

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Via Microsoft Teams
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, June 8, 2020
3:31 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILLS 200296, 200297, 200298, 200299, 200300,
200329, and 200330

- - -

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2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

3 This is the Council Committee on Finance.

4 I understand that state law currently

5 requires that the following announcement

6 be made at the beginning of every remote

7 public hearing as follows:

8 Due to the current public

9 health emergency, City Council committees

10 are currently meeting remotely. We're

11 using Microsoft Teams to make these

12 remote hearings possible. Instructions

13 for how the public may view and offer

14 public testimony at public hearings of

15 Council committees are included in the

16 public hearing notices that are published

17 in the Daily News, Inquirer, and Legal

18 Intelligencer prior to the hearings, and

19 can also be found on PHLCouncil.com.

20 I note that the hour has come

21 for the beginning of this hearing.

22 Mr. Iannuzzi, will you please

23 call the roll to take attendance.

24 Members that are in attendance, please --

25 could you hold on one moment. We have

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2 some background noise. Please put your
3 microphone on mute. If you can put your
4 microphone on mute, please. We have
5 background noise.

6 Thank you.

7 Members that are in attendance
8 will please indicate that you are present
9 when your name is called. Also just say
10 a few brief words when responding so that
11 your image will be displayed on screen
12 when you speak. Thank you.

13 Mr. Iannuzzi, please call the
14 roll.

15 THE CLERK: Chair Derek Green.

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Present.

17 THE CLERK: Councilmember Bobby
18 Henon.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Present.

20 THE CLERK: Councilmember Bass.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Present,
22 and good afternoon.

23 THE CLERK: Councilmember Gym.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Good
25 afternoon, everybody. Present.

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2 THE CLERK: Councilmember Oh.

3 (No response.)

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember

5 Quinones-Sanchez.

6 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Good

7 afternoon, everyone. Thank you for your

8 patience and your time. Thank you,

9 Chair.

10 THE CLERK: Councilmember

11 Squilla.

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Present.

13 THE CLERK: Councilmember Domb.

14 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Present.

15 Good afternoon, everyone.

16 THE CLERK: Councilmember

17 Gauthier.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

19 Present. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for

20 the opportunity to join and thanks to the

21 Committee as well.

22 THE CLERK: Councilmember

23 Parker.

24 (No response.)

25 THE CLERK: That concludes the

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2 roll, Mr. Chair.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
4 Mr. Iannuzzi.

5 This is the public hearing of
6 the Committee on Finance regarding Bill
7 Nos. 200296, 200297, 200298, 200299,
8 200300, 200329, and 200330.

9 At this point, I'll have
10 Mr. Iannuzzi please read the titles of
11 the bills.

12 THE CLERK: Bill No. 200296, an
13 ordinance constituting the Fifteenth
14 Supplemental Ordinance to the General Gas
15 Works Revenue Bond Ordinance of 1998;
16 authorizing the City of Philadelphia,
17 Pennsylvania to sell, either at public or
18 private sale, one or more series of Gas
19 Works Revenue Bonds and Gas Works Revenue
20 Bonds to refund such Bonds; to repay the
21 costs of certain capital projects and
22 other Project Costs; authorizing the City
23 to obtain credit enhancement for any
24 Series of the Bonds; making certain
25 determinations and covenants relating to

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2 Gas Works Revenues and the payment of
3 interest and principal; and authorizing
4 covenants and actions in order that the
5 Bonds shall not be arbitrage bonds; all
6 under certain terms and conditions.

7 Bill No. 200297, an ordinance
8 constituting the Twenty-Third
9 Supplemental Ordinance to the Restated
10 General Water and Wastewater Revenue Bond
11 Ordinance of 1989, as supplemented;
12 authorizing the Bond Committee to issue
13 and sell one or more series of tax-exempt
14 or taxable Water and Wastewater Refunding
15 Revenue Bonds and revenue refunding
16 bonds; authorizing agreements to provide
17 credit enhancement or payment or
18 liquidity sources (or any combination of
19 the foregoing) for such Bonds; providing
20 that such Bonds shall bear interest at
21 fixed or variable rates; determining the
22 sufficiency of pledged Project Revenues;
23 authorizing the Director of Finance to
24 make certain actions with regard to the
25 sale of such Bonds, the investment of

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2 proceeds thereof and the City's
3 continuing disclosure obligations with
4 respect to such Bonds; setting forth the
5 use of proceeds of such Bonds;
6 covenanting the payment of interest and
7 principal; and supplementing the Restated
8 General Water and Wastewater Revenue Bond
9 Ordinance of 1989.

10 Bill No. 200298, an ordinance
11 authorizing the Bond Committee to sell
12 bonds at public or private negotiated
13 sale, to provide funds toward various
14 capital municipal purposes; providing for
15 appropriations to the Sinking Fund
16 Commission for the payment of such bonds;
17 authorizing agreements to provide credit
18 or payment or liquidity sources for the
19 bonds in connection with issuance of the
20 bonds, and certain other actions;
21 providing for obtaining the consent of
22 the electors to increasing the
23 indebtedness of the City; and fixing a
24 day and providing for agreements for
25 holding the election for obtaining such

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 consent.

3 Bill No. 200299, an ordinance
4 authorizing the City Treasurer, on behalf
5 of the City, to enter into an amendment
6 agreement with Citizens Bank of
7 Pennsylvania for provision of payroll
8 banking services to the City, under
9 certain terms and conditions.

10 Bill No. 200300, an ordinance
11 approving the Fiscal Year 2021 Capital
12 Budget providing for expenditures for the
13 capital purposes of the Philadelphia Gas
14 Works (including the supplying of funds
15 in connection therewith) subject to
16 certain constraints and conditions, and
17 acknowledging receipt of the Revised
18 Forecast of Capital Budgets for Fiscal
19 Years 2022 through 2026.

20 Bill No. 200329, an ordinance
21 approving a Substantial Amendment to the
22 Annual Action Plan 2019-2020 to add
23 \$40,410,779 in Federal Coronavirus Aid,
24 Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES)
25 funding, all under certain terms and

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2 conditions.

3 Bill No. 200330, an ordinance
4 authorizing the Director of Planning and
5 Development, on behalf of the City, to
6 file applications with the United States
7 Department of Housing and Urban
8 Development for a Community Development
9 Block Grant; to file applications to
10 participate in the HOME Improvement
11 Partnership program and the Emergency
12 Solutions Grant program; and to apply for
13 a Housing Opportunities for Persons with
14 AIDS grant; and to file applications with
15 the Commonwealth to obtain grants under
16 the Act of April 12, 1956 P.L. 1449,
17 Section 4, as amended, to prevent and
18 eliminate blight; authorizing the
19 Director of Planning and Development and
20 the Director of Commerce to file
21 applications to obtain other grants from
22 the Commonwealth; authorizing the
23 Director of Commerce to use the Section
24 108 Loan Guarantee Program; and
25 authorizing the Director of Planning and

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2 Development and the Director of Commerce
3 to enter into all understandings and
4 assurances contained in such applications
5 and take all necessary action to accept
6 the grants; all under certain terms and
7 conditions.

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
9 Mr. Iannuzzi.

10 Before we begin to hear
11 testimony from the witnesses we have for
12 today, everyone that has been invited to
13 the meeting to testify should be aware
14 that this public hearing is being
15 recorded. Because the hearing is public,
16 participants and viewers have no
17 reasonable expectation of privacy. By
18 continuing to be in the meeting, you're
19 consenting to be recorded.

20 Additionally, prior to
21 recognizing members for the questions or
22 comments that they have for witnesses, I
23 will note for the record at this time
24 that we will use the Chat feature
25 available in Microsoft Teams to allow

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2 members to signify that they wish to be
3 recognized. In order to comply with the
4 Sunshine Act, the Chat feature must only
5 be used for such purpose.

6 Mr. Iannuzzi, will you please
7 call the first panel of witnesses to
8 testify this afternoon.

9 THE CLERK: On Bill No. 200297,
10 Jackie Dunn, First Deputy City Treasurer
11 from the City of Philadelphia.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good
13 morning -- excuse me. Good afternoon,
14 Ms. Dunn. I hope you are ready to
15 proceed. Please state your name for the
16 record and proceed with your testimony.

17 DEPUTY TREASURER DUNN: Yes.
18 Good afternoon, Chair Green and members
19 of the Finance Committee. My name is
20 Jackie Dunn and I am the First Deputy
21 City Treasurer. With me virtually are
22 Christian Dunbar, City Treasurer, and
23 Melissa LaBuda, Deputy Commissioner and
24 Chief Financial Officer for the
25 Philadelphia Water Department.

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2 I'm testifying in support of
3 Bill 200297, which would provide
4 authorization to refund up to 1.47
5 billion in outstanding water and
6 wastewater revenue bonds.

7 Bill 200297 would give the City
8 Treasurer's Office and the Philadelphia
9 Water Department the ability to pursue
10 refundings on up to 1.47 billion of bond
11 maturities that were previously issued
12 with City Council approval between the
13 years 1997 and 2019.

14 Currently, the City can refund
15 approximately 93.9 million in bonds,
16 which are expected to produce 8.7 percent
17 or 8.15 million in net present value
18 savings, resulting in lower debt service
19 costs during this financially challenging
20 period.

21 The remaining authorization
22 would allow the City to capitalize on
23 future refunding opportunities that can
24 result in savings in accordance with the
25 City's debt service policy -- debt

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2 policy. Excuse me.

3 Despite market volatility in
4 recent weeks, we are currently in an
5 environment with historically low tax
6 exempt and taxable rates. We will
7 continue to monitor possible refunding
8 opportunities, and if approved, this
9 authorization would allow the Water
10 Department to pursue future opportunities
11 for meaningful savings.

12 Thank you for your
13 consideration and for the opportunity to
14 testify. I'm happy to answer any
15 questions at this time.

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
17 Ms. Dunn. And just similar to the
18 briefing that we had last week, I just
19 want to ask a few quick questions in
20 reference to the refunding.

21 I think you stated in your
22 testimony and it's been stated prior to
23 today's hearing as well as our City
24 Treasurer, Christian Dunbar, that the
25 benefit of doing this refunding provides

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2 opportunities for savings for the City,
3 which is especially important during this
4 COVID-19 scenario. Can you elaborate a
5 little bit.

6 DEPUTY TREASURER DUNN: Sure.
7 Yes. That's correct. We anticipate in
8 July when we pursue this transaction that
9 we'll be able to generate savings in the
10 ballpark of 8.7 percent net present
11 value, which I had mentioned, which
12 translates into about 8.15 million over
13 the period of the bond maturities that
14 are being refunded, and the broader
15 refunding authorization will allow us to
16 pursue other transactions for refundings
17 that might become economically attractive
18 in the coming months, and we think that's
19 incredibly important for the City during
20 this period to be able to reduce its debt
21 service costs, which would translate into
22 reduced costs for taxpayers.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And that
24 testimony will be consistent with, I
25 guess, testimony that our City Treasurer,

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2 Mr. Dunbar, will testify in the next
3 panel regarding the PGW, Water, and City
4 bond bills as well, provides the
5 opportunities for refunding, which can
6 save the City of Philadelphia money at
7 this time, especially during this
8 COVID-19 pandemic.

9 DEPUTY TREASURER DUNN: Yes.
10 That's correct.

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank
12 you.

13 At this point, I will recognize
14 Councilmember Allan Domb.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
16 Mr. Chairman Green and hello, Ms. Dunn.
17 Good afternoon. I just have a question.
18 The bonds that we're refunding, what were
19 the rates on the ones you retired and
20 what are the rates on the ones that we're
21 initiating?

22 DEPUTY TREASURER DUNN: Sure.
23 We're in the process of pursuing these
24 refundings. We anticipate that the
25 transactions will occur in July. And so

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2 we're monitoring the markets to see what
3 those rates would be for our credit
4 rating and how we compare to at the MMD
5 spread or the Treasury spread since we're
6 looking at both current and taxable, but
7 we can provide you with that information
8 as we get a little closer to the
9 transaction.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Do you
11 know what the market is today for
12 refinancing, the interest rate?

13 DEPUTY TREASURER DUNN: I do.
14 If you give me a moment, I can pull up --

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: This is great
16 that we're doing this, because this is
17 found savings.

18 And, Chairman Green, this is
19 great that this is happening, so I
20 applaud all of this. It's great. We
21 should do more of it.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: As Ms. Dunn
23 is pulling up the information, I know one
24 of the things that I've stated to our
25 City Treasurer, Mr. Dunbar -- I know he's

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2 done it since his time as Treasurer -- to
3 constantly look at our various
4 indebtedness as a city. So I know
5 they're constantly looking at different
6 call dates and opportunities for
7 refinancing. They were doing this prior
8 to this current pandemic, which I think
9 helps us to better navigate the scarce
10 resources we have as a city, and that's
11 even more important during this time
12 here.

13 Ms. Dunn, do you have the
14 information for Councilmember Domb?

15 DEPUTY TREASURER DUNN: Yes.
16 So on June 4th, the -- I'll just give a
17 couple periods for ballpark. The
18 ten-year MMD was at 0.84 percent and the
19 20-year was 1.44 percent and the 30-year
20 was 1.65 percent, just to give you a
21 general ballpark since looking out over
22 that longer term period, and that's for a
23 AAA or the highest rated credits. And so
24 we would look to see how closely the City
25 could come to that benchmark rate.

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2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Based on the
3 City's credit, what's the ballpark that
4 we would receive on a refinance?

5 TREASURER DUNBAR: I can jump
6 in here, Councilman. This is Christian
7 Dunbar.

8 So just in terms of -- I mean,
9 I think what Ms. Dunn characterized was
10 sort of the federal overall market view,
11 but I think, as you know, Councilman,
12 that each of our bonds are issued year
13 per year maturity. So typically we would
14 have to go out to market, issue the debt.
15 Depending on how close we come to the
16 spread between the MMD that Ms. Dunn
17 characterized will determine what our
18 all-in cost is.

19 So it's very difficult without
20 first going out to market and seeing what
21 the demand is for our bonds across the
22 yield curve. Particularly for Water, it
23 could be anywhere from one year to 30
24 years, and then we do an average weighted
25 interest rate across those. So it's

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2 difficult to sort of guess. It really
3 does depend on the day we go out and the
4 demand from the market that determines
5 where our spreads are relative to the
6 best spreads in the country.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So let me
8 just make sure then you can answer this
9 question for me. We're refinancing about
10 \$130, \$135 million of bonds basically?

11 TREASURER DUNBAR: So right now
12 currently the refunding margin shows
13 right around 100 million, and most of
14 that is tax-exempt refinancing. Prior to
15 COVID-19, we were anticipating somewhere
16 near 400 million in taxable refinancing,
17 but what's happened in the current
18 marketplace is that taxable yields versus
19 tax-exempt yields have widened a bit.
20 And so a quick way to sort of understand
21 that is that the market has less
22 confidence in companies today in their
23 ability to repay, so taxable yields are
24 not as attractive as they used to be,
25 whereas I think the market still has some

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2 level of confidence in municipal issuers.
3 So tax-exempt yields are still at
4 all-time lows.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And the
6 savings from the 100 million, is that
7 about \$8 million?

8 TREASURER DUNBAR: Correct.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: That's not
10 per year. Is that over the remaining
11 term?

12 TREASURER DUNBAR: Well, that's
13 for the total -- that's the total savings
14 number. So it's not per year, and we can
15 get you what that looks like each year
16 throughout the savings period.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So one last
18 question and I'll let you go. Because of
19 the fact that the City of Philadelphia as
20 a municipality that maybe is in favor
21 right now for getting really low rates, I
22 assume we're looking at all of our
23 interest securities and things. How do
24 we take advantage of this opportunity for
25 us?

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2 TREASURER DUNBAR: Absolutely.

3 It's something we've been looking and we
4 monitor pretty closely on a week-to-week,
5 month-to-month basis, and that's why
6 we're now requesting particularly in this
7 bill 1.4 billion in refunding authority.
8 So in an event that refundings become
9 economical, we could take advantage of
10 them without having to go to Council
11 first, because that would potentially
12 slow down the opportunity to refund some
13 of these bonds for savings. And it's
14 important to remember that Council has
15 already given authorization to issue this
16 debt. Now we're just requesting our
17 ability in a speedy time to refund them
18 for savings to the City, and we
19 obviously, Councilman, would not do a
20 refunding if there wasn't savings to be
21 had for the City of Philadelphia, and our
22 debt policy calls for a minimum level of
23 savings around 3 percent, but typically
24 we are north of 5 percent before we
25 process the transaction.

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2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I would say
3 this, that right now we're in this window
4 of time, it might be 30 or 60 days, where
5 it's really attractive for us to look at
6 this, because as more states come out of
7 the COVID situation, you're going to see
8 more businesses rebound and more
9 confidence in businesses for borrowing
10 and so forth. So right now we're in a
11 great spot to do as much as we can as
12 soon as we can.

13 TREASURER DUNBAR: Absolutely.
14 That's a good point.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
16 very much. Thank you both.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
18 Councilmember Domb.

19 I think Councilmember Bass also
20 has a question for Ms. Dunn.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
22 afternoon. Good afternoon. Can you hear
23 me?

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes, we can
25 hear you. Please proceed with your

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2 question.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I don't
4 have an actual question. I just had a
5 statement, and I really just wanted to
6 thank everyone who is involved in this
7 transaction or potential transaction, as
8 we're looking at any way and every way to
9 save money here in the City of
10 Philadelphia. I just really wanted to
11 echo the sentiments of you, Mr. Chairman,
12 and also my colleague Councilman Domb
13 that any savings that we could have right
14 now in the City of Philadelphia is really
15 going to go a long way to helping us save
16 some of the programs and services that
17 are desperately needed.

18 So I just really wanted to say
19 a big thank you to any and all who were
20 involved in this effort.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
23 Councilmember Bass.

24 I don't see any additional
25 questions for Ms. Dunn. Thank you.

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2 We're going to the second
3 panel. Christian Dunbar, our City
4 Treasurer. And, Mr. Dunbar, you talked
5 about how the market has a much better
6 faith in tax exempt issues as opposed to
7 taxable. We hope that the federal powers
8 that be in DC would have that same type
9 of belief. It seems like the market
10 believes in the public sector, but
11 unfortunately sometimes our federal
12 elected officials don't always do the
13 same. Hopefully we'll get some revenue
14 reimbursement for cities like
15 Philadelphia.

16 So with that, if we can begin
17 the next panel, Panel No. 2, on the PGW
18 refunding bills as well as the Water,
19 City bond, and payroll. If Mr. Dubow is
20 here, if he would also like to testify,
21 please say so as well.

22 MR. DUBOW: I'm here, and I'd
23 like to testify on the loan authorization
24 in whatever order you guys think is
25 appropriate.

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2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, since
3 you started, Mr. Dubow, why don't you go
4 with the loan authorization, and then
5 from there, we'll have Mr. Dunbar
6 continue with PGW refunding, the Water
7 refund, and then also the payroll
8 bill, which also has a proposed amendment
9 and also has an attached compliance
10 report. I will have some additional
11 questions, but I'll wait until both
12 Mr. Dubow and Mr. Dunbar testify.

13 MR. DUBOW: Thank you.

14 Good afternoon, Chair Green and
15 members of the Committee. I'm Rob Dubow,
16 the Finance Director, and I'm here to
17 testify today in support of Bill No.
18 200298 introduced in May. The purpose of
19 the bill is to obtain approval from City
20 Council to place a loan authorization
21 question on the General Election ballot
22 in November. The loan question requests
23 an increase in indebtedness in an amount
24 not to exceed \$134 million, and the
25 purpose of that borrowing would be to

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2 fund the City's Fiscal Year 2021 Capital
3 Budget that's pending before City
4 Council. State law requires the City to
5 place that question on the ballot.

6 As of June 30th, 2019, the
7 City's legal debt limit was 9.5 billion,
8 and the amount of debt applicable to that
9 limit was 2.1 billion. As a result, the
10 City has a debt margin of about 7.4
11 billion.

12 The FY21 Capital Budget for new
13 GO bonds is approximately \$128 million.
14 The proposed ordinance includes the new
15 GO loan amount as well as a 4 percent
16 cost of issuance, to bring the total loan
17 authorization amount to approximately
18 \$134 million.

19 There is a table in my
20 testimony that breaks the bill out by
21 categories.

22 In order to provide appropriate
23 time to advertise the ballot question
24 prior to the November election, I would
25 like the bill to be enacted by Council

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2 before it recesses this summer.

3 And, finally, attached as part
4 of this testimony is the proposed ballot
5 question.

6 I respectfully request that you
7 report the bill out of Committee with a
8 favorable recommendation and that the
9 rules of Council be suspended so as to
10 permit first reading at the next session
11 of Council.

12 And that concludes my
13 testimony. I'd be happy to answer any
14 questions.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Before
16 Mr. Dubow -- we have a question. Let's
17 get Mr. Dunbar and then we'll have all
18 the questions for this panel.

19 TREASURER DUNBAR: Thank you,
20 Councilmember Green and thank you to the
21 other members of the Committee. My name
22 is Christian Dunbar, and I think as you
23 saw with me earlier today was First
24 Deputy City Treasurer Jackie Dunn. We
25 also have Joseph Golden, who is a Chief

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2 Financial Officer, but we also saw that
3 we have Craig White, who is the Chief
4 Executive Officer for PGW, Philadelphia
5 Gas Works, and I believe there's a host
6 of other PGW employees and executives
7 that are here with me today.

8 Today I am testifying in favor
9 of Bill No. 200296, which would authorize
10 the Philadelphia Gas Works and the Office
11 of City Treasurer to issue up to 300
12 million of gas revenue bonds. Proceeds
13 from the sale of the bonds shall be used
14 to finance capital projects included in
15 the Capital Budget of the Gas Works as
16 well as any required payment to the
17 Sinking Fund Reserve and costs of
18 issuance and/or capitalized interest on
19 the bonds.

20 That completes my testimony for
21 PGW, and we can take any questions at
22 this stage related to PGW.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Mr. Dunbar,
24 can you finish all of your testimony for
25 this panel, and then we'll get the

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2 questions from members of Council.

3 TREASURER DUNBAR: Absolutely.

4 Thank you very much.

5 The final bill that the City
6 Treasurer's Office will be testifying on
7 is Bill No. 200299 -- excuse me; 200229.
8 Again, Christian Dunbar. I am here
9 joined with other members from Treasury.

10 Bill 200229 would provide
11 authorization to the Office of City
12 Treasurer, on behalf of the City of
13 Philadelphia, to enter into an amendment
14 agreement with Citizens Bank of
15 Pennsylvania for provision of payroll
16 banking services to the City for an
17 additional term from July 1st, 2020 and
18 expiring June 30th, 2021, under certain
19 terms and conditions.

20 Citizens Bank has provided
21 these services for the past three years.
22 To ensure continuity of funds during this
23 period, we recommend the authorization of
24 the payroll through Citizens Bank once
25 again, amending their contract for an

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2 additional one-year term effective at the
3 beginning of the fiscal year of July 1st,
4 2020. If we do not proceed with this
5 ordinance, City employees will not
6 receive the paychecks they are owed. It
7 is imperative that we complete this
8 annual process.

9 And just to note,
10 Councilmembers, that this is the final
11 year for Citizens Bank. They have held
12 the contract for three years and this
13 will be their final year, and the City
14 Treasurer's Office will be issuing an RFP
15 for either retaining them or bringing on
16 a new payroll service into the future.

17 And that concludes the three
18 testimonies. First Deputy City Treasurer
19 Jackie Dunn had provided testimony on
20 Water.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
22 Mr. Dubow. Thank you, Mr. Dunbar. I
23 know Councilmember Bobby Henon has a
24 question regarding the bond authority,
25 and we'll get to his question, but I have

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2 a few quick questions I want to raise.

3 When will the RFP regarding the
4 payroll transaction be available? When
5 are you planning on issuing the RFP? I'm
6 sorry.

7 TREASURER DUNBAR: I think we
8 are scheduled -- I don't have that
9 schedule in front of me -- to issue the
10 RFP sometime early in next fiscal year.
11 So sometime between July and August we'll
12 be issuing the RFP for payroll services.

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Also,
14 can you give a little perspective on the
15 current credit rating of the various City
16 credits. I know there's been some
17 movement. A lot of that has been tied to
18 having a very strong fund balance over
19 the past years when we've had a strong
20 economy, but we're now into a global
21 pandemic that's had a very significant
22 impact on the City from a financial
23 perspective.

24 So if you can kind of give us
25 the current perspective on our current

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2 credit rating for a lot of the credits
3 that are on today's calendar.

4 TREASURER DUNBAR: Absolutely.
5 I think, first and foremost, the credit
6 to note in this environment I think, as
7 you know, Council Chair, that the rating
8 agencies have been reluctant for obvious
9 reasons in this environment to give any
10 upgrades or credit improvements across
11 sectors. In fact, they have actually
12 downgraded entire sectors or put entire
13 sectors on negative outlook. Obviously
14 we understand the transportation sector
15 is going through some difficult times,
16 particularly the airport sector.

17 However, PGW in this
18 environment was able to get an outlook
19 improvement, and this can only largely be
20 due to PGW's management and its
21 commitment to improving the fiscal health
22 of the City -- excuse me; of the utility
23 over the last five or more years.

24 As far as the City's GO credit,
25 our rating was recently affirmed when we

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2 did a transaction in January. We have
3 communicated significantly between City
4 Treasury, Budget, as well as Mr. Dubow in
5 regards to the updated Mayor's budget and
6 all the different moving parts. So we
7 have not seen any negative rating action
8 as it relates to our general obligation.
9 And that is the same case with our water
10 and our wastewater system. Our water and
11 wastewater system has historically been
12 our best credit rating that we have had,
13 and, again, a lot of that is the
14 commitment of the Water Department and
15 Ms. LaBuda, who is the CFO, and Deputy
16 Commissioner is on as well. She can also
17 take questions.

18 And, finally, our airport
19 credit has been, again, a mid-A credit.
20 Obviously what COVID has done has made
21 the industry very, very challenging, but
22 we do have pretty decent liquidity for
23 all of our credits, and so we have yet to
24 see a rating action across the board, and
25 the only rating action we have seen has

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2 been a positive rating action for PGW.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. And
4 also I know you have an amendment to the
5 payroll bill. If you could briefly just
6 describe that amendment.

7 TREASURER DUNBAR: Let me pull
8 that up.

9 The amendment is authorizing
10 the City Treasurer, on behalf of the
11 City, to enter into an amendment
12 agreement with Citizens Bank of
13 Philadelphia for provision of payroll
14 banking services to the City, under
15 certain conditions. The amendment is the
16 Authorized Depository Compliance Report
17 document from Citizens Bank, and it's
18 attached to my testimony, and I can
19 provide that to members of Council at a
20 later date -- or excuse me; after this
21 Committee hearing.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: With that, I
23 would like to acknowledge Councilmember
24 Bobby Henon for a question.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,

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2 Mr. Chairman.

3 And I want to thank Mr. Dunbar,
4 Mr. Dubow for both your testimony. My
5 question is to whomever it's appropriate
6 to is regarding the \$131 million bond
7 authorizations by the electors in the
8 form of a question on the November ballot
9 in the fall. Has this capital bond been
10 reflective of the newly submitted and
11 amended budget by the Mayor?

12 MR. DUBOW: Yes. This
13 authorization relates to the new Capital
14 Budget that City Council is considering
15 now, and it's been revised, as you
16 mentioned, from the original budget.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay.
18 Great. And I just want to make sure that
19 we let the general public know that bond
20 authorizations through questions with the
21 general electors happen how often?

22 MR. DUBOW: The bond
23 authorization question happens almost
24 every year. The actual borrowing is done
25 really on a cash basis, so that happens

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2 less frequently.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great. I
4 think you answered both of those
5 questions, especially that the bond has
6 been reflective of the newly submitted
7 budget from the Mayor. So I have no
8 further questions.

9 Thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
11 Councilmember Henon.

12 Also for members of the
13 Committee, the amendment that Mr. Dunbar
14 was referring to has been circulated to
15 all members of the Committee and their
16 staff.

17 Now I'll recognize
18 Councilmember Allan Domb for a question.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
20 Mr. Chairman.

21 Again, thank you, everybody,
22 for your testimony. I guess this is for
23 the Finance Director, Mr. Dubow. Just
24 curious, the 62.6 million for municipal
25 buildings, how would that money be used?

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2 MR. DUBOW: So any time -- the
3 best way to look at that is to look at
4 the Capital Budget that's in front of us.
5 So it's on kind of a wide variety of
6 projects. I'll actually defer to the
7 folks from Budget to give you some
8 examples of that. I think both Marisa
9 Waxman and Peilin Chen are on the call.

10 MS. WAXMAN: Peilin, do you
11 want to jump in, or I can do some big
12 picture.

13 So examples of municipal
14 buildings and facilities where we'll be
15 making improvements, a significant one is
16 elevators in the --

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms. Waxman,
18 if you can just state your name for the
19 record just for the stenographer, just in
20 case.

21 MS. WAXMAN: Hi. Marisa Goren
22 Waxman, Budget Director.

23 So we have a number of
24 municipal facilities that are slated for
25 improvements. I mentioned the elevators,

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2 but now I'll actually turn it over to
3 Peilin Chen, Deputy Budget Director, for
4 more detail.

5 MS. CHEN: Hi. Good afternoon.
6 This is Peilin Chen, Deputy Budget
7 Director for Capital.

8 The triplex is a good one. So
9 under municipal buildings, that houses
10 several departments. So this would
11 include the facilities under the Fire
12 Department, the libraries, the health
13 facilities, the homeless services
14 buildings, Police Department, Prisons,
15 you know, City Hall. All of the major
16 buildings fall under this category.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I guess my
18 question is based on what's been going on
19 in the economy and the fact that space
20 usage might be different in the future
21 than it is today, have we taken that into
22 account, especially with a lot of our
23 office spaces, and figured out ways to
24 actually save money to try to avoid some
25 of these expenses?

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2 MR. DUBOW: Yes. We are going
3 through that process now of looking at
4 what the government will look like when
5 it reopens, and we think that may present
6 potential for savings.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. And
8 then the other question -- two more --
9 three more. The total debt of the
10 City --

11 MR. DUBOW: They're
12 multiplying.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yeah, they're
14 multiplying.

15 What's the total debt of the
16 City right now?

17 MR. DUBOW: So the total
18 outstanding amount, about 2.1 billion.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: How does that
20 compare to two years ago?

21 MR. DUBOW: I would have to --
22 unless, Peilin, do you know or should we
23 get back to --

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Let me tell
25 you why I'm asking that question. In

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2 2016, according to the information you
3 all supplied, our debt service to the
4 City was 132 million. In the new
5 proposed budget, it's 181.5. So it's
6 gone up almost 50 million or 37 and a
7 half percent in five years. So I'm
8 trying to figure out why it's gone up
9 that much.

10 MR. DUBOW: Part of the reason
11 is that we've had over the years
12 underinvestment in our facilities and in
13 street paving, and we were trying to
14 compensate for that. So the amount of
15 street paving, for example, has gone up
16 substantially, and that then leads to
17 increases in debt service since we
18 borrow --

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: One last
20 question. This could be for you, Rob, or
21 anyone else. Have we reconciled all of
22 our accounts? Are we up to date in the
23 last 30 days of reconciliations for all
24 accounts for the City?

25 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. I'll let the

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2 Treasurer's Office answer that.

3 TREASURER DUNBAR: Thank you
4 for that question. We are currently --
5 of our 77 accounts, as you know, that we
6 reconcile, Councilman, we are up to date
7 on 71 of those accounts. There are six
8 accounts that are about two months
9 behind, and the reason really for that,
10 Councilman, is that just given what has
11 happened over the last two and a half,
12 three months from a COVID perspective,
13 our accounting staff capacity has been
14 significantly reduced and collection of
15 revenues has been significantly reduced,
16 recognition of some of the revenue and
17 expenses has been significantly reduced.
18 But we are -- almost all of our staff now
19 can work remotely. We're waiting on a
20 couple additional laptops. As you can
21 imagine, the demand from IT has been
22 significantly high. And so we do
23 anticipate that we should be able to
24 catch up relatively quickly.

25 But our most important account

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2 I think, as you know, our consolidated
3 cash account, is up to date. So we can
4 provide additional information if you
5 would like, but our staff, we have been,
6 quite honestly, proud just given
7 everything that's happened for them to
8 have maintained the level of
9 reconciliation that they have been able
10 to with all the different IT struggles
11 and having the City ability to remotely
12 test us so quickly. And we certainly
13 appreciate the leadership that you've had
14 on this and look forward to engaging
15 again.

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: That's great.
17 Just last question. Are there
18 any issues that we should be aware of
19 that are outstanding on those
20 reconciliations?

21 TREASURER DUNBAR: There are no
22 major issues. And I will say what's
23 important to note is that the daily
24 reconciliation is still happening, but
25 the monthly, if you will, final

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2 reconciliation is what's behind. So our
3 staff is keeping up, by and large, to
4 some of the daily movement of money in
5 and out of our accounts. But as of now,
6 there is no major issue of note or
7 concern.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: That's great.
9 Thank you very much. Thank you so much.
10 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank
11 you.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
13 Councilmember Domb.

14 I just have one last question
15 for our City Treasurer, Mr. Dunbar. Can
16 you give some perspective on the type of
17 financing professionals we've been using
18 from a diversity standpoint for a lot of
19 these transactions?

20 TREASURER DUNBAR: Absolutely,
21 Councilman. And as you know, the City
22 Treasurer's Office and the Administration
23 particularly has had a significant focus
24 on ensuring, and the Mayor, to ensure
25 that our professionals are diverse and

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2 reflect the City of Philadelphia. So for
3 many of our transactions from an
4 investment banking perspective -- and,
5 again, what's important to note is
6 there's really only three major
7 investment banks that are minorities that
8 can senior manage our deals, and of those
9 three in an entire universe of investment
10 banks, three of them -- those three banks
11 are in our top ten. The highest ranking,
12 Siebert Williams Shank, is ranked number
13 two of all our investment banks, Lubben
14 Capital is ranked number five of all our
15 investment banks, and Ramirez is ranked
16 number nine of all our investment banks.
17 And of the total amount over the last
18 five years -- or excuse me; the last four
19 years of this Administration, we're just
20 around 30 percent of our investment
21 banking capacity or revenue that's gone
22 to minority and disabled and women-owned
23 firms.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

25 TREASURER DUNBAR: As you know,

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2 totally from a Treasurer's perspective,
3 we're in the low 50's as it relates to
4 our diversity numbers. I believe the
5 last number for last year was 51.
6 Currently we're at 52, and that's the
7 totality of all of our contracts in
8 professional services. And we've
9 actually increased our goal from 30
10 percent to 40 percent because obviously
11 it's important. It's been a focus of
12 this Administration, and we want to
13 ensure that we can institutionalize the
14 numbers that we've been able to achieve
15 over the last four years.

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: When you say
17 all your professionals, you're talking
18 about FA's or financial advisors or
19 counsel or other type of professionals,
20 correct?

21 TREASURER DUNBAR: Yes. We are
22 talking about the totality of every
23 dollar that comes out of the City
24 Treasurer's Office from a payment
25 perspective, and that's how we track it.

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2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
3 Mr. Dunbar.

4 I don't see any additional
5 questions for you or Ms. Dunn or
6 Mr. Dubow on this issue, so I want to
7 thank you.

8 I want to move into the next
9 panel, Panel No. 3, and this will be
10 representatives from PGW. I understand
11 Mr. White and Mr. Moser are there, as
12 well as Gemela McClendon, who is the
13 Executive Director of the Gas Commission.
14 So if we could start with Mr. White and
15 those from the PGW team, and then we'll
16 go to Ms. McClendon, and then we'll open
17 it up for any questions from members of
18 Council. Thank you.

19 MR. WHITE: Thank you,
20 Councilman Green. I know that the
21 Committee prefers that we stay close to
22 the issue on the agenda, but I've
23 received a number of inquiries from both
24 Council staffers and Councilmembers about
25 the shutoff moratorium. So if it would

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2 be acceptable, I'd certainly like this
3 opportunity to give you some background
4 on where we stand on some of these
5 issues, and of course Mr. Moser is here
6 and he submitted testimony on the Capital
7 Budget, but as I said, there's been quite
8 a bit of interest on this front and I
9 thought maybe you would like us to take
10 the opportunity here and discuss some of
11 these issues. Is that acceptable?

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: That's fine,
13 Mr. White. If you could give that
14 overview, and then, Mr. Moser, if you
15 could kind of summarize your testimony,
16 as well as Ms. McClendon also give a
17 summary of your testimony.

18 MR. WHITE: Very good. Thank
19 you, Councilman.

20 I think the first point to
21 start with is the Governor's Office's
22 amendment to the Proclamation of Disaster
23 Emergency, and very recently, I think it
24 was on the 3rd of June, the Proclamation
25 of Disaster Emergency has been extended

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2 for 90 days, which takes us into early
3 September. So unless the Governor
4 himself modifies that, we expect that to
5 be the case.

6 Now, the second component to
7 that is obviously the PUC, and we have an
8 order from the PUC that similar to the
9 emergency order where it extends all of
10 the issues pertained in that order out 90
11 days, the PUC has required an order to
12 utilities to not terminate service during
13 the pendency of the Proclamation of
14 Disaster Emergency. So there will be no
15 service terminations until that would
16 conclude.

17 Now, just to give you a little
18 further background, we have not
19 terminated service for a residential
20 customer since November of '19. And in
21 addition to that, if the Committee would
22 like any discussion on some of the
23 programs we have that provide a great
24 amount of flexibility, particularly for
25 our customers that are at 150 percent of

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2 poverty or below, we could certainly go
3 into that.

4 I think a couple of the key
5 issues are that I think I can honestly
6 say that outside of maybe California and
7 Oregon, we have the best program in the
8 country for customers that fall into this
9 category, and it's only getting better,
10 and it's getting better at a time that
11 coincides with when shutoffs may be
12 allowed, and that is September.

13 The big step that we took
14 unilaterally -- and that's in a recent
15 filing with the PUC -- we requested to
16 alter the burden, the energy burden, on
17 customers from the current levels in our
18 CRP program, which are 8, 9, and 10
19 percent of your household income, down to
20 4 and 6 percent of the household income.
21 So this will be a significant savings for
22 those customers that are on the CRP
23 program, and of course new entrants to
24 the program would see this as well.

25 So there's quite a few things

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2 that we're doing during the COVID. I'm
3 sure you're aware of the fact that the
4 shutoffs, we terminated that, as I
5 mentioned, but we've also stopped
6 applying any late fees and we're
7 certainly modifying our requirements for
8 CRP documentation. Folks have trouble
9 sometimes getting information on their
10 unemployment status, and we take over
11 documentation for that.

12 I think one of the most
13 important items that -- and I'll end with
14 this, and of course, I have Denise
15 Adamucci here that has a great deal of
16 expertise in this area. One of the most
17 important items is the fact that PGW
18 traditionally uses the last 30 days of
19 income to determine whether you qualify
20 and where you qualify in our programs.
21 So with things happening so quickly
22 during the COVID and folks finding
23 themselves in a position where they don't
24 have income, our program is very dynamic,
25 and as I said, we look at just the recent

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2 30 days to see whether you qualify. So
3 we feel that that capability gives people
4 some nimbleness to get on our program
5 rather quickly.

6 So those were the opening
7 remarks I wanted to make on this issue,
8 and if any members of the Committee have
9 any questions obviously or even
10 suggestions that we can evaluate and give
11 you an answer on, we'd certainly like to
12 do that.

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And just for
14 the record, I'm not sure if you stated it
15 for the record. That was Craig White,
16 President and CEO of Philadelphia Gas
17 Works.

18 At this point, Mr. Moser, if
19 you could begin and state your name and
20 title for the record.

21 MR. MOSER: Good afternoon,
22 Chairman Green and members of the
23 Committee on Finance. My name is Douglas
24 Moser. I am the Executive Vice President
25 and Acting Chief Operating Officer for

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2 the Philadelphia Gas Works. I'm
3 appearing today on behalf of PGW in
4 support of Bill No. 200300, which would
5 approve a Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Budget
6 for PGW.

7 The Proposed Capital Budget
8 totals \$213,368,000 primarily to support
9 our program to replace existing plant and
10 facilities to ensure that PGW continues
11 to operate its assets at a high standard
12 of safety and reliability.

13 I have submitted written
14 testimony, but I am available to answer
15 any questions you may have.

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

18 And if I could have Gemela
19 McClendon, Esquire, Executive Director of
20 the Philadelphia Gas Commission, to now
21 testify.

22 MS. MCCLENDON: Good afternoon,
23 Chairman Green and members of the
24 Committee. My name is Gemela McClendon
25 and I am the Executive Director of the

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2 Philadelphia Gas Commission. We
3 appreciate this opportunity to testify
4 before you in support of Bill No. 200300,
5 which embodies the recommendations of the
6 Commission to City Council regarding
7 PGW's Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Budget,
8 which was unanimously approved by the
9 Commission on April 21st, 2020.

10 We respectfully request this
11 Committee to report this bill out with a
12 favorable recommendation, together with a
13 suspension of the rules, so that it may
14 have its first reading at the next
15 Council session.

16 At its public meeting held on
17 April 21st, 2020, the Gas Commission
18 endorsed the Fiscal 2021 Capital Budget
19 for PGW in the not-to-exceed amount of
20 \$213.368 million. Of that amount, 209
21 million in immediate funding would be
22 available at the start of the fiscal year
23 on September 1st and 3.79 million would
24 require either the Gas Commission's
25 release approval and/or the satisfaction

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2 of certain conditions prior to PGW's
3 commitment and/or expenditure of the
4 funds.

5 The Commission's
6 recommendations to City Council are
7 detailed in the Resolution and Order that
8 I have attached to my written testimony
9 as Appendix No. 1.

10 PGW originally submitted a
11 proposed budget of \$283 million and a
12 Five Year Forecast. The Gas Commission
13 performed its due diligence review and
14 evaluation of PGW's proposals in
15 accordance with the applicable legal
16 standards and governing standards, taking
17 into account PGW's finances, its
18 operations, and its core purpose. A
19 number of reductions were recommended by
20 Commission staff, which were not
21 contested by PGW or the Public Advocate.
22 The Commission accepted these uncontested
23 recommendations and ultimately adopted a
24 budget of \$213.368 million. This amount
25 is \$70.188 million lower than PGW's

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2 proposed budget or roughly 25 percent.
3 However, it is 60 percent higher than the
4 approved Fiscal 2020 Capital Budget of
5 \$127.708 million.

6 The reason for this increase is
7 because PGW is looking to complete two
8 projects that are very important to its
9 continued efficient operation. The first
10 project is Phase 2 of its update of its
11 customer information system. PGW's
12 system was implemented -- was last
13 updated in the late 1990s. I can't
14 remember the year exactly. And it has
15 not been updated since. PGW has already
16 embarked upon Phase 1 of the update of
17 its customer information system, and the
18 funds in this year's Capital Budget will
19 allow it to complete the project.

20 Additionally, PGW's
21 long-awaited building consolidation
22 initiative is ready to move forward,
23 which will result in PGW having three
24 main centers of operation - its
25 headquarters at 800 West Montgomery

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2 Avenue, a North Operations Center which
3 will be located somewhere off of the
4 Roosevelt Expressway with easy access to
5 I-76, and its South Operations Center,
6 which is currently located at -- which
7 will be located at its existing Passyunk
8 site.

9 In addition to approving the
10 actual Capital Budget funding, the
11 Commission is also recommending that
12 Council approve changes to PGW's Capital
13 Program protocols. These protocols
14 govern how PGW goes about preparing its
15 capital budget from year to year and were
16 first adopted in Fiscal Year 2014. At
17 this time, the Commission believes that
18 it is prudent to update the Capital
19 Program protocols to allow for longer
20 line item lifespans for projects that
21 require additional time to complete. So,
22 for instance, the customer information
23 system.

24 Under the existing Capital
25 Program protocols, PGW only has two years

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2 to complete projects like this, when we
3 know at the outset that a project of this
4 size and nature takes a longer -- takes
5 more than two years to complete. So the
6 one change will allow for longer
7 lifespans for those projects that are
8 longer in nature to complete.

9 The other major change to the
10 protocols that we're recommending is the
11 creation of a condition funding reserve,
12 which will allow PGW to address spending
13 shortfalls that it may encounter in its
14 distribution department that occur as a
15 result of events outside of PGW's
16 control.

17 The Commission respectfully
18 recommends that Council approve Bill No.
19 200300, and on behalf of the Gas
20 Commission, I thank you for the
21 opportunity to provide this testimony.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
23 Ms. McClendon, Mr. Moser, and Mr. White.
24 I just have a few questions and then
25 we'll open it up to questions for members

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2 of Council.

3 Ms. McClendon, you talked about
4 the Gas Commission's recommendation for
5 reducing the PGW Capital Budget, I
6 believe like \$70 million. Can you just
7 give a quick overview of those
8 recommendations that calls for the budget
9 reduction.

10 MS. MCCLENDON: Well, when PGW
11 presented its initial budget proposal, it
12 did include funds for the actual capital
13 leasehold that would be required for the
14 building consolidation initiative, so the
15 property where the North Operations
16 Center will be located. PGW and
17 budgeting actually included the amount of
18 that leasehold. It was an accounting
19 decision. And after discussion with the
20 Gas Commission's budgeting and accounting
21 experts and PGW and the Public Advocate,
22 it was agreed that that leasehold amount
23 probably should not be included in the
24 actual Capital Budget. So that
25 eliminated a large chunk of the proposed

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2 budget amount. So it really was just an
3 accounting matter that led to a large
4 part of the reduction.

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank
6 you, Ms. McClendon.

7 Mr. White, I just have a few
8 quick questions, one that came up during
9 last week's Finance Committee briefing.

10 Because of COVID-19 and because
11 of the delay of a lot of issues that are
12 impacting people, especially their
13 ability to receive resources, there are a
14 number of people that may have had their
15 gas shut off. I know from a process
16 standpoint, PGW requires an amount of
17 money as a deposit before that gas can be
18 turned back on. Has there been any
19 conversations or considerations about
20 helping those who may need some
21 assistance in getting to that down
22 payment before they can set up a payment
23 agreement with PGW?

24 MR. WHITE: Certainly we are
25 very sympathetic to the notion that

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2 there's people out there, particularly
3 outside of the 150 percent of poverty,
4 folks that are at 150 to 250, that are
5 really going to be challenged. At this
6 point, as I said, we haven't shut anyone
7 off since November of '19, and the folks
8 that were shut off prior to that were
9 shut off pursuant to the PUC-required
10 procedures.

11 So I think that it would be
12 fair to say that there will be a lot of
13 discussion with the PUC over the next
14 couple of months as to potential
15 strategies that may support customers
16 differently than we are today. And I'll
17 just throw an example out there. We
18 receive significant refunds from an
19 interstate pipeline after a rate case is
20 concluded. Unlike a PGW rate case where
21 we can't put in rates until they're
22 approved, interstate pipelines put in
23 rates subject to rate fund, and we pay
24 those higher rates and then we receive a
25 refund. And one of the things that I'm

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2 thinking about is how we could
3 potentially discuss with the PUC ways in
4 which we could use those refund dollars.
5 Instead of just spreading them across
6 future volumetric usage by the entire
7 system, maybe we could direct some of
8 those.

9 So that's just an example. I'm
10 not saying we can get approval for that,
11 but that's an example of where we might
12 be able to free up some dollars and
13 direct them to a subset of our customers.

14 Beyond that, I think we are
15 going to be largely guided by PUC
16 regulation and where the other utilities
17 in the state are going, recognizing that
18 they are investor-owned and they do have
19 shareholders and we are a municipal with
20 no deep pockets, no shareholders.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
22 Mr. White.

23 MR. WHITE: Very good.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.
25 I just want to raise one other question.

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2 I know Councilmember Domb also has a
3 question. A question came up during the
4 beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in
5 reference to PGW's rate case filing with
6 the Pennsylvania Utilities Commission.
7 As Mr. Dunbar stated earlier, PGW has
8 received a rating upgrade that helps us
9 to reduce our borrowing costs. As you
10 also stated, that most of the other
11 utilities that provide gas are
12 investor-owned utilities and PGW being a
13 municipally owned utility with some of
14 the highest rates in the Commonwealth,
15 we're constantly trying to balance
16 between getting our rates as low as
17 possible but also providing for our
18 customers.

19 So can you give some
20 perspective on the PUC rate case and that
21 process.

22 MR. WHITE: Well, the PUC rate
23 case to date, we received -- and just to
24 give folks the added understanding of how
25 much oversight goes into this case, it's

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2 not just the PUC. It's numerous
3 interveners that represent many subsets
4 of our customers that hire expert
5 witnesses that put us through the paces
6 during the rate case. Right now we have
7 received over 600 interrogatories and we
8 produced over 200,000 pages of responses.
9 So there's a great amount of detail and a
10 great amount of oversight that goes into
11 that process.

12 The process is typically a
13 nine-month process. We filed just after
14 UGI utilities filed, and it was before
15 the COVID obviously. So I think a lot of
16 water has to go over the dam with respect
17 to the rate case, but the reason we filed
18 that rate case was to enable us to remain
19 as solvent as we are today to keep our
20 bond rating so that we can borrow money
21 at reasonable rates and support our
22 customers, particularly in the area of
23 our cast iron main replacement program
24 and of course our gas plants to enable us
25 to meet the coldest day of the year, the

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 coldest years and to do it in a safe
3 manner.

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

6 Councilmember Domb.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
8 Chairman Green, and thank you, PGW. I
9 just have a few quick questions.

10 The collection rate a year ago
11 compared to today at PGW, is there any
12 change in the collection rate?

13 MR. WHITE: Yeah. I have Joe
14 Golden here, the Chief Financial Officer.
15 So I'm going to ask him to speak to those
16 financial issues.

17 MR. GOLDEN: Good afternoon,
18 Councilmember Domb.

19 The collection rate this year
20 at the eight-month ended April was
21 approximately 97 percent, which is
22 slightly above our budget of 96 percent
23 and I believe was a little better than
24 last year at the same time.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. And do

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 you see any problem with people paying
3 during this pandemic?

4 MR. GOLDEN: We have not
5 experienced that so far.

6 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. And
7 are the cap rates in general in the
8 market for utilities like PGW going down?

9 MR. GOLDEN: What rates,
10 Councilmember?

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I'm going to
12 say the capitalization rate, the
13 valuation rate.

14 When you value a utility -- let
15 me rephrase the question. When you value
16 the utility, because there's steady
17 payment, is the value of that utility
18 increased in a time where private
19 companies are having major issues?

20 MR. GOLDEN: Councilmember, I'm
21 not aware of the valuation rates of the
22 investor-owned utilities at this time.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. And
24 can you tell me -- I don't know if you
25 can share this with me. In 2019, what

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2 was the net income of PGW?

3 MR. GOLDEN: I do not have that
4 off the top of my head. I can get that
5 to you during the meeting.

6 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Well, thank
7 you very much, and keep up the good work.

8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
10 Councilmember Domb.

11 Seeing no additional questions
12 for PGW, I would like the next panel to
13 come up. If Anne Fadullon can be ready
14 to speak.

15 MS. FADULLON: Here I am.

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Please state
17 your name and title for the record and
18 proceed with your testimony.

19 MS. FADULLON: Do you want me
20 to give testimony on both the bills? How
21 do you want to do it?

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. If you
23 could give testimony on both bills.
24 Thank you very much.

25 MS. FADULLON: Sure. No

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2 problem.

3 Good afternoon, Councilmember
4 Green and other members of the Finance
5 Committee, members of City Council. I'm
6 Anne Fadullon, Director of Planning
7 Development. I will present testimony on
8 behalf of the Administration on Bill No.
9 200329 and in a moment on Bill No.
10 200330, which is a Substantial Amendment
11 to the City's Annual Action Plan 2019
12 through '20.

13 The bill allocates \$40.4
14 million in federal CARES Act funding to
15 address emergency COVID-19 housing and
16 community development needs. The CARES
17 Act provided Philadelphia with 26.26
18 million in Community Development Block
19 Grant funding, 12.98 million in Emergency
20 Solutions Grant funding, and 1.12 million
21 in Housing Opportunities for Persons with
22 AIDS funding.

23 We propose to use these funds
24 for emergency rental, mortgage, and
25 utility assistance to homeowners and

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2 tenants, emergency shelter and
3 homelessness prevention, eviction and
4 foreclosure prevention programs,
5 emergency home repairs, assistance to
6 small neighborhood businesses.

7 While not nearly enough to meet
8 the need, these funds are critical to
9 helping our residents and our communities
10 respond to the financial crisis caused by
11 COVID-19.

12 Thank you for the opportunity
13 to present this testimony, and we request
14 a suspension of the rules to permit first
15 reading at the next Council session.

16 And I'll -- let me give the
17 next testimony and then I'll be happy to
18 answer questions.

19 I am here to present testimony
20 on Bill No. 200330, which permits the
21 City to apply for CDBG, HOME, ESG, HOPWA,
22 and state funds. The City's Annual
23 Action Plan 2020 through 2021 is the
24 application for these funds. The plan
25 addresses our housing and community

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2 development needs. Its goals are to
3 preserve and create affordable homeowner
4 and rental housing opportunities; to
5 reduce homelessness and expand special
6 needs housing opportunities; to foster
7 open access to all housing and community
8 resources and programs; to address the
9 education, economic, and income needs of
10 people in neighborhoods; to strengthen
11 community assets and manage vacant land
12 to improve quality of life; and to
13 promote fair housing and access to
14 opportunities for all Philadelphians.

15 A key goal is to put people and
16 keep people in their homes through
17 production and preservation of rental
18 housing, foreclosure and eviction
19 prevention programs, rental assistance,
20 and home repair programs such as the
21 Basic Systems and Heater Hotline. It
22 seeks to prevent homelessness and expand
23 housing for people with special needs via
24 rental assistance through the ESG, HOME,
25 and HOPWA programs, the Adaptive

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2 Modifications program, and development
3 financing for homeless and special needs
4 housing.

5 We will continue first-time
6 homebuyer grants, home repair loans for
7 homeowners, and the loan program for
8 small landlords. We will also support
9 our residents and our neighborhoods
10 through housing counseling agencies,
11 neighborhood advisory committees,
12 neighborhood energy centers, programs to
13 maintain vacant land. We will invest
14 significant resources in community
15 economic development, including business
16 loan programs, business development
17 grants, corridor management support, and
18 building improvement support.

19 The coming year will be more
20 challenging than any we have seen in a
21 long time. We are committed to meeting
22 that challenge.

23 Thank you for the opportunity
24 to testify. We must submit the plan to
25 HUD by August 15th, 2020. Therefore, I

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2 ask for a suspension of the rules to
3 permit first reading at the next Council
4 session, and we're here to answer any
5 questions you may have.

6 Thank you.

7 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
8 Ms. Fadullon, and I see we have some
9 questions from members of Council.

10 As you and some of your staff
11 know, years ago when I actually had some
12 hair, I served as Deputy City Solicitor
13 representing the Office of -- then was
14 called the Office of Housing and
15 Community Development, and I know that
16 Community Development Block Grant dollars
17 and other federal dollars have a lot of
18 restrictions and that we have used our
19 General Fund balance for a number of
20 operations.

21 And so I know with the federal
22 CARES dollars that we received and you're
23 using those dollars for rental
24 assistance, but I do have a significant
25 concern because of the reduction of

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2 General Fund dollars for initiatives like
3 the Housing Trust Fund and Basic System
4 Repair program, especially during this
5 current COVID-19 pandemic when these
6 dollars are needed more than ever.

7 Toward the end of last week, my
8 understanding is that the Mayor made a
9 statement that we're going to be revising
10 or making changes to the budget. I
11 believe that was principally in reference
12 to aspects of the Police Department's
13 budget. Also recently the Commonwealth
14 has unveiled some additional dollars for
15 programs for the City as well.

16 So in light of those two
17 actions, has there been any additional
18 conversations since our last briefing
19 with the Finance Committee regarding
20 changes to this budget or other ideas in
21 reference to how we make the commitment
22 to the Housing Trust Fund as well as
23 Basic Systems Repair programs or other
24 programs that were receiving General Fund
25 dollars that were reduced based on the

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2 current pandemic?

3 MS. FADULLON: I have not been
4 party to any discussions about specifics
5 about changes made to the budget. I know
6 that there have been comments in
7 conversations about that, but I am not
8 pertinent -- I have not been informed of
9 any specific changes to the budget.

10 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. But
11 as you know, a proposal by the
12 Administration is, I guess, a proposal
13 and we'll go through a process where
14 we'll amend the budget or make other
15 suggestions. The Mayor presents the
16 budget and then Council will make
17 amendments and actually has the
18 responsibility of passing the budget.
19 But from your perspective, my
20 understanding, you're agnostic to how
21 those dollars come, and if City Council
22 were to provide additional dollars both
23 for the Housing Trust Fund or other
24 initiatives using General Fund dollars by
25 moving them, you would be agnostic to

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2 that perspective?

3 MS. FADULLON: I don't know if
4 agnostic is the right term. I can tell
5 you that we will make sure those dollars
6 are well spent.

7 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Very
8 politically savvy.

9 With that, I will go to
10 Councilmember Gym.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
12 very much, Mr. Chairman.

13 Good afternoon, Anne, and I
14 wanted to just say that I think you and
15 many others share a deep commitment to
16 housing, and I really appreciate that.

17 I've made this very clear on
18 multiple phone calls that I think it's a
19 great thing that the federal government
20 has reached out to do COVID stimulus
21 money specifically to relieve pressures
22 on housing issues. As has been said by
23 the Chairman of this Committee and by
24 many others, we are extraordinarily
25 shocked, depressed, and appalled that the

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2 admin would have reallocated a lot of
3 that money away from the Housing Trust
4 Fund and from urgent needs.

5 I want to thank your
6 Administration -- I want to thank your
7 department for moving quickly on
8 PHLRentAssist. As we saw from the
9 extraordinary turnout in just a very
10 short amount of time, the need is far
11 greater than we can imagine. That
12 includes the fact that we can't actually
13 pay everybody's rent. We are going to
14 need to find other means, and one of them
15 has been like real needs on the
16 Philadelphia Eviction Prevention Project,
17 which provides counseling and advice and
18 lawyers for tenants who are in eviction
19 court. That money has been completely
20 eviscerated, 75 percent down, and I'll be
21 fighting to make sure that it gets
22 restored, and I know other people will as
23 well.

24 But as you're looking at this
25 budget, we have this influx of money that

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2 came in from the federal government, not
3 enough but some. We saw the
4 Administration reallocate a lot of it
5 away. The Housing Trust Fund money is
6 actually down from what it was in FY20,
7 something like \$8 million. In your
8 understanding, like if we are talking
9 about equity and justice, if black and
10 brown communities in particular are
11 demanding that violence end against them,
12 and that's not only violence in policing
13 but violence in other kinds of systems,
14 which include denial of housing, is this
15 the equity budget that this City should
16 be pushing forward on?

17 MS. FADULLON: Well, I think
18 that the Administration and the City had
19 some very difficult decisions to make
20 with the depth of the budget cut they had
21 to make, \$650 million cutting from the
22 budget, and I think they tried to advance
23 the Mayor's priorities of public
24 education, public safety, and economic
25 development. And I would say that I

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2 believe that housing is part of economic
3 development, and that if folks are able
4 to get a quality education and get a
5 living wage job, that affordable, stable
6 housing is very important to that.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And do you
8 believe housing is part of an equity lens
9 and framework and then equity approach to
10 our budget? Like would you believe that
11 our investment in equity would also be
12 core to our understanding of whether this
13 is an equitable budget as well?

14 MS. FADULLON: I've always
15 believed that housing is a moral right.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So I know
17 that -- you know, I'll be honest. It's a
18 struggle for me because I know we have to
19 move forward on this money, but I
20 cannot -- and I will just share this with
21 the Chairman and other members of my
22 committee, because I know I'm not alone
23 on this, but I cannot support an
24 investment unless we rethink our
25 commitment to housing. I will vote in

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2 favor of this transfer because we need
3 the money from the federal government in
4 order to have the conversation, but if
5 this money gets reallocated, if the
6 Housing Trust money actually goes down,
7 if there's less resources for housing
8 money than we had planned for a year ago
9 from today, then we are on the wrong
10 track.

11 So I hope that as the
12 conversation moves forward, we can work
13 with you. I know we will be working with
14 you, Anne, but other members of the
15 Administration to convey to them that
16 housing has to be core to an equitable
17 strategy, that housing has to be core to
18 a race justice strategy, and that housing
19 has to be core to a women and a gender
20 strategy that is like doing justice to
21 our communities.

22 So thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
23 thank you, Anne.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
25 Councilmember Gym, for your comments.

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2 And I know, Ms. Fadullon, this
3 was not your proposed budget and I will
4 state this for the record based on my
5 knowledge of you and your work record
6 both here in the public and the private
7 sector. This was made by others within
8 the Administration. So we are going to
9 continue to push, even as we continue to
10 work on this budget, to provide
11 additional dollars back into the Housing
12 Trust Fund.

13 With that, I will go to
14 Councilmember Gauthier.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
16 you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Good afternoon, Anne. Your
18 core testimony states that the bills we
19 have before us are not enough to meet
20 rising housing needs. We all know we had
21 a housing crisis pre-COVID, so are you
22 using projections of any kind to project
23 how many more people you expect to be
24 either at risk of becoming housing
25 insecure or homeless as a result of this

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2 pandemic and the resulting recession?

3 MS. FADULLON: So I would say
4 as I spoke a little bit at my General
5 Fund testimony on Friday afternoon --
6 it's great to be back with you guys
7 today -- that we anticipate due to
8 various budget cuts and that we're coming
9 to the end of the bonds that we had for
10 the home repair programs, that we
11 anticipate next year based on our cuts or
12 decrease in funding that we're looking at
13 is that we think probably between --
14 we'll be able to fund four to five less
15 Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects,
16 either new ones or preservation projects.
17 Based on our cut in home repair dollars,
18 I think we estimate that we may serve
19 about 3,000 less households with our home
20 improvement programs. That includes
21 Basic System Repair, Adaptive
22 Modifications. Our Heater Hotline we've
23 been able to keep steady, so I think
24 we're okay there. And then we know that
25 we will probably run out of our down

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2 payment Philly First Home dollars, given
3 this year we spent about \$14 million
4 through the year, and even if there's a
5 little bit of a dip, which I have to tell
6 you we have not seen so far due to COVID,
7 we only have the \$6 million in Wells
8 Fargo money available for next year. So
9 we believe that that will probably only
10 last us, if we're lucky, six months,
11 maybe only four months. So we will see a
12 substantial decrease in services there.

13 Again, we know that even
14 pre-COVID with all the other resources,
15 that we were not fully meeting the
16 housing needs and, frankly, in order to
17 do that, we'd need a whole lot more
18 zeroes added on to a lot of our funding,
19 but I do think it's incumbent on us to
20 continue to work with all of your offices
21 to figure out how we leverage the dollars
22 that we have to the maximum, but also
23 really how we all -- even if they're not
24 accessible on the local level, how we
25 advocate together to get the kind of

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 dollars that we would need in order to
3 really be able to deal with our housing
4 issues here.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Yeah.
6 Thank you.

7 So basically we're saying with
8 our current proposal, with the prospect
9 of all of these programs being reduced or
10 going away, we could be seeing thousands
11 of people becoming housing insecure or
12 homeless as things stand now?

13 MS. FADULLON: I think in
14 particular in relation to our home
15 improvement programs, that, yes, there
16 will definitely be many more families at
17 risk of housing insecurity.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
19 you.

20 I know that we as Council
21 belabored this point at Friday
22 afternoon's hearing, but I think it's
23 important to summarize here today because
24 the Con Plan sets the affordable housing
25 strategy for the City.

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2 Your testimony prepared for
3 this hearing states very clearly, and we
4 just heard now even, that this Con Plan
5 will not meet the housing need in
6 Philadelphia nor would it have met the
7 need before COVID-19. You note the need
8 for more federal support, but during
9 Friday afternoon's Planning and
10 Development hearing, multiple revenue
11 sources were identified that could
12 potentially increase funding for housing
13 assistance during a time of unprecedented
14 need. These add up to hundreds of
15 millions of available dollars between the
16 recession reserve, the fund balance,
17 Council's -- or City's emergency
18 allocation, and flexible Coronavirus
19 relief money from the CARES Act.

20 Restoring the \$20 million
21 commitment to the Housing Trust Fund
22 would only take 5 percent of this
23 projected available funding. On Friday,
24 the Finance Director said that revisiting
25 this budget is worth discussing. So is

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2 there anyone here from the Administration
3 today who can commit to amending the Con
4 Plan to restoring the Housing Trust Fund?

5 MS. FADULLON: I don't know if
6 anybody in the Budget Office or Finance
7 Department is here.

8 (Pause.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Okay.
10 It sounds like there's no one here, but
11 since this is a discussion worth
12 revisiting and since we could potentially
13 have thousands of more people become
14 housing insecure, I think we should
15 revisit it with some seriousness.

16 I support Councilmember Gym's
17 comments. We know we have to get this
18 plan to HUD, but we also know that this
19 plan is inadequate and needs to be
20 revised.

21 MS. FADULLON: And I would just
22 say it's not -- just to clarify, it's not
23 a HUD requirement that we -- if there
24 were General Fund dollars provided for
25 housing, that we would have to amend our

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 Consolidated Plan and Budget. We do that
3 as a courtesy so everybody can kind of
4 see the breadth of the housing dollars,
5 but we could still go on the path with
6 our schedule to get our Consolidated Plan
7 and Budget up to HUD to get those federal
8 dollars and it would not be impacted if
9 there was a change in General Fund
10 dollars coming in.

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Just a point
12 of information. Because the Housing
13 Trust Fund, as Ms. Fadullon said, was
14 based on General Fund dollars, we still
15 are going to be having a conversation
16 with the Administration, and we can look
17 to providing additional dollars for the
18 Housing Trust Fund on the General Fund
19 dollars and still be able to move forward
20 with the Con Plan, but we still have a
21 lot of questions in reference to the
22 overall budget that we will pass as a
23 body, including issues regarding the
24 Housing Trust Fund.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 you, Anne.

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Are there
5 any additional questions, Ms. Gauthier?

6 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Well, I
7 have one more, if there's still time.

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Okay.
10 I'd like you to comment on a couple
11 programs set to see significant budget
12 reductions that both help build wealth in
13 black and brown communities as well as
14 stimulate our city's economy. These are
15 the Basic Systems Repair program and
16 Philly First Home program. Those
17 programs are incredibly important to our
18 neighborhoods. And so I wanted you to
19 speak to the wisdom of cutting these
20 programs, being that they build wealth
21 particularly in black communities and
22 being that they are also so successful in
23 terms of giving business to minority
24 contractors.

25 MS. FADULLON: Sure. Sure.

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2 Well, as you know, I think, we are
3 looking -- since we're looking at a
4 substantial cut in dollars, there were
5 things that had to be cut. However, we
6 did try to prioritize programs that would
7 keep people in their homes, and that's
8 definitely what our home improvement
9 programs do. And I think the biggest
10 impact to the home improvement programs
11 is that the bond that Council had
12 approved through the transfer tax
13 increase and then the issued \$60 million
14 of bonds and those were good for three
15 years, we've now come to the end of that
16 term. So the biggest hit we're taking
17 there really is those bond funds running
18 out. So how we tried to backfill for
19 that is, we did get a little bump in our
20 regular CDBG dollars this year. So we
21 got about a 1.7 or 1.8 increase in
22 regular CDBG coming into the City. So we
23 put 100 percent of that into the home
24 repair programs.

25 In addition, we did put about

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2 3.75 million in CDBG COVID into our
3 standard Basic System Repair, but overall
4 we put about 4.2 million, because we have
5 a targeted Basic System and some other
6 things.

7 So we tried to make up for that
8 deficit as much as we possibly could, but
9 we simply overall have less dollars to
10 work with.

11 As far as the Philadelphia
12 First Home, we really needed the
13 flexibility that came with the Housing
14 Trust Fund sub-fund, non-recording fee
15 Housing Trust Fund dollars that we were
16 getting in order to fund that program.
17 With those -- with those funds being cut
18 for this fiscal year, that really just
19 left us with the Wells Fargo settlement
20 dollars that we had available to that
21 program. I mean, you know, that is 6
22 million, so it's not a small amount of
23 money, but based on the incredible
24 response we saw, which again is a great
25 building program and also leverages a lot

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2 of dollars for us, unfortunately we won't
3 be able to serve as many people.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
5 you.

6 That's all for now,
7 Mr. Chairman. Thank you so much.

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
9 Councilmember Gauthier.

10 Councilmember Maria
11 Quinones-Sanchez.

12 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
13 you, Anne, so much for all your work and
14 your team's work.

15 On Friday, we started a
16 conversation that I want to go back to
17 today. When Rendell got into office and
18 we had a devastated downtown, he saw to
19 use the Section 108 loan that I spoke
20 about. Can you speak to what have been
21 some of the transformational projects
22 built through Section 108, if you have
23 any examples in Philadelphia that you can
24 speak to, and some of the decision-making
25 that went that you saw -- the leveraging,

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 I should say, of other dollars in those
3 projects.

4 MS. FADULLON: Yeah. So I have
5 to say when Rendell was here, a lot of
6 that Section 108 loan money went to fund
7 the development of hotels in order to
8 attract the Republican National
9 Convention. And I think one of the key
10 things about Section 108 and for those
11 who may not be as familiar is what that
12 does is, it allows you to borrow from
13 future years' Block Grant dollars, but
14 then you have to pay them back, and it
15 can be -- so, for example, let's say we
16 paid back -- we borrowed \$40 million of
17 Block Grant. We give a certain amount of
18 time, I think it's 20 years, but not a
19 hundred percent sure. Melissa can jump
20 in here if I'm misspeaking. But you get
21 a certain term and you have to pay those
22 back. So, for example, when it was a
23 hotel project, if those hotels turned
24 income, you could take the income from
25 them to pay back the Section 108 loan.

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2 If you have a project that doesn't throw
3 off income, you have to pay those out of
4 your actual future CDBG dollars.

5 So, for example, this year we
6 got 42 million. If we had a Section 108
7 loan and the payment was due for \$2
8 million, we would have to take the 2
9 million from our 42 million, and that
10 would continue for a number of years.

11 So the major housing project
12 that I recall being partially funded with
13 Section 108 loans, I believe -- and,
14 again, Melissa, please jump in if I'm
15 wrong -- is Poplar Nehemiah, but we had
16 other funds from the federal government.
17 We had Nehemiah funds, which was where
18 that name came from, and we had some
19 Enterprise Foundation funds and we had
20 some other funds, and that was a very
21 large transformative project, but that
22 was a project, again, that didn't throw
23 off income in and of itself, but
24 believe -- we built those houses at the
25 time anywhere between, you know, \$140,000

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2 to \$200,000 and I think they sold between
3 \$45,000 to \$60,000. So they were heavily
4 subsidized, plus there was a lot of
5 street work and all those kinds of
6 things. So that project didn't throw off
7 any dollars. So we did have to commit
8 and we used to pay it back out of the
9 actual annual CDBG budget.

10 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
11 you, Anne.

12 You know, one of the reasons
13 why the Council President moved to create
14 the office that you currently run as the
15 first Director of the Office of Community
16 Development and Planning was because we
17 felt that the City for a long time was
18 very siloed around its economic
19 development strategies, and having all of
20 this under your portfolio allowed us to
21 think big. And I think over the last
22 couple of years, we've tried to think
23 big, the Land Bank with all its
24 challenges, the housing plan that was not
25 just about affordable housing but what

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 did the City look like in the next ten
3 years, all of those things.

4 If not today, given what has
5 happened between COVID and the last week,
6 when will it be the time for us to be
7 really bold and big? You know,
8 notwithstanding the fact that we all know
9 what the revenues are going to be moving
10 forward, some of us are going to work as
11 hard as we can so that in November, the
12 tide changes. Why not make that
13 substantial investment and say let's
14 think big, let's do several hundred
15 million dollars?

16 I don't know who in the
17 Administration has had an opportunity to
18 go visit some of these commercial
19 corridors. Have you had an opportunity
20 to see the devastation in our
21 neighborhoods yet?

22 MS. FADULLON: Yeah. I mean, I
23 live not far from some of that
24 devastation. So, yes, I've seen it, and
25 it is stunning.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: So we
3 can be bold and do a hotel, but we can't
4 be bold and restore -- like commit to
5 folks that we're going to be there to
6 restore these neighborhoods in a more
7 equitable way?

8 I just don't know under what
9 conditions -- our Chairman has talked
10 about through his role in the National
11 League of Cities we have access to the
12 most amount of money, the lowest
13 interest. We've heard our Treasurer and
14 other folks say we're probably in a
15 pretty good condition, all things
16 considered. This is the time to send
17 that message that we're going to help do
18 this smart restart.

19 And so to the Chairman's
20 position, over the next week -- because
21 this has to happen quickly, Anne -- the
22 Administration has to reframe this budget
23 and we have to show significant
24 commitment to restoring the
25 neighborhoods, the ones who had lacked

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 investment from the beginning, the ones
3 who have been devastated over this last
4 week, and we have access to this capital.
5 I don't know how we get through
6 June 25th without doing anything other
7 than really, really big. I think we
8 can't tell people we heard them and then
9 not do something big, not prevent the
10 3,000 less people who are going to get
11 service, not prevent the eviction that's
12 going to happen, not fund LIHTC deals
13 that leverage hundreds of millions of
14 dollars. But not to do those things is
15 not an acceptable budget.

16 And so I join my colleagues in
17 saying we're in this process and we know
18 that you're going to make sure the money
19 is spent and leveraged appropriately, but
20 if we heard people and we're going to say
21 we heard people, what we're doing today
22 cannot be the final and what we do June
23 25th has to be real and big.

24 Thank you. That's more of a
25 statement. I'm sorry, Anne.

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2 MS. FADULLON: That's okay.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN:

4 Councilmember, are you concluding your
5 questions?

6 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: I am,
7 because I know there's a lot of great
8 advocates here to testify and we have
9 access to Anne all the time, but it's
10 really important that we get some of this
11 stuff on the record, because this is not
12 the time for us to be shy about what we
13 want to do. And so I appreciate it, and
14 out of respect for all of them who have
15 been waiting patiently to come testify, I
16 will conclude.

17 Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
19 Councilmember Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

20 We're going to tee up in a few
21 moments and, one, give a break to our
22 stenographer and also tee up the other
23 people that would like to testify, but I
24 think part of a different flection than
25 what Councilwoman Sanchez said, as

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2 somewhat as I said earlier, spent a lot
3 of time really learning the code of
4 federal regulations as applied to HUD
5 dollars, and during the Rendell
6 Administration -- now, granted, we did
7 have a much larger Con Plan. We at that
8 point were \$130 million, \$150 million
9 just on CDBG dollars. And so we had a
10 much larger amount of money, but still we
11 were flexible to using that Section 108
12 dollars for, as Anne just stated, for a
13 lot of hotel development, like the Ritz
14 Carlton, like the Marathon Grill. A lot
15 of those HUD 108 loans went to PIDC. But
16 we were able to be flexible in using the
17 code in reference to CDBG dollars can be
18 used for the prevention or elimination or
19 slums of blight. We have always just
20 used it the same way for a long number of
21 years, the number of neighborhoods around
22 the City of Philadelphia that may have
23 not received CDBG dollars because we only
24 used it for low- to moderate-income and
25 we were not as flexible as we could like

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 other cities have been, like Cleveland
3 and others who used CDBG dollars to
4 prevent slums of blight.

5 So we need to have that type of
6 flexibility lens as we go forward in how
7 we can try to leverage as much dollars as
8 possible, even in this challenging time,
9 to make sure we provide more resources to
10 people throughout the City of
11 Philadelphia.

12 So I'll close my comment with
13 that. I will give the stenographer --
14 and that's not an indictment of you,
15 Anne. That's more of a philosophy that
16 we've had throughout numerous
17 administrations from when this department
18 was the Department of Housing, Department
19 of Community Development, Department of
20 Housing and Community Development. So
21 there was also a number of different
22 names and plans and ideas, the
23 Neighborhood Transformation Initiative,
24 but we always had a very narrow
25 perspective on how we used CDBG dollars

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2 as opposed to a broad perspective, except
3 for that time when we were doing that
4 with the 108 dollars and some other
5 perspectives.

6 So I will close at that point.
7 We will give the stenographer about five
8 minutes to take a break and then we'll
9 tee up our other witnesses who are
10 scheduled to testify.

11 MS. FADULLON: Thank you.

12 (Short recess.)

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

14 I want to thank all members of the public
15 who are here to testify on Bills No.
16 200329 and 200330. These are amendments
17 to the FY20 and Consolidated Plan 45
18 amendment, as well as the new CDBG plan
19 for FY21 and Con Plan, the 46th year.

20 I want to thank you for your
21 patience and providing your public
22 comment and testimony today in today's
23 Finance Committee hearing. You will have
24 two minutes to speak. We have a number
25 of people who are here to testify on

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 these two bills. I want to thank you for
3 your patience and your participation.

4 Please state your name and your
5 title prior to beginning your testimony.
6 And as I stated earlier, we have a number
7 of people who are here to testify and
8 we'll have two minutes for each person.

9 The first person to speak is
10 Beth McConnell.

11 MS. McCONNELL: Good afternoon,
12 Chairperson Green, other members of the
13 Committee. My name is Beth McConnell,
14 Policy Director at PACDC. Thank you for
15 the opportunity to testify.

16 PACDC urges Council to restore
17 the General Fund commitment to the
18 Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund for the
19 FY21 Year 46 Plan. The Mayor's proposed
20 budget to eliminate his commitment is in
21 concept with existing Council statutes.
22 It will mean more than \$9.8 million in
23 cuts for rental housing production and
24 preservation and millions in cuts for the
25 successful Philly First Home-buying

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2 program. This will negatively affect our
3 lowest income tenants who desperately
4 need a safe, affordable home and hurt
5 low- to moderate-income buyers who
6 deserve the stability homeownership
7 provides in these trying times. These
8 programs are important for our economic
9 recovery, creating jobs and tax revenue.

10 While the Administration has
11 proposed using additional CDBG CARES
12 dollars to boost housing counseling,
13 legal services, and the NAC program, the
14 need for those programs to rise to the
15 challenge right now is enormous. We also
16 need additional Housing Trust Fund
17 dollars to stabilize affordable housing
18 units that operate without profit margin
19 and razor-thin cash flow at a time when
20 many of their tenants are expected to get
21 behind on their rent.

22 We applaud the Mayor for
23 proposing to continue funding for most of
24 our commercial corridor programs, but
25 after the unrest and physical damage to

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 corridor businesses last week, 40 percent
3 cuts to programs to help businesses fix
4 up their storefronts or make internal
5 improvements is no longer a wise
6 decision. There are businesses on almost
7 every commercial corridor that will not
8 have adequate insurance to replace broken
9 glass, repair facades, restock inventory
10 or make other critical repairs they need
11 to reopen. So cuts to programs like
12 Storefront Improvement and InStore and
13 the Business Security Grant program and
14 the cuts to Commerce staff could not come
15 at a worse time. These business owners
16 need grants for repairs, legal technical
17 assistance, and the support of corridor
18 managers and Commerce staff to recover.

19 I want to finally thank the
20 Kenney Administration and Council for
21 their continued commitment to the CDC tax
22 credit program, which provides vital
23 basic operating support for our CDCs to
24 do economic development at this critical
25 time.

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2 We want to thank you very much
3 for the opportunity to testify.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
5 for your testimony.

6 Stefanie Seldin.

7 MS. SELDIN: Good afternoon,
8 Chairperson Green and members of the
9 Committee. I am Stefanie Seldin,
10 President and CEO of Rebuilding Together
11 Philadelphia. RTP provides critical home
12 repairs to ensure the safety and health
13 of community residents in need.

14 I'd ask my full remarks be
15 submitted for the record.

16 Carrie B., a disabled senior,
17 had no banister and had to crawl up her
18 stairs because she was terrified of
19 falling. She also had no functioning
20 kitchen for years. This is just one
21 homeowner who RTP has served during the
22 pandemic.

23 Staying at home prevents the
24 spread of COVID-19, but a home can only
25 be a sanctuary when its residents can

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 live in safety and health.

3 Mayor Kenney's decision to
4 dramatically reduce resources for housing
5 is shortsighted. The Basic System Repair
6 Program has just eliminated the
7 years-long waiting list for home repairs
8 from the proceeds from a 2016 City
9 Council-sponsored bond fund. There were
10 4,000 people on that list.

11 While BSRP handled the backlog
12 from 2016, there were hundreds, if not
13 thousands, of homeowners who could not
14 receive home repairs. The waiting list
15 was closed.

16 The need is back. The City's
17 2019 Housing Action Plan states that
18 there are 27,000 housing units without
19 complete kitchens or plumbing facilities.
20 Our neighbors are living without ovens,
21 without showers, without toilets. This
22 budget will dig the City back into the
23 same hole we were in before the bond
24 fund.

25 Home repair funding is but one

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 example of housing resources decimated by
3 the post-pandemic budget. \$14 million
4 earmarked for the City's affordable
5 Housing Trust Fund is gone. Homeless
6 families will no longer get that first
7 apartment. Tenants will no longer be
8 able to afford their rent, and new
9 homeowners will not receive down payment
10 assistance.

11 COVID-19 is hitting our poorest
12 communities and communities of color
13 hardest, the same communities that are
14 most likely to struggle with inadequate
15 and unstable housing. Now is the time to
16 right those wrongs, not exacerbate them.
17 The new normal budget act is a great
18 start, and I hope we can think even
19 bigger.

20 Thank you for the opportunity
21 to testify today.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
23 Ms. Seldin, for your testimony.

24 I know our next witness is Nora
25 Lichtash. I know that they need

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 additional time to get her on the call.

3 Ms. Lichtash, are you on the
4 call?

5 COUNCIL SUPPORT: One second,
6 Councilman.

7 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

8 Ms. Lichtash, if you could
9 begin your testimony.

10 MS. LICHTASH: Oh, begin now?

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes.

12 MS. LICHTASH: Even though
13 Stefanie is still talking?

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: She just
15 completed her testimony.

16 MS. LICHTASH: Oh, okay. I can
17 start now? Just start?

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. Go
19 ahead.

20 MS. LICHTASH: Okay. My name
21 is Nora Lichtash. I work for the Women's
22 Community Revitalization Project, also
23 known as WCRP, and we're proud members of
24 the Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable
25 Communities. I'm testifying today

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 because my family, along with thousands
3 of Philadelphians, have been marching in
4 the streets since George Floyd's murder
5 to ensure that our elected officials look
6 carefully at how our city allocates its
7 resources through a racial and economic
8 justice lens.

9 I'm testifying today to oppose
10 the Mayor's callous proposed cuts to the
11 Housing Trust Fund to fill renter
12 assistance, first-time homebuyer closing
13 costs, and although I know it's not
14 included, to the Land Bank.

15 I've been told that in our city
16 the decision has already been made to
17 spend 15 percent of our city's resources,
18 a full 760 million, on police or in jail.
19 At a time when staying home is the only
20 way to stay safe, the Administration has
21 made the decision to cut back their
22 investment in building and preserving
23 affordable homes.

24 Although there are some federal
25 dollars due to COVID, the Administration

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 will not invest already committed General
3 Fund resources to ensure that renters
4 have enough money to make rent payments,
5 that low-income homeowners can make
6 needed repairs, that first-time
7 homeowners can get help buying a home,
8 that homes are made accessible for people
9 who use wheelchairs, and that taxpayers
10 and properties can help folks who are
11 being pushed out of their communities due
12 to gentrification.

13 The Mayor's budget should be
14 investing more, not less. I know from
15 the work my organization does how people
16 are suffering. WCRP has developed and
17 managed 300 homes. The average income of
18 our tenant families is less than \$15,000
19 a year. Eighty percent of those families
20 have lost hours or lost jobs due to the
21 pandemic. I know from experience that
22 the Philadelphia residents who are
23 already most vulnerable are hurting the
24 most.

25 We're counting on you, Council,

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 to know that the cuts being proposed will
3 bring devastating consequences to far too
4 many. We're not just negotiating dollars
5 and cents here. We're negotiating with
6 people's lives. We ask you to do the
7 right thing and reinstate funding for
8 affordable, accessible homes.

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
10 for your testimony.

11 Next, if we could have Rachel
12 Garland.

13 MS. GARLAND: Good afternoon.
14 Can you hear me?

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Please
16 proceed with your testimony.

17 MS. GARLAND: I'm just checking
18 if you can hear me.

19 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. Ms.
20 Garland, please proceed with your
21 testimony.

22 MS. GARLAND: Thank you.
23 Good afternoon. My name is
24 Rachel Garland and I'm the Managing
25 Attorney at the Housing Unit at Community

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 Legal Services of Philadelphia. I'm here
3 to ask you to maintain funding for
4 programs that keep people in their homes.
5 Specifically, I'm here to urge you to
6 keep the Philadelphia Eviction Prevention
7 Project, known as PEPP, in the budget at
8 2.1 million perfectly; to pass Bill
9 200329 which provides 2.8 million in
10 COVID-19 CDBG funding to housing
11 counseling and legal services to prevent
12 eviction and foreclosure; and to maintain
13 funding for the Housing Trust Fund.

14 Systematized racial inequality
15 has led the black communities being
16 hardest hit by the pandemic, with higher
17 rates of infection, coupled with less
18 access to quality healthcare. These same
19 communities are also the ones most at
20 risk for imminent eviction or mortgage
21 foreclosure when the courts reopen.

22 Mortgage and rental assistance
23 programs will not solve this problem on
24 their own. There is not enough funding
25 to go around, and without the support of

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 housing counselors and lawyers, many will
3 not know how to access this funding.

4 For homeowners, CLS attorneys
5 will be critical in providing technical
6 assistance to housing counselors and
7 providing legal representation to
8 homeowners. On the tenant side, PEPP was
9 created by City Council because you
10 recognized that not only does poverty
11 cause eviction, but eviction causes
12 prolonged poverty. PEPP has made a lot
13 of progress over the past three years in
14 resolving evictions and Philly was in a
15 better position to deal with the pandemic
16 because of the support PEPP provides to
17 renters.

18 Unfortunately, the budget is
19 cutting PEPP by 75 percent, gutting
20 representation of and support for renters
21 facing eviction. For what amounts to a
22 drop in the budgetary bucket, PEPP has
23 been incredibly successful. Ninety-five
24 percent of renters helped by PEPP have
25 successful outcomes. They are more

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 likely to win their cases, avoid default
3 judgments, and enter into agreements that
4 avoid disruptive displacement, and
5 stabilize both renters and their
6 landlords.

7 Now is the time to be investing
8 in safe, stable, and affordable housing
9 for renters and homeowners. We need
10 these programs.

11 Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
13 Ms. Garland, for your testimony.

14 Next, we'll hear from Lisa
15 Rivera.

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Lisa Rivera.

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Calling for
20 Lisa Rivera.

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Last call
23 for Lisa Rivera.

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Moving on,

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 Carrie Rathman.

3 MS. RATHMAN: Hi. Good
4 afternoon. Can you hear me?

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: We can hear
6 you. Please begin your testimony.

7 MS. RATHMAN: Hi. I'm Carrie
8 Rathman, Director of Strategic
9 Partnerships at Habitat for Humanity
10 Philadelphia. Habitat is an affordable
11 housing developer and critical repair
12 provider for Philadelphia's low-income
13 homeowners.

14 The COVID crisis and current
15 unrest in Philadelphia has clearly
16 exposed that things are not working and
17 we are not okay. At Habitat, our vision
18 of the City where everyone has a decent
19 and affordable place to live cannot be
20 achieved without acknowledging the years
21 of injustice that communities of color
22 have faced around the country and
23 especially the violence and economic
24 injustices heaped upon the black
25 community.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 At Habitat, our very origin is
3 grounded in the attempts to bring the
4 benefits afforded by ownership to
5 lower-income families who have
6 traditionally been denied homeownership
7 through our housing policies built on
8 racism.

9 These past months and weeks
10 have dramatically shown what's at stake
11 when we deny, limit access or invest too
12 little in the basic needs of
13 Philadelphians. Housing is perhaps the
14 most fundamental of these needs.
15 Everything that we say we care about as a
16 city - health, education, economic
17 stability, safety, and keeping families
18 intact - is fully dependent upon stable
19 housing, and for the past several years,
20 Habitat has utilized Housing Trust Fund
21 dollars to stabilize and keep families in
22 their existing homes throughout
23 neighborhoods.

24 In the past, we've received
25 subsidies for ownership development as

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2 well. This helps to keep neighborhoods
3 intact, staves off more expensive social
4 interventions downstream, and preserve
5 what is often most families' only
6 financial asset. It also builds
7 long-term stability and wealth.

8 Do not support the Mayor's
9 proposed cuts to the Housing Trust Fund.
10 The Housing Trust Fund mainly supports
11 families of color, those most devastated
12 by COVID and our current unrest. Do not
13 waiver from the priorities that we have
14 outlined in the Consolidated Plan.

15 Thank you.

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
17 Ms. Rathman.

18 The next person scheduled to
19 testify is Dorian Jones. Dorian Jones.

20 MR. JONES: Can you hear me?
21 Good afternoon. Good afternoon,
22 Councilmember. My name is Dorian Jones,
23 disability recipient and homelessness. I
24 am testifying today on Bills 200329 and
25 200330.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 We oppose any cuts to the
3 Housing Trust Fund. I am a senior who is
4 currently experiencing homelessness from
5 the COVID pandemic. I have struggled to
6 find accessible housing for nearly three
7 years that I can afford because there are
8 already so few safe, affordable rentals
9 for people living with disabilities.

10 If City Council allows the
11 Mayor to cut funding to the affordable
12 Housing Trust Fund, they will make a hard
13 situation such as mine even worse.

14 Unfortunately, before and
15 during the beginning of the COVID
16 pandemic, I was sleeping in my car. No
17 one should have to experience what I have
18 this far, especially when I am not
19 without income.

20 Homelessness is hard enough
21 without a pandemic. Imagine how much
22 more difficult it has been given the
23 previous stay-at-home order. I have no
24 home to stay in. My car has been my
25 home.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 Based on amendment 200329, the
3 federal CARES Act funding does not cover
4 all those cuts being proposed, and this
5 has real consequences on people's lives.
6 More importantly, 3 million less for
7 wheelchair accessibility modifications
8 means that more than 150 people with
9 disabilities will be trapped in dangerous
10 nursing homes or homelessness, because
11 there is so little affordable, accessible
12 houses in our city.

13 Councilmembers, please stop
14 cuts to the front -- Councilmembers,
15 please stop cuts to the Housing Trust
16 Fund.

17 Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
19 Mr. Jones, for your testimony and for
20 your advocacy regarding this issue.

21 Next, we'll hear from Gail
22 Nedd.

23 MS. NEDD: Thank you, Chairman
24 Green. My name is Gail Need. I'm a
25 Housing Specialist for Liberty Resources.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 I am testifying today on Bills 200329 and
3 200330.

4 On behalf of Liberty Resources,
5 I ask that there be no cuts to the
6 Housing Trust Fund. This is a time to be
7 investing more and making it easier to
8 keep people safe. Cuts to the Housing
9 Trust would eliminate the majority of
10 housing opportunities for seniors,
11 disabled, homeless, and those at risk of
12 being homeless, specifically persons
13 making little to no income.

14 This would be the consumers I
15 serve at Liberty to be homeless or
16 competing for the presently limited
17 public housing. Programs that Liberty
18 has utilized to assist in obtaining
19 housing has dwindled. For example, there
20 are no mainstream vouchers available from
21 PHA at this time. Liberty does not know
22 when more will be issued. We found out
23 on Friday from PHA that there are only
24 nine vouchers left for nursing home
25 transition, and the program will end on

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 June 30th. This is even more distressing
3 because the people with disabilities I
4 work with are at extremely high risk
5 during this pandemic.

6 We have had consumers that were
7 just about to move into their homes that
8 they could finally afford, but before
9 they were able to move out of a nursing
10 home, they passed away from COVID-19. I
11 have now experienced this tragedy several
12 times.

13 In addition, some consumers
14 become ill from COVID-19 and were unable
15 to move as scheduled into their housing.
16 Now they are faced with outstanding rent
17 bills due for the month or months it took
18 them to recover. This is unacceptable.

19 The City has a responsibility
20 to protect those that are most
21 vulnerable, but the current budget does
22 not live up to the goals of the
23 Consolidated Plan. According to the
24 amendment 200329, the federal CARES Act
25 funds do not cover all of the cuts being

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 proposed. Three million dollars --
3 hello.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. Ms.
5 Nedd, if you could just conclude your
6 testimony.

7 MS. NEDD: Okay. Three million
8 dollars less for wheelchair accessible
9 modifications means that more than 150
10 people with disabilities will be trapped
11 in dangerous nursing homes because there
12 is so little affordable, accessible
13 housing.

14 Please, Council, stop the
15 Mayor's cuts to the Housing Trust Fund.

16 Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
18 Ms. Nedd, for your work with Liberty
19 Resources and being an advocate for this
20 community.

21 The next person scheduled to
22 testify is Channel Saunders.

23 MS. SAUNDERS: Good evening.
24 My name is Channel Saunders and I'm a
25 volunteer with 215 Alliance. I'm a

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 member of the Philadelphia Coalition for
3 Affordable Communities. I'm testifying
4 today on Bills 200330 and 200329.
5 Specifically, I oppose the Mayor's
6 proposed cuts to the Housing Trust Fund.

7 I am one of the 50 percent of
8 the renters in Philadelphia who were
9 cost-burdened before the pandemic even
10 hit our city. This means that after
11 paying rent, I struggle to meet my
12 family's other basic needs even though I
13 have a steady job as a crossing guard.

14 The Consolidated Plan lays out
15 that we need more affordable housing
16 actions in Philadelphia, yet the Mayor
17 has proposed cutting funds to the Housing
18 Trust Fund. He wants to invest less in
19 creating safe, affordable housing at a
20 time when we need to invest more to keep
21 our people safe. This is unacceptable.

22 Really the question in front of
23 us is if we think all Philadelphians
24 deserve dignity and respect, how can we
25 flourish and see just change if

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2 everything that should help us does not
3 help us or it's removed from us?

4 If City Council does not stop
5 the Mayor's cuts to the Housing Trust
6 Fund, more people like me will struggle
7 to stay housed, and this means more
8 people will be subjected to danger,
9 violence, and sickness by COVID-19.

10 Thank you, and that concludes
11 my testimony.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
13 Ms. Saunders, for your testimony.

14 The next person scheduled to
15 testify is Albert Littlepage. Albert
16 Littlepage.

17 MR. LITTLEPAGE: Yes,
18 Councilman. Good evening, Chairman Green
19 and all Councilmembers. My name is
20 Albert Littlepage. I'm the President of
21 the Point Breeze Community Development
22 Coalition.

23 I would respectfully like to
24 oppose the Mayor's proposed cuts to the
25 Housing Trust Fund. As a longtime

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2 Philadelphia resident and the President
3 of the Point Breeze Coalition, we support
4 affordable housing initiatives that
5 build, strengthen, and sustain a diverse
6 community.

7 In my South Philadelphia
8 community, gentrification has led to
9 market-rate housing and higher rents,
10 which are out of reach for citizens of
11 meager means, which directly affects the
12 African American population.

13 A fully funded Housing Trust
14 Fund can make a difference and provide
15 the hope and resources needed for
16 organizations like WCRP to service people
17 with disabilities, veterans, and
18 low-income families to live in a real
19 diverse community. I work closely with
20 WCRP to bring more affordable, accessible
21 housing to my neighborhood, like the
22 Mamie Nichols Center housing, and these
23 cuts threaten that progress.

24 All Philadelphians deserve the
25 opportunity to live a better quality of

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2 life, and the Housing Trust Fund clearly
3 funds can help.

4 Currently, the Mayor is forming
5 a committee to address the 25.7 percent
6 poverty rate in our city. If his
7 intentions are genuine, then how can he
8 cut these funds? The ends in this case
9 just don't justify the means.

10 As you know, we need jobs,
11 workforce development, and affordable
12 housing. Funding the Housing Trust Fund
13 will be a sustainable measure to
14 achieving the Mayor's overall goal to
15 reduce poverty in the City of
16 Philadelphia.

17 Again, as a longtime
18 Philadelphian and a community activist
19 and a person who loves this city, I
20 respectfully ask this honorable body not
21 to allow any cuts to the Housing Trust
22 Fund.

23 Thank you, and God's grace.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
25 Mr. Littlepage, for your testimony and

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 thank you for your leadership in the
3 Point Breeze community.

4 The next witness to testify is
5 Marissa Johnson-Valenzuela.

6 MS. JOHNSON-VALENZUELA: Hi.
7 Good afternoon. My name is Marissa
8 Johnson-Valenzuela. I'm an English
9 professor at Community College of
10 Philadelphia and Secretary of CCP's
11 Faculty and Staff Union, ASP-2026.

12 Over the past few years, I've
13 spoken with many of you about the need
14 for more funding and support for our
15 city's college. However, today I am
16 testifying on Bills 200330 and 200329.

17 We oppose the Mayor's cut to
18 the Housing Trust Fund. I lost count of
19 how many students I've known who are
20 trying to navigate homelessness or a
21 housing crisis during this semester.
22 Such students struggle to keep up with
23 their studies, and many just stop showing
24 up. I recall one young man who was doing
25 great, trying to get his life back on

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2 track, but after class one day, he told
3 me he was homeless and he was ashamed he
4 didn't have a place to take a shower. I
5 did what I could to connect him to
6 resources. As a former social worker in
7 the City, I had some knowledge about what
8 is available. But even though he was
9 passing all of his English 101
10 assignments, he ultimately stopped
11 showing up.

12 According to the Hope Center,
13 56 percent of CCP students are housing
14 insecure, which is higher than the
15 national average for community colleges.
16 Whether or not a student has access to
17 affordable housing options in an
18 increasingly expensive city is truly the
19 difference between passing and failing.

20 Stable housing is fundamental
21 for so much, including obtaining the kind
22 of education that can lift people out of
23 poverty. And now with the pandemic, we
24 are multiplying one crisis times another
25 times another. If City Council does not

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 stop the Mayor's cuts to the Housing
3 Trust Fund, more people will struggle and
4 more people will die from COVID-19.
5 After all, it's really hard to stay home
6 and quarantine when you don't have a
7 home.

8 Furthermore, funding to build
9 and preserve affordable, accessible
10 housing will be a critical part of
11 recovery. As recent massive protests
12 demonstrate, this city has so much
13 potential for positive change to become
14 the city Philadelphians want and need,
15 all Philadelphians. Do not cut the
16 Housing Trust Fund.

17 Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
19 for your testimony.

20 I just want to remind the
21 public that you need to hit star 6 to
22 unmute yourself. In addition, I just
23 want to remind those who are about to
24 testify, if you are watching this on
25 Channel 64 or PHLCouncil.com through our

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 live stream, please make sure you turn
3 down the sound so we do not have an echo
4 and so we can truly hear your testimony.

5 The next person to testify is
6 Nicole Freeman.

7 MS. FREEMAN: Hi. This is
8 Nicole Freeman. One second. I
9 apologize.

10 Good evening, Chairman Green
11 and Councilmembers. My name is Nicole
12 Freeman and I'm a resident of
13 Philadelphia. I'm testifying today on
14 Bills 200300 and 200329.

15 I adamantly oppose the Mayor's
16 cuts to the Housing Trust Fund. As a
17 single mother of five living with a
18 plethora of disabilities, I've had an
19 intimate relationship with the plight
20 that is inadequate and affordable
21 housing. And since I've embarked on my
22 journey of motherhood, my biggest
23 stressor in life has been being able to
24 provide and maintain housing for my
25 family.

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2 My sister, who is
3 wheelchair-bound, has been unable to
4 relocate for more than 15 years due to
5 inadequate or lack of available units,
6 and my uncle who is riddled with
7 arthritis, his joints have seized,
8 rendering him unable to walk. He can't
9 relocate closer to his family due to a
10 lack of funding.

11 The regentrification that the
12 City has allowed to occur is not only
13 rendering current residents homeless, but
14 they find themselves in a state of
15 perpetual helplessness because the homes
16 are being purchased out from under them.

17 I speak from firsthand
18 experience in saying this city already
19 doesn't have enough affordable,
20 accessible housing, and I've struggled my
21 entire adulthood to find affordable,
22 safe, and stable housing. It's been a
23 long, disheartening, and draining
24 experience that I will wish on no one,
25 and yet I'm still not alone.

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2 It's incumbent on City Council
3 to stop the Mayor's cuts and provide the
4 basic and essential need of affordable
5 housing to the residents of Philadelphia.

6 Thank you, Councilmembers, for
7 hearing us.

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
9 Ms. Freeman, for sharing your story and
10 being an advocate for your family
11 regarding this important issue.

12 The next person scheduled to
13 testify is Max Ray-Riek.

14 MR. RAY-RIEK: Hi. I'm Max
15 Ray-Riek with Act Up Philly.

16 This Consolidated Plan and the
17 Mayor's budget cuts within this plan are
18 dangerous. It continues the same trends
19 in past plans that have led directly to
20 preventable deaths and violence in the
21 past, from COVID-19 to an HIV, from
22 overdoses, from police.

23 Philadelphia has an affordable
24 housing crisis. Rents are rising faster
25 than incomes, and new housing is not

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2 affordable. Instead of addressing the
3 crisis, City Council has repeatedly heard
4 landlords and developers and not the
5 needs of the over 125,000 households that
6 are severely rent or cost-burdened and
7 the over 5,600 families experiencing
8 homelessness, 80 to 90 percent of whom
9 make \$20,000 a year or less.

10 Because of the huge hole in our
11 housing stock for people making less than
12 30 percent of area median income, the
13 City has had to make decisions that put
14 people directly at risk.

15 People who are homeless and
16 enter emergency housing in Philadelphia
17 are usually living on fixed incomes or
18 working in low-wage jobs. There is not
19 enough housing that they can afford, and
20 so over 70 percent of people in shelters
21 still need so-called emergency housing
22 year after year.

23 Rather than (inaudible) across
24 our shelter system to care for all these
25 folks stuck in the system and new people

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2 who are being evicted or foreclosed on,
3 many came to Council and DHCD every year
4 to limit our shelter capacity. That's
5 why our winter shelters close and kick
6 people out on the streets every year and
7 that's why the residents organize and
8 demand to keep shelters open (inaudible)
9 and says no. That's why Eva Gladstein
10 resisted opening Center City hotels to
11 shelter Philadelphians during COVID,
12 saying that they will become de facto
13 shelters. That's why we've had COVID
14 outbreaks in our shelter system,
15 including preventable death and
16 hospitalizations of dozens of residents
17 and staff. We've been trying to pretend
18 our way out of the housing crisis instead
19 of investing and solving it.

20 These are the impacts our
21 budgets have had in years past. This
22 year with many more Philadelphians out of
23 work than ever before and Council trying
24 to stabilize rent using power over PHA
25 and other developers to demand housing

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 affordable to people making \$20,000 a
3 year or less, they're going to see
4 large-scale evictions and foreclosures,
5 more homelessness, and we're looking at a
6 budget that is the best balance by
7 plugging in cuts with CARES Act funding
8 and in many cases think the cuts -- I
9 don't want to (inaudible) --

10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
12 for your testimony.

13 The next person scheduled to
14 testify is Betty Beaufort.

15 MS. BEAUFORT: Good evening.
16 My name is Betty Beaufort. I'm a
17 community activist and I'm testifying
18 today on Bills 200300 and 200329 to
19 oppose any cuts to the Housing Trust
20 Fund.

21 I live in Point Breeze over 20
22 years and I watch my neighborhood change.
23 All I've heard about is gentrification,
24 rent, and home prices going up. I watch
25 my neighborhood struggle to stay in the

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 neighborhood. Many have been pushed out.
3 I see houses going for over \$200,000 that
4 people are calling affordable. I say,
5 affordable for who?

6 I want to see investment in
7 housing that is actually affordable. My
8 neighborhoods were struggling before
9 COVID-19, and now with the pandemic,
10 investment in housing is more important
11 than ever.

12 The Housing Trust Fund serves
13 the Philadelphia residents who are being
14 hit hardest by this pandemic, people with
15 disabilities and families of color with
16 the lowest income in our city. We should
17 be investing more into our community to
18 keep people safe, not less. Funding to
19 build and preserve affordable houses will
20 be a critical part of our city's recovery
21 from COVID-19.

22 Do not cut any funding to the
23 Housing Trust Fund.

24 Thank you very much.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 for your testimony and your activism in
3 the Point Breeze community.

4 The next witness is Sam Tower.

5 MS. TOWER: Hi. My name is Sam
6 Tower. I'm an associate artist with
7 Applied Mechanics and I'm testifying
8 today on Bills 200330 and 200329 to
9 oppose any cuts to the Housing Trust
10 Fund.

11 I'm going to read excerpts from
12 a statement that has been signed by 400
13 artists in Philadelphia. The full
14 statement and signatures have been
15 submitted as written testimony.

16 We are proud to represent the
17 robust artistic and cultural scene here
18 in Philadelphia. If the Housing Trust
19 Fund and social services like it are
20 de-funded, we will face a much longer
21 fight with COVID-19. This will devastate
22 our artistic communities. The work that
23 we have been making by, with, and for the
24 people of this city will cease,
25 especially if the people we serve do not

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 have homes in which to stay.

3 We understand that this is a
4 matter of life and death. To steal
5 resources away from housing during a
6 pandemic is illogical and shameful. It
7 guarantees more cases of COVID-19 as your
8 constituents die on the waiting list for
9 affordable housing. It encourages the
10 spread of the virus in marginalized
11 communities, especially communities of
12 color and among people with disabilities
13 and their caregivers. It means that this
14 disease will persist in the City, where
15 we desperately need to recover and begin
16 to heal.

17 Affordable funding for housing
18 will help guarantee that recovery. It is
19 an investment in the future in which this
20 city and its people cannot just survive
21 but thrive.

22 Let's be real, Philadelphians
23 were struggling before COVID-19. Before
24 this pandemic, there was a housing
25 crisis. More than half of all City

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 renters and almost one of every three
3 homeowners were cost-burdened. No one
4 should ever have to choose between paying
5 for rent or putting food on the table.

6 Now due to the virus,
7 Philadelphians are struggling more than
8 ever to pay their mortgages and rent.
9 Council can set the tone for
10 Philadelphia's recovery strategies, and
11 the choice is clear. Fund housing and
12 save lives.

13 Thank you for the opportunity
14 to testify today. Have a good night.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
16 for your testimony. As a Board member
17 for the Cultural Fund, I want to thank
18 you and other artists for coming together
19 and using your skills and your advocacy
20 to raise your voice regarding this issue.

21 The next person scheduled to
22 testify is Liam Dougherty.

23 MR. DOUGHERTY: Thank you for
24 hearing my testimony. Hi. My name is
25 Liam Dougherty. I'm an advocate with

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 Disabled in Action and the staff.

3 When will Council say to the
4 hundreds of people who will, despite
5 hearing me, have a stable mortgage,
6 believe it or not, or have a home to stay
7 in because of the (inaudible) to the
8 Housing Trust Fund. When will Council
9 say to those who are depending on the
10 Housing Trust Fund for accessible housing
11 (inaudible). Fifty-three percent of
12 Philadelphia's COVID death (inaudible)
13 preliminary data. Thirty percent of
14 people who are diagnosed with COVID in an
15 institution die as a result. (Inaudible)
16 Philadelphia's death rate is around five
17 percent. That explains (inaudible) for
18 COVID-19 (inaudible). (Inaudible). Many
19 of them who are elderly or have very
20 serious conditions are forced to live
21 together and not in healthy conditions,
22 resulting in numerous COVID fatalities.
23 For many, life in a nursing home is
24 (inaudible). When a person has a
25 disability, someone in long-term care,

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 they are faced with the choice of either
3 a nursing home or in resident living.
4 (Inaudible) services such as (inaudible).
5 However, getting money to help
6 (inaudible) contingent on being able to
7 find housing that is accessible to their
8 needs. The Housing Trust Fund supports
9 the addition of more affordable housing,
10 as well as home modifications that are
11 needed now more than ever. Do not force
12 us into a tinderbox.

13 Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
15 Mr. Dougherty, for your testimony and
16 your work with Disabled in Action and
17 your advocacy on those issues as well as
18 the issues that are listed for today's
19 hearing.

20 The next person scheduled to
21 testify is Karen Burrison.

22 MS. BURRISON: Yes. My name is
23 Karen Burrison. I have a physical
24 disability. I have cerebral palsy. I
25 lived in Philadelphia since I was 15 and

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 I was in -- during the time I lived here,
3 I lived at five different residences,
4 4052 Powelton Ave last two years, 1109
5 Green Street two years, 1508 South 16th
6 Street two years, 1821 New Market Street
7 13 years, 3401 Capital present.

8 I gave you these above
9 addresses for a reason. Everyone can
10 have this dream in Philadelphia. We need
11 the Housing Fund for everyone. No budget
12 cuts at all. We have enough
13 homelessness. Disabled and able-bodied
14 people are right, we don't need more.

15 We all understand that we all
16 have a lot going on with the pandemic and
17 Coronavirus and different protesting,
18 looting and all the above, and most of us
19 will still be here living day to day when
20 we get -- after this is over with.

21 Mr. Mayor, give the Housing
22 Trust Fund what they need.

23 Thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms.

25 Burrison, thank you for sharing your

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 poignant testimony with us this
3 afternoon.

4 The next person scheduled to
5 testify is Ruth Birchett.

6 MS. BIRCHETT: Good evening.
7 Thank you, Councilman Green. I am Ruth
8 Birchett speaking in reference to Council
9 Bills 200329 and 200330.

10 It's heart-wrenching to listen
11 to the previous testimonies of all of
12 these honorable people who are working
13 and toiling in the vineyards to try to
14 make life better here in Philadelphia.

15 It is wrong to give preference
16 to outside developers who are coming in
17 and enjoy tax abatement credits and other
18 kinds of people who are benefiting from
19 our beautiful city. As a daughter of a
20 family who has been in the same house for
21 70 years here in Philadelphia and has
22 done everything we can to try to make a
23 difference here in the City of
24 Philadelphia, who also was sitting on my
25 steps the night of the riots, we've seen

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 our home in the Fifth Councilmanic
3 District and our community robbed of its
4 life.

5 I am totally against cutting
6 programs that are essential to the lives
7 and the survival of Philadelphians. It's
8 time to put Philadelphians first. It's
9 time for councilmanic prerogative to be
10 pushed aside and eliminated. It's time
11 to de-fund the Philadelphia Police
12 Department in preference for creating a
13 civil community safety network within our
14 communities. Those monies can go to all
15 of these programs that everyone has so
16 quickly taken a pin to to cross out the
17 Housing Trust Fund.

18 I think it's absolutely absurd
19 in this budget that 11 million was for
20 rental assistance and only 4 million for
21 the system repair program. And I came
22 for Air Management of the Philadelphia
23 Housing Authority as well. That's why
24 people are homeless (inaudible)
25 continually on the backs of

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 Philadelphia's most impoverished
3 communities.

4 Thank you.

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
6 Ms. Birchett, for your insightful words
7 and eloquent testimony for today's
8 hearing.

9 The next person scheduled to
10 testify is Jihad Ali.

11 MR. ALI: Hello, Chairman Green
12 and other members of City Council. I'm
13 here to provide testimony on Ordinance
14 200329.

15 I'm opposing the cut in the
16 Housing Trust Fund. And I'm also here to
17 provide testimony on Bill 200330.
18 Councilman and other members of Council,
19 in these troubling times of this pandemic
20 and national civil unrest, I think you
21 all are doing a great job in trying to
22 get our city through these unprecedented
23 times, both veterans and the newly
24 elected.

25 I wanted to also point out on

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 Bill 200330 my support for the Director
3 of Planning, Anne Fadullon. In light of
4 all that we've recently heard in these
5 streets as a result of the death of
6 George Floyd, one of the things we've all
7 heard is people saying, well, get off my
8 neck, and people could hear us. Well,
9 one of the things I can say truthfully is
10 every time that I've been down to any
11 committee that Ms. Fadullon was chairman
12 of or on, she allowed me to express
13 myself, and I sincerely appreciate that,
14 because I never felt frustrated. I
15 always felt as though I had the
16 opportunity to come down and the least I
17 could do is speak, and she respected
18 that.

19 I also wanted to encourage her
20 to continue to work with the African
21 American developers who are trying to
22 rise up and do housing, such as Anthony
23 Fullard, who does excellent work. He
24 just completed a project out in West
25 Philly on Osage Avenue, and we need to

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 make more developers so we can help solve
3 this housing problem.

4 I thank you for allowing me to
5 testify.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
7 Mr. Ali, for your testimony today.

8 The next person scheduled to
9 testify is Kenneth Bigos.

10 MR. BIGOS: Hello. Can you
11 hear me?

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: We can hear
13 you. Please proceed with your testimony.

14 MR. BIGOS: Okay. Good
15 evening. Thank you, Chairman Green and
16 members of the Finance Committee for
17 enabling me to present my comments today.
18 My name is Kenneth Bigos. I'm the
19 Executive Director of the Affordable
20 Housing Centers of Pennsylvania. We're a
21 HUD-approved and DHCD-funded housing
22 counseling agency. I'm here to present
23 my testimony in reference to items 200329
24 and 200330 requesting that additional
25 funds for housing counseling services be

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 made available for the 2020-2021 budget.
3 This includes ensuring that the cuts in
4 funding to the Housing Trust Fund are
5 awarded.

6 The current moratorium on
7 foreclosures and evictions by the
8 Governor until July 10th, 2020 has
9 allowed us to get organized and brace for
10 the avalanche of evictions and
11 foreclosures that will submerge the
12 City's court systems and housing
13 counseling agencies. Housing counselors
14 are the EMT workers for the households
15 that undergo financial distress related
16 to their home.

17 During the Great Recession, we
18 were called upon by the City to rescue
19 homeowners from the threat of mortgage
20 foreclosure. Fast forward to today, we
21 are in the opening stages of a new
22 economic crisis that will have greater
23 economic devastation compared to the
24 Great Recession.

25 This will be an epic period

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 where the housing counselors will be
3 called upon to keep Philadelphia
4 neighborhoods and family units strong.
5 Currently there's legislation that is
6 being proposed by the Committee of
7 Housing, Neighborhood Development and the
8 Homeless that offers substantial rules
9 that can govern tenants' rights, and
10 evictions that will demand the
11 involvement of housing counselors.

12 Meanwhile, as we brace for this
13 avalanche of evictions and foreclosures,
14 demand for our first-time homebuyer
15 program is still high. Currently AHCOPA
16 is educating about 200 households per
17 month on the aspects of purchasing a home
18 through our Zoom virtual homebuyer class.
19 Many potential homebuyers see
20 homeownership as the opportunity to get
21 more living space and have a stable
22 housing payment, and they are very much
23 interested in the very first home grant
24 as a way to ease the barrier of access to
25 homeownership, which this program has

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 been a godsend for those that have taken
3 advantage of it, and many of them earn a
4 decent living.

5 So with that, there is no
6 denial that we will have major
7 involvement in the stabilization of
8 Philadelphia's families and neighborhoods
9 and it is incumbent upon City Council and
10 DHCD to make sure there's funding for
11 this anticipated service demand.

12 Thank you very much for your
13 testimony.

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
15 for your testimony this afternoon.

16 The next person scheduled to
17 testify is Andrew Frishkoff.

18 MR. FRISHKOFF: Thank you,
19 Chairperson Green, members of the
20 Committee, members of City Council.

21 With its budget and Annual
22 Action Plan, the City of Philadelphia
23 must take the first steps in addressing
24 inequitable policies and practices that
25 have led to decades of injustice and the

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 past weeks of devastation. In order to
3 address inequity, the City's Action Plan
4 must affirmatively advance racial equity
5 and must promote comprehensive community
6 response. That starts with fully funding
7 its affordable rental housing obligations
8 to its poorest citizens and residents who
9 are predominantly African American and
10 other people of color. It includes fully
11 supporting community development
12 corporations who have been struggling
13 valiantly to serve residents during the
14 pandemic. It includes public investments
15 in enterprises owned by black and brown
16 people and in corridors serving
17 predominantly non-white residents and
18 neighborhoods.

19 The following are specific and
20 urgent recommendations. First and
21 foremost, LISC urges City Council and the
22 Administration to restore \$20 million
23 from the General Fund to the Philadelphia
24 Housing Trust Fund for FY21. The
25 proposed FY21 budget that eliminates that

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 General Fund commitment is in conflict
3 with previous commitments and would
4 decimate necessary funding for affordable
5 housing, including a cut of more than 9.8
6 million for rental housing production and
7 preservation. This will negatively
8 affect our lowest-income tenants who
9 desperately need safe, affordable homes.

10 Furthermore, our affordable
11 housing organizations have been
12 struggling to maintain safe and clean
13 housing because reduced rental payments
14 and increased COVID-related costs. They
15 need these Housing Trust Funds to
16 continue providing tenants with safe
17 living conditions.

18 Additional recommendations
19 include more funds to the Philadelphia
20 COVID-19 Small Business Relief Fund;
21 rental assistance and legal assistance
22 for small businesses who are struggling
23 to pay their rent; increased capital for
24 community development financial
25 institutions to provide flexible

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 financing to help small businesses reopen
3 and recover; expansion of language access
4 and digital access services for
5 businesses; increased funding for
6 Commerce and CDC staffing; and new
7 funding for CDC's housing counselor
8 organizations and community-based
9 organizations to help with our public
10 health crises.

11 Thank you very much for the
12 opportunity to testify.

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
14 Mr. Frishkoff, for your testimony.

15 My understanding is the next
16 person that was scheduled to testify,
17 Michelle Lewis, will be providing written
18 testimony.

19 The next person to testify is
20 Will Gonzalez.

21 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you for
22 the opportunity to testify today. My
23 name is Will Gonzalez. I'm the Executive
24 Director of CEIBA.

25 Sound housing policy and full

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 equity and inclusion of all communities
3 in drafting housing policies is one of
4 the most important elements of promoting
5 reconciliation and healing in
6 Philadelphia. This is especially so for
7 the Latino community. Philadelphia's
8 Latino neighborhoods face issues related
9 to police accountability, racial and
10 social economic inequality, and a
11 disproportionate risk of contracting
12 COVID-19. I've documented in two recent
13 reports by the Economy League and the
14 Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia.

15 We commend the City for the
16 work that it presents in the plan and we
17 are proud to partner with it through our
18 work of that -- of our work and the
19 fellow Latino organizations in Eastern
20 North Philadelphia.

21 The CARES Act temporarily
22 eliminates the 15 percent cap on the use
23 of CDBG funds for public services in a
24 program year. This increases the
25 opportunity for the City to work

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 creatively with Latino CDCs and other
3 non-profits. This new-found flexibility
4 is an opportunity to think outside the
5 box when it comes to using CDBG dollars
6 to help our city's most vulnerable
7 populations.

8 Let us not miss this critical
9 opportunity to work collaboratively and
10 creatively with the robust family of
11 neighborhood non-profits. CEIBA hopes
12 that the City executes its plan focusing
13 its investments in programs to help
14 people who need assistance the most.
15 This includes Latinos, who have the
16 highest rate of poverty in the City.

17 The increase in people facing
18 credit issues and housing challenges will
19 increase the need for housing counseling.
20 Please increase the role of housing
21 counselors, increase the funding for
22 housing counseling. We don't want to
23 break the cart that is carrying these
24 great people who are doing great work.

25 We would be remiss not to

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 mention in our comments our concerns
3 about the Latino homeless paradox in
4 Philadelphia. The City of Philadelphia
5 is under-serving Latino homeless. We
6 need to change that. We also request
7 that the City invest a minimum of the \$20
8 million in General Fund dollars to help
9 the Housing Trust Fund and that it find a
10 way to support small business.

11 Don't be afraid to be bold.
12 This is your time in history. Seize the
13 moment. We need you.

14 Gracias.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Gracias,
16 Mr. Gonzalez. Thank you for your
17 testimony and your long history of work
18 with CEIBA.

19 Earlier I called on Lisa
20 Rivera, who was not able to testify. I
21 believe she is back on. She may need to
22 hit star 6 to unmute.

23 Ms. Rivera.

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I'm calling

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 for Lisa Rivera. She was scheduled to
3 testify. My understanding that she is
4 back on, and you may need to hit star 6
5 to unmute so you can testify during the
6 hearing.

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And before I
9 make the last call for Ms. Rivera, if
10 there's anyone that's on the call that
11 has not had an opportunity to testify,
12 please say so.

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Hearing
15 none, I believe all the people that have
16 scheduled to testify have already
17 testified.

18 I will also make another call
19 for Lisa Rivera to testify.

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And, Ms.
22 Rivera, if you are here, you need to hit
23 star 6 in order to testify to unmute
24 yourself.

25 (No response.)

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Also we're
3 now about to go into the public meeting,
4 so if all Councilmembers could make sure
5 that you are back on the call. I know
6 prior to the hearing starting,
7 Councilmember David Oh stated that he was
8 here. I want to make sure he was here so
9 we can have him listed for the record.

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. I did
12 not hear from Councilmember Oh.

13 And this is my final call for
14 Lisa Rivera.

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.
17 Considering we don't have any additional
18 people to testify, at this point we'll
19 take a quick break and then we'll go into
20 the public meeting. I will give an
21 opportunity for Council Support to clear
22 all of the people who have testified off
23 the line, so that way, we can come back
24 into the public hearing and then go into
25 the public meeting.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 So please do not go anywhere,
3 Councilmembers. Please stay there, and
4 we'll allow Council Support to clear the
5 line.

6 (Pause.)

7 COUNCILMAN GREEN: As we're
8 getting ready to go back into our public
9 hearing, if we could do a quick mic check
10 for Councilmember Bobby Henon.

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
12 Mr. Chairman. How does this sound check
13 to you and to our stenographer?

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: It sounds
15 good for me.

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: At this
18 time, we're going to go back into our
19 public hearing.

20 Hello?

21 THE CLERK: Can you hear me?

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: We can hear
23 you.

24 THE CLERK: Great. I was
25 disconnected along with everyone else.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 This is Frank Iannuzzi.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So we are
4 continuing the public hearing. There
5 being no further questions from members
6 of the Committee and no other witnesses
7 to testify, I will ask once again if
8 there's anyone else present in this
9 hearing whose name we have failed to call
10 and wishes to offer testimony on any of
11 the bills being considered today?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Hearing
14 none, I want to thank all of the panels
15 of witnesses for their participation
16 today. We value your opinions. I now
17 invite all panels of witnesses to please
18 leave and disconnect from the meeting
19 before we go into our public meeting.

20 So we're about to go into the
21 public meeting. We'd like to have anyone
22 that's not a member of Council and/or
23 staff to exit the call.

24 COUNCIL SUPPORT: We are now
25 live, Councilman.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I will
3 restate what I just said a few moments
4 ago.

5 There being no further
6 questions from members of the Committee
7 and no further witnesses to testify, I
8 will ask once again if there is anyone
9 else present in the hearing whose name we
10 have failed to call and that wishes to
11 offer testimony on any of the bills being
12 considered today.

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Hearing
15 none, I want to thank all the panels of
16 witnesses for their participation today.
17 We value your opinions. I now invite all
18 panels of witnesses to please disconnect
19 from the meeting before we go into our
20 public meeting. We will now pause the
21 proceedings briefly as multiple
22 participants will leave the hearing.

23 (Pause.)

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: This
25 concludes the public hearing of this

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 Finance Committee. We will now go into a
3 public meeting to consider the action to
4 be taken on the bills before this
5 Committee today.

6 And, Mr. Iannuzzi, if you could
7 please do a roll call of members for
8 their attendance. Please, members,
9 indicate that you are present when your
10 name is called so we can make sure that
11 we can hear you. Councilmember Bobby
12 Henon has already done a mic check, but
13 please make sure you state you're present
14 as well when you hear from Mr. Iannuzzi.

15 THE CLERK: Give me one more
16 second, please.

17 Councilmember Henon.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Present.

19 THE CLERK: Councilmember Bass.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I am
21 present.

22 THE CLERK: Councilmember Gym.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Present.

24 THE CLERK: Councilmember
25 Quinones-Sanchez.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Present.

3 THE CLERK: Councilmember

4 Squilla.

5 (No response.)

6 THE CLERK: Councilmember Oh.

7 (No response.)

8 THE CLERK: And Chair Green.

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Present.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: This is Allan

11 Domb. I'm present.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Hi.

13 Councilmember Gauthier is still here as
14 well.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I just want
16 to make sure the Clerk, Mr. Iannuzzi, has
17 recognized those members of Council for
18 the record.

19 THE CLERK: Members Domb and
20 Gauthier are included in the roll call
21 for this hearing.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank
23 you so much.

24 At this point, we are now in
25 our public meeting. I would like to

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 recognize Councilmember Henon for a
3 motion on Bill No. 200296.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.
6 200296 be reported from this Committee
7 with a favorable recommendation and
8 further move that the rules of Council be
9 suspended to permit the first reading of
10 this bill at our next session of Council.

11 (Duly seconded.)

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: It's been
13 moved and properly seconded that the Bill
14 No. 200296 be reported from this
15 Committee with a favorable recommendation
16 and further moved that the rules of
17 Council be suspended to permit first
18 reading of this bill at the next session
19 of Council.

20 All those in favor of the
21 motion will signify by saying aye.

22 (Aye.)

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Opposed?

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The ayes

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 have it and the motion carries.

3 The Chair recognizes

4 Councilmember Henon for a motion on Bill

5 No. 200297.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,

7 Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.

8 200297 be reported from this Committee

9 with a favorable recommendation and

10 further move that the rules of Council be

11 suspended to permit the first reading of

12 this bill at our next session of Council.

13 (Duly seconded.)

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: For the

15 record, for the Councilmember that

16 seconded this bill, can you please state

17 for the record.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

19 Councilwoman Bass.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Oh, that was

21 somewhat inaudible. If that

22 Councilmember could restate their second

23 motion.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

25 Councilwoman Bass.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I believe
3 that was Councilmember Bass that did a
4 seconding motion for Bill No. 200297.

5 Okay. It's coming in and out.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON:

7 Mr. Chairman, this is Bobby --

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Second.

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. There
10 you go.

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I believe
12 that was Councilmember Gym that did a
13 second for Bill 200297; is that correct?

14 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Correct.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Also can we
16 get a second for the record for Bill No.
17 200296.

18 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Sanchez.
19 Second.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.
21 That was Councilmember Sanchez who was
22 seconding for Bill 200296.

23 It has been moved and properly
24 seconded that Bill No. 200297 be reported
25 from this Committee with a favorable

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 recommendation and further moved that the
3 rules of Council be suspended to permit
4 first reading of this bill at the next
5 session of Council.

6 All those in favor of the
7 motion will signify by saying aye.

8 (Aye.)

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those
10 opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The ayes
13 have it and the motion carries.

14 The Chair recognizes
15 Councilmember Henon for a motion on Bill
16 No. 200298.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
18 Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.
19 200298 be reported from this Committee
20 with a favorable recommendation and
21 further move that the rules of Council be
22 suspended as to permit the first reading
23 of this bill at our next session of
24 Council.

25 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Second.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Could you
3 say for the record the Councilmember that
4 seconded the bill.

5 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Sanchez.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
7 Councilmember Sanchez. It's seconded
8 Bill No. 200298 which has been moved and
9 properly seconded that this Bill No.
10 200298 be reported from this Committee
11 with a favorable recommendation and
12 further moved that the rules of Council
13 be suspended to permit first reading of
14 this bill at the next session of Council.

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

17 (Aye.)

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those
19 opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The ayes
22 have it and the motion carries.

23 The Chair recognizes
24 Councilmember Henon for a motion on the
25 amendment to Bill No. 200299.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
3 Mr. Chairman. I offer an amendment to
4 Bill No. 200299. A copy of the amendment
5 has been circulated to all members of the
6 Committee and I move for the amendment to
7 be adopted to Bill No. 200299, be
8 approved.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Second.
10 Allan Domb.

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.
12 The amendment has been seconded by
13 Councilmember Domb.

14 It has been moved and properly
15 seconded that the amendment to Bill No.
16 200299 be approved.

17 All those in favor of the
18 motion will signify by saying aye.

19 (Aye.)

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those
21 opposed?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The ayes
24 have it, the motion carries, and the
25 amendment to Bill No. 200299 has been

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 approved.

3 The Chair recognizes
4 Councilmember Henon for a motion on Bill
5 No. 200299, as amended.

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
7 Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.
8 200299, as amended, be reported out of
9 this Committee with a favorable
10 recommendation and to further move that
11 the rules be suspended to permit the
12 first reading of this bill at our next
13 session of Council.

14 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Second.
15 Allan Domb.

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.
17 The bill, as amended, was seconded by
18 Councilmember Domb.

19 It has been moved and properly
20 seconded that Bill No. 200299, as
21 amended, be reported from this Committee
22 with a favorable recommendation and
23 further moved that the rules of Council
24 be suspended to permit first reading of
25 this bill at the next session of Council.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 All those in favor of the
3 motion will signify by saying aye.

4 (Aye.)

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those
6 opposed?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The ayes
9 have it and the motion carries.

10 The Chair recognizes
11 Councilmember Henon for a motion on Bill
12 No. 200300.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
14 Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.
15 200300 be reported from this Committee
16 with a favorable recommendation and
17 further move that the rules of Council be
18 suspended as to permit the first reading
19 of this bill at our next session of
20 Council.

21 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Second.
22 Allan Domb.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The motion
24 is seconded by Councilmember Domb.

25 It has been moved and properly

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.
2 seconded that Bill No. 200300 be reported
3 from this Committee with a favorable
4 recommendation and further moved that the
5 rules of Council be suspended to permit
6 first reading of this bill at the next
7 session of Council.

8 All those in favor of the
9 motion will signify by saying aye.

10 (Aye.)

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those
12 opposed?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The ayes
15 have it and the motion carries.

16 The Chair recognizes
17 Councilmember Henon for a motion on Bill
18 No. 200329.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
20 Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.
21 200329 be reported from this Committee
22 with a favorable recommendation and
23 further move that the rules of Council be
24 suspended to permit the first reading of
25 this bill at our next session of Council.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Second.

3 Allan Domb.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN:

5 Councilmember Domb seconded the motion by
6 Councilmen Henon.

7 It has been moved and properly
8 seconded that Bill No. 200329 be reported
9 from this Committee with a favorable
10 recommendation and further moved that the
11 rules of Council be suspended to permit
12 first reading of this bill at the next
13 session of Council.

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

16 (Aye.)

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those
18 opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The ayes
21 have it and the motion carries.

22 The Chair recognizes
23 Councilmember Henon for a motion on Bill
24 No. 200330.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.
3 200330 be reported from this Committee
4 with a favorable recommendation and
5 further move that the rules of Council be
6 suspended to permit first reading of this
7 bill at our next session of Council.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Second.

9 Allan Domb.

10 COUNCILMAN GREEN: It has been
11 moved and properly seconded by
12 Councilmember Allan Domb that Bill No.
13 200330 be reported from this Committee
14 with a favorable recommendation and
15 further moved that the rules of Council
16 be suspended to permit first reading of
17 this bill at the next session of Council.

18 All those in favor of the
19 motion will signify by saying aye.

20 (Aye.)

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Those
22 opposed?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The ayes
25 have it and the motion carries.

1 6/8/20 - FINANCE - BILL 200296, ETC.

2 Thank you, members of this
3 Committee.

4 This concludes the business for
5 the Committee of Finance today. I want
6 to thank everyone for your attendance and
7 your patience as we continue to work our
8 way through Microsoft Teams and do the
9 legislative business of City Council and
10 the City of Philadelphia.

11 Thank you, and have great
12 afternoon and evening.

13 (Committee on Finance concluded
14 at 6:27 p.m.)

15 - - -

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CERTIFICATE

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

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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