal and
21 social cost-benefit analysis, then
22 changing the cost-benefit ratio for
23 those at risk on the community and
24 individual levels means improving
25 economic mobility and making education,

1 legal employment more valuable which can
2 outsize the impact of violence and
3 crime. This means looking beyond
4 traditional analysis of violent crime
5 and digging deeper into the
6 intersectionality between violence and
7 other community-level indicators like
8 poverty, education, community
9 connectivity, blight and health.

10 By doing so, we will be better-
11 positioned to explore, implement and
12 evaluate targeted interventions and
13 prevention tactics. One way of reducing
14 violence is through disruption of
15 neighborhood disadvantage and fully
16 investing in these communities.
17 Investments need to be aimed at
18 beautification and business development
19 so economic mobility is not dependent on
20 physical mobility.

21 Workforce development programs
22 are one example of interventions aimed
23 at disrupting the cycle of poverty and
24 have shown particularly strong efficacy
25 in altering the cost-benefit assessments

1 with the goal of reducing violent
2 behavior. Studies across the country
3 and across diverse communities have
4 shown how targeted workforce trainings
5 has significant impacts on both younger,
6 older and previously incarcerated
7 populations.

8 Providing pathways to more and
9 better opportunity has clearly been
10 shown to interrupt patterns of economic
11 disadvantage, thus interrupting the
12 cycle of violence. To that end, smaller
13 community-based businesses play a
14 critical role in the local workforce
15 accounting for 33 percent of the City's
16 total employment. And while Black men
17 and boys are disproportionately impacted
18 by violence, increasingly research tells
19 us that race is not a risk factor in
20 violence. Structural racism is. That
21 is why we must also focus on dismantling
22 policies and practices that contribute
23 to violence, such as discrimination in
24 employment, lending, housing, policing
25 and unjust disciplinary practices in

1 schools.

2 We must also change the
3 narrative and end the perpetuation of
4 negative perceptions of young men and
5 boys. Waging a war on gun violence
6 isn't the answer. The answer is
7 recognizing and restoring investments
8 never made in people that built this
9 country for free. Thank you for the
10 opportunity to testify, and I will be
11 happy to respond to any questions.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
13 Ms. Atwood, Commerce Director Rashid and
14 Mr. Qayyum, for today's testimony. It
15 was interesting both Ms. Atwood and
16 others have talked this week about the
17 Greenwood section of Tulsa, Oklahoma,
18 this being the 100th anniversary of the
19 Tulsa massacre, and a number of people
20 at a national level, even here locally
21 have talked about Tulsa.

22 What is interesting, and I know
23 we're focusing here on the City of
24 Philadelphia and the connection of gun
25 violence and economic development and

1 systemic racism, when we look at Tulsa,
2 you have a 1 in 16 chance of being a
3 victim of violent crime or poverty of
4 crime in the city of Tulsa. It's
5 identified as one of the more violent
6 cities in America. But also when you
7 look at Tulsa from a population
8 perspective, 34 percent of African-
9 Americans who live in Tulsa live in
10 poverty compared to 13 percent of White
11 Americans that live in Tulsa live in
12 poverty. So you can make the direction
13 connection of the lack of economic
14 investment from, one, the massacre of
15 the Greenwood community of Tulsa to then
16 even when that community was rebuilt,
17 you still have other dynamics of urban
18 renewal that also continue devastating
19 and shrinking the Greenwood District of
20 Tulsa and to where we are now in
21 reference to economic development
22 poverty in that city.

23 So I guess my first question is
24 for any of the panelists -- well, let me
25 specifically ask Mr. Rashid. You talked

1 about the PHL Taking Care of Business
2 Initiative and working with returning
3 citizens and also talking about the Fair
4 Chance Hiring Initiative. Can you give
5 us some more perspective on how the
6 Commerce Department has been working
7 with either anti-violence or grassroots
8 violence organizations like Mr. Qayyum
9 has been involved in over the years to
10 really try to promote the business
11 community to hire more people or
12 returning citizens, and also the
13 opportunities for entrepreneurship for
14 those who are doing the grassroots anti-
15 violence initiatives, can then give the
16 opportunity to provide those who may be
17 starting to veer on a path that we don't
18 want them to veer to, can see different
19 perspectives and exposure to
20 entrepreneurship.

21 MR. RASHID: Thank you. Thank
22 you, Councilmember, for that question.
23 I have members of my staff here on the
24 line and they can speak to it in detail.
25 But let me just say, as I tried to

1 indicate in my testimony, we see our
2 role as connecting the dots. We're the
3 dot-connector because we talk to
4 businesses every day, from all types of
5 businesses every day. And through our
6 connection with various entities all
7 over the City, whether it's the
8 Community College of Philadelphia or all
9 of the violence prevention initiatives,
10 working with Ms. Atwood and many people
11 that she works with, we find from them
12 the types of programs that they are
13 working with and the types of people
14 that they are working with.

15 And so, when we talk to
16 employers, employers say I need this
17 type of people, I need that type of
18 person, we know where to go to, to bring
19 those type of people to the table. We
20 actually make grants to certain agencies
21 to train people for specific jobs.

22 Karen, you want to speak --
23 Karen Fegley, you want to speak to that
24 a little bit or Heloise, if Heloise is
25 on the line.

1 MS. JETTISON: Good morning.
2 Good morning, Council. I can speak a
3 little bit to the Fair Chance Hiring
4 Initiative, specifically that is an
5 initiative that is geared towards
6 supporting returning citizens who want
7 to work. But what it is, is a way for
8 us to incentivize employers, and mostly
9 small- and medium-sized businesses who
10 are in need of talent and open to a
11 diverse population to hire from, and our
12 workforce team works with the employer
13 and then also with our workforce
14 partners and even some of the
15 organizations that are community-based
16 to resource individuals to make sure
17 that they are prepared and have the
18 supports in place, be ready for work.

19 So we work specifically to
20 connect the employers who are
21 incentivized, but we also have an
22 incentive for the individuals, the
23 returning citizen, to work. And these
24 employers are prepared. They
25 understand. They know what to do as far

1 as flexibility and being sensitive to
2 needs and maybe a flexible schedule for
3 our individuals, and they work together
4 purposely so that there are more
5 opportunities for our returning citizen
6 population to work. So that is the Fair
7 Chance Hiring Initiative, which is
8 specifically for returning citizens and
9 small- and medium-sized businesses
10 located in Philadelphia.

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And so, let
12 me ask this question to Ms. Atwood from
13 a little different perspective in
14 reference to the anti-violence
15 initiative that you've been working and
16 been working on from a macro strategic
17 perspective. What has been from your
18 perspective the engagement or the
19 involvement of either economic
20 development either through
21 entrepreneurship or other type of
22 opportunities as a way to address and
23 stem gun violence in the City.

24 MS. ATWOOD: So I think we're
25 figuring out where the entry point for

1 entrepreneurship is on a number of
2 levels, two in particular. And so, as
3 we're looking at entrepreneurs and small
4 businesses as employers, how are we
5 connecting those individuals who are
6 interested in work and could be matched
7 with those employers. And so, how are
8 we supporting that work of Commerce.

9 And there's also the notion of
10 how are we cultivating and developing
11 young people to be entrepreneurs. And
12 so, how are we saying, okay, well, you
13 have this entrepreneur spirit, you have
14 this hustle drive, what are we doing
15 with that, and how can we cultivate that
16 in a way to make your idea make money
17 and do it in a way so you can be your
18 own boss.

19 And so, there is a younger
20 generation of individuals that want to
21 run their own ships. They want to chart
22 their own course, and we are looking at
23 ways that we can support them and give
24 them the tools and capacity-building
25 they need to chart their own destiny and

1 chart their own course.

2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And then I
3 have a question for Mr. Qayyum from your
4 perspective, and then one other
5 question. I see Councilmember Domb also
6 has a question as well.

7 Mr. Qayyum, from your
8 perspective what do you see as the need
9 from the public sector, both from the
10 Commerce side as well as the anti-
11 violence public safety perspective of
12 how people in the community can better
13 benefit and bring these type of services
14 together, because it seems like we're
15 still at the starting stage, but we need
16 to have a much deeper dive in making
17 that connection to show someone that the
18 work that you've done over the years
19 who's on the corner of the block and
20 some of those, and I'll use Ms. Atwood's
21 phrase, hustle skills to put that into
22 an entrepreneurial venture that can help
23 them and also help their community as
24 opposed to going into a different way?

25 MR. QAYYUM: (Muted).

1 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Mr. Qayyum,
2 I think you are on mute. There you go.

3 MR. QAYYUM: First of all, and
4 I want to apologize if I speak out of
5 turn on this, but I'm also Chair of the
6 Mayor's Commission on African-American
7 Males Economic Development Committee,
8 and we have a proposal that we have
9 submitted to the Administration
10 requesting -- it's called the GAP,
11 Growth Advisory Program, where we
12 recruit Black males coming out of the
13 institutions as well as other locations.
14 And the goal is to create 80 new Black
15 businesses, Black male businesses per
16 year.

17 We have a curriculum. We have
18 a partnership with the Business Center,
19 which you're well aware of, Councilman
20 Green, and also with the West
21 Philadelphia Financial Institute in West
22 Philly -- they changed their name -- to
23 actually recruit and find young men who
24 want to come off the corners, and the
25 young men that a lot of them that are

1 looking for alternatives, which
2 Ms. Atwood talked about, about the
3 hustle, and put it into real businesses.
4 So that is something that we are
5 pursuing to get support from the
6 Administration on with this upcoming
7 budget.

8 Second thing is I just think
9 what is constantly missing is the
10 connection, how do you connect the anti-
11 violence groups with the City and the
12 City's departments, let's say the
13 Workforce Development or Commerce and
14 not only Commerce, but with the larger
15 White corporate community and in
16 Philadelphia that should be and do a lot
17 of hiring within the institutions in the
18 City, how do you do that connection I
19 think is a gap that still has to be
20 addressed.

21 I know in all fairness to
22 Erica, she's just been on board for a
23 couple of months and I understand that
24 she's now working her best to begin to
25 work a system to make that connection.

1 And I think that's one of the -- and you
2 know, I'm big on and folks might have
3 remember, but 14 years ago I walked to
4 Harrisburg under the banner Jobs Not
5 Guns, so I've always been a big
6 component that give a guy, a woman, a
7 job we're going to change their
8 lifestyle. So I'm big on jobs.

9 I still think that there might
10 be a disconnection between the anti-
11 violence groups I work with and the
12 workforce development. I know they're
13 beginning to have that conversation, and
14 I know that Council in particular with
15 the leadership of President Clarke is
16 beginning to have that conversation more
17 and more, how do you connect workforce
18 development agencies, Philadelphia Works
19 and stuff with anti-violence groups to
20 support them to help do, one, training
21 and put them in jobs.

22 And the last thing I just want
23 to say on that, Councilman, is that
24 something has emerged lately that is
25 hard to deal with, but some guys we find

1 out or some folks, and it's not only
2 Black folks but across America now don't
3 want to work, because they're getting
4 money from the stimulus checks and all
5 that, and that's why you got Chickie's &
6 Pete's last week or two weeks ago had an
7 ad. They needed to hire 200 people and
8 they were hiring people on the spot, and
9 that's across the spectrum that I'm
10 pretty sure that Michael can talk about,
11 across the spectrum of all businesses in
12 the City, so we got to address that
13 issue as well. How do folks that are
14 getting income from other sources and
15 not illegal sources -- I mean, from
16 legal sources and they just don't want
17 to work. So that's going to be another
18 hurdle that we're going to have to
19 address in this City as we move forward.
20 All the restaurants in the City
21 are crying for workers. But also, I
22 think we can take that and use that as
23 our advantage for us, so we can get guys
24 who -- because the jobs are there. A
25 lot of jobs are available now. So that

1 could be to our advantage, is how do we
2 grab these guys off the corners, do the
3 first step to get their mindset right,
4 that they're willing to change their
5 lives, and then we help them with
6 training, workforce development,
7 activities and then tie them to get the
8 jobs.

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I have one
10 final question. But before I go to my
11 last, I'm going to do a bit of
12 housekeeping. I know that Reverend
13 Gregory Holston is also here. He's
14 actually testifying on behalf of the
15 District Attorney's Office. So after
16 the questions from Councilmember Domb
17 and Councilmember Gym, we'll then hear
18 Reverend Gregory Holston as a part of
19 this panel, and we'll open it up for
20 additional questions.

21 My last question, and Commerce
22 Director Rashid, you made reference to
23 life sciences in your testimony. And it
24 was an article, I believe, two weeks ago
25 about the growth of life sciences in the

1 City of Philadelphia. And as we all
2 know, Philadelphia is known as a city of
3 eds and meds on education and health
4 care perspective, so life sciences
5 provide a real opportunity for those
6 coming out of University of
7 Pennsylvania, Temple, Drexel to get an
8 opportunity for a research and
9 development family-sustaining wage, but
10 also for those who are not coming out of
11 those institutions of higher learning,
12 for those who receive a certification or
13 some other training coming out of our
14 high schools can also have an
15 opportunity for getting a significant
16 job that's a family-sustaining wage in
17 the life sciences space as well.

18 So the question I have from the
19 growth of that industry which provides
20 some real promise here in the City of
21 Philadelphia and in the region and then
22 looking at the anti-violence work that
23 Ms. Atwood's talking about and then also
24 what Mr. Qayyum's talking about in
25 reference to his work, how do we provide

1 that exposure to those young people who
2 are looking for different things, maybe
3 thinking about going to college or maybe
4 not thinking about going to college, but
5 have an interest or just having that
6 exposure to the opportunities in this
7 new growing industry in the City of
8 Philadelphia like life sciences that
9 also we can get that information to
10 those grassroots community organizations
11 that Mr. Qayyum is talking about to give
12 them that information to talk to young
13 people as they're talking to young
14 people about these opportunities?

15 MR. RASHID: Right. I want to
16 address life sciences because it is a
17 booming -- I can't think of another
18 term -- booming area in our City,
19 University City and all around there,
20 and just so much is going on. And I
21 want to ask Sarah if she can talk about
22 that, Sarah Steltz who has worked in
23 that area.

24 But first, I have to address
25 something that my friend Bilal Qayyum

1 said about people that don't want to
2 work. There's this thing out here in
3 the world now that people don't want to
4 work because the stimulus program, you
5 know, they can make more sitting at home
6 than they can working. There's some
7 facts that need to be taken into account
8 when people hear that, and I have to
9 address that.

10 First of all, a lot of females,
11 especially women in our society, because
12 they don't have child care and the
13 schools have not been in session, they
14 felt the need to stay at home with their
15 children and not let them just be in the
16 house by themselves and bad things can
17 happen, and we've seen bad things happen
18 from a violence point of view where a
19 child from South Philly was by himself
20 or herself and was killed. School was
21 out and school was remote, and the
22 parent went to work and the child was
23 killed. So lack of child care is a real
24 issue for a lot of people while the
25 schools are closed and, therefore, they

1 don't go to work.

2 Another reason people are not
3 willing to go to work is because of
4 safety. A lot of restaurant people,
5 people who work in restaurants don't
6 want to go to work because when you go
7 to restaurants, you take off your mask,
8 and I don't want to be working around a
9 lot of people with no mask and I can be
10 catching COVID, so that is a concern.

11 And even today as we are coming
12 out of the masks, there are a lot of
13 restaurants saying they want to mandate
14 that people wear masks as much as
15 possible in the restaurants because
16 people are afraid to come to work. So
17 there's a lot of considerations why this
18 whole thing is out there about people
19 don't want to work, and obviously, it's
20 the minimum wage.

21 Minimum wage in Philadelphia
22 and Pennsylvania is so low. And if we
23 can get the state to come up and have a
24 decent minimum wage in our City, in our
25 state, I think people will be more

1 motivated to come to work, but it's not
2 because people are lazy. I have to
3 speak to that myth. Don't say people
4 just don't want to work because we want
5 to get a welfare check.

6 So let me ask, Sarah, if you
7 can speak to, this is your background
8 working at University City and putting
9 those kind of people to work, so can you
10 speak to that a little bit.

11 MS. STELTZ: Yeah. Sure. I
12 agree with Mike that life sciences is a
13 burgeoning industry and our business
14 development team has staff members
15 specifically focused on bringing life
16 sciences companies to Philadelphia. But
17 for life sciences to grow here in
18 Philadelphia, of course we need the
19 talent that Councilman Green mentioned
20 related to lab jobs, research jobs
21 coming out of many of the major
22 universities. But in order for the
23 industry to really grow as it can, we
24 also need to establish opportunities for
25 those in the manufacturing and

1 production space in cell and gene
2 therapy. Those jobs do not have the
3 same level of educational requirements
4 that the lab and science space jobs do.

5 So we also need to think about
6 the real estate available since
7 manufacturing requires a much larger
8 footprint, and we're working with our
9 partners at PIDC to make sure that
10 happens. For me as someone who has a
11 workforce background, think about how
12 you can create opportunity at scale in a
13 specific industry, what is required is
14 some employer infrastructure. So not an
15 employer here, an employer there that
16 you can tap into, but instead an
17 industry partnership model where you
18 have a bunch of employers coming
19 together to talk about their needs and
20 to act as resources to connect and train
21 people for those jobs. And you need the
22 programs of course. You train people
23 for those roles, but there is an
24 industry partnership that has started
25 over the last year by the Chamber in

1 partnership with Philadelphia Works.

2 So I would like to invite Pat
3 Clancy to speak. I believe he's on the
4 line. Pat is the President of
5 Philadelphia Works, the City's workforce
6 board, to add more detail on that.

7 MR. CLANCY: Sure. Thank you.
8 Good morning, everybody. Thank you for
9 having me join the conversation today,
10 which is really a critical issue, how do
11 we get individuals into good paying jobs
12 with long-term careers. And one of the
13 things that we're working with the
14 Greater Philadelphia Chamber is funding
15 an industry partnership which enables
16 the Chamber to kind of drill down into
17 those life science companies that are
18 growing in our region --

19 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Mr. Clancy,
20 if you could just state your name for
21 the record for the stenographer.

22 MR. CLANCY: Sure. I'm Patrick
23 Clancy, President and CEO of
24 Philadelphia Works. The Chamber is
25 working diligently with the life science

1 sector to really see where is there
2 opportunity across all different levels
3 of occupations and really begin to think
4 through how do we build those pipelines
5 into those various occupations, and some
6 of it's entry level, some of it's mid
7 level, but not missing the opportunity
8 for us as a region to kind of make sure
9 that as life sciences are growing either
10 in University City or at the Navy Yard,
11 that we have a pool of applicants that
12 are beginning now to learn and
13 understand what STEM is, so we're
14 working with the Chamber on that.

15 Just going back to what Sarah
16 said, the most successful models have
17 been when employers are engaged. We can
18 do all the data collection we want. But
19 when we are working with employers
20 directly and they help us shape sort of
21 the curriculum and sort of how to get
22 people ready, that is where we're most
23 successful and I think that's why our
24 strong-working relationship with the
25 Commerce Department and the Chamber

1 really has provided benefits.

2 And hopefully as we build these
3 models out, we have a life sciences one,
4 but we also have an hospitality one, we
5 also have an advanced manufacturing one,
6 we have financial sector one in the
7 smaller version with BankWork\$ and OIC.
8 So we're beginning to look at all our
9 critical industries and see where we can
10 begin to sort of map it out so we can
11 have better opportunities for people.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
13 Mr. Clancy and Ms. Steltz and
14 Mr. Rashid, for those comments. Those
15 are all great. But I think the concern,
16 and I'm very familiar with the work
17 that's happening through the
18 Philadelphia Skills Forward Initiative,
19 I'm glad to hear that Philadelphia Works
20 is engaged in this concept regarding
21 life sciences, but the challenge is that
22 that research is being done, but that
23 information is not getting to people in
24 the community to know that, hey, if I'm
25 a person that's doing an initiative, a

1 program on my block in my community and
2 I know that there's this opportunity for
3 jobs in life sciences and I know some
4 young people that I come and encounter
5 with that are interested in biology or I
6 see them always asking me about science
7 or this issue or that issue and they're
8 asking me about Garrett Morgan or
9 Granville T. Woods or just interested in
10 STEM and I can see that aptitude, I
11 think it's at that grassroots level that
12 people need to know about this work
13 because then they can say, listen, I
14 have some young people who need to be
15 exposed to this because I see they have
16 an interest in this field. And I think
17 that's ultimately what is happening.

18 I know my experience at
19 INROADS. I know people who went to
20 PRIME and a whole bunch of other
21 programs over the years going back to
22 the '70s and '80s, but it's that
23 opportunity for exposure for those who
24 are closely connected to young people
25 can say, hey, there's a program that

1 talks about or is interested or give me
2 some information or maybe give you a
3 career path based on I can see what
4 you're interested in because you're
5 always borrowing your grandfather's
6 magnifying glass or some other type of
7 thing that you're interested in, science
8 or the T.V. or you're always on the
9 phone. That's the disconnect that is
10 not occurring, and that's what needs to
11 occur.

12 Now, I want to recognize
13 Councilmember Domb and Councilmember Gym
14 for questions.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good morning,
16 Mr. Chair.

17 Thank you and thank you
18 everybody who's on the panel. I just
19 have a couple of quick questions to
20 Commerce Director Michael Rashid. Can
21 you share with us the total number of
22 dollars the City currently commits to on
23 an annual basis for the small Black and
24 Brown businesses grant programs?

25 MR. RASHID: I can get that

1 number for you, Councilmember. But the
2 whole City, I don't have that handy, but
3 I can get it for you.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Do you think
5 it's like 10 million, 15 million or 20
6 million or you're not really sure yet?

7 MR. RASHID: I don't want to
8 speculate or guess. Let me get the
9 number for you.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And I guess
11 the follow-up to that, if you can do
12 this study maybe, in your opinion and
13 Commerce's opinion, how many additional
14 grant dollars into the programs could
15 really change the trajectory from that
16 so we have an idea from the Commerce
17 Department what are we spending now, how
18 do we change the trajectory, how much
19 money will that cost us and how do we go
20 about doing that. If you can come back
21 to this Committee with that information,
22 I think that will be helpful for us.

23 MR. RASHID: Okay. Will do.
24 Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

1 And then the other questions I have,
2 I've been listening and I keep thinking
3 to myself, something we talked about
4 yesterday, I don't want to sound like a
5 broken record but it does upset me. In
6 the last 10 years the jobs we created in
7 Philadelphia, and I think this speaks to
8 what Chairman Green was talking about,
9 the jobs we created in Philadelphia 60.5
10 percent, 60.5 percent pay less than
11 30,000. We're actually creating a
12 tremendous amount of low-income jobs.

13 And when you compare us to the
14 top 25 cities, that's 28 percent for the
15 cities. We're double that. And then
16 when you compare us to the U.S., they're
17 29 percent. And again, we're double in
18 a category where we're falling far
19 behind, I guess, what we call the
20 family-sustaining jobs that pay 35,000
21 to 100,000 where we're half of everybody
22 else.

23 And so, with that in the
24 background, there's so many things we
25 need to do besides investing in our tax

1 structure to create more jobs, but also
2 education and violence and so forth.
3 Would it make sense for us at this point
4 in time to really make the investment,
5 something I've been talking about for
6 five years, and make mandatory in our
7 school system for prevention, teaching
8 from PreK to 12th grade, teach that
9 financial literacy, teach that
10 technology that we all realize is so
11 crucial and teach entrepreneurship?

12 The country of Israel teaches
13 entrepreneurship. 28 percent of their
14 graduates go into their own businesses.
15 It does work. I'm thinking about it.
16 I'm thinking about myself as an example.
17 I never was a great student, but I
18 always liked things that were of
19 interest to me, and maybe we just have
20 to find that for every one of our
21 students what is of interest to them.
22 And for many of them it could be
23 entrepreneurship and we could change
24 that trajectory. Because right now, the
25 formation of our Black and Brown

1 businesses of the City is abysmal. So
2 this is just one thought, and I don't
3 want to put it out there. Maybe this is
4 part of the investment you make. We
5 won't see the benefits of this for the
6 next 5 or 10 years, but you will see the
7 benefits in 15 to 20 years. It is a
8 long-term outlook.

9 Anyway thank you, Mr. Chair.
10 And I appreciate this Committee. Thank
11 you very much.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
13 Councilmember Domb.

14 Councilmember Gym.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes. Thank
16 you very much, Mr. Chair.

17 First of all, I just wanted to
18 thank the Commerce Department and
19 Heloise for doing a brief overview on
20 the Fair Chance Hiring Initiative. This
21 is an area that I've been keenly
22 interested in, in part because it's just
23 around some of our thinking.

24 Traditionally, we had worked
25 closely with Sylvie on tracking the

1 evolution of the program. So initially,
2 it came in the form of tax credits to
3 employers who hire formerly incarcerated
4 individuals. And then the Commerce
5 Department switched it from tax credit
6 on the back-end to a grant on the front
7 end, and it seemed to be far more
8 successful.

9 And so, we were talking
10 initially with the Commerce Department
11 about given the success of the program,
12 to what extent it might be expanded as
13 the budget permits in this post-COVID
14 environment, but also to deal with
15 vulnerable youth for example. We've
16 been looking at the importance of
17 guaranteed employment, support for small
18 businesses who engage young people who
19 are, for example, in the top 10 zip
20 codes most impacted by gun violence or
21 who attend 1 out of the 25 schools where
22 50 percent of the youth who have been
23 shot in the last 22 years have been in
24 attendance. So I'm interested in
25 hearing from your perspective a little

1 bit more about the Fair Chance Hiring
2 Initiative and the possibility of
3 expansion if, for example, Council was
4 to exclude it and whether the Department
5 in particular would be interested or see
6 any possibilities in the relationships
7 that you've built through the small
8 businesses you've worked with to
9 potentially expand it, support small
10 businesses locally and help us engage
11 and employ vulnerable at-risk
12 individuals.

13 MR. RASHID: First of all,
14 thank you for your comments and you're
15 right, that is a wonderful program. It
16 has shown much greater effectiveness
17 than some of the tax credit programs and
18 also much easier to administer.

19 Heloise, you want to talk more
20 about how we're going to expand the Fair
21 Chance Program.

22 MS. JETTISON: Good morning.
23 As far as expansion, so we have the
24 funds. We need more people prepared for
25 the employers that we have. We got a

1 lot of really strong businesses, strong
2 employers that are in need of talent.
3 What we are endeavoring to do as far as
4 expansion is widening our network of
5 where we get talent from, whether it's
6 from small grassroots organizations that
7 are preparing individuals that are
8 providing support services and
9 cultivating that culture with the folks
10 that are ready to work in a progressive
11 way so that we can offer them as viable
12 candidates to our employer partners.
13 That's the expansion that we need.

14 We have employers, over 40 to
15 45 employers that are hiring, that are
16 open to hiring that have positions, and
17 what we need to do is ensure that we are
18 reaching all of those organizations.
19 Again, the ones we know, the ones we all
20 know very well that we can name as well
21 as those that are in the communities
22 where these businesses are located that
23 they understand what is needed, that the
24 basic tenets of work readiness that we
25 need for our individuals to be prepared

1 for those particular positions, and then
2 the understanding of positions that
3 these employers have. So expansion in
4 that regard is where we're going.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. And
6 are you -- the Department, if it were to
7 get additional funding, could you expand
8 it beyond in addition to formerly
9 incarcerated residents or returning
10 citizens? Is there an openness to
11 thinking about its expansion or do you
12 think that you really need to spend most
13 of your time on this current group
14 because it needs more support?

15 MR. RASHID: No, we are
16 absolutely open to expansion. The
17 supply of people is there. The
18 demand -- as Heloise is saying, the
19 demand is there. We need to be able to
20 connect the dots. So, yeah, this is
21 what's necessary.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: One of the
23 things that we've been discussing a
24 little bit has been the need for that
25 intermediary that I think Heloise is

1 discussing. And I don't think it's
2 individuals just land at a nonprofit and
3 then they go into business and then
4 there's like a happily ever after story
5 that's written. I think it's a lot
6 about the role that Commerce can do to
7 help with the mentoring and/or support
8 network as an individual is re-entering
9 and coming from being disengaged from
10 systems of care, employment and then
11 moving between mentoring and then back
12 into workforce, but always having a
13 place to land in case people encounter
14 as we all very well know racism,
15 discrimination on the job, frustrations
16 or other types of things that they might
17 experience.

18 So we will be continued to be
19 interested in the Fair Chance Hiring
20 Initiative. The more data that you can
21 share with this Council body, I know
22 that all of us are interested in things
23 that work. And to hear people say that
24 there is demand, that businesses are
25 eager to hire returning citizens and

1 what we need is to find more people is a
2 great place for us to be able to delve
3 deep to partner with our community
4 organizations. And I think your hearing
5 from myself and I know our Chair have a
6 deep commitment to the Commerce
7 Department right now to really see some
8 creative successful programming, because
9 I think working on the things that are
10 working for us is really important.

11 Understanding why they were --
12 what's appealing to people about it and
13 then figuring out how to meet what is
14 needed within communities because we
15 definitely got need in communities. We
16 had, for example, in 2019 there were
17 20,000 applicants to the Youth Ready
18 program -- I mean to the WorkReady
19 program through Philadelphia Youth
20 Network. There were 8,000 slots. So
21 there is definitely a need.

22 And if there's a partnership,
23 maybe those are areas where you can meet
24 those employers. We can manage things
25 for your small businesses, make sure

1 that the relationship and the program is
2 successful and healthy for both ends.
3 And again, I just want to commit and,
4 first of all, thank the Commerce
5 Department for its work on the Fair
6 Chance Hiring Initiative, but also make
7 a commitment that our office is an eager
8 partner to help make it as a model for
9 our City and, if not, for our country,
10 so thank you.

11 MR. RASHID: Thank you for your
12 commitment, Councilmember. Members of
13 my staff who are on the line can tell
14 you that they hear from me all the time
15 that we have to do a better job of
16 telling our story not only to the
17 public, but also to City Council, to you
18 folks. And so, we're committed to doing
19 that, and we will do what you suggested.

20 MS. ATWOOD: Chair Green, if I
21 may.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Please
23 proceed, Ms. Atwood.

24 MS. ATWOOD: Thank you. To
25 address some of the opportunities that

1 exist that are in place that need to be
2 implemented, specifically supporting
3 individuals who have been impacted by
4 the criminal justice system, in our
5 Office of Re-Entry partners, we are
6 standing up the Neighborhood Resource
7 Centers.

8 Part of the work of the
9 Neighborhood Resource Centers is the
10 wraparound services for individuals who
11 are being released from incarceration
12 and on supervision. They will not only
13 have probation and patrol there, but the
14 model has -- there's mentoring there.
15 There are job training supports.
16 There's that connectivity that exists
17 that we can have a physical
18 infrastructure for.

19 And so, there is work that is
20 happening to focus on individuals who
21 are our friends, our neighbors, who are
22 my cousins who are coming out of
23 incarceration who are on supervision who
24 need those supports. The other thing is
25 as we think about that connectivity, who

1 those credible folks are to fill that
2 gap, we are very comfortable in hiring
3 search firms for executive-level
4 positions. But how can we incentivize
5 individuals who have connectivity to
6 folks on the street that can fill these
7 jobs that be those recruiters, so to
8 speak, to make sure that they are
9 connecting the individual they know to
10 the jobs that exist, how are we training
11 those middle ground folks to be the
12 connectivity and incentivizing them the
13 same way we incentivize the large search
14 firm.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Chairman
16 Green, can I just have a quick point of
17 clarification for Erica Atwood.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes.
19 Proceed.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you.
21 Well, one, I absolutely believe that the
22 City's been doing a much better job
23 around supports. Are you connected at
24 all with the Fair Chance Hiring
25 Initiative through the Commerce

1 Department or --

2 MS. ATWOOD: We are, so in two
3 ways. One, Heloise and Zakiyyah attend
4 our tactical meetings on a weekly basis,
5 and I talk to one of them several times
6 a week. We're figuring out ways that we
7 can build a strategy short-term and
8 long-term for the individuals that are
9 impacted by violence and/or the criminal
10 justice system. And when I say
11 impacted, I mean victims, perpetrators
12 and witnesses in neighborhoods that are
13 particularly oppressed by racism and
14 poverty.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And do you
16 feel like among the areas that we're
17 also taking a look at, although this is
18 sometimes a little bit harder, but would
19 that also include, for example, young
20 people at the juvenile justice system,
21 so either those who are returning from
22 placement, those who've been even in --
23 some of them obviously are like youth
24 who have been placed in adult prisons
25 unfortunately in Pennsylvania, which

1 needs to end. But primarily, we are
2 looking at youth in residential
3 placement because when they come back,
4 some of these placement facilities
5 unfortunately with a lack of oversight
6 that we've got right now at the state
7 level, the abuses that have been
8 significantly documented in media
9 repeatedly. These are supposed to be
10 places where young people can find
11 support, mentoring, healing and instead
12 are not. So they are replicating an
13 abusive penal, adult penal system.

14 And I'm wondering if there's a
15 means for us to find considerable and
16 continued landing spaces, but definitely
17 we have thousands -- about 1,000 youth
18 at any given time over the course of the
19 year who might be placed in residential
20 placement either through DHS or through
21 the court system, sometimes through
22 mental health but primarily through DHS
23 at this point. And it's just asking for
24 your partnership to think about supports
25 for them through the Fair Chance Hiring.

1 And then the last thing I'll
2 just say is that when our young people
3 are separated from their families at a
4 very young age and they go into places
5 and they're not cared for and the state
6 doesn't have oversight, and God help us
7 if they suffer any amount of violence or
8 physical abuse in these facilities, but
9 it would be naive for us to think that
10 they don't either at least witness it in
11 some of these places, if not, suffer
12 from it directly.

13 Either way they're coming back
14 to us hurt and angry. And some of them
15 are then pursuing -- are involved in the
16 gun violence. We know the numbers are
17 getting younger. Many of us have been
18 shocked by the age range of some of the
19 folks, young people who are there. But
20 we need re-engagement, we need
21 reconnection, and we have very few
22 landing places for youth in particular,
23 so we just urge the Commerce Department,
24 Erica, just let's maintain a partnership
25 on this, and I know we'll continue to

1 figure this out.

2 So thank you very much,
3 Mr. Chair.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
5 Councilmember Gym. I want to also
6 recognize Reverend Gregory Holston from
7 the District Attorney's Office. I did
8 not realize that he was speaking on
9 behalf of the District Attorney's
10 Office. I believe he is on.

11 REVEREND HOLSTON: I'm here.
12 Thank you.

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: If you could
14 please state your name for the record
15 and --

16 REVEREND HOLSTON: My name is
17 Reverend Gregory Holston. I am the
18 Senior Pastor of Janes Memorial United
19 Methodist Church and also member of
20 Black Clergy as well as Senior --

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: If you could
22 hold on one moment. What I was saying
23 is that --

24 REVEREND HOLSTON: Oh, okay.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: -- after you

1 finish your testimony, we'll then open
2 up questions for you and any other
3 additional questions that members of
4 Council may have for this entire panel.
5 And then from there, we'll go on to the
6 next panel. So please just state your
7 name for the record and then proceed
8 with your testimony.

9 REVEREND HOLSTON: Okay. Thank
10 you, Councilman. My name is Reverend
11 Gregory Holston. I'm the Senior Pastor
12 for Janes Memorial United Methodist
13 Church in the Germantown section of
14 Philadelphia. I'm also a member of
15 Black Clergy and also the Senior Advisor
16 on Policy and Advocacy for the
17 Philadelphia District Attorney's Office.

18 I'm not sure exactly what I'm
19 testifying for, I want to be clear, but
20 I was asked to come and share. And so,
21 first of all, I want to thank Councilman
22 Green for pulling this Committee
23 together on these three and very
24 important topics of poverty, systematic
25 racism and gun violence. We have said

1 and I have said over and over that as
2 Erica said earlier, gun violence really
3 is a symptom of the systematic racism
4 and poverty that is in our country, that
5 you cannot really talk about gun
6 violence unless you're talking about the
7 250 years of slavery, 100 years of Jim
8 Crow, the 100 years of redlining of our
9 areas in Philadelphia, North
10 Philadelphia and West Philadelphia in
11 particular, the 60 years of massive
12 disinvestment that has left parts of
13 North Philadelphia looking like a
14 bombed-out war zone, 50 years of a war
15 on drugs that from all evidence was more
16 of a war on Black people, 40 years of
17 massive incarceration, and this last
18 many years of 10 years of disinvestment
19 in our schools in terms of closing 23 of
20 our schools mostly in Black and Brown
21 communities that have left our areas, as
22 these schools are major, major hubs
23 economically in every other way for
24 those communities devastated by the
25 loss.

1 All of those things, including
2 this pandemic over the last year has led
3 to this escalation of this chronic
4 problem of gun violence, this escalation
5 that we are dealing with now. There's
6 499 murders from last year, 2300
7 shootings. And now to even a greater
8 level at this time, this year almost 200
9 homicides.

10 And so, what do we do. I
11 applaud all of the efforts listed here
12 by the Commerce Department. I applaud
13 all of the efforts here to get people
14 into jobs. I applaud all of the efforts
15 that are being tried and trying to do.
16 But I agree with really what I heard
17 State Senator Hughes say just a couple
18 of weeks ago, we are at a dramatic point
19 right now. We are at a generational
20 point in our nation right now that's
21 unlike any other that I have experienced
22 or many people have experienced maybe
23 since the 1960s.

24 The American Recovery Act is
25 doing exactly what it said. It's

1 helping America to recover. And the
2 \$1.4 billion that our City has received
3 from the American Recovery Act and the
4 \$1.4 million that our school districts
5 have received are dollars and infusion
6 of capital that we have not seen in a
7 long, long time.

8 But even more than that, the
9 Recovery Act is working. The state
10 budget now has a \$3 billion surplus.
11 Just two months ago, three months ago,
12 it had no surplus. But when you put
13 dollars into the pockets of regular
14 people, those dollars bubble up and add
15 coffers and more revenue for our
16 governments. And not only that, they
17 still have \$7.2 billion from the
18 Recovery Act. And so, these kinds of
19 dollars we have not seen and it gives us
20 an opportunity to do something really
21 different around systematic racism,
22 poverty and gun violence that we have
23 not done before. And that's why I
24 applaud all the programs, but we need to
25 do something more drastic.

1 The reality is that still today
2 that a White high school dropout makes
3 more money than a Black college
4 graduate. If education was the only
5 issue here, if training was the only
6 issue here, if job training was the only
7 issue here, you would not have a
8 statistic like that where even the
9 trained and the educated Black person is
10 making less than the less-trained and
11 less-educated White person.

12 And one of the reasons for that
13 is that we have not in the Black
14 community, and the events like Tulsa
15 make it very clear, we have not
16 developed the kinds of systems because
17 we've been systematically denied
18 institutions in our community that allow
19 for those to have jobs that are
20 controlled by the Black community. We
21 have not built a Black distribution
22 system. We have not built a Black
23 wholesale house system. We have not
24 built a system where Black products are
25 brought to market. We have not built

1 enough outlets, enough stores to be able
2 to handle those products.

3 You go into an Asian community,
4 you go into their stores, you see
5 products that are only in those stores
6 because they have systematically
7 developed a distribution system for
8 those products. You go into a Latino
9 store, you'll see products that are only
10 in Latino stores because they have
11 developed a system, a distribution
12 system for that. And we have to take
13 the revenue or the monies that we're
14 getting now that once we give 100
15 million for gun violence, once we do the
16 other kinds of things that's necessary,
17 we have to take some of that money to
18 really start to lay down and create a
19 Black distribution system for Black
20 products so that our Black unemployment
21 problem, which in some parts of our City
22 is 50 percent, that those individuals
23 can come in and learn about how to make
24 economics work, because most of us don't
25 even understand that I can develop my

1 own product and get someone to
2 manufacture it and get someone to
3 distribute it and get someone along the
4 distribution line to get that product in
5 store and actually sell product and make
6 money. And we need to be able to do
7 that and create that, not only teach
8 about it, but make it happen in the City
9 for those who are craving for
10 opportunities who are not necessarily
11 skilled to go on to higher education,
12 but a strong and powerful entrepreneurs
13 that need greater opportunity and
14 greater hope.

15 And so, I'm just proposing just
16 this one suggestion of doing something
17 really different. And I believe -- and
18 that's why I'm glad, Councilman Green,
19 you came back on because I wanted to
20 applaud you again for the public bank
21 because this is the kind of thing a
22 public bank can do, real Black
23 distribution system within the City of
24 Philadelphia, help raise the dollars,
25 help leverage governmental dollars to

1 raise other dollars so that we can
2 produce that system that would allow us
3 to be able to employ our own people and
4 be able to deal with this gap where
5 White high school dropouts make more
6 than even Black college graduates.
7 Thank you so much.

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
9 for your testimony.

10 Are there any other questions
11 from members of Council for this panel?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: All right.
14 Seeing and hearing none from members of
15 Council, we will now move forward to the
16 next panel.

17 Mr. Iannuzzi, can you please
18 read the names of the next panelists.
19 And once we begin, please state your
20 name for the record and then proceed
21 with your testimony.

22 THE CLERK: William Carter,
23 Vice-president for Local Government
24 Affairs Greater Chamber of Commerce;
25 Eric Williams, Co-founder of Shape Up:

1 Barbers Building Better Brothers; Movita
2 Johnson-Harrell, Founder of The CHARLES
3 Foundation; and Dawud Bey, Co-executive
4 Director and Co-founder for Put It Down.

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
6 Mr. Iannuzzi. We will go in that order.

7 Mr. Carter, if you can start
8 and state your name and proceed with
9 your testimony.

10 MR. CARTER: All right.
11 Councilman, can you hear me?

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: We can hear
13 you.

14 MR. CARTER: All right.
15 William Carter, Vice-president of
16 Government Affairs for the Chamber of
17 Commerce for Greater Philadelphia. This
18 is our testimony for the hearing. First
19 of all, good morning, Councilman Green,
20 members of the Committee.

21 Once again, I'm William Carter,
22 Vice-president of Local Government
23 Affairs for the Chamber of Commerce for
24 Greater Philadelphia. The Chamber is
25 currently engaged in an agenda designed

1 to drive inclusive economic recovery and
2 growth city-wide in partnership with
3 City Council, the Mayor's Administration
4 and numerous grassstop and grassroots
5 organizations. To force such growth,
6 we're committed through our Skills
7 Forward Initiative reskilling and hiring
8 thousands of displaced and unemployed
9 workers reside in Philadelphia, City
10 residents, through our diverse
11 procurement collaborative, to increase
12 private sector procurement opportunities
13 with local Black and Brown businesses.

14 Recently announced that \$100
15 million effort to increase investments
16 with Black and Brown businesses, and
17 we're working in collaboration with
18 Council and the Mayor to shape an
19 inclusive growth budget that will use
20 the American Rescue Plan to make
21 investments in equity and job growth.

22 What I really want to talk
23 about today is really economic
24 opportunity and empowerment. That's
25 what this is all about, creating a

1 dialogue and action that creates
2 opportunities, opportunities to improve
3 people's quality of life. If you think
4 about it, everyone wants the same thing,
5 to pursue happiness, to take care of
6 themselves and their loved ones and to
7 be able to live by their "best lives."

8 As an example, a lot of young
9 residents are into Hip-Hop like I am.
10 Hip-Hop is a lifestyle. When
11 something's a lifestyle, everything in
12 life relates to it. It relates to
13 everything, everything in life. It
14 relates to the way people live. It
15 relates to how people live. It relates
16 to basics like clothing, food, shelter.
17 It relates to extras like communication,
18 transportation, recreation. The Hip-Hop
19 culture relates to everything in life.
20 It simply is a lifestyle, and Madison
21 Avenue knows this. More and more
22 they're using Hip-Hoppers and Hip-Hop
23 lifestyle to sell products to that
24 lifestyle.

25 They sell what we buy from low

1 end to top shelf. They make what
2 Hip-Hoppers wear. They manufacture what
3 Hip-Hoppers drive. They advertise where
4 Hip-Hoppers should go and they tell
5 Hip-Hoppers what to spend money on.
6 They're selling a Hip-Hop lifestyle.
7 What should be instilled in our Hip-Hop
8 generation is if they can buy it, they
9 can create it, manufacture it and sell
10 it.

11 We struggle with trying to find
12 alternatives to the streets with
13 implementing an array of social programs
14 directed at educating youth. We
15 scramble to find things that occupy time
16 for our innercity youth. I know all of
17 you know what we must do more of is
18 create more opportunity. And in many
19 instances, we have but we have to do
20 more.

21 And it takes more than just
22 creating the opportunity. We can't just
23 say, hey, here's opportunity, take
24 advantage of it. We have to do a better
25 job of highlighting the path towards

1 opportunity and instill the mindset that
2 people can take advantage of the
3 opportunities available.

4 There's no insurmountable
5 divide between a creator of textiles and
6 themselves, between a cellular phone
7 provider and themselves, especially if
8 we work together. They must know that
9 they can be the lifeline of the
10 lifestyle. I think world famous
11 entrepreneur and Hip-Hopper JAY-Z put it
12 best when he said, if someone would have
13 told Hov he could sell clothing, not in
14 this lifetime, wasn't in my right mind.
15 And that gave me pause to think, you
16 know, a lot of people if they are of the
17 mindset that they can do things, can see
18 things outside of what they normally
19 would see and the opportunity is showed
20 to them, they could get into their right
21 mind and there's a multitude of talent
22 of youth who simply need to be shown
23 that if they have the right mindset,
24 they can take advantage of the
25 opportunities, improve their quality of

1 life, and the private and public sector
2 should be at the forefront of such mind-
3 setting. We should be professional
4 mind-setters.

5 Our youth can be empowered.
6 Our youth can build successful
7 enterprises. They can be the creators
8 and not just consumers of the lifestyle.
9 They must be shown and truly understand
10 that they can own an international
11 clothing boutique, that they can own
12 marketing requirements, that they can
13 own happening restaurants and hotels,
14 that they can be the next entrepreneurs
15 out here shouting like Jay Z, 1 million,
16 2 million, 3 million, 4, in 13 months,
17 30 million more. And if you add that up
18 to the number he said before, you're now
19 looking at one smart Black boy. And
20 that's something that we need to take to
21 heart in terms of our youth out here,
22 showing them new opportunity, showing
23 them that there are alternatives to what
24 they have seen. And the public and
25 private sector, we need to be at the

1 forefront of it. Thank you.

2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
3 Mr. Carter. We'll have questions for
4 the panel after the other witnesses on
5 this panel testify.

6 Mr. Iannuzzi, I believe our
7 next witness to testify is Eric
8 Williams. Mr. Williams, if you could
9 please state your name for the record
10 and then proceed with your testimony.

11 MR. WILLIAMS: Okay. Good.
12 Can you hear me okay?

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: We can hear
14 you. Thank you.

15 MR. WILLIAMS: Okay. Good day.
16 My name is Eric Williams. I'm
17 testifying today in support of
18 Resolution No. 210169. Thank you,
19 Councilman Green, for this invitation.
20 My business partner and long-time friend
21 Mike Monroe and I are cofounders of
22 Shape Up. Shape Up is a gun violence,
23 sex relationship and financial literacy
24 initiative for youth ages 12 to 24.
25 Mike Monroe is the owner and operator of

1 ESPM Hair Zone, located at 5929 West
2 Girard. Mike has been a barbershop
3 owner of over 27 years and has an
4 unbelievable passion to invest and
5 improve the quality of lives for our
6 next generation.

7 The University of Pennsylvania
8 School of Nursing partnered with ESPM
9 Hair Zone a few years ago to conduct a
10 pilot study focusing on gun violence and
11 high crime neighborhoods in
12 Philadelphia. To date, it's the only
13 study in United States funded by the
14 National Institute for Child and Human
15 Development.

16 Shape Up is a three month
17 six-part curriculum held at ESPM Hair
18 Zone every first and third Monday from
19 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. You may ask yourself
20 why at the barbershop. Well, it's
21 simple. All of you know the barbershop
22 is one of the most comfortable
23 businesses in our community. At any
24 given time, you may have a City
25 official, elderly, youth, business

1 person or even a drug dealer or a
2 criminal. Barbers are like therapists,
3 accountants, counselors, sports
4 commentators, et cetera. This alone
5 makes the barbershop the perfect setting
6 for Shape Up.

7 Shape Up hosted an open house
8 soft launch March 7th through May 17th
9 for eight youth. The dialogue shared
10 between the youth and the mentors has
11 been unbelievable. When asked, some of
12 the participants couldn't even remember
13 the last time they had a hug or someone
14 told them they love them. As a result,
15 by the time they experienced life in the
16 streets, they're detached from their
17 emotional state, which from there they
18 become at risk.

19 My belief, you're at risk when
20 you leave your home because it's not
21 guaranteed in today's society you will
22 return. Shape Up's official launch is
23 Monday, June 7th. Since our first soft
24 launch, we had ex-offenders, judges,
25 parole officers, accounting, lawyers and

1 business owners, who are currently in
2 training to become mentors to create
3 internship and employment opportunities.
4 We had a parole officer send a
5 participant via a court order and is
6 working to have Shape Up as a resource
7 in the judicial system.

8 Shape Up is facilitating a
9 two-hour five-week session at Freire
10 Charter Middle School for 5th to 8th
11 graders. We're in negotiation with West
12 Philly High, and several other schools
13 have expressed interest and stated, the
14 teachers and counselors are not equipped
15 to teach such programs and outside
16 sources such as Shape Up are necessary.
17 Talks have been even discussed to have
18 Shape Up implemented in HBCUs as part of
19 a community development series. All of
20 the group mentions fit the demographic.
21 However, in order to effectively
22 maximize this endeavor, funding is
23 required.

24 Financially supporting programs
25 such as Shape Up would serve as a way to

1 regauge our communities. This multi-
2 year plan not only supports Shape Up,
3 but Shape Up will provide a funding
4 stream for other gun violence and
5 community-based organizations. For this
6 not to have a strategic plan in place
7 while lives are being lost daily is
8 unacceptable, and it pains me to text my
9 friend and colleague Derek Green
10 whenever a life is lost.

11 He is my friend first and I
12 don't want to jeopardize our friendship
13 over a lack thereof. So in closing, I
14 leave with a quote from my mentor
15 Dr. Cornell West. And it reads, You can
16 lead the people if you don't love the
17 people. You cannot save the people if
18 you don't serve the people. Again,
19 thank you, Councilman Green, for this
20 invitation to testify. Members of City
21 Council, your commitment and dedication
22 to serve is appreciated and the
23 listening audience for your attention.
24 Everyone have a great day on purpose,
25 and I thank you so much for this

1 opportunity.

2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
3 Mr. Williams, for your testimony.

4 I believe our next witness is
5 Movita Johnson-Harrell followed by Dawud
6 Bey.

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Not sure if
9 Ms. Johnson-Harrell is with us, but
10 let's go to Dawud Bey at this point in
11 time.

12 MR. BEY: Thank you, Councilman
13 Green.

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

15 MR. BEY: Appreciate y'all
16 having me here today. I just went
17 through major surgery for some implants
18 on my teeth so I'm not necessarily
19 camera-ready right now so --

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
21 for being with us.

22 MR. BEY: Yes. Going through a
23 lot of pain, but been going through a
24 lot of pain witnessing our young men and
25 women being murdered on our streets

1 every day. And I start out like that
2 because it's been very pain-taking for
3 us to take the time that we have to.
4 When I say us, I talk about my
5 cofounders in our organization called
6 Put It Down.

7 Put It Down is an organization
8 that's been founded by me and my partner
9 Darryl Shuler and Salaam Muckson, and
10 we've been meeting with various
11 different practitioners, various
12 different law enforcement agencies,
13 elected officials, people within the
14 community and doing some interviewing
15 with some potential credible messengers.

16 Within that process, as I said
17 it's been pain-taking because as we have
18 the intentions to try to make sure that
19 we do all of the proper research and
20 talk with all of the various
21 professionals that may have been in this
22 business prior to us is still a pain-
23 taking process because we still have to
24 see our young men and women being
25 murdered on the streets every day.

1 As someone mentioned, we're
2 already now at 200-something murders.
3 And one of the things that I wanted to
4 point out is that we are in a very
5 critical time in history right now, and
6 I believe even as African-American
7 leaders in our communities, we are in a
8 very pivotal moment of greatness
9 actually. We have an opportunity to
10 really get a lot of things done and get
11 things done right if we unify our
12 thought process. And I believe we're
13 getting closer.

14 I'm listening to everyone's
15 testimony and things that people are
16 saying here today, and it's just a merit
17 of making the proper connections between
18 the street credibility and science. You
19 know, we need guys like myself that was
20 once part of the problem who now are
21 trying to be part of the solution to be
22 more vocal and more involved with issues
23 of gun violence.

24 When we categorize and speak of
25 the terminology that's been popularized

1 now as credible messengers, one of the
2 things that we need in order to remain
3 credible is the resources from the
4 various City, state and government
5 agencies in order to be able to really,
6 really provide the resources for these
7 kids as we make the contact. And when I
8 say the contact, we're talking about
9 going directly to the shooters and the
10 killers.

11 We have guys that we personally
12 know that's bona fide shooters. We have
13 people that we have communicated through
14 law enforcement because we have built a
15 one-way data-sharing relationship with
16 law enforcement where they let us know
17 certain neighborhoods where there may be
18 certain hotspots and different things,
19 and we have went into these
20 neighborhoods and shown that we can
21 basically reduce the gun violence if we
22 do the intervention with the actual
23 shooters and killers.

24 So one of the things that we
25 wanted to be clear as we all begin to

1 try to figure out what is the approach
2 towards reducing gun violence in our
3 community, one of the things that my mom
4 used to always teach me is it's always a
5 cause and effect to everything.

6 And I hear Erica Atwood speak
7 so eloquently about the systemic racism
8 aspect to it, which is very, very
9 pivotal and very, very key. It's almost
10 being cliché-ish, but it's so real that
11 we have to really pay attention to it
12 from the standpoint that we have to
13 begin to figure out from a scientific
14 standpoint what is causing these young
15 men to be as aggressive as they are in
16 our communities. And I had a
17 conversation the other day with
18 Councilman Kenyatta, and we were just
19 throwing some thoughts back and forth
20 just in regards to what is the issue.

21 And I pointed out to him, one
22 of our friends actually, me and Kenyatta
23 grew up with a friend of ours, he is now
24 deceased, he was killed in gun violence.
25 But a friend of his that he used to

1 date, her son has been indicted for
2 probably six homicides. He's 16 years
3 old. He's the kid that was involved
4 with the homicide where the guy was
5 coming outside of the prison.

6 So one of the things that we
7 was talking about, okay, before they
8 demonize this guy, we need to look at
9 what is the back story behind some of
10 this youth and what's causing them to do
11 the things that they're doing. And when
12 we know -- because we know these
13 families, we know them personally. This
14 kid's family, the kid witnessed his
15 mother kill her boyfriend because he was
16 molesting his sister allegedly, and come
17 to find out the sister was lying, he was
18 never molesting her, but the mother went
19 to prison for it. While his mother was
20 in prison, his father died. It's just
21 things that we want to kind of figure
22 and start tying in and making the
23 connections from academia and from
24 science and from streets. The street
25 guys that's on the streets, when we say

1 street credibility, we're talking about
2 guys that have a direct contact and
3 pulse beat of the individuals, the
4 communities, their families and some of
5 the history of their family.

6 These are the connections that
7 have to be made. And I believe we're on
8 our way, on the verge of making these
9 connections, because now I'm
10 communicating with Michael Rashid in
11 regard to how can Commerce be involved.
12 And to answer Derek Green's question
13 earlier, like how can these
14 organizations be more engaged and how
15 can Commerce play a role in that, well,
16 Commerce do have a lot of access to
17 various different organizations that can
18 provide jobs.

19 We need to get commitments
20 because there are, as Michael Rashid
21 said, a lot of young men that really
22 want jobs. There's a lot of young women
23 that want jobs. But there is some
24 phobia, there is some fear as it relates
25 to some of the guys being afraid not

1 just because they're getting a stimulus
2 check, some of these guys don't want to
3 work on a worksite because they're
4 afraid of getting killed.

5 So at the end of the day, it's
6 a lot of psychological trauma that's
7 impacting our youth that's causing them
8 to be oversensitive about very different
9 issues and things. So my question, and
10 one of the things that I think that we
11 have to tie into, because I made contact
12 with a guy that I know that's a bona
13 fide shooter, and if we can turn this
14 guy around, he can probably help us
15 reduce gun violence by 50 percent in
16 South Philadelphia. So how do we get
17 this guy -- but he got some issues.

18 As I was explaining to this
19 kid, explaining to him about the
20 programs -- because one of the things
21 Put It Down is going to do is we're
22 going to focus highly on mental health
23 treatment. We have a situation where
24 all of us as staff members have been
25 trained by the Network of Neighbors that

1 teaches us about post-stress traumatic
2 management. And it teaches us how to
3 first deal with it and have coping
4 mechanisms to help us through stress and
5 trauma because most of us have been
6 through stress and trauma. And as
7 African-American men, I think it's
8 important that we begin to start
9 speaking about mental health issues
10 because in our community, it's like a
11 taboo issue and we can't get to the core
12 of the issues that's dealing with these
13 young men. Because in order for us to
14 bring proper diagnosis to these
15 problems, we first have to do a proper
16 assessment.

17 And I heard someone mention
18 something about Hip-Hop, because one of
19 the things that we got in regards to our
20 program, we got a thing called From
21 Trauma to Champions, where we're going
22 to use music as a means and lyrics from
23 music as a means to engage with youth
24 and help them navigate through some of
25 the vicious music that they listen to

1 and how that music impacts their
2 thinking, but use the music as a tool
3 for healing. So there's a few different
4 things that we have.

5 And some guys, like you say,
6 may not want to work for various
7 different reasons, but to have a
8 combination -- one of the things that
9 Put It Down is doing is we're setting up
10 training programs for job training, for
11 soft skills and hard skills. We already
12 have curriculums for carpentry,
13 plumbing, electric and HVAC, and have a
14 partnership that we're establishing with
15 the Philadelphia Carpenters Union where
16 they're going to allow us to be able to
17 use their training facility to help some
18 of these guys as it relates to wanting
19 to get into the carpentry and building
20 industry. So we have to have a plethora
21 of different resources available for
22 these guys because me and Darryl Shuler,
23 we're confident that when we go on the
24 streets and we begin to start doing real
25 intervention with the actual shooters

1 and killers, when we bring them off the
2 battlefield, we need all of y'all, we
3 need all the local and state agencies to
4 be in that emergency room to provide the
5 resources for them. Because if we don't
6 have the resources for them right there
7 immediately, they're going to go back to
8 the streets and they're going to die.

9 So when we say we need to
10 classify gun violence as a public health
11 emergency, we're saying it from that
12 standpoint, that if we don't get all of
13 our communications and all of our
14 resources on the same page and ready and
15 available with transparency to be able
16 to help these kids get their birth
17 certificates, driver's licenses, social
18 security cards, it's just the basic
19 stuff that they need to get prepared for
20 the recovery room, because our recovery
21 room is where the training programs and
22 the soft skill programs and
23 entrepreneurship programs and job
24 training programs will be.

25 But if we can't even get

1 them -- and the reason why we know that
2 this type of conveyor belt type to
3 system have to be in place, because
4 we're not just going off of proof of
5 concepts which we had did that, because
6 as I started out in the beginning I
7 explained to you that we have talked to
8 countless different practitioners, local
9 and national, to be able to figure out
10 what do we do and what not to do so we
11 can make sure that we try to get this
12 situation right here in Philadelphia.
13 But we're not just going off just based
14 off of proof of concepts. We're going
15 off of proof of experience.

16 I have guys right now that's in
17 the graveyard because we did
18 intervention and we was able -- if we
19 was able to be as transparent as I'm
20 speaking about, we could have saved this
21 kid's life. And how do I know? He had
22 potential because he was going to
23 school, college, coming home and going
24 to war, going to college and coming home
25 and going to war. That shows us that he

1 was trying. But if we don't have these
2 emergency -- this transparency that I'm
3 talking about, if we don't have all of
4 these resources ready and available for
5 when we do the intervention, because
6 this is a critical stage of
7 transitioning and these things have to
8 be there, because if we don't be there,
9 this kid now is in the graveyard.

10 Because I went to my cousin's funeral
11 and I stumbled on this kid's grave and I
12 seen the kid's name on the tag and he's
13 now in the grave.

14 So when we see public health
15 emergency, it means that we have to be
16 serious about this issue here, and we
17 have to tie in all of these various
18 different organizations and resources
19 and try to figure out how do we make
20 sure that we get this -- how do we turn
21 a bona fide shooter, because he may have
22 a couple of cases, because we have in
23 our program a case deferment program
24 that we talked to the DA's Office about.
25 I believe Reverend Holston is here in

1 representation of the DA's Office. But
2 we sat down countless times speaking to
3 Larry Krasner as it relates to if
4 there's a possibility for us to do case
5 deferments and allow kids to be a part
6 of our program for a year, which they
7 mandatory would have the mental health
8 treatment and at the same time, they
9 would be able to make the transition to
10 become a true real certified credible
11 messenger.

12 I say that because I understand
13 that there may be some concern as it
14 relates to who's a credible messenger
15 and if that person is still in the
16 streets or not and what if he gets
17 locked up or not. Listen, all the fruit
18 don't ripe at one time. And we're all
19 African-American people and we
20 understand the condition of our people
21 and we have to understand that it's a
22 transition, and everybody makes mistakes
23 so we have to stop being afraid to
24 invest into organizations like Put It
25 Down, organizations like Unity in the

1 Community, organizations like NOMO. And
2 I mentioned other organizations because
3 we understand that we don't have the
4 end-all-be-all on what it takes to stop
5 or reduce gun violence. We're willing
6 to work with all various different
7 organizations.

8 I see Erica Atwood is on the
9 call. We've been in countless
10 conversations with her as it relates to
11 what can we do to partner with them to
12 figure out what do we need to do to help
13 deal with this gun violence and add
14 credibility and notoriety and elevation
15 on what everyone is doing, because I
16 think we need to start working closer
17 together and figure out how we can
18 elevate each other. And I believe that
19 Put It Down has the kind of leadership
20 that's necessary, and I believe that if
21 y'all would focus on the program that we
22 already put in front of y'all, Allan
23 Domb, I sent it to you. Kenyatta
24 Johnson, I sent it to you. Derek Green,
25 I haven't sent it to you, but I will

1 send it to you after this call and
2 whoever else that may need to see our
3 funding proposal, we have a complete
4 funding proposal that I believe is
5 second to only the City of Philadelphia,
6 you understand.

7 The reason why I say that is
8 because we have worked so closely with
9 them and I see a lot of our bullet
10 points in their proposal. So at the end
11 of the day, the only person that I see
12 that's second to our proposal is the
13 City of Philadelphia. And for
14 everyone's comfort zone, we are already
15 partnering with the Urban Affairs
16 Coalition. The Urban Affairs Coalition
17 will be our fiscal sponsor. So even
18 though Put It Down is coming out as a
19 new organization, me and Darryl Shuler
20 have 25, 30 years of experience in this
21 business. It's just a new organization
22 that we're starting. But we won't look
23 like it's new because we'll be using the
24 501(c)(3) number of the UAC.

25 So that's something that I just

1 want to kind of let y'all know that
2 we're set up from an organizational
3 standpoint. Anything that needs to be
4 asked as it relates to our proposal, I'm
5 here because it's my intellectual
6 property. I help put it all together.
7 So anything that needs to be added as it
8 relates to what do we need to do to make
9 these things become reality, I'm sitting
10 here and I'm eager to get involved and
11 trying to figure out exactly what it is
12 that we need to do so we can get into
13 implementation of what we need to do.

14 And I wanted to also say this
15 in closing because I believe the
16 Commerce Department is a great safe way
17 of funding for these particular type
18 programs to get them more involved so
19 they can absolutely really facilitate
20 meetings and relationships between the
21 corporate companies as well as
22 organizations that's on the ground,
23 because the corporate companies have to
24 understand, listen, if they don't have
25 no interest in gun violence, then they

1 got to realize that it's also going to
2 affect the way their business operates.
3 Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
5 Mr. Bey.

6 Are there any questions for
7 this panel?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I don't see
10 any questions from other members of
11 Council.

12 I do have a few questions just
13 for this panel. Specifically from --
14 and I think, Mr. Bey, you mentioned
15 about the need for the program and
16 information getting to grassroots
17 community-based organizations.

18 Mr. Williams, I want to ask you
19 from a similar perspective, considering
20 that Mr. Monroe has a business and he's
21 connecting the business to trying to
22 address the public safety issues and the
23 gun violence, which also kind of
24 connects to what Mr. Bey was saying as
25 well, can you give your thoughts on --

1 either of you, your thoughts on doing a
2 better job of how we get the information
3 regarding life sciences and other
4 industries to get that information
5 available to those organizations that
6 are really connecting with young people
7 trying to either talk with shooters or
8 talk with other people to get them kind
9 of in the way of these opportunities to
10 be able to take a different path.

11 MR. WILLIAMS: Sure. One is
12 just allowing us on a larger scale, not
13 just in the West Philadelphia community,
14 but partnering with organizations like
15 Put It Down and the others to reach
16 different areas of the City. He
17 mentioned some key initiatives. And one
18 like Shape Up could be a pipeline.
19 Because after you complete the three-
20 month program, we still look to fund the
21 individual because we have to have the
22 next steps for them. And an
23 organization like Put It Down or some
24 others like #ManUpPHL or Frontline Dads
25 and the others that were mentioned

1 during this conversation, we can send
2 them right through that program and have
3 organizations as to be what is next for
4 them, so not just to get lost in the
5 system or after the three months or
6 whatever duration of any program that's
7 been mentioned today, what happens next.
8 Because young people, they want the end
9 results at the beginning. So just you
10 can see them through -- hold their hands
11 and see them through what they're
12 experiencing now, but most importantly
13 what's the next step for them. Because
14 we got to keep them out the streets and
15 we got to keep them active in what's
16 going on. So just partnering with
17 different organizations so they can see
18 the next step is doable from a Black and
19 Brown community perspective. So I think
20 that's really key in getting the message
21 out. Because there's not one program or
22 organization that's going to get it done
23 by themselves.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And just to
25 follow up on that point -- thank you,

1 Mr. Williams -- Mr. Carter, I think one
2 of the other things that I was talking
3 earlier to the first panel about what
4 does the Commerce Department and
5 Ms. Atwood's work to try to really make
6 that connection, but I think from a
7 Chamber of Commerce perspective
8 considering when you do have these
9 grassroots community-based organizations
10 that are going in the working community
11 regarding anti-violence community, I
12 think it will be a great opportunity to
13 connect some of the business interests
14 with those organizations so there can be
15 at least to hear some of the challenging
16 perspectives, one, for what Dawud Bey or
17 Eric Williams or Bilal Qayyum, what
18 they're doing in the communities to
19 address violence and challenges. But
20 for them also to hear from
21 representatives in different businesses
22 to say, listen, we have these types of
23 jobs, these are the types of jobs that
24 are available for people of various
25 skill sets so that both sides can hear

1 from each other. And I think that will
2 give a better sense of now if I know
3 what some of the businesses are looking
4 for, for employment, it makes it easier
5 when I come in contact with some of the
6 individuals to be able to say, hey,
7 here's an opportunity, and then vice
8 versa for the business community,
9 especially for the ones who are active
10 and in the engagement of Chamber to hear
11 some of the challenges that those in the
12 anti-violence movement are encountering
13 to hear both sides of the perspective.

14 MR. CARTER: Yeah, I a hundred
15 percent agree with you, Councilman, and
16 very familiar with Mr. Qayyum and look
17 forward to having those conversations,
18 because you can't really tell people not
19 to do something without showing them
20 something to do. That's only one side
21 of the equation. So you want to say,
22 hey, this is a better pathway for you to
23 go that will give you a better quality
24 of life and those conversations need to
25 be had with the stakeholders, certainly

1 from the private sector and nonprivate
2 in this space. So definitely any time
3 you'd like to broker that conversation
4 with myself and Mr. Qayyum and whoever
5 else, I look forward to that.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
7 Mr. Carter.

8 Are there any additional
9 questions for this panel?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Hearing and
12 seeing none, Mr. Iannuzzi, if you could
13 read the names of the last panel. In
14 addition, if there's anyone else that
15 would like to testify after the last
16 panelist speaks, please state your name
17 for the record and I'll come back to
18 this point after the last panelist
19 speaks.

20 THE CLERK: Reverend Carl Day,
21 President and Founder of Culture
22 Changing Christians, Inc. and Will
23 Little.

24 PASTOR DAY: Hello.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. If you

1 can just state your name for the record
2 and then proceed with your testimony.

3 PASTOR DAY: Okay. Pastor Carl
4 Day, Culture Changing Christians. And
5 I'm here to obviously discuss a bit of
6 what we do, but also the issue of gun
7 violence and testify on behalf of the
8 issues of violence in the City and to a
9 lot of what we heard. So --

10 (Background interruption.)

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Everyone who
12 is not testifying, if you can please put
13 your microphone on mute.

14 Council Support, if you can put
15 everyone on mute except for Mr. Day.

16 (Background interruption.)

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Council
18 Support, if you can put everyone on mute
19 except for Mr. Day.

20 PASTOR DAY: I believe it's
21 coming from Michael R.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. I
23 think we are now good. If you could
24 just for the stenographer, make sure you
25 state your name and proceed with your

1 testimony.

2 PASTOR DAY: All right. Pastor
3 Carl Day, C-a-r-l, last name Day, day of
4 the week, D-a-y, of Culture Changing
5 Christians, been pastoring and doing
6 actual outreach work in the City for
7 over 10-plus years now. I too have been
8 a part of the problem once upon a time,
9 been convicted of violent crimes in the
10 City in the previous life of mine.

11 I've dedicated my life in the
12 City of Philadelphia to really serving
13 families, serving guys that are out
14 there on the streets. We've gotten
15 brothers to transition, over 18 men in
16 the last three years to transition out
17 of the streets into starting their own
18 businesses, including car lots,
19 including home health care aid
20 businesses, into cleaning companies
21 amongst other things, with little to no
22 money, shoe-string budgets. I've had
23 some millennials in the City of
24 Philadelphia, also in Essex County, New
25 Jersey. So pre-COVID, I would travel

1 back and forth and preach service and
2 teach bible study, and majority of the
3 congregants were from Bloomfield, New
4 Jersey and Newark, New Jersey. Newark
5 is very much like a smaller
6 Philadelphia, so we've done extensive
7 work with returning citizens.

8 We do a ton of work with
9 college students, college-aged
10 individuals, teenagers. I currently
11 mentor over 52 teens in this City,
12 teenage boys, have taken on various ones
13 with open cases, ones who -- actually
14 we've gotten judges to sign off to allow
15 them to go and partake in our
16 programming while being on house arrest.
17 This has all been done within the past
18 few years.

19 Every single day after school
20 we provided a safe zone because we
21 understood that afterschool hours were
22 the most dangerous and vulnerable times
23 for teenage youth in our City, which is
24 why often times we would see the El
25 stations, we would see the subway

1 stations where a lot of violence would
2 take place. We would see downtown. We
3 would see Liberty Place where they would
4 go meet up, which is why the City had to
5 put certain things in practice to not
6 allow teens at Liberty Place afterschool
7 hours.

8 And then also the Fashion
9 District, prior to COVID kids were
10 meeting up and fighting there. These
11 are the things that my youth would
12 always tell me to be aware of. So a few
13 years back we started an afterschool
14 program, created a safe zone for these
15 teenage boys and there's no
16 discrimination to women obviously. We
17 run single mother cohorts where we run
18 programming to help assist them, help
19 aid and help fill in the gaps because
20 often times we talk about what a village
21 looks like for a family, but yet a lot
22 of the times, these mothers don't have
23 the help.

24 A lot of these mothers can't be
25 heard. Mothers are sitting here working

1 60 to 70 hours a week while their
2 children are left out here to pretty
3 much fend for themselves. So for us,
4 it wasn't just enough for us to say
5 let's reach youth, but let's also reach
6 the parents. But then also, Dawud Bey
7 spoke about Darryl Shuler. Do a lot of
8 work with Darryl Shuler as well as
9 inside our communities alongside John
10 Solomon with Endangered of a Kind where
11 we are on the ground intervening. We
12 are afterhours, late nights, spending
13 time out there amongst guys who are
14 really doing the shootings.

15 In fact Fridays, Reverend
16 Holston can attest to this, State Rep
17 Danilo Burkos, Dr. Jean Wright, every
18 Friday at my location here we bring in
19 those men who are actively involved and
20 whatever they're involved into without
21 incriminating anybody, and we talk
22 solutions. It's anywhere from 18 to 24
23 men that myself and John Solomon bring
24 through the streets because we're
25 spending time out there intervening with

1 them, and we have conversation and
2 dialogue about what are actual needs.
3 And I say this in all truth and
4 transparency. And I speak about this
5 from the position of, I guess we could
6 say that we're triple-dipping diversity.

7 I'm a millennial Black man, a
8 formerly incarcerated man that walk
9 around with a felony, but also clergy,
10 and I'm here to attest to the fact that
11 we also have to deal with the measuring
12 account of accountability. We failed a
13 generation in reaching a generation of
14 individuals for a long time, and I say
15 that as a faith leader and one who
16 serves on the Mayor's Faith-based and
17 Interfaith Commission. This is an area
18 that we have to deal with as well.

19 We lack relationship with a lot
20 of these people which is why we're
21 constantly in search of trying to get
22 young people infused in something when
23 truth be told it should be second nature
24 for us to be involved with young people.
25 We should already have relationships

1 with young people. So on account of
2 that, we do need support from Council.
3 We do need support from the City at
4 large to continually fund these things.
5 And as Reverend Holston said earlier, we
6 need to do something different.

7 Now, we're talking about the
8 issues of racism, a lot of ways in which
9 we see funding and a lot of ways in
10 which we deal with disbursed funds is
11 through a systemic -- honestly a
12 systemic White business outline. We are
13 asking these organizations and
14 constantly coming to these organizations
15 and we utilize it with words such as
16 capacity to almost deter people who are
17 really grassroots, who are doing this
18 work so we kind of politicize the idea
19 of what grassroots organizations look
20 like. But guess what, doing something
21 new, doing something different is
22 bringing different people in these rooms
23 having these conversations.

24 Doing something different is
25 making that transition and that shift to

1 power. Doing something different is
2 truly investigating. When we talk about
3 people and talk about who's credible,
4 who has reach, who has this, doing
5 something different is truly
6 investigating. How many people do these
7 people actually reach. And I'm not
8 talking about City Council, and I'm sure
9 some of y'all caught on.

10 I'm not talking about come
11 around to the one-shot big event that
12 looks good when we have 200 people from
13 the community and we're giving free
14 stuff away. I'm talking about on a
15 continual day-to-day operations so where
16 we're not sitting here gerrymandering or
17 fabricating our clipboard numbers, but
18 showing actionable items and showing
19 tangible work. That is something that
20 we have to do. That is doing something
21 differently. Drastically, aggressively
22 funding new faces and new voices who
23 really not only are credible, but have
24 influence and have the acumen to really
25 build up and train our young brothers

1 and sisters out here to actually do
2 something different. And I think that
3 those are things we have to do at some
4 point, because for a long time it's been
5 the same 'ol game, same 'ol names.

6 And then what we see behind the
7 scenes or the backdoor scenes, we see
8 some of the same 'ol names reaching out
9 to some of these younger folks trying to
10 go ahead and do what they can do, to go
11 ahead and see what they can do to go
12 ahead, as Dawud said, include certain
13 things in their outlines.

14 And some of those guys that we
15 talk about that are on the ground, they
16 stay on the ground and they stay in the
17 shadows because quite frankly, they
18 continue to still keep grinding and
19 doing the work. And quite frankly,
20 Council can help them build the
21 capacity. You help them build the
22 capacity by again doing something
23 different, by aggressively funding them
24 so that they can utilize funds to
25 actually create the craft.

1 It's just like the single mom
2 who's overworked and overburdened, if
3 she's out there working 60, 70 hours a
4 week, we can't keep putting the onus on
5 her to basically tell her to pull her
6 bootstraps and raise her child while
7 she's still trying to provide for all
8 three, four children. You can't keep
9 doing that to grassroots organizations
10 or grassroots leaders and say you lack
11 capacity, but you lack funding because
12 people need funding to go ahead and work
13 those jobs that a grassroots leader is
14 sitting here doing wearing seven
15 different hats. That's a lot to ask for
16 while they're still doing the work. And
17 then ultimately, they suffer from
18 burnout. And then we find ourselves in
19 the meat of these same issues saying
20 why aren't things changing. Well, quite
21 frankly, those who are living like fat
22 cows from ivory towers are standing
23 where they are and they're not being
24 challenged to have to do more.
25 I saw -- and I'll say this last

1 statement and I'll shut up, and I love
2 everybody here by the way. But I saw a
3 youth empowered agenda that recently
4 featured people who truly cannot bring
5 you more than 15 youth if you ask them
6 to at the drop of a dime. That's
7 problematic. When I had youth asking
8 me, Pastor, who are these people and
9 what youth are they talking to. I'm
10 just being realistic because I don't
11 know no other way to be. But in order
12 for us to do something different, we
13 have to make sure that we're really
14 empowering our youth, really making sure
15 that they have the voice to set their
16 agenda. We have to make this stuff
17 palatable for them.

18 We have to present it to them a
19 different way. We have to make sure
20 that they truly desire what it is that
21 we're setting for them as opposed to us
22 setting parameters in an outline and
23 telling them, here you fill this box.
24 And I'm just saying that because guess
25 what, with funding or without funding,

1 I'm going to continue to do what I
2 continue to do for the last 10 years
3 because I'm called to it, and that's
4 where I stand. Thank you for your time.
5 Thank you, Councilman Derek, for having
6 me and everyone else.

7 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
8 for your testimony.

9 Mr. Little, if you're
10 available, please state your name for
11 the record.

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: While we're
14 waiting on Mr. Little, Pastor Day I'd
15 like to ask you a quick question. I
16 believe we're coming to the end of this
17 hearing. We'll have the ongoing hearing
18 regarding this topic. You talked about
19 entrepreneurship and how you were able
20 to take young people with various
21 perspectives and put them on a path on
22 entrepreneurship. You said home health.
23 You said barber. You said a whole host
24 of different industries.

25 Can you provide in a little

1 more detail on how you were able to do
2 that, because that's really the crux of
3 what we're talking about today? How do
4 we take young people or people in
5 general who we're trying to steer them
6 from one direction and steer them into a
7 different direction regarding
8 entrepreneurship and that we can grow
9 more and more entrepreneurs, grow more
10 and more businesses? To me, that's a
11 way -- that's another anti-violence
12 strategy, but also it is an economic
13 development and empowerment strategy for
14 the City of Philadelphia. But if you
15 think we have more businesses on
16 Washington Lane, Washington Avenue,
17 Kingsessing or Wynnefield or Brewerytown
18 or Feltonville, you name the community
19 and any of those commercial corridors,
20 that's going to provide more resources
21 in the community, more dollars that can
22 circulate in that community.

23 And it goes back to the
24 conversation that we started with in
25 reference to Tulsa and Greenwood, if you

1 have more and more merchants in those
2 communities, either entrepreneurs or
3 others, to circulate more resources and
4 also for those other young people to
5 follow the path of those same people
6 that you talked about that managed into
7 entrepreneurship.

8 PASTOR DAY: Great question,
9 Councilman. So one thing, I think
10 Councilwoman Gym and Erica Atwood made
11 those statements about that bridge, that
12 person who needs to go out and somewhat
13 be a recruiter. Because there is a
14 nuance in between that where there's not
15 just this hand-off, okay, you're ready
16 for a job, now go get a job; you're
17 ready for entrepreneurship, now just go
18 start a business. One of the things
19 that I've done, we've taken and created
20 programs in place where we met with men
21 and we ran a program from real to
22 righteousness, because often times our
23 men would talk about keeping things
24 real. And we're like, nah, nothing is
25 real, righteousness is real, let us move

1 righteous. Keeping it real is a facade.
2 Just like the streets is. Just like the
3 street code is. It ended up being a
4 myth because it's no longer operable at
5 all.

6 With that, we would teach men
7 pretty much life skills that
8 transitioned into entrepreneurship,
9 because there are different work ethics
10 and patterns you need as a man and a
11 woman to excel in entrepreneurship. One
12 thing that I usually or typically will
13 teach our men is even while you got the
14 job, learn to make the job work for you.
15 If you're coming into work with a goal
16 instead of being disgruntled, you
17 understand that you're here for a set
18 amount of hours and you're utilizing the
19 funds that you're making to incorporate
20 it into your businesses that you want to
21 eventually ultimately build.

22 And then you also have to be
23 willing and make that constant decision
24 to say that I'm going to work outside of
25 work. So I taught our brothers how to

1 work outside of work. You still can't
2 stay out there eight hours and go home
3 and lay down. You're not ready to run a
4 business. And in the midst of that, you
5 need capital but you also know you can't
6 continue to get the capital and/or try
7 to utilize the capital from the streets
8 because the streets in an inconsistent
9 stream of capital, because those things
10 can change at any given moment. So what
11 you need to do is utilize the job to now
12 invest in your business, but also be a
13 student of the game. Because just
14 because you have a gift don't mean
15 you're good at actually running a
16 business. There's a marketing aspect of
17 business.

18 So we have book selection
19 readings. We would go through those
20 books. We would spend time with these
21 brothers. We would go ahead and make
22 sure that those brothers were setting
23 budgets and allocating money that they
24 would go ahead and save. Rather than
25 spend their money foolishly or

1 frivolously, they would go ahead and put
2 it up into their business.

3 We've also read Shark Tanks for
4 our youth as well. What I did was we
5 did a Shark Tank right before the COVID.
6 We took 20 proposals and they got to set
7 business proposals. We had a panel, and
8 I had a panel of other investors and a
9 couple of other community organizers,
10 and we sat there and we actually allowed
11 the youth, we allowed my team to present
12 proposals. The top 5 proposals got
13 \$1500 to start their business. All of
14 this was grassroots funded by the way.
15 We raised this money.

16 So we went ahead and gave the
17 top 5 business proposals \$1500 to start
18 their business. A couple of the kids --
19 one of the kids started his car wash
20 where he bought his own powerwasher,
21 bought his own supplies, everything
22 else. A couple other kids started their
23 own clothing lines, and another kid
24 started his own YouTube streaming
25 channel, in which he did in correlation

1 to his game. So he took his money and
2 actually built his gaming computer up so
3 that he can go ahead and get on Twitch
4 and run his gaming account. This is
5 what this kid did. So all of those ways
6 in which we made entrepreneurship a
7 reality because there still had to be a
8 process into where in which they had to
9 unlearn other unhealthy practices that
10 would pretty much make you a failed
11 entrepreneur if you jumped out there and
12 did business.

13 Also, your customer service,
14 your people skills can't stink. So this
15 is things that, you know, we had to show
16 brothers as, yo, you can't talk to them
17 how you might talk to an addict that
18 you're giving drugs to. You got to be
19 able to deal with people to understand
20 that there's an essence in the nature
21 that you got to carry and conduct
22 yourself with.

23 So in those things, like I
24 said, we help start businesses, but we
25 help brothers start mobile detailing

1 businesses, broke down the nuances of
2 that, buying the van, gutting it out,
3 buying 30-gallon water tank and doing
4 what you had to do to set up his
5 clientele, utilizing other Internet
6 services to where people can know how to
7 run his ads online. Those are things
8 that we did with people.

9 But again, I think it really
10 starts for us with drawing it up on
11 white boards, laying out that plan,
12 understanding cost. But then also like
13 I said, them getting on board and being
14 committed to saying, okay, I really want
15 to transform the way that I think and
16 approach things so that I can truly
17 thrive as an entrepreneur. And I can
18 have those men speak for themselves as
19 well during a separate time.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
21 for that testimony. I'm going to tee up
22 Mr. Will Little, who is the last person
23 speaking on this panel.

24 But, Pastor Day, what you
25 talked about I think really captured a

1 lot of the conversation we're having
2 today. Earlier Ms. Atwood talked about
3 hustle skills, and then you kind of
4 talked about that exact same thing in
5 how that young man and others took those
6 hustle skills and transformed that into
7 an entrepreneurial activity.

8 That's why the last panel I was
9 talking with, Mr. Carter from the
10 Chamber of Commerce, that both sides
11 need to hear that. So if you have a
12 representative from Comcast that is here
13 and in hearing some of the things you
14 were talking about, that's that type of
15 interconnection that people need to know
16 about, that you have a person like
17 yourself who's been able to help have a
18 shark-tank type of activity, and a young
19 person took that, used it to create
20 their own channel through Twitch, those
21 are the same type of skills that someone
22 at Comcast is trying to do more
23 developing more in a creative space and
24 trying to have more people that are
25 influencers in that space need to hear,

1 and there's a whole host of other
2 opportunities and applications to that.
3 That's why having this kind of
4 connection where members of the business
5 community and individuals like yourself
6 and Mr. Bey and Mr. Qayyum and others
7 can have that type of conversation at
8 least to hear from each other to get
9 that perspective of the possibility,
10 which then could lead to other types of
11 engagement and conversations going
12 forward.

13 With that, I'm going to thank
14 you, Pastor Day, for your testimony. I
15 will also like to open it up for any
16 other people who are on the call from
17 the public who would like to testify
18 regarding this resolution.

19 MR. BEY: If I could right
20 quick, Derek, just to double down on
21 something that Pastor Day was saying.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes.
23 Mr. Bey, if you could state your name
24 again for the record for the
25 stenographer.

1 MR. BEY: Yes, sir. My name is
2 Dawud Bey of Put It Down. I just wanted
3 to double-down on something that Pastor
4 Day was saying in regards to the lies
5 that the streets tell our youth.
6 Because culturally, we have to get them
7 to see how this stuff is sexy and it's
8 cool and it's okay to be a part of what
9 we're talking about.

10 And one of the things that
11 we're going to do is called demystifying
12 the codes of the streets because the
13 streets is a myth on what is cool and
14 what's all right. It ain't never been
15 cool, so it's important that guys like
16 us begin to start having those type of
17 conversations.

18 I wish Will was here because he
19 also is a pivotal part in helping them
20 change their mindset with emotional
21 intelligence, because that's something
22 that Will Little teaches down there with
23 us in South Philly. So I want to kind
24 of give him a shout-out with that and
25 let y'all know that we're all working

1 together collectively from the mental
2 aspect as well to try to figure out how
3 we can change the cultural thinking of
4 our youth, you know.

5 So one of the things we think
6 about is how do we make that transition
7 cool. So we got a thing that we call
8 Buy Back the Block where we will begin
9 to use real estate as a means to reduce
10 gun violence. Because if a lot of guys
11 that come from the street, Pastor Day,
12 they're good with getting involved in
13 real estate and construction and things
14 like that because it's still keeping a
15 sense of coolness to it, it's accepted.

16 So with the Buy Back the Block
17 program it's not just that we just going
18 to give guys grant money to get involved
19 with real estate. They first have to be
20 a part of another program that we have
21 full curriculum on that's called URUP,
22 Urban Roots Unites Partners, where we
23 basically teach kids how to become
24 developers. And they know everything
25 about purchasing real estate, zoning

1 requirements, zoning analysis,
2 everything from start to finish from a
3 developer side, and then they also would
4 get the project management side. And
5 the project management side is the
6 construction cost and things to that
7 extent.

8 And once they complete that
9 program, this is where the City can be
10 more involved with a lot of these City-
11 owned properties that's just sitting
12 there not collecting any taxes and so
13 forth and so on. And we are of the
14 mindset that if we reduce gun violence
15 by at least 10 percent, the property
16 value goes up 2.3 percent. But if we
17 get these guys involved and get them
18 involved in something you were saying,
19 Councilman Derek, but the key is getting
20 them involved with the ownership of
21 these communities.

22 Because one of the things about
23 URUP, as a developer I'm going to take
24 an apprentice -- I own a development.
25 I'm doing 18 units on North Broad

1 Street. I'm going to take an
2 apprentice. He's going to get ownership
3 of that development. It's small, but
4 it's an incentive for him, and he's
5 going to get paid throughout the project
6 for him to sit there and see every phase
7 of the project.

8 So as developers, we're going
9 to use this type of curriculum ourselves
10 with our own projects that we're doing,
11 but this is a way that we can get the
12 City more involved and get these guys
13 involved with the ownership of the
14 community because they're feeling boxed
15 out when we talk about gentrification,
16 when we talk about redlining, you
17 understand, and when you talk about
18 survival in general, poverty.

19 So when there's poverty and
20 there's a sense of survival, you will do
21 anything to survive by any means
22 necessary. And they don't even know
23 that terminology, how that affected a
24 lot of people back in the day. But at
25 the same time, we got to realize when

1 people are in the mood of survival, they
2 will hurt people, so we got to get them
3 involved with the ownership because
4 they're being pushed out of their
5 communities, and I see it in South
6 Philly to the point that they're all on
7 my step where my office is at.

8 They can't sit on other
9 people's steps that's owned by Asians
10 and White folks no more because they're
11 being boxed out. They don't even own no
12 property in the community. Then they
13 come out to Southwest, but they from
14 South Philly. But that's why you got
15 all of these classes because
16 gentrification is pushing people into
17 neighborhoods that they're not
18 necessarily comfortable in, and then
19 they clashing out there. So it's a lot
20 of different variables to exactly what
21 we see and how we see all these various
22 different classes that we got to get
23 involved with.

24 We got to get these kids
25 involved with ownership of our

1 community. So now when you see the BIA
2 and you see all these developers coming
3 through with thousands and thousands of
4 units that they're getting ready to come
5 into our communities, make sure that we
6 have community packages that's together
7 that tell these developers, look, if you
8 want to do these developments in our
9 communities, especially if you want to
10 be using City-owned property, then you
11 have to make sure that you have
12 diversity and inclusion, diversity on
13 the construction level, diversity on the
14 ownership. It's an opportunity for the
15 leadership, Council leadership to hold
16 these developers accountable for y'all
17 to create more funding from the private
18 side to help these types of programs.

19 I'm a member of the BIA, and
20 they come in through -- I had Kenyatta
21 on the phone, and they're coming through
22 with 1,000 affordable housing units
23 within the next two years. But how many
24 market rate units are they coming with?
25 10,000.

1 So as they come in with these
2 big plans into our community -- I see my
3 brother Will and then I'm going to close
4 out now. But when we see all of these
5 developments coming into our communities
6 as Councilmembers, these are the
7 opportunities to create funding simple,
8 easy. They're going to give it up. The
9 RCO, Registered Community Organization,
10 being sticking them all up for 200,000,
11 50,000 or whatever money that they want.
12 So as Council if you use your authority,
13 there's multiple different ways that we
14 can continue to get more funding that we
15 need for more nontraditional ways to
16 help reduce gun violence.

17 Will Little, we missing you
18 here as it relates to your emotional
19 intelligence. It's very needed.

20 MR. LITTLE: What's up, Dawud.
21 How everybody doing --

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Mr. Little,
23 give me one moment. We will bring you
24 on next.

25 Mr. Bey, thank you for that.

1 And I think what you're talking about is
2 very important, especially considering
3 there's a number of different
4 organizations especially from the
5 African-American community who are
6 talking about realty development from
7 The Collective. I know there's an
8 African-American developers group that's
9 affiliated with the BIAs. There's a
10 number of different organizations, but
11 it brings me back to something I said
12 before in this body for those who have
13 seen the film Concrete Cowboy, one of
14 the main characters is a young man by
15 the name of Smush.

16 And if you saw the movie, you
17 know that this young man was part of
18 that cowboy culture, but at one point
19 was veered to a different path. But in
20 doing that, he was on a different path
21 and engaging in an activity that was
22 illegal because he was selling drugs,
23 but he was doing it as a way to funding
24 capital so he could go into the real
25 estate business, and he had a very clear

1 specific plan of buying real estate,
2 properties, so he had the vision of how
3 he was going to go into a legitimate
4 real estate business enterprise. But
5 the only way he knows as a way of
6 getting that capital was working on the
7 corner. So he had a plan, and it wasn't
8 just a made-up plan.

9 He had his parcel, this
10 property, so he had a specific plan that
11 ties right into what you're talking
12 about as well as what Pastor Day was
13 talking about, taking young men
14 particularly and giving them that path
15 and that exposure in order to go into
16 those areas of business and industry
17 that can grow wealth and grow job
18 opportunities and build up our
19 communities.

20 And with that, I would like to
21 bring in Mr. Will Little. If you can
22 just state your name for the record for
23 the stenographer and then proceed with
24 your testimony. Being no other
25 witnesses for this hearing, we'll

1 conclude this hearing after Mr. Little's
2 testimony, unless there's any other
3 questions from members of Council.

4 MR. LITTLE: Okay. Thank you.
5 Will Matif Little here. Sorry, guys,
6 I'm late. Just chiming into this
7 conversation. But, yeah, I think in
8 order for us to create a safer city, it
9 has to be a top-down bottom-up approach.
10 What you do in both businesses, they
11 have a top-down bottom-up approach
12 whereas though they can scale their
13 businesses to a point where they are
14 hiring the right people to work for
15 their company to get the right result
16 they're looking for.

17 The same thing the City needs
18 as well. The City needs to hire people
19 who they know can get the results they
20 are looking for. And because we're
21 dealing with a traumatized community,
22 one of the main things that we're
23 dealing with are people's emotions.
24 Bilal spoke to all of these arguments
25 coming from raw emotions.

1 A lot of conflict coming from
2 not understanding how to conversate or
3 communicate those feelings as well to
4 whoever it may be, your spouse or your
5 neighbor or your coworker or somebody in
6 traffic. So we know that this community
7 has been impacted by trauma deeply
8 because of how many homicides in the
9 last four or five years that has
10 affected at least 50 members per family
11 and friends. And you can times that by
12 last year's number, 499 times 50, just
13 one year during COVID. So the trauma of
14 the impact is very, very major.

15 The only way -- even with me
16 being a kid being affected by the loss
17 of a good friend of mine, I was impacted
18 by that trauma too as well. It impacted
19 me because I didn't know how to deal
20 with it. The only way I know how to
21 deal with it is not being the next
22 victim, and this is the mentality that
23 we have in our community today,
24 especially with all of these murders.

25 So one of the things that's

1 very important, which I've been teaching
2 basically all over the country and more
3 so now in the City of Philadelphia, even
4 if it's just doing one-on-one coaching
5 with individuals who are willing to get
6 the help they really need. They can't
7 go to a psychiatrist. They mostly come
8 to me and hire me to do a one-on-one
9 session with them on emotional
10 intelligence, on personal development.
11 Because regardless of what we're doing
12 in our life, personal development is
13 attached to everything we do. I don't
14 care if it's business. I don't care if
15 it's a job. I don't care if it's a
16 relationship with your friends and
17 family or yourself. Your personal
18 development has everything to do with
19 that.

20 And the more we understand how
21 we can more personally develop, heal
22 ourselves from whatever trauma and
23 experience, look within ourselves to
24 find the resources, right, the resources
25 that we have within ourselves in order

1 for us to continue with growth, not just
2 coming out of a program or not just
3 coming from an event or a session, but
4 how to continue sustainability when it
5 comes to personal growth. And this is
6 just things that I've been teaching in
7 this community for the last two years.
8 But even way before that when I got
9 really in contact with emotional
10 intelligence, I knew that this was the
11 key in order for us to really be able to
12 create a safer city for one and to help
13 people feel good about themselves and
14 continue to see a vision of life for
15 themselves that they can do better in
16 life as opposed to thinking they not
17 going to live past 20 or 21 years old or
18 that they're 35 and 40 and it's over for
19 them at this time in age.

20 So just illustrate a new
21 insight, a new awareness of how to
22 manage those raw emotions when any time
23 they come into contact with any kind of
24 conflict, that's especially the conflict
25 within yourself. Because now it's more

1 so how do we develop -- it's hard for us
2 to develop relationships with other
3 people because a lot of us don't have
4 relationships with ourselves. And when
5 you begin to develop a relationship with
6 yourself, you understand how to build
7 relationships with other people, and
8 this is the information that we're
9 missing.

10 We're missing it in our
11 schools. We're missing it in our
12 prisons. We're missing it in our rec
13 centers, because these are captive
14 audiences whereas though we can put this
15 information in. We can put the
16 curriculum in whereas our people in our
17 community can get the knowledge they
18 need in order to help them scale their
19 own personal business, the business of
20 self. And that's my testimony today.

21 So we're trying to share this
22 information more out there with City
23 Council. Also, I talk to Mark Squilla
24 who's attended my event as well as Bilal
25 did and Kenyatta, about me doing another

1 presentation to the Council, because I
2 did one two years ago which only two
3 Councilmen showed up. It was Mark
4 Squilla and Kenyatta Johnson. But most
5 of the staff of those particular
6 Councilmembers showed up, and all of
7 them wanted to be trained because they
8 knew the need, because they got the help
9 they needed personally in their life
10 right then and there in those two hours.
11 We know the importance. That's all I
12 wanted to say.

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well,
14 Mr. Little, thank you for taking a few
15 moments to testify. Definitely look
16 forward to that opportunity coming to
17 Council, but I think you spoke to
18 something that's a very important part
19 of this whole conversation in reference
20 to when you talk about emotional
21 intelligence, but also a value of self-
22 worth, which tied directly to
23 entrepreneurship.

24 When we go back to the original
25 conversation, we talked about the

1 Greenwood section of Tulsa because of
2 the sense of pride of that community and
3 the pride of starting your own type of
4 business that you've been able to start
5 a business and start some economic
6 development or have a job and being able
7 to provide for your family or your
8 community that provides that type of
9 empowerment and self-fulfillment that
10 can also resonate to others, and I think
11 it's that type of environment and that
12 type of perspective that's so important,
13 it comes out of having the ability to
14 grow economic development and grow
15 wealth and grow entrepreneurship because
16 that is transferable knowledge for
17 yourself but also, your family and your
18 community. And that's another aspect
19 that is lost when we talk about this
20 interplay between gun violence and
21 public safety and some of the systemic
22 racism that Mr. Qayyum talked about and
23 others talked about as well as also the
24 economic aspect and entrepreneurship we
25 were talking about.

1 So definitely looking forward
2 to hearing about the opportunity where
3 myself and other members of Council and
4 others can participate and learn from
5 the work that you're doing. I want to
6 thank all of the people that came out
7 this morning to testify. This is the
8 first step of this conversation. Just
9 from today's conversation, I developed a
10 wealth of ideas that we can continue to
11 engage throughout the summer.

12 Also as I stated at the
13 beginning of this testimony, we've
14 reached out to various parties from
15 Annie E. Casey Foundation as well as Pew
16 Charitable Trust to provide more
17 academic information regarding the
18 connection between gun violence and
19 economic development, but also want to
20 continue to engage in this conversation
21 as well as we can make sure that people
22 know about the opportunities from the
23 work that Pat Clancy talked about from
24 Philadelphia Works, for the work that
25 Erica Atwood talked about, for the work

1 that Michael Rashid talked about, to
2 make sure that information is given to
3 the Will Littles, Dawud Beys, Bilal
4 Qayyums and Eric Williams and the Pastor
5 Days so that way they have the
6 information so that they know a young
7 people who's interested in this
8 opportunity or that opportunity or this,
9 they know the abilities to make those
10 connections in order to help that young
11 person get on a path to self-
12 fulfillment, engagement and empowerment
13 as well as possibly entrepreneurship.

14 So with that, I want to thank
15 all of you for being here this
16 afternoon --

17 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
18 Councilmember Green, can I just have one
19 comment?

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. I
21 believe that was Councilman Squilla.

22 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes.
23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Chairman
24 Johnson also. This has really been an
25 important meeting. And as you listen,

1 we still listen and learn. And it's
2 great to hear people who really give
3 their time to testify because everybody
4 wants to help. And when you hear from
5 folks like Bilal and Will, it's really
6 important to understand that we as City
7 government need to do more, right. It's
8 not just the regular things that we've
9 done in the past. It's new ideas and
10 how we address those new ideas.

11 And it's so true, until you
12 learn to love yourself, it's hard to
13 love others. And we as a society,
14 sometimes we always want to put blame on
15 people and why they're doing things
16 instead of looking to say how can we
17 promote ourselves, how can we promote
18 the people who are having these
19 challenges, and whether it's Father's
20 Day Rally or a gun buyback that Bilal is
21 so involved with and working with all
22 the Councilmembers or whether it's Will
23 Little being able to show individuals
24 what it is that we're missing as people.

25 And when I went through the

1 training and understanding and
2 listening, we sometimes as
3 Councilmembers think we have all the
4 answers and we throw all this
5 legislation at it. But sometimes we
6 have to take a step back and listen.
7 And when we listen, we learn.

8 I think these hearings, what
9 you have done today is give us an
10 opportunity to listen and learn. And I
11 just think that this is one big step
12 forward. Obviously, we have a long way
13 to go, but listening and learning from
14 our constituents, people who are in our
15 City who really want to help come up
16 with a solution and meet the people
17 where they are is so important.

18 So I will continue to work with
19 you and Councilmember Johnson and all
20 members of Council, but not only that,
21 but all the organizations of people who
22 are here to help testify and help us,
23 guide us in a direction that's really
24 going to make a difference. So thank
25 you for that, and thank you everybody

1 who testified. We really appreciate it.
2 And like we said earlier, this is just a
3 first step. So thank you for giving us
4 this opportunity.

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
6 Councilmember Squilla.

7 Also, I would like to recognize
8 Bilal Qayyum. I believe you had another
9 comment. I did also see -- I believe I
10 saw Rickey Duncan as well. I wasn't
11 sure if he wanted to testify as a member
12 of the public. I did see his hand
13 raised in the chat feature. I believe
14 he is on as well, so let's go with
15 Mr. Qayyum, and then hopefully we can
16 hear from Mr. Duncan as well. And then
17 we will conclude today's hearing.

18 MR. QAYYUM: Yes, Councilman
19 Green. I just wanted to thank you and
20 the Committee and Councilman Johnson for
21 today's hearing. As you know, when I
22 approached you and other Council folks
23 about addressing this issue around White
24 institutional racism and the effect of
25 violence, and you stepped forward and

1 said, yes, let's do this, it's a
2 different discussion around violence
3 that we haven't had in the City of
4 Philadelphia, but also the economic
5 impact is a different discussion.

6 And I'm a strong believer. I
7 know the work that Will Little is doing
8 about changing your mindset is all
9 important, the work that Dawud Bey's
10 doing, the work that Pastor Carl Day's
11 doing and other individuals, it's great
12 work in this City. But I also believe
13 if we have a strong economic base in the
14 Black community, we will see major
15 changes particularly as it relates to
16 violence and gun play in the City of
17 Philadelphia.

18 More folks locked out the
19 system, not included, feel isolated are
20 the ones who are more likely involved
21 and responding to the pressure, the
22 daily pressures with violence, so it's a
23 combination of things. It is really a
24 combination of things. But I just
25 wanted to thank you for allowing for the

1 participants today and for you hosting
2 the meeting.

3 And also, I know you had
4 mentioned that there would be follow-up
5 which is more than important. We need
6 solutions, not more conversations. As
7 people know me, I'm always looking for
8 the solution, and let's get the action
9 moving. And I will just say this to the
10 folks who might be still on from the
11 government side and the Administration
12 is that we do need these solutions and
13 we need to move them. There's enough
14 talent in this City to solve this
15 problem. There's no doubt in my mind.

16 I just got thank everybody
17 who's saying -- Michael Rashid, to you
18 and Erica, we just got to connect the
19 dots, and I'm confident, very optimistic
20 that we can see positive changes, but
21 it's not going to be overnight. It's
22 going to take a while. But I once again
23 thank you very much for hosting this
24 meeting today.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, thank

1 you, Mr. Qayyum, because it was through
2 you the genesis of this idea that truly
3 germinated. And I think this goes back
4 to my original comment how from your
5 work both with Father's Day Rally and
6 other activities you've done over a
7 number of decades regarding anti-
8 violence, but also your work in economic
9 development in the City of Philadelphia
10 also makes that connection that's much
11 stronger and tighter.

12 I was looking for Mr. Duncan
13 because I did see on the chat --

14 MR. DUNCAN: I'm here.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank
16 you. If you can just state your name
17 for the record and then proceed with
18 your testimony. And I believe he is the
19 last person because I did not see others
20 that have signed up to testify. So
21 please state your name for the record
22 and proceed with your testimony.

23 MR. DUNCAN: Rickey Duncan,
24 R-i-c-k-e-y, D-u-n-c-a-n, Executive
25 Director at the NOMO Foundation, New

1 Options More Opportunity. I just want
2 to again thank Council for allowing the
3 people to get a word in on what's taking
4 place in the City of Philadelphia, which
5 at an all-time high is violence, gun
6 violence in particular.

7 And I'm pretty sure I'm late to
8 the meeting because for some reason I
9 didn't get the link in time to join the
10 meeting. But someone actually
11 specifically linked me and allowed me to
12 join in. But I'm pretty sure my
13 comrades that's on the phone spoke on
14 everything I would have spoke on,
15 because we're all in a joint effort to
16 combat the gun violence that's taking
17 place in the City of Philadelphia today
18 right now.

19 And I also see some influential
20 gamechangers that's also listed on the
21 call, so I don't want to be redundant in
22 my testimony. I just wanted to step in
23 and thank you, but first apologize for
24 my late attendance due to the fact that,
25 like I said, I didn't have the link

1 originally. But I do want to apologize
2 for my late attendance.

3 And just going by what I've
4 heard as I entered the meeting at the
5 end of the meeting, everything they said
6 sounds progressive moving forward. And
7 I would just testify to the fact that I
8 hope that it's more moving than talking.
9 Because at the end of the day, I believe
10 violence is at a state of emergency in
11 the City of Philadelphia. I believe our
12 youth is at risk and is most vulnerable
13 that's taking place right now in the
14 City of Philadelphia.

15 So like I said, I don't want to
16 be redundant because I'm pretty sure
17 seeing the folks that's on this call
18 that everything that I would say has
19 already been said. But again, I would
20 like to just thank you for inviting me
21 and for putting this call together.

22 And thank you, Bilal, as
23 Councilman Green has said, was an
24 influential person in putting this call
25 together. That's all I have to say.

1 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well,
2 Mr. Duncan, thank you. And actually,
3 you don't need to apologize. I
4 apologize to you that you did not have
5 the information in a more timely
6 fashion. But I want to thank you for
7 endeavoring to get on this call, taking
8 a few moments out of your day
9 considering the great work that you've
10 been doing through your organization to
11 address this issue. Definitely look
12 forward to continuing on engaging with
13 you on this issue and making this
14 connection between the anti-violence
15 initiative and also how we address
16 systemic racism through the lens of
17 economic opportunities and economic
18 development, entrepreneurship to really
19 help to grow wealth, especially in the
20 African-American community and other
21 marginalized communities here in the
22 City of Philadelphia.

23 I want to make sure that
24 everyone that is here that would like to
25 testify has had an opportunity to do so.

1 Also, any of my colleagues on Council
2 who would like to make any additional
3 comments regarding today's topics and
4 questions?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I just want
7 to really thank everyone for being here.
8 I think we've been on this call for a
9 few hours. And as I said in the
10 beginning, so often we talk about these
11 issues in various silos. Well, if
12 you're a person that's addressing gun
13 violence in public safety, this is your
14 portfolio or if you're a person that
15 works on economic development and
16 entrepreneurship, this is your portfolio
17 or education or health care, and all of
18 these issues are interconnected.

19 That's why I just want to thank
20 my colleague Councilmember Johnson and
21 we've been working together on this
22 issue, but also economic development
23 issues with the Chamber of Commerce and
24 others to try to create more
25 opportunities in the City of

1 Philadelphia. And I want to thank you
2 for always engaging me on different
3 issues and the work that he's doing not
4 only his Council District, but around
5 the City of Philadelphia.

6 And I will close with this,
7 there being no further questions from
8 members of the Committee and no other
9 witnesses to testify and I believe
10 there's no one else present in this
11 hearing whose name we have failed to
12 call and wish to offer testimony on any
13 of these bills being considered today,
14 hearing none I just want to close
15 today's hearing.

16 Thank you for all your
17 participation and attendance. We will
18 continue this conversation and probably
19 continue conversation in a little
20 different format, especially from the
21 conversation that was started regarding
22 the Chamber of Commerce and some other
23 organizations, so we'll try to put that
24 type of conversation together as well as
25 continue to push forward on different

1 ways that we can help address this
2 issue, especially as we are going
3 through the final quarter of our budget
4 process to address issues and the
5 resources that some of you have talked
6 about in today's hearing.

7 Thank you all for being here.
8 And at this point, I will close this
9 hearing and will recess to the call of
10 the Chairs. Thank you very much for
11 your time and attention and also your
12 participation on today's hearing.

13 MR. BEY: Thank you very much,
14 Councilman.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

16 (Joint Committee on Finance and
17 Special Committee on Gun Violence
18 Prevention concluded at 12:17 p.m.)
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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, hereby certify that the
proceedings and evidence noted are contained
fully and accurately in the stenographic
notes taken by me in the foregoing matter,
and this is a correct transcript of the
same.

TANEHA C. CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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