COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND THE HOMELESS

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, May 27, 2025
10:15 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN RUE LANDAU, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DRISCOLL
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILLS: 250043, 250044, 250045

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COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
I now note that the hour has come and this hearing is called to order. This is a public hearing of the City Council Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development and The Homeless. The purpose of this public hearing is to hear testimony on Bill Nos. 250043, 250044 and 250045.

Ms. Jones, would you please call the roll.

THE CLERK:
Councilmember Bass.

(No response.)

THE CLERK:
Councilmember Driscoll.

(No response.)

THE CLERK:
Councilmember Squilla.

COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
Present.

THE CLERK:

Councilmember Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES:
Present.

THE CLERK: Vice-Chair Landau.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
Present.

THE CLERK: Chair Gauthier.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Present. Thank you, Ms. Jones. I note for the record that a quorum of this committee is present and this hearing is called to order.

Good morning, fellow members of the Committee and everyone joining us today. I wanted to take a moment to briefly summarize the purpose of Bill No. 250043, which is actually pretty straightforward. This bill proposes using permit expediting mechanisms that already exist in the code to prioritize and streamline deed restricted affordable housing.

It's as simple as that. If we're serious about ending our city's affordable housing crisis and making government a part of the solution, we need to turn over every stone and identify ways we can do things differently to get families into safe, stable and affordable housing sooner.

Our current processes are not serving those who need us the most. Now is the time to show developers willing to build deed-restricted affordable housing that we appreciate them and we prioritize them. This bill accomplishes that through four simple mechanisms:

First, it takes the existing 5-day zoning permit response time turnaround option in the Code and grants it to any developer who can prove they are building deed-restricted affordable housing and at the same price as a regular zoning permit application.

Second, it gives a 10-day building and trade permit response time for those same developers, removing the loophole that currently exists in the Code that allows L&I to change the standard whenever they want to, causing unpredictability that increases cost and project timelines.

Third, it expands how L&I currently defines affordable housing project to include any and all buildings that will have deed restrictions or other regulatory agreements attached to them legally requiring that a certain percentage of their housing units be cost restricted for a minimum of 30 years. Some examples include developers going through a zoning bonus program, those applying for city vacant land for affordable housing or those developers voluntarily recording deed restrictions against their properties.

Lastly, it grants accelerated zoning board hearing scheduling for those same development proposals, again at the same price as a regular ZBA application.

I know these do not cover every single cause of delays in our permitting processes, but for me this is about the start of a culture change because that's what is required if we're going to truly make a dent in our affordable housing production and not just give it lip service.

Those who build deed-restricted affordable housing are in most instances our partners and collaborators. It makes no sense that we award them free land or construction subsidies only to have them pay it back to us in expedited permit application fees or put their closings at risk because they can't get a ZBA hearing in time. We as a city can do better. This is a flaw we can fix relatively easily in fact.

And with Mayor Parker proposing a housing strategy, the likes of which the city has not seen in recent memory, there is no better time.

Do any of my colleagues have opening remarks? And I'd like to also acknowledge the presence of Councilmember Cindy Bass.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
Yeah, I just wanted to if I may.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Sure.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Madam Chair, I just wanted to thank you for your work on this piece of legislation and really on all the bills that we're going to be hearing about today. It's really been quite a weekend. There's been a lot of conversation.

Thank you, Councilwoman Landau. But I think that we have a package of bills that are really going to work for everyone. So thank you so much.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much.

Ms. Jones, will you now read the title of the bills.

THE CLERK: Bill No. 2504 -- excuse me, 250043, an ordinance amending Subcode "A" (The Philadelphia Administrative Code) of Title 4 of The Philadelphia Code (The Building, Construction and Occupancy Code), by defining affordable housing projects and establishing specific application and permitting procedures for such projects, all under certain terms and conditions.

Bill No. 250044, for an ordinance amending Chapter 9-800 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Landlord and Tenant," to establish requirements related to security deposits for residential rentals and establishing remedies for violations, all under certain terms and conditions.

Bill No. 250045, an ordinance amending Chapter 9-800 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Landlord and Tenant," to establish requirements related to fees charged by landlords to individuals applying for residential tenancy, all under certain terms and conditions.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

Please call the first panel of witnesses to testify on Bill No. 250043.

THE CLERK: Alexander Palmer, Kathleen Grady.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good morning. Please state your name for the record and proceed with your testimony.

MS. GRADY: Kathleen Grady, Deputy with the Department of Planning and Development. Good morning, Chairman Gauthier and members of the Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development and The Homeless. I am Kathleen Grady, Deputy Director for Strategic Initiatives and Executive Administration at the Department of Planning and Development.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Bill No.

250043, which was introduced by Councilmember Gauthier on January 30, 2025. We thank Council for its continued partnership on advancing the development of new and preserved affordable housing. Bill No. 250043 will define affordable housing and will allow us to better track approvals and timelines regardless on whether the project needs a variance or special exemption, which we appreciate.

This bill also alters the fee schedule for appeals to the ZBA by waiving the accelerated hearing fee for certain defined affordable housing projects. While this provision can be implemented without any significant changes to ZBA operations, I'd like to raise one potential side effect for consideration by the committee.

The Zoning Board currently meets every Wednesday and one Tuesday per month. Wednesday meetings have three lists and often run from 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Roughly 30% of zoning appellants choose to pay for an accelerated hearing. Appellants expect that accelerated appeals will be heard sooner and that the difference between the accelerated date and the non-accelerated date will be worth paying the fee.

This bill will increase the number of cases that will be heard on the accelerated schedule, potentially reducing the difference in time between accelerated appeal and a regular appeal given the limited number of hearing slots. While we don't know exactly how the bill would affect the timing of accelerated appeals, it's important for the committee to understand this trade-off since it will affect all ZBA appellants.

We share Council's intent to reduce the time tax appellant applicants face in going through the Zoning Board. As part of the Mayor's H.O.M.E. Initiative. Executive Order 325 signed on February 19, 2025 under the leadership of the Department of Planning and Development, it tasked over 25 departments with identifying key barriers and opportunities within the housing and commercial development timelines, cost and predictability, including consideration of permitting requirements, land use approvals, building codes, design review, environmental review processes, zoning, technology and financing.

As part of that effort, Planning and Development identified key efforts to address the timeline of the Zoning Board of Adjustment process and we have begun efforts to address them. Key improvements are already underway.

For example, since winter we have reduced the length of time to four weeks with the goal of providing notice of decisions within two weeks by the end of the fiscal year. Additional efforts are underway, including preparing first-time applicants for the ZBA hearing, proactive outreach to applicants missing exhibits, the launch of our new file upload tool, which allows all parties to upload exhibits, and identifying the need for interpreters early in the process to avoid unnecessary continuances.

We believe these improvements will make a meaningful change for all applicants before the board, while simultaneously contributing to the expedited affordable housing applications. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I'm happy to answer any questions.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much.

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

MR. PALMER: Good morning, Chairperson Gauthier and members of the Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development and The Homeless. My name is Alex Palmer and I'm the Director of Enforcement for the Department of Licenses and Inspections.

Today I'm here to provide testimony on Bill No. 250043 introduced, as we all know, by Chairperson Gauthier, which would amend Title 4 of The Philadelphia Code to create a new application and permitting scheme for affordable housing development.

The Department of L&I appreciates the intent of this bill but has several concerns that this bill if implemented would have severe impacts on the department in terms of a financial as well as an administrative burden. This bill would mandate that the review time for zoning applications associated with an affordable housing project be cut from 10 days to 5 days, and the fee associated with such an expedited review be waived.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Can you speak into -- maybe pull the mic a little closer.

MR. PALMER: Of course. Sorry. Based on our current projections of affordable housing projects, shortening this time frame would cost the Department of Licenses and Inspections approximately $210,000 in overtime alone. Review times for other permits would remain at 10 days. But this bill would eliminate the important caveat that reviewing all permit applications within that 10-day timeline be to the extent that capacity permits. As everybody knows, there are current shortages and the department has issues filling its current openings.

The Department has made tremendous strides despite this in meeting this deadline, and has done so for the vast majority of applications despite the caveat of capacity. This would create more overtime costs for the department, estimated approximately $855,000.

Second, the department is concerned that the quality of these reviews would suffer which could have dramatic impacts on life safety and the general quality of life of owners of adjoining parcels. It is our belief that the Code as written is sufficient to meet the timelines of affordable housing developers and other stakeholders and that there will likely be no meaningful difference in the approval time for these applications, and in turn, no meaningful difference at the speed at which development of these housing projects can occur despite the burden on the department. I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify on this bill and we welcome any questions that you might have.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

Thank you so much for your testimony and for the work that you do. I just wanted to offer some comments in response. I do think that we have to aim to do something different than we're doing now, particularly if we're going to meet the ambitious goal of preserving and creating 30,000 housing units. It just is not possible without expanding our capacity and making some changes to our processes.

Right now I also think there's an opportunity -- I understand that you're trying to hire more people, but at the same time as I understand it, permit demand is currently at its lowest point in years and the turnaround times that we're pushing for in these bills are also already included in the Code. So this is a goal that L&I has set for itself that we're just trying to codify and put some structure around to give more predictability to developers of affordable housing.

And I think when we met with staff, it was said to us that you're already at a 10-day turnaround for trade permits. And so, what we want to do is put some structure around this, put some definition around this. And I do think we'll have to expand our capacity anyway if we're to meet the Mayor's goal.

And I also wanted to commend you on all of the changes that ZBA has made up to now, particularly having hybrid hearings. I know that you all are working hard to try to expedite things, but it still remains that people are waiting six-plus months to get a hearing. And when it comes to affordable housing providers, that can put them in a very precarious position.

Every year, in just my District alone, there are multiple LIHTC providers who are in danger of missing their PHFA deadlines because they can't get a hearing.

And so, this is about our city continuing to make adjustments and changes if we want to do what we say we want to do, which is really make a dent in the affordable housing crisis.

And so, I thank you for coming here and for laying out your concerns, but I also look forward to continuing to work with your agencies to get to the place where we need to be.

Are there any questions? Go ahead.

COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Real quick because I know concerns that we have on the expedited process that we go through, and I know they're not here today, but as Planning and L&I worked with the Zoning Board, is it possible to look at different ways to address some of the hearings that we have at the Zoning Board?

In other words, we have a lot of hearings that are scheduled a long way out but are very basic hearings that have support from the community, support from the Councilmembers, support from Planning, and they are just really cases that could be heard quickly and pushed through. And even if we could create either a day to do that where you could hear maybe 50, 60 of them and really knock those numbers down and therefore be able to then get to the cases that are going to be a little more complicated.

Is that something that we can do as a city? Can we work with the Zoning Board to address that? And therefore, I think the wait time would be eliminated. Yes, the Zoning Board might have to be one extra day a week or something like that, but it would really eliminate and streamline a lot of that process where they have to put those hearings in the same hearings that are a little more complicated and take a little more time.

MS. GRADY: Councilmember, that is something that we are in fact also exploring. It's a great idea. One of the things that we are doing next year is increasing the number of hearings that we have, so we'll be adding for -- we're also thinking about how do we utilize our Tuesday hearings. So we'll be looking into whether or not we can group certain types together.

I know that in the past there has been conversations around a consent agenda, and that is something that's very challenging for us because the ZBA is an adjudicatory body so we have to give everyone the ability to put their case on file, on the record. But there are ways that we can think about constructing our agendas or having certain hearings for certain things, and that's something that we are looking at.

We've actually been working with Harvard Bloomberg Data Tract and trying to measure out where we are in the existing conditions and then what impact certain interventions could look like from a data-driven perspective. So that is something that is in play.

COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: All right. I think that would be great, and I appreciate you guys looking into that and looking forward to seeing what possible changes we could have. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

Councilmember Bass.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning. I had a question for the Department of Licenses and Inspections around the costs that were rejected. And I'm wondering, you know, it looks like shortening the time frame would cost L&I about $210,000 a year and also, additional costs piled on beyond deadlines would run around $855,000 per year. And I'm wondering has there been sort of like a cost analysis between those costs and expenses versus the cost to not provide affordable housing in Philadelphia. Have we looked at what the cost is to not provide the housing that so many people need?

MR. PALMER: Those costs are projected based off the overtime that would be required to meet the timelines. As far as a cost for each project, that would be project-specific and we have not made those calculations.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I would just suggest that we should look at it in a broader context. Because when a family is housed, it provides stability. They can sort of get their lives together if they're in a chaotic situation. You have a foundation.

When we're not providing that foundation that little more than $1 million, which is a drop in the bucket for the City of Philadelphia to spend, when we're not spending that million dollars, we're leaving too many families in vulnerable situations. So I just really wanted to say that I thought we were being just a little bit -- not you, but I thought we were being just a little bit short-sighted in seeing what the big picture is in terms of how important it is to provide housing.

I know that the Chair and the bill's author said that you all were going to continue to work together, which is a great thing. But I'm just reminded of years ago when I did a bill that would streamline some things along faster, and the idea was -- what we were told is that, oh, this is going to be an administrative nightmare. And it almost feels like sometimes we get in our own way. We want to fix a problem, but we don't want to put the work in to fix the problem. And, you know, we just have to.

The other thing I just wanted to ask is for the details. You said the department is concerned that the quality of reviews would suffer. And I just wanted you to give some details on that in terms of the inspections.

MR. PALMER: Certainly. So currently, we schedule our reviews in 10-day blocks so that the plans reviewer can address and actually examine the plans and then give them back with any comments should they not be approved.

That 10-day time period can happen -- well, the reason why we've chosen that 10-day time period is to account for potential vacation, emergencies that come up and it's important that each plan stays with each reviewer. So when a plan is assigned, that reviewer is assigned to it and they will follow that plan throughout that plan's life cycle.

So we have some concerns that giving a 5-day turnaround doesn't necessarily account for the staffing and potential emergencies that could pop up where people are taking off or people have vacations scheduled. People might have vacations scheduled months out and then a plan will come in for them to review and then to turn it around in 5 days is a little more difficult than 10 days.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So it sounds like it's more of a question of sort of staffing and consistency within the department and consistency among staffers doing the inspections versus the quality of the inspections themselves; is that accurate?

MR. PALMER: Well, I think it's -- I think it's both. I think it's both the quality and --

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. Because I think the quality among the staffers and what is sort of the guidelines that they go by, you know, like that to me seems like an easy fix. That's something that we could work on inhouse. The availability of the number of staffers is something totally different.

And my last question is what is the department's plan to scale up in light of the H.O.M.E. Initiative from the Mayor?

MR. PALMER: These applications were based upon the H.O.M.E. Initiative by -- these projections, I should say, were based upon the H.O.M.E. Initiative by the Mayor, and these overtime costs would be potential costs that the department would face, so we plan to fix this through overtime in the meantime while we hire additional staff.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So it won't cost so much because you're planning on doing it anyway, right? Is that what I'm hearing?

MR. PALMER: Well --

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yeah.

MR. PALMER: I mean, these projections are based upon the time shortening, not necessarily based upon the increased applications.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. All right. Sounds like you said something different before, but that's okay. I just think that the department clearly has to scale up if we're talking about putting 30,000 new and improved units online. The department has a scale up. There's no question about it.

And so, how we're getting there, what we're doing to get there I think is just a question that needs to be addressed inhouse and we certainly hope that you will.

So no further questions. Thank you, Madam Chair.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Thank you so much, Councilmember.
Thanks to both of you for your testimony and for your work. We appreciate you.
The Clerk will please call the second panel of witnesses to testify.
THE CLERK: Terrilynn Donald, McDonald Ford, Jane Allen and Kevin Malawski.
(Witnesses approached witness table.)
COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Good morning. Please state your name for the record and proceed with your testimony. Whoever wants to go first.
MR. FORD: Good morning to everyone. My name is McDonald Ford. I am delighted to be here. I want to thank the Councilwoman for sponsoring this bill. Just a little bit about myself. I am a

community-based developer. I pastor a church at the 4300 block of Fairmount Avenue.

Outside of our worship experience and our faith journey, I am also concerned about developing our community, so I set out a plan to acquire vacant lots. And with those vacant lots, we were looking to put housing and also relieve some of the congestion in that area. By doing some very unique things, we want to bring back a vibrant, interactive, engaged community.

So the property I'm going to discuss this morning, because of the current status, the bills where they are today, the process today, it deterred us from going to affordable housing route, although we still plan to do that. I tell you why.

There's a property at

700 North 43rd Street. We purchased a property, the church, this local community, faith-based organization storefront church, we bought this property, 700 North 43rd Street, many you all know that as the Bottom of the Sea. On our dime we're going to build. We are currently under construction. Five residential units, two commercial space.

We went down the road for a density bonus. Let me tell you what deterred us: Affordability, costs, time frame. Although we still plan to do that, I believe if we were able to afford it and get it through, we would have the deed restriction, but we'll talk about that also if you have any questions.

But Phase 2 of that project we planned on doing some other development with current lots that are holding trash and furniture and create violence. We want to take those lots and develop them and go through the route of making them affordable housing deed restriction. But I can tell you one thing, as a community-based developer two things that comes to mind for me that I'm managing the balance sheet and the P&L, affordability, efficiency. And I believe this bill will allow us to do those things. Thank you, Councilwoman, for sponsoring and I am here to support that effort. Thank you so much.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much for your testimony and for your work.

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

MR. MALAWSKI: Thank you very much. My name is Kevin

Malawski. I'm the Director of Advocacy for the AIA Philadelphia. Can you hear me?

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Yes.

MR. MALAWSKI: Okay. Excellent. Good morning. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the committee. I'm speaking on behalf of Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects today, otherwise known as the AIA.

Our chapter is the leading voice of the architectural profession in the city, representing more than 260 member firms and 220 allied companies that provide buildings, products and services to the building industry. The AIA supports Bill No. 250043 because Philadelphia's affordable housing shortage demands urgent action. By establishing compulsory review deadlines, the bill injects predictability into a process that too often delays projects and drives up costs as a result.

Coupled with a waiver of fees for accelerated plan reviews and Zoning Board hearings, these deadlines will ensure that the limited funding available for affordable housing goes towards construction, helping bring critically-needed affordable units online sooner. We recognize however that meeting these timelines will place additional burden on the plan reviewers at Licenses and Inspections, as we've heard earlier this morning.

We therefore urge the Administration and the Council to please pair this legislation with additional resources that L&I will need to deliver thorough, timely and, most importantly, code compliant reviews for all of their projects.

While this bill is an important step, we also acknowledge that there are other bottlenecks, such as financing gaps, utility coordination and fragmented approvals across other agencies which continue to slow the delivery of affordable housing in our great city.

The AIA stands ready to work with the Council and to identify these obstacles and craft practical solutions so that everyday Philadelphians can benefit from safe, affordable and of course well-designed housing. Thank you for your time and thank you for introducing this bill.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much for your testimony and your advocacy.

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

MS. ALLEN: Good morning. Can everyone hear me okay?

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: (Gestured).

MS. ALLEN: My name is Jane Allen and I'm here on behalf of the PA Associate -- the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations, PACDC. Good morning, Chair Gauthier, Vice-Chair Landau and members of City Council's Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development and The Homeless.

I'm glad to be here today to testify in support of Bill No. 250043. This legislation will make the permitting and approval process faster and cheaper for projects that include affordable housing by requiring the Department of Licenses and Inspections to review building permit applications within five business days, and enabling any of these projects that require ZBA approval to receive an accelerated hearing date at no cost to the developer, as we heard earlier.

PACDC supports this bill because guaranteeing expedited permit review by L&I and an accelerated hearing date by the ZBA provides affordable housing developers with much needed predictability. Our membership is supportive of this legislation because it will, as we just heard, alleviate bottlenecks in the permitting and variance process that increase carrying costs for affordable housing projects that are already operating on thin margins.

During a period where there is already a significant need for affordable housing that is increasing faster than our ability to build that housing, municipal interventions that improve efficiency are an integral strategy to reducing predevelopment costs, especially as the community and economic development sector navigates federal policy changes that may spike already high borrowing costs and increase the price of building materials above and beyond the historically high levels that we saw during the pandemic. I'm pleased today to testify in support of this legislation. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Thank you so much. Thanks to all of you.

Are there questions or comments for the panel from members?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: If there are no other witnesses to speak on Bill No. 250043, we will move on to the next bills.

Will the Clerk please call the first panel of witnesses for Bill Nos. 250044 and 250045.

THE CLERK: Vilna Gaston, Marcella Joe, Kadeem Morris.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good morning. Before you ladies go, I'm going to allow for comments from the bill sponsor.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank you. Thank you so much and thank you to everybody who came out today. These are my bills and I just wanted to take a couple of minutes to lay a little bit of a groundwork on why I introduced them and why we're here today.

I've spent my entire career committing to fighting for housing justice in Philadelphia. It's the work that led me to run for City Council in the first place and I'm proud to serve as Vice-Chair of the Housing Committee alongside Chair Councilmember Jamie Gauthier.

Today this Committee will hear amendments to my Move-In Affordability Plan, a plan that will lower the barriers so many Philadelphians face in accessing housing, the hidden upfront costs of moving. These costs are often the deciding factor between securing stable housing or continuing to live in uncertainty over the past decade Philadelphia has seen an 11% increase in renters. Nearly half of all city households rent their homes.

Renters are our seniors, minimum wage workers, new graduates, survivors of domestic violence, half of us. Every Philadelphian deserves accessible and affordable housing, but nearly 48.5% of renters are cost-burdened, spending over 30% of their income just on their rent. That's why I introduced this legislation to create some reasonable guidelines around application fees and rental deposits.

Let's be clear, Pennsylvania state law is very clear about how landlords charge tenants for upfront deposits. In fact, it states -- Pennsylvania Landlord and Tenant Act -- no landlord may require a sum in excess of two months' rent to be deposited in escrow for the payment of damages to the leasehold premises and/or default in rent thereof during the first year of any lease. And after the first year, a landlord is only permitted to hold one month's rent.

This has been established state law for over 50 years. Landlords may call these deposits for damages or default or rent. They can call them security deposits or last month's rent, but the courts are clear that no matter what you call it, all of those charges are security deposits and may not exceed the cost of two months' rent.

Let's be clear, everyone deserves a home to live in and this legislation simply offers tenants struggling with the cost of moving in some additional flexibility. Many other states and cities regulate both security deposits and rental application fees. I'm proud to sponsor legislation that creates some commonsense guidelines to help protect tenants, particularly low-income Black and Brown renters who face deep barriers to finding affordable housing.

I pride myself on accessibility and clear communication. I spent the last month working with stakeholders on both sides on thoughtful and responsive changes that will acknowledge the needs of both renters and property owners.

I've had multiple meetings, calls and sent and received emails from many of you in this room to hear about your concerns about this legislation. I've met with small and large landlords and have heard your feedback. I've also heard from advocates and constituents, many of whom are tenants, who are deeply worried about and burdened by the cost of moving into a new apartment. And I've worked hard to ensure that these bills will help protect tenants without undue burden on landlords.

As a result, I've made a number of key amendments to strengthen this proposal and make its implementation more effective. I've increased the proposed cap on rental application fees to $50, a change that reflects realistic screening costs while still protecting renters from excessive fees.

I'm also removing the provision that allows tenants to provide their own background checks in lieu of paying a fee. I've also made an amendment so that landlords won't be required to offer installment payments for plans for security deposits equal to or less than one month's rent. This ensures that we're focusing this flexibility where it's needed most, for tenants who face the highest upfront costs.

And for those who do have a security deposit of up to two months' rent, if they need it, they will have an installment plan with the equivalent of one month's rent paid upfront at move-in, then the rest in installments over the next three months. Lastly, an amendment will also add a 90-day delay to the implementation of these changes to give both renters and landlords time to adjust to the new standard.

I want this legislation to be practical, equitable and deliberate. Renters will gain greater transparency and flexibility and landlords will benefit from clearer guidelines and a broader pool of applicants ready to move in. This plan is how we create flexibility without sacrificing fairness. It's how we promote stability without inviting financial strain.

We look forward to hearing testimony today from those who have experienced these challenges firsthand and those who advocate for them. Your voices are essential in helping us move forward together. Thank you very much.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you, Vice-Chair Landau.

Are there additional witnesses that the Clerk needs to call up?

THE CLERK: Yes. Can Garrett O'Dwyer also come up. Thank you.

(Witness approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

Good morning. Please state your name for the record and proceed with your testimony.

MS. GASTON: Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you to encourage you to pass the amended versions of Bills 250444 and 250045 that we wholeheartedly support. My name is Vilna Gaston and I am a staff attorney in the Tenant Rights Group at the Senior Law Center.

At the Senior Law Center, we seek justice for older adults by using the power of the law, educating the community and advocating on local, state and national levels. We are the only nonprofit organization in Pennsylvania whose mission is dedicated solely to provide legal services to older persons. And one of very few in the nation, we provide free legal assistance to thousands of older people each year, including victims of elder abuse and financial exploitation, older homeowners and tenants facing housing crises and homelessness, grandparents raising grandchildren and older individuals facing undue or neglect in guardianship.

Our Tenant Rights Project provides representation to tenants facing various landlord-tenant issues, including evictions, ejectments and Fair Housing Commission complaints as well as providing advice to tenants regarding their rights. While many older adults want to live out their days in their homes, the reality is that they are often forced to move due to rising rents, dangerous housing conditions or to escape abusive situations.

Just as the freedom to stay should be a human right, so should the freedom to move to be closer to family or live in better conditions. However, for many of our older clients the high cost of moving prevent them from making this choice. Even the most frugal older adults often have no savings because the system is designed to leave them with just enough money to get by.

In fact, if seniors who receive SSI manage to save up more than $2,000 they risk losing their benefits. This makes it impossible for many seniors to pay the first and last month's rent or the security deposits that are often required to move into a new apartment. Tenants with housing vouchers who receive assistance with their monthly rent are often unable to move due to high upfront costs that are not covered by their voucher subsidy, and we are unaware of any forms of assistance for application fees.

Unfortunately, the Philadelphia Housing Authority does not provide any assistance for move-in costs, such as security deposits or last month's rent. Disabled older adults are often in the worst position. They are often less stranded in unsafe or unsuitable housing. If they don't have the resources for upfront costs, they have no chance of moving to better housing even though they can pay ongoing rent.

Tenants who are lucky enough to receive their security deposit back from their current landlord are still caught in the impossible situation. They can't get their security back until they move out and they can't afford to move out until they get their security back.

My colleague Vincent Montoya Armanios testified at the first hearing on these bills last month and shared the story of one of his clients, Debra Scott. I will not retell her entire story to you today, but I wanted to briefly mention that Ms. Scott represents hundreds of our clients who stand to benefit from these bills as drafted today. For clients like Ms. Scott, excessive move-in costs can be the difference between a smooth transfer and a disaster.

We are fully in support of a $50 cap on application fees. With this cap and the additional protections in Bill 250045, older tenants will save money and be spared unnecessary charges when they need to relocate. We likewise remain fully in support of Bill 250044, which will allow installment payments in a situation where a landlord requires a security deposit in excess of one month's rent.

As noted above, many older tenants do not or legally cannot have enough money to pay a first month rent, last month rent and security money prior to move in. This bill will cap the financial barrier for older adults to get the keys for a unit and make it easier to ensure the stable housing of older adults. We strongly support the enactment of this legislation to limit move-in costs for renters. Bills 250044 and 250045 will enhance the ability of older tenants to access stable, affordable and decent housing in Philadelphia. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much.

Please state your name for the record --

MS. GASTON: Vilna Gaston.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Please state your name for the record and proceed with your testimony.

MR. MORRIS: Kadeem Morris. Good morning. Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee in support of the Move-In Affordability legislation, Bill Nos. 250044, 250045 as amended, introduced by Councilmember Landau to address the barriers faced by everyday Philadelphians to gain an access to safe and affordable housing. My name is Kadeem Morris. I'm the co-managing attorney of the Housing Unit at Community Legal Services.

Every year Community Legal Services through Philadelphia's Eviction Prevention

Project represents over 3000 families facing unfair housing practices and evictions. The majority of our clients live at or below the federal poverty level and face significant barriers to housing affordability.

Evictions are deeply stabilizing, but they're also quite expensive. The upfront cost of relocation can be as much as three months' rent in addition to application fees charged to tenants at the time that they are searching for new housing.

For tenants in Philadelphia seeking to find new housing, the average rental unit starts at $1500. The upfront cost for that unit can easily exceed $5,000. The existing requirements to pay first, last and security at the time of move-in can have a crippling effect on households and significantly limit their ability to find new housing. Most of our clients with an income at or below 125% of the federal poverty limit, which is only $33,312 for a household of three, while some of our clients can obtain housing subsidies, including vouchers and other forms of payment supports to make their housing more affordable, most renters pay fair market rent and are often cost-burdened. Meaning, that their rental expenses make up more than 30% of their monthly household expenses. This cost-burden is significant.

The proposed legislation would limit the upfront cost of move-in and go a long way to improving access to safe and affordable housing for residents of Philadelphia. Forced and voluntary moves are a significant feature of the city's housing landscape.

Approximately 50% of the city's residents live in rental housing.

Rising costs, credit scores and income requirements already limit the options for vulnerable Philadelphians in their search for new housing. Applicants for housing rarely pay just one application fee. Price considerations and limited housing stock means that there are usually multiple tenants applying for the same unit and tenants often have to apply for multiple units.

The average cost of a rental application in the United States is about $50 but can often exceed $75 per applicant. Tenants should not be locked out of future housing stability due to high move-in costs that have the potential to track them in substandard housing.

Community Legal Services

supports the bills as amended, introduced by Councilmember Landau to reduce the cost-burden of renters in Philadelphia. Bill No. 250044 provides a payment plan option for security deposits and 250045 limits the amount that a landlord can charge at the time of an application. These two bills are responsive to a clear barrier that upfront costs proves to vulnerable families.

Pennsylvania law limits the amount that a landlord can charge a security deposit to two months' rent. It does not address the real-world impact and the resulting economic burden of having to pay first and two months' security or first, last and security at the time of move-in. The passage of these bills will directly impact the more than 15,000 Philadelphians a year who face eviction and often must relocate quickly alongside the rest of the city's renters who must confront the growing cost of planned relocations.

For cost-burdened renters, upfront move-in costs are a significant barrier to access and safe and affordable housing. Thank you for your time and we look forward to these bills becoming law.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much. Please state your name for the record and proceed with your testimony. Good morning.

MS. JOE: Good morning. My name is Marcella Joe. I am a tenant information specialist with Tenant Union Representative Network. Been there 30 years, a little longer than they've been born actually from Tenant Action Group. It's a pleasure to be here and my agency thanks you as well.

I settled some of these testimonies a few times and I enjoy them. Each time it's an experience. My two witnesses here they said pretty much everything that I wanted to say. I'm like, wait a minute, give me something to say.

But I do want to talk about the experience with the clients that I've dealt with over the last 30 years. Yes, they are limited-income clients, female, children, families with no dads in the home for the most part, and they have limited income and they're struggling.

One of the main things that I have experienced with the clients that I've seen, and that's been tens and tens of thousands of them, that security deposit has always been a major issue as far as being able to afford to move into these units. Because like everyone knows, it's usually first, last and security. There are some landlords that, bless their souls, will only ask for first and the security deposit, but the majority do want at least three months' equal to move in. Because some of these folks are not able to afford to move with the move-in monies, and if there's no rental assistance programs available to help them, they find themselves moving into poor conditions.

I've noticed that when folks cannot afford to move where they would like to move, they will take whatever they can get and that also starts to pile up with some other issues. Okay. So affordable housing is very important and decent housing is very important. I do agree with most of the things here that I'm reading around the security deposit and the credit check fees because they are expensive. And even myself can't afford to do it and I rent as well.

But at the end of the day, it's very important for folks to know that they have a city that's actually looking into these things. This is a United States problem as well. It's not just a Philly problem. I watch a lot of documentaries. I see a lot of cities really suffering worse than what we are and they can actually take a lesson from Philadelphia.

I do want to commend City Councilmembers on all the bills that you have passed in the past simply because you didn't forget about the tenants. You did allow some bills to be passed where they got their foot in their door and were able to be amended moving forward, and this is one of these bills. These are two bills here there has been desperately needed.

I just wish that you guys would just kept that part in where they could just take their credit report over to the next landlord and not have to continue to pay this $50 every time they go because that can really feed into the money that you're trying to save to move. $50, it's always been $50, you know. 20 would have been good because they can see at least five places with $100 as opposed to having to see five places for $250. Okay.

So I thank you guys for listening to me. And again, thank you for your contribution with new legislation and keeping tenants in mind and treating people fairly.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank you very much. Appreciate your testimony.

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

MR. O'DWYER: Good morning, Chairperson Gauthier, Vice-Chair Landau and members of City Council's Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development and The Homeless. My name is Garrett O'Dwyer, and I'm the Policy Director for the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations or PACDC. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of Bill No. 250044 as amended, that would require landlords that require more than one month of security deposit to offer tenants the option to pay their second months' worth of security deposit in monthly installments.

We support the aims of the bill sponsor, Vice-Chair Landau, to expand housing affordability in Philadelphia and commend her and her staff on this novel approach. PACDC is the leading voice of nonprofit community development organizations in Philadelphia. Our 60 CDC members and over 100 additional associate members are responsible for addressing key affordable housing, social service and economic development needs across the city.

As Philadelphia turned the corner at the beginning of this century, we began to see steep increases in rental rates following the Great Recession. In communities experiencing gentrification, this posed a particular problem but rates went up across the city more generally.

The COVID-19 pandemic turbo charged this trend with rent increasing at 1.5 times the rate of wages. This has exacerbated underlying societal inequities and turned our dearth of affordable housing into a true crisis. Steeply higher rents make it more challenging for individuals and families to be able to afford ongoing monthly housing costs, but it also makes it much harder for them to access housing in the first place. Many for-profit landlords require applicants to produce three months of rent to be able to begin tenancy, first month, last month and security deposit.

According to the most recent Out of Reach report by the National Low Income Housing

Coalition, the average fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Philadelphia is now $1,737 a month. That means a family renting that unit would need to produce over $5,200 for the landlord, and that doesn't even include their move-in costs.

In the poorest big city in the United States, this is a significant burden. To put this into perspective, a person making minimum wage would need to work over 718 hours or 17.9 weeks with no deductions from their paycheck to be able to afford the average upfront tenancy costs. Bill No. 250044 works to equitably alleviate this burden if a landlord chooses to require more than first month's rent and one month security deposit by distributing the remaining balance over the first months of occupancy. Landlords will still receive their security deposit and tenants who choose to opt for an installment plan will still be required to pay. These changes though would make the renting process dramatically more manageable, particularly for low-income residents.

We fully support the proposed amendments to the bill, which exempt landlords that only require one month of security deposit before move-in, only requiring one month of security deposit is already the standard practice of nonprofit affordable housing providers like our members, which are responsible for thousands of units across the city.

We call on all housing providers to embrace this model, which focuses on reducing barriers to access while still protecting the financial stability of the underlying property. If it works across our city every day for nonprofit landlords, it can work for you too. Access to housing is fundamental to the well-being of individuals and families, and modifying our approach to security deposits will put it more firmly in reach of all Philadelphians. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify this morning in support of Bill No. 250044 as amended.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much to all of you for your testimony and the work that you do every day.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Vice-Chair Landau.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I too wanted to just thank you for the work that you're doing, the work you're doing trying to support our lowest-income families in the city of Philadelphia. And to say that I see some hope on the horizon not only with this, you know, a little bit of wiggle room with the bills that will make moving in more affordable, but in the Mayor's H.O.M.E. Plan, the money that she will have in the Fresh Start program that will give us a larger pot to help people with their security deposits.

It has been the one area that we haven't been able to fully crack to help people get the money they need in order to move in. And if we do get an influx of money into the Fresh Start program, it will help all of the families that you serve and families throughout Philadelphia. So looking forward to that going hand-in-hand with this to make moving in much more accessible. And thank you so much.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

Thanks to all of you.

If there are no more witnesses to testify on these bills, we will now move on to public comment. We ask that all commenters limit their testimony to three minutes. And if you have submitted written testimony, you can summarize your testimony.

Ms. Jones, can you please call the names of the first three commenters.

THE CLERK: Ryan Spak, Nora Dowd-Eisenhower and Jasmine Henderson.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Okay. Again, I'm going to ask that you try to make your comments in three minutes. I'm timing and I will, you know, prompt you to move it along when we get to the three-minute mark.

Good morning. Please state your name for the record and proceed with your comment.

MR. SPAK: Good morning. My name is Ryan Spak. I'm the founder and principal partner at Spak Group. We're a real estate development company based in West Philadelphia. Good morning. Thank you all for the opportunity to speak with you today on behalf of these bills.

First, I want to commend this committee on its creativity. I want to commend and, Councilmember Gauthier, you and I have had this conversation on more than one occasion. I love the idea of creative solutions to the rental market. Our company was the first to do inclusionary housing in Philadelphia. We did it on a small scale at 51st and Baltimore. We were surprised when it didn't get expanded and others paid the fee instead of actually building affordable units. And so, we doubled down and built a 60-unit development at 53rd and Whitby with 50-year deed restricted units. This is a model that works.

My challenge with these bills is when the math doesn't actually math. So I say all of that to also say that for the last 10 years of our 15-year operation we have only charged $50 for an application fee. That I don't have any challenges with. It costs us 39.95 to run a credit report. We charge $10 for administrative costs. If there is a second adult in that application, we end up charging $35 for the second application fee. I don't have an issue with that.

I have challenges however with the security deposit payment. We have had significant increases in residents moving into our units and by the third month stop paying their rent. The other legislation that Council has passed, the way that the court system currently handles evictions puts us at significant risk. We have evictions that now take us four to six months for residents who are not paying in a timely fashion.

We have challenges where we have violent residents, where we have documented police reports, where we cannot remove them from buildings that are in scenarios where we are the recipient. We have challenges where we have residents who are destroying our units. Our average cost for a renovation is $2,900. However, the most expensive apartment in our entire portfolio is only $1,700.

So one-month security deposit doesn't even cover the cost of our average renovation.

From a conversation that I've had with multiple members in Council, right now Spak Group feels like this is a death by a thousand cuts. We have moved on from developing in Philadelphia. In the last three years, Spak Group hasn't done a single project in Philadelphia. We have moved to Reading, Pennsylvania, Wilmington, Delaware, cities where fairness is the goal.

My challenge with this legislation and other legislation that's coming forth in the next week is that we as an industry are being demonized, and my desire is for us to find a balance. Evictions shouldn't take six months. We should be allowed to charge security deposits that actually cover our renovations. The cost of our water bills, our gas bills, our insurance, everything --

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Can you please finish your comments.

MR. SPAK: Yeah, absolutely. Everything that we do in an operational standpoint has made our margins less than 20%. The risk is not worth the cost and that is a very big challenge. It makes us desire that if interest rates were to drop, our projects would be sold. That is not the city that I want to invest in. It is not the city my partners want to invest in, and I'd rather this Council meet the development needs so that we can build more housing for middle-income residents. That is our goal. It has always been our goal and I hope to work with you all to that point.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Thank you. I do want to --

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
I do want to clarify for the record that there is no bill that Council has passed, diversion or otherwise, that stops evictions for violent tenants. We have not passed that policy.

Please -- I'm going to move on. Please state your name for the record and proceed with your comment and please state the bills that you're commenting on.

MS. DOWD-EISENHOWER:
Okay. Good morning. Thank you all. Thank you for being here and a special thank you to my own member, Cindy Bass. Good morning, Councilmember Bass. And thank you for inviting us, Councilmember Landau.

Okay. My time starts now. Good morning. I am the Volunteer State President for AARP, Pennsylvania. My name is Nora Dowd-Eisenhower. AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan, social impact organization dedicated to empowering America's 50-plus population to choose how they live, where they live as they age, with a membership of nearly 38 million nationwide, almost 2 million across Pennsylvania and nearly 300,000 in Philadelphia.

We advocate on issues that matter most to older adults and their families and loved ones, with a focus on health security, financial resilience and livable communities. For over a decade, AARP has worked with Philadelphia officials in Council and the administration and partner organizations, local leaders all to devise and update an age-friendly Philadelphia action plan that targets housing, transportation and safe access to outdoor space for all neighborhoods.

At AARP, we know that most older Americans, and that includes older Philadelphians, want to live independently in their communities for as long as possible. We also know that Philadelphia is home to one of the largest rental populations in the country. These realities underscore why we advocate for protections and assistance to ensure that renters can afford to stay in their homes and that landlords follow housing laws.

Philadelphia has a growing older adult population. Roughly 1 in 7 Philadelphians are 65 or older and many live on modest or fixed incomes and often struggle to afford basic housing. The average Social Security retired worker benefit in Pennsylvania is $1,600 per month, about $19,000 annually when compared to the $1,500 average monthly rental cost for a one-bedroom apartment in Philadelphia. Opportunities to remove financial barriers renters face such as high application fees and large upfront security deposits are worthy of pursuit. We thank you for your leadership and urge all City Councilmembers to support Bills 250044 and 250045.

We look forward to working with you on policies that will provide all Philadelphians with housing choices that will allow them to remain in their homes or find safe and affordable homes in their own communities. Thank you for the opportunity to support this important work.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much.

Please state your name, the bills that you're commenting on and proceed.

MS. HENDERSON: My name is Jasmine Henderson. I'm commenting specifically on Bill 20454 -- 45 -- 445. Yeah, 45. So I've already heard obviously a landlord come up and say that requiring that tenants have a payment plan to pay the security deposit is unrealistic and untenable for them.

Let's talk about the income in Philadelphia. Most people are making less than $20,000 a year. With the average one-bedroom apartment being 15 grand, if you do that math, they are paying 70% to 85% of their income just on rent. So to say that they want this to be fair and equitable, this is not. $1,500 a month in rent is not fair and equitable to the people who need it the most.

Without the housing programs that currently exist, most of us would be homeless and with the way that this city treats their homeless population, that would be disastrous. I am for Councilmember Landau's bill and think that it should go further, right.

We need to start talking about price controls. We need to start looking at how people pay and what they can actually afford to pay. Because if we want to say that we want our housing to be affordable and that's 30% of your income, then that's what it should be. And since this is one of the few states that refuses to increase the minimum wage for the state, why is our rent going up but our money is not?

Our food costs are going up, but our money is not. Everything wants to increase except for what we're paid. So we want to do this equitably, it will be taking people's income into actual consideration. I heard middle-income Philadelphia. What about low and poor-income Philadelphia?

(Applause.)

MS. HENDERSON: There are 45% to 50% of this city that lives well below the poverty line and they're never in these conversations. It's always middle and high and landlords and businesses and everything else. But you don't hear conversations about poor people and we need to be having those. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Thank you for your comment.
Vice-Chair Landau, did you have questions or comments?

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
Yeah. I just had a comment for Mr. Spak to talk about the numbers that you're talking about. I want to be really clear about what the bill does. You said your average cost of a renovation is $2,900 and your average rent is 1700. I'm assuming you mean a renovation if there was damage to a property and what you need to hold? What do you mean by renovation?

MR. SPAK: So any turnover right now is costing us somewhere between $2000 and $4,000 and the average over the last six months has been $2,900. And so, at Spak Group we have a vacancy rate of somewhere in the 5% to 7% range. So if you take our whole portfolio, we're turning over 5% to 7% of our units on an annual basis.

And so, if an apartment is, you know, our most expensive apartment is a two-bedroom in a luxury building with elevator and gym, dog park. It's $1,700 at the Wade Flats Development. That apartment, if someone were to turn that over in the next month and it costs us $2,000, it is more than one month's rent.

If we have a scenario where we have an eviction in that scenario and there's damage and it takes six months for that eviction to play itself out, the loss is significant. And so, those costs continue to add up, drive down our ability to reinvest in our buildings. Right now we have a staff of nine. It costs us challenges in paying for our staff. When you then take in all the other accounts that we have to pay for, from insurance to higher water bills, I think the water bills went up 18% in the last year, and that's for all Philadelphians on average. But we don't charge for water to our residents, right. So that cost has to be eaten somewhere.

If it was one item, no big deal. If it was two, not a challenge. The challenge is when all of these things stack on top of each other individually it becomes untenable --

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I want to be clear about the numbers though. If you said that your average rent is $1,700, the proposed security deposit payment in this bill would have you receive $3,400 upfront. Your first month's rent and one month's security. Plus each month after that, the tenant would pay the rent plus

$566.67. It's not that you wouldn't receive the security deposit. It would come a little more slowly. Plus you would have plenty of money upfront, even though to do -- technically hold as security deposit for that unit. It's not for any other unit. It's for that unit if you need future money to take care of damages or any unpaid rent. So thank you so much.

MR. SPAK: Sure, and I understand that. May I make one comment. We have two residents right now who moved into two of our properties. One is at 49th and Baltimore. The other one is at 53rd and Whitby. We have two residents who have lived in our residences for less than four months who have stopped paying their rent. If they were on your payment plan, we would be out that capital.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: In four months, you would have received your security deposit. Under this bill -- I just want to be really clear about what it does --

MR. SPAK: I understand. I --

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I am sorry that you're having challenges with your tenants --

MR. SPAK: On the Whitby Avenue property we don't take a second rent payment. It's only first and security. Most of our units are only first and security. My challenge with these bills isn't what you are attempting to do. It is this thought process that the regulation of this industry at all of these levels when compacted together become incredibly problematic, because we as a business, small businesses, right, which I would count ours as, can't in any way, shape or form continue to operate when the margins dip below where they are. And when faced with debt service coverage ratios from our banking institutions, we end up finding ourselves in a very precarious position.

And if the small landlords were to leave this industry or find challenges with financing or making repairs or have -- and I'm not discounting what this person said. The fact that folks have to choose between medication, food and rent and make that decision is inhumane. It is against the moral code that I personally live by. But if I then have to make that decision as a business owner, whether I pay my employees, make a repair to my building or pay my real estate taxes, as a business we have a challenge in operating. That's the balance that I'm asking this Council to keep in mind.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank you. Appreciate you so much.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you all for your comment. Did you want to add something?

MS. HENDERSON: All I want to say is bottom line, housing should be a human right. We're listening to these people talk about us and our money and where we live as a commodity, and we are not a commodity. This is something that we should just have, period.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you.

Will the Clerk please call the next group of commenters.

THE CLERK: Danny Bueno,

C. Michael Robinson, Becca Lipstein.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good morning to all of you. You will have three minutes for your comment. When we get to three minutes, I'm going to try to kind of push things along.

Please state your name for the record, the number of the bill that you are referencing and proceed with your testimony.

MS. LIPSTEIN: Good morning, Councilmembers. My name is Becca Lipstein and I'm here to voice my strong support for Councilmember Landau's Move-In Affordability Plan. I've been a public health nurse in Philadelphia for over five years working with the Nurse Family Partnership.

I visit first-time

parents starting in pregnancy and then visit about every two weeks until the baby is about 2 years old. My clients are low-income Philadelphians. And while I wish I could say our work solely focuses on labor and delivery, breast feeding, development, the reality is that the affordable housing crisis in Philadelphia affects almost every family that I work with.

Currently, I'm working with a young mom who has a housing voucher but each application fee is about $75, which means she could afford to one apartment. That $75 she doesn't get back and that's $75 that goes a long way in terms of diapers or formula. As a result, she and her baby remain in shelter, an environment that's destabilizing, traumatic and makes it nearly impossible to pursue a

GED. We know that housing instability is a trauma that touches multiple generations when children are involved.

Another family I support has a toddler that just started walking. Their apartment is too cramped for the child to safely move around. They found a better place about a block away, but the security deposit was a deal breaker. If they could have paid it in installments, that child might be walking and moving around that new apartment.

Safe and affordable housing is a public health issue. So many of the families I work with can afford rent but just can't get through the front door. I urge the Council to pass this legislation. In Philadelphia we must ensure that every family, especially those raising the next generation, has a fair shot at stable, affordable housing. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much for your comment.

Please state your name for the record, the bills that you're referencing and proceed with your comment.

MR. BUENO: Hi. I'm Danny Bueno, and I'm speaking today in support of Councilmember Landau's Move-In Affordability Plan, Bills 250044 and 2500545. I'm a video game artist, which often means I'm working freelance a lot of the time.

When you're working freelance, you can just lose your job at any time and you don't get unemployment. I've been living in Philadelphia for about seven years now. I've been here through college and now as a working professional. I love Philadelphia. When I was most recently looking for an apartment last year, I was looking for a three- to four-bedroom apartment in South Philly that was affordable for my two roommates and I.

We viewed a good amount of places, but it was incredibly stressful because getting an apartment is very cut-throat. If you don't immediately apply, you could lose the chance at that apartment that day. This was difficult because my roommates were working lower-paying jobs and already were going to struggle with first and last month's rent and security deposit, which in our case was a total of $7,950. On top of that, landlords often charge a non-refundable pet fee, which in my case was $350 per cat.

We only ended up

applying for one apartment because the application fees range from around $40 to $80 a person and we could not afford to spend hundreds just applying. When paying for all the fees in order to secure the apartment, I had to use my savings to help my roommates pay because they could not afford three months' worth of rent all at once, which in my opinion is completely understandable. I was in a place where I could help at the time. However, even I had to defer my student loan payments just to live my regular daily life.

Asking any individual for three months of rent all at once just is kind of unreasonable. Plus, I have to pay my rent online. And no matter what, I'm charged a fee for every transaction, no matter if I'm paying through my bank account or through card. I have no option to pay any other way.

The three of us are just in our 20s and our biggest responsibilities are taking care of ourselves and our cats. And I can't imagine the struggle for anyone who also has to support a child or is disabled and isn't making a six-figure salary. Thank you for your time.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much for sharing your story.

Please state your name for the record, the bills you're referencing and proceed with your comment.

MR. ROBINSON: My name is C. Michael Robinson and I address you today as a proud resident of Philadelphia's 4th District in West Philadelphia and I stand before you to share a personal narrative that underscores the urgent need for the Move-In Affordability Plan.

I'm a Black, queer Philadelphian and a millennial who came to age during the Great Recession. Like many of my peers, building wealth or stepping into an adulthood with a safety net was a standard set by generations prior to me. Instead I found myself navigating a landscape riddled with systemic barriers.

I spent over eight years in chronic homelessness, moving through more than 20 homeless shelters. This wasn't due to a lack of effort but rather a result of voucher discrimination, flawed housing policies and compounded challenges of being young, queer, Black and economically disadvantaged.

Upon relocating from New York City to Philadelphia, I lost access to the HAVE program, which had been instrumental in providing comprehensive housing support that included a 100% down payment assistance for people living with a chronic disability. In its absence, I was compelled to take out a $2,500 bank loan just to afford a security deposit and first month's rent for a South Philadelphia apartment I would be priced out of a year later. My part-time job at the School District of Philadelphia, paying $16 an hour, barely covered rent and essential expenses.

These experiences are not isolated. They reflect broader systemic issues. 58% of Black renters spend over 30% of their income on rent. Nearly 30% of Black LGBTQ households reported being behind on rent compared to 9.7% of their White counterparts. These statistics are not just numbers. They represent real people facing real hardships.

The Move-In Affordability Plan is a pragmatic step towards addressing these challenges. By capping rental application fees and allowing security deposits to be paid in installments, it directly alleviates the financial barriers that prevent many of us from securing stable housing. I urge you to consider the profound impact this legislation can have on individuals like myself and countless others striving for stability and dignity. While I don't claim to speak for all millennials, I can confidently say and in the spirit of my sister Jasmine, the rent is too damn high

and the wages are too damn low.
Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much for sharing your story. Thank you to all of you.

Will the Clerk please call the next group of commenters.

THE CLERK: Beverly G. Hargrove, Bill Vargas, Damian Smith.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Can you repeat that?

THE CLERK: Beverly G. Hargrove, Bill Vargas, Damian Smith.

(No response.)

THE CLERK: Okay. Igor Ivan, James Killen and Joseph Garsezi.

(No response.)

THE CLERK: Mark Roche,

Mimi Shapiro, Natan Carney.

(No response.)

THE CLERK: Paul Cohen, Paul Levicos, Seth Lloyd.

(No response.)

THE CLERK: Cheryl Sitman, Shirley Armstead, Susan Rocsanditch(ph).

(No response.)

THE CLERK: Tori Harris, Selena (inaudible), Greg Workman.

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Everybody's still on vacation.

THE CLERK: All right. Seth Anderson Oberman, Monique Taylor, Joy Parham.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good morning. Please state your name for the record, reference the bills that you're speaking on and proceed with your comment.

MR. OBERMAN: Good morning, Councilmembers. Thank you for having us in today to speak on this. My name is Seth Anderson Oberman. I'm the Executive Director of Reclaim Philadelphia. And I'll be speaking in support of the Move-In Affordability Plan Bills 250044 and 250045.

Good morning. So my name is Seth Anderson Oberman. I am the Executive Director of Reclaim Philadelphia. Before I talk about policy, I want to speak from personal experience. When I was a kid, after my parents split up my mother and I moved a lot.

By the time I was 10, we had moved 27 times. We weren't living in apartments. We were living on friends' couches, in garages, with grandparents, wherever we could piece together to get by. That kind of housing insecurity isn't just about where you sleep at night. It impacts everything.

It meant a new school every few months. It meant being the new kid over and over again. And for my mother, it meant relentless stress, carrying the weight of trying to keep her child safe without the money or stability to make that possible. And that was in the 1970s. Back then move-in costs were already hard to afford, but today they're devastating.

In Philadelphia, right now renters are being asked to pay first month's rent, last month's rent, security deposit and often hundreds of dollars in application fees just to get the keys to a place to live. And that can easily add up to 4,000 or 5,000 or even $6,000 upfront. For poor and working-class folk, that's not just a hardship. It's a barrier to stability. It keeps people out of housing. It forces families into overcrowded apartments or extended homelessness.

It pushes people deeper into debt just for a chance at stability. That's why the Move-In Affordability Plan introduced by Councilmember Rue Landau matters so deeply. This bill is not just smart policy, it's a moral commitment. It caps application fees at $50 or the actual cost of a background check, whichever is lower.

It bans landlords from charging the same applicants twice in a year. It lets renters submit their own background checks so people don't pay again and again to prove they're worthy of housing. It caps security deposits at no more than two months' rent. It allows renters to pay those deposits in monthly installments, spreading the cost out instead of demanding it all at once. And it requires landlords to return deposits within 30 days of move out so people aren't left waiting and wondering if they'll get their money back.

These may seem like small technical fixes, but for thousands of Philadelphians they're life-changing. At Reclaim Philadelphia, we fight for a city where housing is a human right, not a reward for the wealthy. This bill won't solve every part of our housing crisis, but it's a real material step toward equity and dignity. It protects renters. It eases the burden on tens of thousands of families and single parents across the city.

It gives people a fighting chance to access stable housing without being bled dry just to walk through the door, and it helps to ensure that no one is priced out of a home because of junk fees, exploitative deposits or predatory barriers to entry. I want to be clear, this is the least we can do and it sends the right message, that Philadelphia is a city that stands with renters, not just landlords, that we are ready to pass laws that reflect the realities of working people, not just the interests of the real estate and landlord lobbies.

We urge City Council to pass this bill without delay. Let's start to build a city where housing is a human right and no one is denied the right to live here because they can't afford to apply. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank you so much.

Can you please state your name for the record and proceed with your testimony.

MS. PARHAM-THOMAS: Good morning, everyone. My name is Joy Parham-Thomas. I am speaking from personal and professional experience today. I am a proud Philadelphia native. I was born and raised here and I am too a product of the recession and a millennial.

So because of that, I know that affordable housing has always been a need in Philadelphia. And I think one of the biggest issues is that we forget that affordable housing is a universal need. It's just not a need for a specific demographic of people. Now, because I'm a native of

Philadelphia I've had different experiences, but one of those was the luxury of aging out of foster care here in Philadelphia and system services.

And at the age of 18 I didn't know where to go so I decided it was time to enroll in college for two years. I did not have means to sustain myself in college because I had a social worker who didn't like me, so I didn't receive any payments and I struggled with eviction and all of the things that come with it.

But I came back to Philadelphia after graduation and those same issues were still there because there were no new systems in place to support people who needed to rent. There were no new systems in place to support people who didn't have the financial access and who've always dealt with generational -- I'm sorry, excuse me, I'm cold y'all. They've always just dealt with generational issues that have kept them kind of just stagnant and really behind the curve.

So though I am in full support of your legislator, Councilmember Landau, I do ask that the city takes the time to dig deeper into the root of a lot of these issues. Because, yes, this is a fix and I think it's a great and a thoughtful fix. It's a band-aid to a bigger situation. And the bigger situation is that we do not have regulated rent here in Philadelphia.

The bigger issue is that we have landlords who are sharks. I myself have lost hundreds of dollars looking for affordable housing, specifically in District 3, because it's an ideal neighborhood for some people. And not only is my house a gem in the midst of that area, but it's a duplex next to me. I pay 1750 a month for my three-bedroom house. They pay 1850 a month for their two-bedroom duplexes. The math isn't mathing. And it took me a year to find my house, a year.

So I just encourage you guys to really dig deeper into what the root of these problems are, and I also stand in full support of what you guys are doing right now to really shift the nature and the culture behind the housing afflictions we've had in Philadelphia. So thank you for your time today.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you both for sharing your stories.

Will the Clerk please

call the next set of public commenters.

THE CLERK: Tessa Renshaw, Sultan Smalley, Miles Owen.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good morning. Please state your name for the record, the bills that you're referencing and proceed with your comment.

MR. SMALLEY: Hello. My name is Sultan Smalley and I am a member of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Sunrise Movement. I am here to advocate in favor of Councilmember Rue Landau's Move-In Affordability Plan, Bills 250044 and 250045, I believe.

Because Philadelphia is in a housing crisis, as things stand renters are being forced to pay exorbitant and unregulated application fees, even if they're rejected from the apartment that they've applied to. And this is despite the fact that we live in a city where nearly half of renters are cost-burdened.

And I understand the strife and confusion that these kinds of fees cause, as a community college student who's thought about moving out of my parents home. This process has made all the more difficult by these fees, given that I'm reliant on my low income as a food runner.

We live in a country that often criminalizes poverty and rewards cruelty. And housing is a human right and should be treated as such, which is why I fully support Councilmember Rue Landau's proposal to cap and regulate application fees and security fees, ban junk fees and more.

So Sunrise Philly is dedicated to ensuring that Philadelphia has an affordable and sustainable future. So I thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation so that we can keep Philadelphia a place where Philadelphians can actually live and thrive in. And I hope that more legislation like this is to come because it's desperately needed. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much. Proceed.

MR. OWEN: Good morning, Councilmembers. My name is Miles Owen and I'm a renter in the Brewerytown neighborhood in the 5th District -- thank you, Councilmember Young, for being here today -- and I'm speaking here in support of Bills 250044 and 250045.

I have been a renter in

the city for nearly 10 years. I moved here for graduate school. After graduation, have worked as a professional city planner. In that time, I have lived in four apartments, in West Philly, Graduate Hospital, Passyunk and I've now been in Brewerytown for five years.

Every single one of those moves was financially stressful, scraping together enough money for the deposit, application fees, the U-HAUL and pizza for my friends and family members who I've recruited to carry everything. One at a particularly tough time in my life left me with just $7 in my bank account, and that's once you've found a place.

Searching for an apartment is a combination of looking for the right location and space, trying to figure out the landlord is a good one who actually repairs things, engaging how much you have to pay upfront over the course of the year and if you can actually afford everything. These costs are almost insurmountable, even with those with some level of professional career and some financial stability.

As a renter, you have a lot of uncertainty in your life. You don't know how much your rent will increase the end of the year. I have been priced out of two of the locations I have lived in. You don't know when your landlord might or might not fix something that breaks. I've lived in a place where a hole appeared in the first floor bathroom and you can see down the basement, landlord never fixed it after every month of telling them so.

You have no idea if

you'll ever get your security deposit back. Despite of excessively cleaning and treating everything very carefully, I have never received anywhere close to a full deposit back when I moved away from a place. All of these often times substantial costs increase renter uncertainty and decrease the accessibility of rental housing in the city.

Many of these costs are well known and not under discussion today, but the application fee and security deposits are. For several reasons, including the price of buying a house, is growing beyond the reach of many, many Philadelphians, renters are rapidly increasing percentage of the population.

I'm a committee person, zoning committee member, Tree Tenders volunteer, Parks cleaner participant and RCO leader. By voting for these bills, Council can support renters help reduce that financial uncertainty we all face and build up neighborhoods around the city. Capping rental fees will help searching for a new apartment more accessible for all, such as people who may be fleeing an unsafe environment, moving closer to a job or school or simply looking for a new place to live. Capping and allowing installments for the security deposit is crucial for the many, many Philadelphians living paycheck-to-paycheck. None of these will substantially reduce the amount of legitimate money flowing in landlords' pockets, but will have a big impact on the renters living in this city. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

Thank you so much to both of you for sharing your stories.

Will the Clerk please call the next set of public commenters.

THE CLERK: Sophie White, Sam Pfeiffer, Camille Pearsall.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good morning. Please state your name for the record, the bills that you're referencing and proceed with your comment.

MR. PFEIFER: Good morning. My name is Sam Pfeifer and I'm here in support of Councilwoman Rue Landau's Move-In Affordability Plan. I'm a mother of twin 10-year-olds and a survivor of a 17-year abusive relationship.

In 2022 when the violence in my home escalated, I knew I had to get out for my life and for the safety of my boys, but escaping abuse was only the first hurdle. The second was trying to find a place to live. The expenses for applying for housing were a huge barrier to my freedom. I filed multiple applications costing anywhere from $40 to $75 non-refundable even when I didn't get the house.

Each time I was told there were a dozen of other applicants, I was competing against people who had savings, good credit and time on their side. I had none of those things. I just needed to get free. I was lucky. A domestic violence organization stepped in to cover my deposit. My family and community members pulled together the rest, but I still had to carry the immense financial burden of those fees I'd already paid for places that I never got. And if I hadn't had that support, I would still be stuck with my abuser, stuck in danger and so would my boys.

These upfront housing costs are a quiet cruel barrier that keep low-income families, especially survivors, from accessing the stability we need and deserve to rebuild. It's not just the rent. It's the endless fees, the credit checks, the deposit that feel like a punishment for just trying to get free and start over.

I heard landlord lobbyists say that this bill makes things harder for them, but I want to be clear, the real harm is being done to families like mine. What they call just business could have cost me and my sons our lives. Councilmember Landau's Move-In Affordability Plan is common sense.

It offers immediate relief in a housing market that is broken for working people and survivors like me. I urge you all to please pass this bill for survivors, for families and for a more just Philadelphia. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much for sharing your story with us.

Proceed.

MS. PEARSALL: Good morning. My name is Camille Pearsall. I'm speaking regarding Bills 250044 and 250045. I'm a Philadelphia-based small landlord who provides high-quality affordable homes to some of our most vulnerable and underserved communities. I'm also an educator community and community developer.

I own and operate Legacy Builders Management Consultant and

I work directly with tenants and other small landlords across the city. I'm here today because I believe in fair housing, but I also believe small landlords deserve fair treatment too.

Thank you, Chair Gauthier, Vice-Chair Landau and members of City Council's Committee for your continued work and willingness to update and refine these proposed bills in response to community input. Your consideration is appreciated. However, as a small landlord and housing provider I must respectfully express that the recent changes still don't go far enough to protect property owners, especially those of us who are not backed by large corporations, deep reserves and legal teams.

We fully understand the financial strain many tenants face, but we also understand the true cost of placing the wrong tenant, a cost that many small landlords like myself simply cannot afford. Let me address Bill 250045. While this proposed updates raise the cap on application fees to $50 and remove the language requiring us to accept tenant-provided credit reports, we still need clarity and boundaries and acceptable age of the background check.

We are requesting that the background checks and credit reports be valid for no more than 90 to 180 days. Banks with far more reserves than us only accept credit reports for 90 days, and yet this bill even in its updated form will have us accept reports older, leaving us open to risks we cannot absorb. If a tenant experiences a job loss, eviction, judgment in the last six months, we need to know that. We must have the ability to screen thoroughly and responsibly.

To that end, I propose the city work with landlords and developers to create a citywide tenant screening portal. I have emailed all of you my proposal. This portal could standardize affordable, up-to-date screening processes that serve both landlords and tenants fairly, only making them pay one application fee for that period of 90 to 180 days.

It will help ensure everyone is working from verified data, track application timing and maintain a 90-day screening limit or 180. This creates transparency and protects both responsible landlords and good tenants.

As for Bill 250044, which allows the last month's rent, also known as second security deposit, to be made in three installments. This raises major concerns. Right now it takes six to nine months to evict a non-paying or problematic tenant in Philadelphia. If a tenant never completes the installment plan, what is the consequence? That final month's rent is a key tool for landlords to use to protect their financial stability and prevent unit loss during turnover.

We are requesting that if a tenant defaults from these installment payments, the lease must be subject to immediate termination. The eviction process should begin without requiring diversion or mediation. The process should be expedited with a clear and direct path to resolve the situation within 30 to 60 days --

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

I'm going to ask that you take the next 30 seconds and summarize.

MS. PEARSALL: Without accountability in enforcement, these bills shift all the rest onto the shoulders of small landlords, many of whom are Black, Brown, immigrant and first-generation property owners who are simply trying to build and maintain generational wealth while providing safe and stable housing. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much. Thank you for your comment and for being here today. We look forward to continuing the conversation with you. Thanks to both of you.

Will the Clerk please call the next set of public commenters.

THE CLERK: Antoine

Cruz, Riquan King, David Lipscomb.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

Madam Chair, before we proceed I was going to ask if the bill sponsor could make mention of the amendments because I think some of her concerns were addressed in the amendments that were made.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

Thank you, colleague. I agree.

I was about to correct something, but then heard something else that I might have thought I misheard the original comment. I want to be clear that we removed the provision from the application fee bill that a tenant could provide their own credit report. That's what I thought I heard in the beginning. I thought I heard something else after that. But I want to make that clear.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good afternoon. Please state your name for the record, the bills that you're referencing and proceed with your comment.

MR. LIPSCOMB: Good afternoon, Councilwoman Gauthier and Vice-Chair Councilmember Landau and the members. My name is Dave Lipscomb. I'm a proud resident of Philadelphia, 3rd District, 51st Ward, 5th Division.

And I came here to say that I am against the Bill 250045. You know, as someone whose families had properties and rented out over the years -- I'm a property manager now -- I've noticed that we've had many issues, so many issues that the last commentator made. While my heart pours out for those people that have individual issues, there are bad landlords, but you have great ones. I have a cousin right here who has about six properties. Okay, the best landlord. You call, she's up there, right there. And then you have some people -- but what we're looking at is the cost of renting an apartment. The gentleman over here mentioned that.

He said, you have one month, one month security payment. What happens when that person moves out and it costs about $3,000 worth of damage. Now, that comes out of the owner's pocket. Additionally, as I've spoken before the city is the problem with having affordable housing. You're looking at the taxes. When you have a property that has 107.5 increase on your property taxes in one year, when you have an increase in fees that the city is assessing the owners, when you have insurances and all that kind of stuff, that takes money.

So when you talk about the cost of renting an apartment at $1,700 which you're saying is the average people, the math doesn't math, because the owner has to make a profit. It is a business. Okay.

What I would suggest, and these are some of the things I would suggest, one thing, you're talking about damage to apartments. There should be a requirement that all tenants have rental insurance, whereas there's damage to the property the owner can sue them, get it through the insurance. That should be within the law. That would alleviate some of the issues that owners have. That's all. We want to provide. Most small landlords want to provide an area for people to have a good place to live at a reasonable rate, but we have to look at it from both sides. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you for being here and for your input. I do believe that Councilmember Bass has tackled the insurance issue in the past but certainly something that has moved through the Housing Committee and we'll make sure to give it more thought.

Did you want to say anything?

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: As we've watched these insurance companies over the years now, it's a little different from when they first came to Philadelphia and asked to be a part of the market. They have shown themselves to be fully predatory. I appreciate very much that the landlords are made whole, but they then sue the tenants and have created significant damage. And it is definitely a product that I don't want to see in Philadelphia. Thank you.

MR. LIPSCOMB: Can I ask --

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: But does exist in Philadelphia believe me. It's alive and well in Philadelphia. But the predatory insurance companies, the predatory insurance companies that are providing security deposits are the problem.

MR. LIPSCOMB: I'm talking about rental insurance.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: No, I know. I got you. I should have started with clearing that up. Rental insurance is a smart thing for any tenant to have. Thank you.

MR. LIPSCOMB: And it should be mandatory.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

Thank you so much. And I want to acknowledge also the presence of Councilmember Mike Driscoll.

Please state your name for the record, the bills that you're referencing and proceed with your comment.

MR. KING: My name is Riquan King. I am here in support of Bills 250044 and 250045. Good morning, Committee Chair Gauthier, Vice-Chair Landau, Councilmember Bass, Councilmember Driscoll and to all those in attendance and listening or watching virtually.

I am the Director of Advocacy at TURN, the Tenant Union Representative Network. TURN's mission is to educate and advocate for renters across Philadelphia. We have a vital role of staffing the Philly Tenant Hotline, which serves as a lifeline to connect renters with resources around the city to aid them in navigating a variety of housing issues.

We are hopeful of the continued work being done by this Council to strengthen the rights of renters in this great city of Philadelphia. Security Deposit payments and application fees way too often serve as major barriers to affordable and accessible housing. Councilmember Landau's Move-In Affordability Plan, once passed, will serve as a tool to start breaking down those barriers.

I've heard a couple times today now the argument against these bills calls for balance, so let's talk about what we're balancing. One side, we have dignity, safety and security. On the other, we're talking about profit margins. That's what we're constantly asked to balance, our right to exist against your profits. Housing is a human right. It is not a question. It is not a suggestion. It is a fact. Housing is a human right. And so, I call on this Committee to pass these Bills 250044 and 250045 and for the whole City Council to do the same. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you for your comment and for your work. Thanks to both of you.

Will the Clerk please call the next set of public commenters.

THE CLERK: Calvin Cannon, Mijuel Johnson, Wanye Allen.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good afternoon. Please state your name for the record, the bills that you're referencing and proceed with your comment. Whomever wants to go first.

MR. CANNON: How are you doing. Good afternoon. My name is Calvin Cannon, Jr. I will be talking in reference to Bills 250044 and 250045. I am here today, one, to listen in to get some more clarity on different things that are happening inside the city of Philadelphia.

I am one of these small landlords who are in the city of Philadelphia who we do our best to make sure that we provide affordable housing, safe housing and fair housing to everyone. One of the things that did come up into concern with our company is to have credit reports submitted. I did hear some clarity of the amendment that the credit report will be submitted directly I guess from the company who is issuing the credit report. And I do commend that because credit reports can have some integrity issues and credit profiles change within a 30-day period. So the first of the month may be different for the 15th of the month if a tenant is applying for a unit to rent. So I did want to just emphasize on that.

Also, the second thing that I wanted to emphasize on was the security deposits. So right now as a landlord, we're able to get one month's rent, one month security and then sometimes the two months' security, but we're talking about one full month of the first month, one full month of security and then a payment plan.

My only concern about the payment plan is what are the consequences if the payment plan is not going through? So if the tenant defaults, that's placing the tenant in another jeopardizing situation with another landlord. So what happens now is that here this tenant is on a payment plan, something happened financially and then now the tenant can't move forward with the payment plan and now that particular landlord is looking to evict or place the tenant into the diversion program. So when the tenant goes to the next property, that payment plan caused a friction for that tenant to move forward with another landlord.

So I don't know if that's helping tenants by having a payment plan because if they default, it's going to cause a bigger issue. So I just want to say we can take maybe another look at that.

And then the last thing another gentleman said, and I'll wrap this up, is that it's kind of forcing landlords to be more strict on having renter's insurance for the particular properties, which I believe is a great thing to do, and also about the predatory insurance, landlords would now be looking to have rental payment insurance. Just in case that rental payment does not work, at least the landlord is secure that they'll have some type of security blanket.

Yes, I'm not for the predatory insurance companies. I totally agree with that, but I also feel that the landlords also need a protection plan if something happens so both parties, landlord and tenant, is protected. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you for your comment and for your input. I think Vice-Chair Landau wanted to respond.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:

Thank you so much. I also want to thank all of the small landlords who are coming out to talk to us today. No, you don't always believe it, but we absolutely want to keep our small landlords here in Philadelphia. We want more of them. We don't want the big corporations to come. And what I see what we're doing here is a very small tweak to what is a crisis here in Philadelphia.

Thank you also for those of you who are charging only one month security deposit upfront. It's so much easier for people to move in. In the case of the actual installment payments, you would already be holding one month security that could cover those installment payments because it's exact same amount of money, the equivalent of one month's rent.

You get one paid upfront and then one paid in three installments starting the next month. So you do have your cover there.

And also, we just want to add the most important thing here. For those of you can help us get security deposits back from the previous landlord, a landlord has to return a security deposit within 30 days or deal with damages, you know, get into that interactive process with the tenants about damages or who's going to pay what.

But within 30 days if you moved out well, here you go, you got your big lump sum again. It goes to your new landlord. This is literally just trying to help with that gap. So many people need their security deposit back from the landlord they're leaving to go move into the place they're moving in. Hopefully you'll get that in the next month or two.

And also, if anybody needs it, send the tenants to the Penn Law School's Civil Legal Clinic where they're doing an entire clinic on helping people get their security deposits back. We want all of that money to get into the pockets of you as the new landlord they're moving in. So thank you for what you're doing.

MR. CANNON: Can I just make one statement? So I think the reason for the insurance is if you look at the average rent, two bedroom, three bedrooms in certain areas let's say the rent is $1,600. So when you break that down into four payments, you're looking at an additional 400 to $500 a month on top of the rent. So that means that if the tenant is just barely making the 1600, you add another $400 to that. Now, the tenant is paying $2,000 for the first four months. So now we have to evaluate is the tenant even qualified for $2,000 for four months versus just the $1,600. So it does make it a little bit difficult.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I just want to make sure I'm clarifying again a change that happened in the law -- that is proposed in this bill now that is different from where it was before. If someone is charging two months' security deposit, the tenant will pay first month's rent, one month of security deposit upfront and in your 1600 scenario will pay $533.33 on top of the rent for the next three months. So you'll have that one month upfront and for the next three months 533.33 to cover that.

MR. CANNON: So that will place the tenant at $2,100 for the first three months, which may be a strain on the tenant.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you. I'm going to move us along, but we look forward to continuing the conversation with you and we appreciate you being here.

Please state your name for the record, the bills you're referencing and proceed with your comment.

MR. ALLEN: My name is Wanye Allen. I'm in testimony of the Bill 250044 and Bill 250045. Good morning, Councilmembers. My name is Wanye Allen. I'm a college student and proud organizer with the Sunrise Movement Philly.

As a young person trying to build a life in the city, I felt the way of this housing crisis firsthand. I paid multiple application fees, $50 here, $75 there just to apply for a place I may never hear back from. It adds up fast, especially when you're juggling school, work and rent at your previous place or at a family's residence.

It's like playing the Powerball. And when I finally found the place, I had to come up with thousands of dollars upfront, first and last months' rent, plus a security deposit, the kind of burden to keep students and poor working families stuck, couch surfing or locked out of opportunity.

Meanwhile big developers are receiving millions in tax breaks to build luxury apartments many of us to never afford to live in. How is it fair that we're subsidizing their profits while everyday renters are nickeled and dimed with junk fees and crushing move-in costs. There's big and small landlords who don't take care of the properties they lease to us as people. And then when we ask for repairs, the owners increase the rent or never fix it or have fixed the issues, which again is making it hard for people to afford and prosper.

Councilmember Rue Landau's Move-In Affordability Plan is a step towards balancing the sales. It caps application fees at $50 or distributed cost of a background check, whichever is lower, and bans duplicate fees by the same landlord within a year. It also has security deposits at no more than two months and lets renters pay in installments like you stated.

The bill is about justice. It's about making sure that working people, students and families aren't priced out of their own city while developers enjoy tax giveaways. On behalf of myself and the Sunrise movement, I urge you to support this plan. This is not just a housing issue. This is a climate issue, a race issue and a people's issue. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much for your comment.

Proceed.

MR. JOHNSON: Hi. My name is name is Mijuel K. Johnson. I'm a member of Reclaim Philadelphia and I'm here in support of the Bill 250044 and 250045. Housing and freedom of movement are fundamental human rights as expressed in Articles 25 and Articles 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which the United States is a signature and principal founding author.

The City of Philadelphia is currently in a housing crisis and a housing crisis that is affecting most of the developed world at this time. These two bills are examples of thinking globally and acting locally. This can actually make Philadelphia a leader in housing affordability. The rent is simply too damn high and has been for far too long.

While many developers in the city may try, and I'm being generous, may try to actually help to make rent affordable, it is simply not enough. What we're proposing here today -- what Councilmember Landau is proposing here today will fundamentally help the people most in need. As has been illustrated before, poor people need a place to live too.

So we often talk about Philadelphia being the poorest big city in America and there's a number of reasons for that and there are a number reasons for that. But poor people and working-class people need a place to live. We cannot simply invest in policies that are about moving people out, not lifting people up. This policy honestly here is about lifting people up, not pushing people out. And so, I strongly support this bill and hope that this bill and the forthcoming Safe and Healthy Homes Act are both passed in Council with one another because they will move this city forward for the people that it needs to be moved forward, the poor and working class of this city. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you for your comment and your advocacy. Thanks to all of you.

Will the Clerk please

call any remaining public commenters.

THE CLERK: Daniel Harvey, Jabri Douglas, Ugochukwu Opara, Kim Avant Babb, Amanda Gleason Mack.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good afternoon. As a reminder, you're going to have three minutes to complete your comment. Please state your name for the record, the bills that you're referencing and proceed with your comment.

MS. GLEASON MACK: Good morning. My name is Amanda Gleason Mack. I am commenting on Bill 250044 and 250045. Good morning, Jamie Gauthier and fellow City Councilmembers. I'm a licensed real estate broker and a property manager in the city of Philadelphia.

I have heard testimony here today that so many people are struggling with affording their rent, struggling to save up for security deposits and I totally understand this is a major issue and a major concern. Many individuals cannot afford to save up for moving before they move. I've experienced it myself and many of my clients have as well.

However, how does City Council expect somebody who can't save before moving to be able to pay extra fees on top of their rent after they move? This is not a good idea either. It's just not going to work. I agree that application fees can also be a major barrier. My first apartment wanted $400 for an application fee. That's exorbitant.

As a property manager, I charge 39.95. That is my cost.

That gets charged directly to the tenant. The system that I use allows those tenants to reuse their application for up to 30 days. I chose that system for that reason because I do feel for the tenants and what they're struggling with.

Most of my clients are owners who have 1 to 10 units. These are not large corporations. They don't have a lot of extra money. Many of these people moved out of one home and decided to rent it out just for a little extra income, but they struggle. They cannot afford to handle when a tenant doesn't pay. When there was a comment earlier many tenants fall behind on month three, and that has been a problem year over year over year.

They cannot afford to handle their mortgage when the tenant stops paying and it takes 12 weeks for the sheriff to lock out a tenant after we've already gone through the eviction diversion and eviction and all of that. They cannot afford to deal with the extremely, overwhelmingly complex rules that it is to be a landlord in Philadelphia. It's very confusing for me, who does it for a living. They can't -- it's a lot. It's overwhelming.

There was a comment earlier that a person making minimum wage would take over 17 weeks to save up for their security deposit. The stark reality is that person would never be approved for a $1,700 a month apartment in the first place. So is the issue how much a landlord is charging for a security deposit or is the issue affordability in Philadelphia? Is the issue raising minimum wage?

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

Please summarize.

MS. GLEASON MACK: The pending changes to the bill are a step in the right direction, but they do not go far enough. Burdening our landlords who are already struggling is not the answer. Thank you for your time.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you for your comment and for your input.

Proceed.

MS. AVANT BABB: Good morning. Can you hear me?

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: (Gestured).

MS. AVANT BABB: Good. My name is Kim Avant Babb and I'm here in opposition to Bill 250044 and 250045. Good morning. I'm Kim Avant Babb, co-founder of Babb Properties and Legacy Real Estate Consulting. I have been a small landlord in Philadelphia for 41 years. I'm opposed to the passage of Bill 250044 and 250045 without more consideration and balance. I think we've heard the word balance a lot this morning, inclusive of both the tenants and the landlord.

My husband and I are co-owners of the two companies that I just mentioned. We are awesome landlords. If you survey any of our past or current tenants, we provide quality housing. We're responsive to every repair within 24 hours. We even gift our tenants annually because they're awesome tenants. We worked 30 years to build our real estate portfolio while working full time. Okay.

And, yes, we do expect to make a profit because landlording is a business. The fact is, like I said, landlord is a business. On the surface these bills do not take into consideration, number one, the application fee covers more than the background and criminal checks.

We have an eight-step screening process, which has garnered us 41 years of a 0% eviction rate, 41 years of a 0% eviction rate. We're proud of that. The background and criminal checks only cover two steps. Okay. There is staff time and effort that goes into calling references, past landlords and employers. These bills discount the value of our time and our staff in taking and handling those tasks.

Two, mandating a partial payment option for security deposits. Again, is absent of administrative time and effort to track, monitor and audit these payments. These bills impose an additional burden on small landlords like us and expose our assets to higher risk.

In closing -- oh, let me, I'm sorry. In closing, these bills clearly only favor tenants and reflect no consideration of the added burden to landlords. The very source of providing the much needed housing our tax dollars paid to the city that support your salary should fuel a balanced representation of tenants and landlords and not simply the tenants. I support the proposal of our previous speaker, Camille Pearsall, in reference to considering that.

And lastly, after your April 7th I believe it was hearing, I emailed all 12 committee members with evidence of industry standard application fees and suggestions for equitable approaches to these bills. I only received a response from two of you, Councilmember

Landau and Driscoll.

Just like you and your staff are busy handling business, so are we as landlords. It is unacceptable that 10 Councilmembers who are making impactful recommendations and votes that affect businesses in this city do not respond to outreach from those very business owners. It's unacceptable. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you for your comment.

Proceed.

MR. OPARA: Greetings, everyone. My name is Oguchukwu Opara. I am a first-generation immigrant here in the city of Philadelphia. For the past 10 years, my business has focused on neighborhoods that are not as ideal, taking rundown properties and turning them into gems and putting families in those that help contribute to the neighborhood.

One of the things that I am a little disappointed with everything that's going on is, you know, just consideration for what it takes to even create a unit and get it on the market. A lot of times my average rehab is anywhere between $100,000, $120,000 to get a property in shape and ready to actually take in a tenant. And for all of that work that goes in there to have any situation or any type of bill being passed by people that you want to be on the same page with makes it feel like the time, energy resources and money that you're putting in to bringing these properties online in this great city of Philadelphia is just going unappreciated.

Mr. Ryan that was here earlier mentioned that he hasn't done anything in the city of Philadelphia and he's now focusing on Reading and Wilmington. And there are reasons that justify why it's starting to make sense to not invest in the city of Philadelphia anymore. Because what's happening now is that landlords are now being burdened with basically everything.

It reminds me back when we had COVID and the landlords did not have the ability to evict tenants. And I don't know if you guys are landlords, but that was one hell of a time. So seeing things that are coming into motion, seeing things that are being passed on, it makes it really difficult to look at the City of Philadelphia as a partner attacking federal housing versus now we're on opposing teams, claiming that we want the same thing.

So the only thing I

would want everyone here to consider is just make it very fair, you know what I mean. A tenant moving into a property and then making monthly payments, if they don't have it to begin with, they're probably never going to catch up and that's going to be a problem.

And one thing that again I don't think people are considering is once the tenant stops paying, who's responsible for that mortgage, right. So if you have to be responsible for the mortgage and then you have to be responsible for getting that tenant out, which there are fees associated with that, and then you have to be responsible for going back and redoing a unit again and making it ready for someone else. You know, these are staggering numbers that are thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars. And for that to not be in consideration, for that to not be appreciated makes me really question if the City of Philadelphia is serious about attacking affordable housing or not. That is it.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you for your comment. I look forward to continuing the conversation about how we can support our small landlords.

Proceed.

MR. HARVEY: Good afternoon. My name is Daniel Harvey, 20-plus year landlord, founder of BRAG, the Black Real Estate Alliance Group, which has over 2000 members of Black investors, contractors, so forth and so on. A lot of the small landlords here have done a great job of speaking to the issues in the bill.

I want to just take a second to kind of humanize us because there's been a lot of vilifying landlords. I'm a Philly native, born and raised Southwest Philly. Went to Dobbins, worked at SEPTA, worked extremely hard, sacrificed beyond I think what most people are probably willing to do to be able to purchase real estate. And I've taken pride and joy of going back into the very community I was raised in and building properties that I wish was there when I was a child and investing millions of dollars into those neighborhoods.

And much like Ryan Spak and other investors, I've stopped investing because it's not just about this one bill. This one bill on its own I would agree it's not that egregious. There are some parts of it that I do not agree with. It's about all of the laws as a whole. It's become so complex that you have to be a corporation or a large landlord to stay compliant.

I myself lost a lawsuit over the lead bill, which I won't get deep into it, but I did not run afoul of but it was used against me. So the issue is if we really want to encourage, and I wanted to speak to this part of it too, I care about people who are struggling, that's the background that I come from. But I also care about people like myself who worked very hard, who want to invest and make the city better. I represent a lot of those folks when it comes to BRAG.

And what we're doing I believe is we're sacrificing those who are investing, these small investors, a lot of them who are Black and Brown like everybody else -- not like everybody else, a lot of the folks that have spoken here, a lot of those folks are going bankrupt. They cannot afford it. They have one unit, maybe two. Those tenants stop paying and it's six months to get through the court and another three weeks -- I'm sorry, three months for the sheriff to do a lockout. They lose their property. They're done. They don't have the money where they can weather that storm.

So I do believe that there should be some balance. I do believe that if we want to get to these 30,000 units, we have to stop vilifying the people who are doing the investments. And I'll say this, I've tried even without this ordinance to do you can pay for your deposit as you go, it rarely works. The issue is if you didn't have the money coming in, you will not have the money going along. It just does --

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Can you summarize.

MR. HARVEY: I'm sorry?

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Can you please summarize.

MR. HARVEY: Yes. So I am in opposition to this bill. I hope that the City Council and the City look for a more balanced relationship when it comes to investors because we are the lifeblood of the housing in this city.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank you so much for your comment.

Proceed.

MR. DOUGLASS: Good afternoon. My name is Jabri

Douglass. I'm here both personally and professionally. Personally I'm not a native to Philly, but I've been in Philly going on 10 years now and I've been a tenant way longer than I've been a housing provider. So I understand both sides, but also come here professionally as a housing provider and also one of the larger lead companies in the city.

And I wanted to say a couple of things. Number one, to put things into perspective I as a small housing provider only have one property. It's a triplex. I live there so I have two units, right.

One of those two units have been vacant since October because the tenant caused over $20,000 of damage. And as a small landlord that has to work, where am I going to get $20,000 from, right.

And so again, that's just one example. So when I put the security deposit against the damage, it pales into comparison.

Another tenant caused over $5,000 worth of damage. Again, the security deposit pales into comparison. And then one last tenant again cost over $5,000 worth of damage. We had to go to eviction diversion. I did not get my money that the city said that I was able to be awarded, but yet I still had to come out of pocket, security deposit pales into comparison.

And then I also think too that there's no balance, right. If you wanted to cap security deposits, that's okay if you also cap the Mayor from being able to raise taxes 30%, 50%, if you also cap PECO from raising electricity. The vacant unit electricity went from $40 a month, vacant unit, nothing's on, to over $125, right. And I have to pay that because the unit is vacant, right.

You also have to cap gas company PGW. You also have to get cap trash and sewage as well, right. You can't just cap the landlords and not cap these other things. And I think we also have to look at a nuanced view to legislation. There's an incredible difference between the corporate landlord who can afford to absorb the cost of a $20,000 damage when they have 50 other units to balance that out as opposed to a small landlord that only has two units, one of which is rented and the other which is vacant because of $20,000 worth of damage.

And so, when we don't look at legislation from a nuanced view, it becomes harmful to both tenant and housing provider, right. So you continue to do more damage than good. And I think that we have to stratify the way in which we legislate in this city. If you are going after big corporations, name big corporations and stratify and say housing providers that don't have let's say over 100 units this does not apply to you, right, because our ability to recoup the damage that is done it just pales into comparison to a security deposit.

And I'll end by saying I also support Camille Pearsall. I hope that you go back to her email and the other people on City Council and really take heed to that. But I do oppose the Bill 250044 as it's written but could potentially support it with amendments.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Thank you so much. Thank you to all of you for being here.
Seeing no one else here to testify on these bills --
COUNCILWOMAN BASS:
Madam Chair, I just have a question.
COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Oh, go ahead. Councilmember Bass.
COUNCILWOMAN BASS: So I just wanted to make note to the folks who just testified. And again, I wanted to go back to the bill's sponsor because I think some of the things that were mentioned have been changed in the amendments.
So can we go over -- can you go over the amendments that we're presenting today because it's my understanding for the young lady who said how can a tenant pay for the extra payments if they can

barely get in, that's an option
that is to be worked out between
the landlord and the tenant --
COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
Yes.
COUNCILWOMAN BASS: --
is that accur -- okay.
COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
It's not a mandatory installment
payment. It's if somebody needs to
pay in installments --
COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It's
if a landlord wants to, you know,
work out --
COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
It's got to be an option.
COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It's
an option.
COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
It's an option. But what I was
thinking as this testimony
continued was great news, is that
within 30 days hopefully they're
getting back their previous

security deposit. We have to keep talking about this. And I'm going to be spending a lot of time this summer going out doing an education tour, making sure people really remember how to get their security deposits back from their previous landlords so we can put it into the hands of these landlords right here. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Can you go through the --

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Okay. I'm happy to go through. So once again, one, just want to go through the amendments. To be clear on the --

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: (Inaudible).

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: -- on the application fee, Bill 250045, the application fees will be capped at cost or $50, whichever is lower. And on the security deposit, Bill 250044 if you charge one month security deposit, you get that one month upfront with your first month's rent. If you charge two months' security deposit, you get your first month's rent, one month of the security deposit and the second month of security deposit, if the tenant needs it, can be paid up to three installment payments starting at Month 2.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Are you good, Councilmember?

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Seeing no one else here to testify on these bills, this concludes the public hearing. We will now go into a public meeting to consider the action to be taken on the bills heard today.

Can the Clerk please

call the roll.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Squilla.

(No response.)

THE CLERK: Councilmember Driscoll.

COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL: Present.

THE CLERK: Councilmember Bass.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Present.

THE CLERK: Vice-Chair Landau.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Present.

THE CLERK: Chair Gauthier.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Present. The Chair recognizes Vice-Chair Landau for a motion on the amendment to Bill No. 250043.

COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

Madam Chair, can I be recorded as present. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes. Recognizing Councilmember Squilla.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I offer an amendment to Bill No. 250043. A copy the amendment has been circulated to all members of the committee.

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Okay. Sorry. Go ahead.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: I move that the amendment to Bill No. 250043 be approved.

(Duly seconded.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: It has been moved and properly seconded that the amendment to Bill No. 250043 be approved.

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

(Aye.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
The ayes have it and the motion carries and the amendment to Bill No. 250043 has been approved.

The Chair recognizes Vice-Chair Landau for a motion on the amendment to Bill No. 250044.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
Thank you, Madam Chair.

I offer an amendment to Bill No. 250044. A copy of the amendment has been circulated to all members of the committee. I move that the amendment to Bill No. 250044 be approved.

(Duly seconded.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
It has been moved and properly seconded that the amendment to Bill No. 250044 be approved.

All those in favor of

the motion will signify by saying
aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
The ayes have it and the motion carries and the amendment to Bill No. 250044 has been approved.

The Chair recognizes Vice-Chair Landau for a motion on the amendment to Bill No. 250045.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
Thank you, Madam Chair.

I offer an amendment to Bill No. 250045. A copy of the amendment has been circulated to all members of the committee. I move that the amendment to Bill No. 250045 be approved.

(Duly seconded.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
It has been moved and properly

seconded that the amendment to Bill No. 250045 be approved.

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

(Aye.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: The ayes have it and the motion carries and the amendment to Bill No. 250045 has been approved.

The Chair recognizes Vice-Chair Landau for a motion on Bill No. 250043 as amended.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I move that Bill No. 250043 as amended be reported from this committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of this bill at the next session of Council.

(Duly seconded.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: It has been moved and properly seconded that Bill No. 250043 as amended be reported from this committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of this bill at the next session of Council.

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

(Aye.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: The ayes have it and the motion carries. Bill No. 250043 as amended will be reported from this committee with a favorable recommendation with a request that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading at the next session of Council.

The Chair recognizes Vice-Chair Landau for a motion on Bill No. 250044 as amended.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
Thank you, Madam Chair.

I move that Bill No. 250044 as amended be reported from this committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of this bill at the next session of Council.

(Duly seconded.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
It has been moved and properly seconded that Bill No. 250044 as amended be reported from this committee with a favorable

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

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

(Aye.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
The ayes have it and the motion
carries. Bill No. 250044 as
amended will be reported from this
committee with a favorable
recommendation with a request that
the rules of Council be suspended
to permit first reading at the next
session of Council.

The Chair recognizes
Vice-Chair Landau for a motion on
Bill No. 250045 as amended.

COUNCILWOMAN LANDAU:
Thank you, Madam Chair.
I move that Bill No. 250045 as amended be reported from this committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of this bill at the next session of Council.
(Duly seconded.)
COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
It has been moved and properly seconded that Bill No. 250045 as amended be reported from this committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading of this bill at the next session of Council.
All those in favor of the motion will signify by saying aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:
The ayes have it and the motion carries. Bill No. 250045 as amended will be reported from this committee with a favorable recommendation with a request that the rules of Council be suspended to permit first reading at the next session of Council.

This concludes the business of the Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development and The Homeless today. Thank you all very much for your attendance.

(Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development and The Homeless concluded at 12:47 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

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

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

(The foregoing certification of this transcript does not apply to any reproduction of the same by any means, unless under the direct control and/or supervision of the certifying reporter.)