

Committee on the Environment
May 19, 2016

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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Thursday, May 19, 2016
1:25 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE L. PARKER
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN AL TAUBENBERGER

BILLS 160132, 160133, and 160362
RESOLUTION 160203

- - -

1
2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good
3 afternoon. We want to say thank you for
4 all of those who have arrived for the
5 Committee on the Environment of the
6 Council of the City of Philadelphia.
7 We're here today for a public hearing, to
8 be followed by a public meeting, and I
9 wish to ask the Clerk to please read the
10 title of the first bill.

11 THE CLERK: The first two bills
12 are Bill No. 160132, an ordinance
13 amending Title 19 of The Philadelphia
14 Code, entitled "Finance, Taxes and
15 Collections," by adding a new Chapter
16 19-4100, entitled "New Sustainable
17 Businesses," to reduce the tax burden on
18 new sustainable businesses; all under
19 certain terms and conditions; and

20 Bill No. 160133, an ordinance
21 amending Chapter 19-2600 of The
22 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Business
23 Income and Receipts Taxes," to revise the
24 Sustainable Business Tax Credit by
25 changing the criteria for eligibility, by

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 increasing the number of eligible
3 businesses, by increasing the total tax
4 credit amount, and by expanding the
5 credit so that it applies against
6 Sustainable Businesses' total business
7 income and receipts tax liability; all
8 under certain terms and conditions.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you
10 very, very much.

11 And with that, we'd like to
12 turn the mic over to Councilwoman Maria
13 Quinones-Sanchez for opening remarks.

14 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
15 you, Madam Chair. I want to thank this
16 Committee and all of the folks that we've
17 worked with.

18 A few months ago I talked about
19 branding Philadelphia the B Corp Capital
20 of the World, and the reason is, we spent
21 a lot of time here in Council talking
22 about sick leave, living wage, obviously
23 in this Committee of the Environment
24 protecting our environment, and what we
25 have found, that B corporations around

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2 the world are leading the charge and
3 creating businesses, being diverse within
4 their makeup, and sharing core values
5 that we think are hugely important and
6 that we attempt to legislate in this body
7 all the time.

8 This measure is part of the
9 agenda that the Sustainable Business
10 Network promoted in its campaign last
11 year. They were proponents for many
12 years of B corporations. In fact, then
13 Mayor Kenney as Councilman promoted these
14 two legislative initiatives. And what
15 we've done is, we've taken our knowledge
16 in understanding tax legislation and its
17 impact on businesses and have completed
18 what he also articulated during the
19 campaign was that we needed to improve
20 these incentives and encourage more of
21 these businesses.

22 Why this bill at this
23 particular time? In districts like mine
24 where I represent ten different El stops,
25 neighborhoods craving for creative and

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2 innovative businesses, I believe that
3 these types of incentives will help us
4 populate some of our commercial corridors
5 and hopefully attract and retain the
6 millennial population. There is a
7 growing interest in B corporations at the
8 college level, not only in Philadelphia
9 but across the country.

10 Existing B corporations in the
11 City of Philadelphia are varied, and what
12 we've learned in our conversations with
13 them in visiting them is that they're
14 innovative, they're creative, and they
15 will, through their sustainable
16 practices, really grow our economy at the
17 same time as taking people as what they
18 call the PPP, protecting the planet, they
19 look at people, and they look at their
20 profits, and the numbers show that they
21 are extremely profitable.

22 We want to thank the
23 Administration for working with us on
24 expanding these initial pieces of
25 legislation, as I said, that were created

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 by then-Councilman Kenney, and we thank
3 this Committee and we ask that you
4 support these pieces of legislation as
5 one more important tool in a toolbox
6 about sending the message that
7 Philadelphia is open for business.

8 Thank you.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Agreed
10 2,000 percent.

11 With the opening remarks, let's
12 now move to the first panel, Christine
13 Knapp, to come and speak on these bills.

14 Next up will be United By Blue,
15 Kelly Offner; Sustainable Business
16 Network of Greater Philadelphia, Jamie
17 Gauthier; and B Lab, Hardik Savalia, if
18 you could be prepared.

19 (Witness approached witness
20 table.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Proceed
22 with your -- state your name and proceed
23 with your testimony.

24 MS. KNAPP: Good afternoon,
25 Chairwoman Councilwoman Reynolds Brown

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 and members of the Committee of the
3 Environment. I am Christine Knapp, the
4 Director of the Office of Sustainability.
5 I'm here to testify on Bill No. 160133,
6 which expands the structure and scope of
7 the existing Sustainable Business Tax
8 Credit, as well as Bill No. 160132, which
9 expands the Jump Start programs for a
10 third year for qualifying sustainable
11 businesses.

12 The Office of Sustainability is
13 responsible for the implementation of
14 Greenworks Philadelphia, the City's
15 comprehensive sustainability plan. Our
16 aim is to grow as a green city, to
17 embrace environmental stewardship, and
18 social equity not only as core values but
19 as investment strategies for our
20 community.

21 Increasingly over the past
22 decade, businesses have taken steps to
23 incorporate sustainable practices into
24 their operations. As demand for
25 sustainable products and services has

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2 increased, it has taken on heightened
3 value in the marketplace among consumers.

4 In 2012, Philadelphia became
5 one of the first cities in the country to
6 offer a tax credit for certified
7 sustainable businesses. Businesses can
8 choose to certify through B Lab's process
9 or via an application reviewed by the
10 Office of Sustainability. As an initial
11 approach, the credit was capped at
12 \$100,000 annually with a maximum credit
13 per firm of \$4,000, which only applied to
14 the gross receipts portion of the BIRT.
15 The original legislation's annual
16 reporting requirement and five-year
17 sunset has allowed us to learn from the
18 program, assess its effectiveness, and
19 potentially adapt as necessary.

20 After three years of
21 implementation, we have mixed views of
22 the credit's effectiveness as currently
23 structured. Since it was introduced in
24 2012, the number of businesses that claim
25 the credit has decreased each year. Last

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2 year, only nine businesses out of 25
3 available spots claimed the credit at an
4 average of \$1,700 per firm. Given three
5 years to assess, we have not seen
6 evidence that the credit is encouraging
7 new start-ups or attracting new companies
8 to Philadelphia. Rather, it serves as a
9 small incentive to Philadelphia-based
10 companies who are already incorporating
11 sustainable practices into their
12 operations.

13 In discussions with the local
14 business community, we have heard two
15 recurring themes. Some believe that the
16 cost of the tax credit combined with the
17 B Lab certification process exceeded its
18 benefits and was too small to make an
19 impact on the company's bottom line.
20 From other partners, we heard that the
21 current structure of the credit, only
22 applying to the gross receipts portion of
23 the BIRT, prevented small businesses from
24 taking full advantage of the \$4,000
25 credit. We believe that extending the

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2 credit to apply to both gross receipts
3 and the higher rate charge to BIRT's net
4 profits is a smart and sensible
5 improvement. This change would produce
6 significant savings to smaller businesses
7 whose gross receipts are not high enough
8 to benefit from the current formula.

9 We also believe that a
10 reasonable increase in the number of
11 businesses that would be able to qualify
12 for this credit is appropriate.
13 Incremental increases over the next six
14 tax years would reflect real-life growth
15 in this burgeoning market. This
16 stepladder approach mirrors the small and
17 growing community of sustainable business
18 in Philadelphia and also gives the Office
19 of Sustainability an opportunity to grow
20 our capacity as well. As we currently
21 stand, we have limited capacity to verify
22 and monitor ongoing compliance.
23 Boundaries are necessary to effectively
24 allocate resources as this credit grows
25 in its popularity alongside its

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2 companion, the Jump Start BIRT abatement,
3 which is also being discussed.

4 We support this legislation
5 with the proposed amendments and we're
6 eager to work with Council to develop and
7 implement a broader sustainable business
8 attraction strategy.

9 On Bill 160132, we also look
10 forward to moving this ahead in
11 partnership with City Council,
12 Councilwoman Sanchez's office, the
13 Commerce Department, PIDC, and other
14 private-sector partners to develop a more
15 comprehensive green business and economic
16 development plan.

17 We also recognize that we need
18 more thoughtful planning. Few cities
19 have developed a comprehensive
20 sustainable business attraction plan,
21 suggesting that Philadelphia has an
22 opportunity to become one of the first
23 cities to create and advertise a cohesive
24 set of activities or incentives to lure
25 sustainable businesses here.

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2 A critical component of this
3 process will be to better understand how
4 the City can help existing local green
5 businesses to grow while encouraging new
6 start-ups and attracting new companies,
7 both large and small. As part of the
8 plan, we will need to develop truly
9 effective incentive programs. Such
10 programs can include rent reductions in
11 certain zones, programs for
12 entrepreneurs, and start-up funding
13 grants. We also need to identify the
14 regulatory obstacles that act as barriers
15 to growth and to address those.

16 Our identity as the greenest
17 city in America will depend on our
18 ability to grow and support a vibrant
19 network of green companies to attract
20 successful new members of green
21 industries, encourage local start-ups,
22 and foster increased awareness of local
23 supply chains.

24 The Office of Sustainability is
25 happy to provide support for this

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2 legislation with the proposed amendments
3 again and they're eager to work with all
4 of the partners to implement a broad
5 sustainable business attraction strategy
6 that supports Greenworks and advances our
7 city's sustainability and economic
8 development goals.

9 I thank you. I'll be happy to
10 take questions.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you
12 very much for your testimony.

13 Any questions from members of
14 the Committee?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you
17 very much.

18 While I'd like to call up the
19 next panel, Jamie Gauthier and Hardik
20 Savalia, and I'd like to ask Councilwoman
21 Cherelle Parker have the mic, please.

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
23 you, Madam Chair.

24 Madam Chair, I wish to be
25 recorded as voting aye on all bills and

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2 resolutions heard by the Committee today.
3 I have a district-specific meeting that I
4 must attend, but wanted to have my vote
5 recorded.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We
7 appreciate your presence, and we know
8 what it's like to be in 14 places at one
9 time.

10 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
11 you, Madam Chair.

12 (Witnesses approached witness
13 table.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Please
15 proceed with your testimony.

16 MS. GAUTHIER: Good afternoon,
17 and thank you for the opportunity to
18 address you today. My name is Jamie
19 Gauthier and I'm the Executive Director
20 of the Sustainable Business Network of
21 Greater Philadelphia, or SBN. SBN is a
22 non-profit membership organization for
23 locally owned businesses committed not
24 just to profit but to making positive
25 social and environmental impacts through

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2 their businesses. Our mission is to
3 create an economy in the Philadelphia
4 region that is based on these same
5 principles, one that is locally based,
6 socially equitable, and environmentally
7 sustainable.

8 I'm here today to speak in
9 support of Bills 160132 and 160133 and
10 also because I believe that
11 mission-driven businesses are a
12 tremendous resource in impacting a host
13 of complex issues, such as deep poverty
14 and environmental concerns. Though our
15 ability to successfully tackle these
16 challenges is incredibly dependent on
17 strong government leadership, our success
18 will ultimately hinge upon our collective
19 strengths. It will take the ability and
20 commitment of our entire community -
21 government, non-profit, and business - to
22 address our most pressing challenges.

23 It is this commitment to
24 positive social and environmental action
25 through business that is embodied by our

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2 hundreds of business members. For 15
3 years, SBN has pursued the vision of a
4 local economy built upon the pillars of
5 environmental responsibility and social
6 equity, but it has been the everyday
7 efforts of our members committed to
8 acting as a force for positive change in
9 the region that has steadily marched us
10 towards this goal.

11 Increasing the number of
12 businesses committed to a triple bottom
13 line would advance the City of
14 Philadelphia's goals for shared economic
15 prosperity and sustainability. To
16 illustrate, I'd like to just list a few
17 statistics about triple bottom line
18 businesses.

19 Please consider that nine out
20 of ten B corp businesses are locally
21 owned and are three times more likely to
22 be owned by minorities and women.
23 Seventy-four percent are affiliated with
24 local charities, and they are 30 times
25 more likely to donate at least 10 percent

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2 of their profits to charity. Forty-four
3 percent offer some form of employee
4 ownership. B corps are twice as likely
5 as other traditional businesses to offer
6 health insurance and retirement plans.
7 Thirty-three percent of them make
8 products that preserve the environment.
9 Seventy-two percent of them use renewable
10 energy, and these businesses are 30 times
11 more likely to work inside of a green or
12 sustainable building.

13 It is for all of these reasons
14 that SBN applauded City Council in 2009
15 as Philadelphia became the first city in
16 the nation to offer a tax incentive for
17 triple bottom line or sustainable
18 businesses. The Sustainable Business Tax
19 Credit program elevated the dialogue
20 about all that business could be and
21 began laying the foundation for a
22 business climate that could support our
23 transition to a values-based economy.

24 While the Sustainable Business
25 Tax Credit program is a greatly

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2 appreciated acknowledgment of the
3 sustainable business community's
4 contributions to our city, the structure
5 of the tax credit program is problematic,
6 and it also undervalues the significant
7 benefits social enterprises bring. The
8 lowest of any credit offered by the City
9 of Philadelphia, it is too small to make
10 a meaningful impact on triple bottom line
11 companies' bottom line. Participation in
12 the program is further hindered by the
13 fact that in order to receive the \$4,000
14 credit, the benefit -- a business must
15 have at least \$2.8 million in total
16 sales.

17 For the Sustainable Business
18 Tax Credit program to become more than a
19 symbolic gesture, these challenges to the
20 program must be addressed. Doubling the
21 tax credit to \$8,000 would encourage more
22 businesses to certify its social
23 enterprises. It would also shift the
24 revenue scale so that existing social
25 enterprises with lower sales qualify.

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2 Similarly, extending the Sustainable
3 Business Tax Credit program to the net
4 income portion of the BIRT tax would
5 produce significant tax savings to many
6 small businesses whose gross receipts are
7 not high enough to benefit under the
8 current formula.

9 Beyond improving upon the
10 foundation that has been laid, what's
11 also needed now is to establish an
12 infrastructure for growth in the amount
13 of businesses who know about and adhere
14 to sustainable practices. Philadelphia
15 can encourage business to solidify their
16 commitment to positive change during
17 their formation phase by extending
18 exclusive benefits to triple bottom line
19 businesses under the Jump Start
20 Philadelphia program. In a way that's
21 similar to the Sustainable Business Tax
22 Credit program, Jump Start currently has
23 no recognition of the benefits afforded
24 by triple bottom line businesses and
25 places them on equal footing with

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2 traditional businesses.

3 Certainly these bills alone
4 will not secure Philadelphia's path
5 towards a value-based economy, but this
6 is a good beginning. This goal of
7 building a totally sustainable economy
8 will require a diversity of efforts,
9 education, and promotion. Organizations
10 like mine, SBN, and others must continue
11 to offer complementary programming to
12 build upon the momentum of this
13 government action that we're taking
14 today. But the foundation and
15 infrastructure for growth that you as our
16 Council leaders can provide will form the
17 right ecosystem for a just and
18 sustainable economy to grow and thrive
19 here.

20 Thank you very much for the
21 opportunity to appear before you this
22 Committee, and I look forward to
23 answering any questions that you have.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We thank
25 you for your testimony as well.

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2 Good afternoon.

3 MR. SAVALIA: Good afternoon.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Please
5 pull the mic close to you.

6 MR. SAVALIA: Sure. Good
7 afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity
8 to address you this afternoon. My name
9 is Hardik Savalia. I'm a Program
10 Director with B Lab, which is a
11 non-profit organization that certifies
12 and supports B corporations.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We've
14 heard a lot about B Lab and we want to
15 hear more, but to do that, you're going
16 to have to talk into the mic.

17 MR. SAVALIA: Sure. Is that
18 better? Appreciate it. Thank you.

19 And to date, our organization
20 certified approximately 1,700 companies
21 as B corporations in about 50 different
22 countries, and so it is with that
23 perspective that I'm offering my comments
24 today. Unfortunately, we are not tax
25 experts or business location experts, but

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2 we can -- I can speak to the credibility
3 of the standards, as well as what effect
4 and what benefits these kinds of
5 companies accrue to the City of
6 Philadelphia.

7 For context, to achieve B corp
8 certification, companies must do two
9 things. Those companies take and pass
10 what's called the B Impact Assessment.
11 It's a comprehensive and rigorous set of
12 standards regarding their social and
13 environmental performance. And second is
14 that those companies legally expand their
15 fiduciary duties so that their directors
16 have to consider the interest of all
17 stakeholders, not just their
18 shareholders. And the combination of
19 those two things is what makes these
20 companies eligible to become a B corp.

21 There are over 300 distinct
22 business practices that factor into
23 achieving this status, and they range
24 from what Jamie described as paying
25 employees a living wage, hiring people

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2 with a barrier to employment, all the way
3 to creating product and services that
4 address the City's public health or
5 environmental issues, to name a few.

6 We think that these amendments
7 will certainly help increase the number
8 of businesses for whom this incentive is
9 available and will be meaningful for them
10 to adopt these types of practices. When
11 businesses in Philadelphia adopt these
12 things, the City accrues real benefits.
13 When businesses create higher-quality
14 jobs for people of all types and
15 backgrounds or that they engage deeper
16 with local organizations and charities or
17 that they reduce their environmental
18 resource use, the City should see real
19 reduced benefits on public services and,
20 as a result, hopefully the quality of
21 life that the citizens enjoy should be a
22 lot greater.

23 Cities all over the world,
24 ranging from Baltimore to Philadelphia to
25 Taipei, are, quite frankly, interested in

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2 unleashing the power of business to
3 address our city's greatest challenges,
4 and they are often calling the CEOs of
5 these B corporations to ask about what
6 their city can do. And so we are proud
7 that the City is considering these
8 amendments, because they are concrete and
9 they should make our city a leader in
10 that regard.

11 I hope that you'll consider
12 voting in favor of these amendments.

13 Thanks so much for your time.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I'm very
15 excited about these amendments as well.

16 I'm looking for printed
17 testimony. Did you supply printed
18 testimony for us to keep for later?

19 MR. SAVALIA: We did, and I
20 think they were sitting with Councilwoman
21 Sanchez's office.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All right,
23 then. Great. We'd like to --

24 MR. SAVALIA: And we have them
25 on hand as well.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: -- review
3 it after the hearing.

4 Any questions by members of the
5 Committee?

6 Please, Councilwoman Sanchez.

7 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: No. Go
8 ahead, you can.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So is it
10 fair to say that B Lab provides technical
11 assistance to entities or new
12 organizations that want to become more
13 environmentally responsible? Is that
14 fair to say?

15 MR. SAVALIA: Good question.
16 I'll offer a clarifying comment there. B
17 Lab does not -- B Lab sets the standard
18 and verifies their performance. We
19 create software tools that allow a
20 company to measure themselves against
21 that. However, it is often lots of other
22 organizations like SBN Philadelphia or
23 others who can then hold those companies'
24 hands to actually help them implement the
25 necessary improvements.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

3 Very helpful.

4 Please.

5 MS. GAUTHIER: We host
6 educational events throughout the year,
7 some of which have focused on the B
8 Assessment. We also use the B Assessment
9 as a tool even when businesses don't go
10 on to become certified. So every time a
11 member joins SBN or renews with SBN,
12 they're asked to take the survey. And we
13 would be happy to talk with you even
14 after today about ways that we can work
15 with others to ramp up that type of
16 education.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We'll look
18 forward to that subsequent discussion.

19 Please, Councilman Green.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
21 Madam Chair.

22 Just a quick question, because
23 I remember initially hearing about B
24 corporations a few years ago, and I guess
25 a question that I have is, do you find

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2 more businesses more willing to become B
3 corporations over time, and what has been
4 some of the impediments of why a
5 corporation from an outward perspective
6 you would think would be a great entity
7 to be eligible to be a B corporation but
8 for whatever reason decides not to be?

9 MR. SAVALIA: Sure. I'm happy
10 to address that question. There's
11 several reasons for what the potential
12 barriers are. For 95 percent of
13 businesses in our economy, they simply
14 are not able to achieve B corp
15 certification because they don't meet the
16 standards. Their practices are not
17 strong enough to warrant them to achieve
18 that level of performance. And that's
19 why it's incredibly important that we
20 spend time on education programs like
21 what SBN Philadelphia is doing to help
22 companies get up to that curve.

23 Of those that are actually
24 eligible and have the necessary
25 practices, many of them, for a variety of

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2 reasons, are not interested in going
3 forward through that process. One very
4 specific reason is that in addition to
5 achieving the standard, companies must
6 expand their fiduciary duties, so their
7 directors have to consider the interest
8 of the employees, community, and the
9 environment in addition to their
10 shareholders. We find that that often is
11 the biggest barrier. For us, it is
12 incredibly important that that still
13 remains a core component of this, because
14 we want those companies to not only do
15 good today, but to do that good for the
16 long-term perpetuity of the company.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So for a
18 corporation that takes on that high level
19 of, I'll say, fiduciary responsibility to
20 be a B corp, going forward do you see any
21 future benefits from that federal level
22 from a tax perspective that may entice
23 more corporations to be a B corporation?

24 MR. SAVALIA: That's a good
25 question. Those are certainly things

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2 that may come down the pike either in the
3 form of financial incentives or
4 procurement incentives, et cetera. Even
5 without those incentives, we think that
6 companies -- companies who have a mission
7 should find value in expanding their
8 duties in that way. Most of the CEOs or
9 founders of these businesses want to make
10 sure that their mission continues even if
11 the owners change. They want to have
12 that level of accountability toward their
13 social mission. And so with or without
14 that, we think that there is some value,
15 and hopefully some of the companies that
16 are here to testify will explain why they
17 have chosen to do it.

18 MS. GAUTHIER: Part of why this
19 is important to us, to SBN, is that it
20 would still be a relatively small -- one
21 of the smaller tax credit programs even
22 if it passes, but for us, it's a way to
23 highlight the issue of sustainable
24 business and to get more companies online
25 with even learning what it is or being

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2 interested in learning more. So I think
3 it's about the credit, but I also think
4 it's about the visibility as well.

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And one
6 final question. Has there been a
7 challenge in trying to raise the
8 awareness of what is an actual B
9 corporation? Has that been a challenge
10 to let more people know the opportunity
11 to take on this heightened level of
12 responsibility as a corporation?

13 MR. SAVALIA: Sure. As with
14 any new social narrative or new form,
15 just like it took 30 years for the
16 non-profit sector to form, it will take
17 another 30 years for the B corp sector to
18 form in our economy. And it's never a
19 one-time event or a challenge. It's a
20 continual effort that will overcome that.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
22 Madam Chair.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That's a
24 great opportunity, though, and it's
25 really exciting.

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2 Councilwoman Sanchez.

3 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Yeah. I
4 wanted to again thank the SBN. We had an
5 opportunity to do a roundtable yesterday
6 with some of the businesses. I think one
7 of the things to Jamie's point is -- and
8 I wanted her to highlight -- is, there
9 needs to be a full education campaign,
10 and our hope is that -- and I think the
11 Administration is committed to it -- is
12 informing folks about this, because even
13 the initial assessment, getting to a B
14 corp certification level is huge and it
15 requires a lot of investment from the
16 companies, as was discussed, but just the
17 very process of the young people at the
18 universities, even in your own class,
19 Councilwoman, when I went to your class
20 the other day, one of the first questions
21 from her students at Saint Joe's was
22 around B corporations. I think there's
23 an opportunity here, and I want Jamie to
24 speak to how the SBN views their role in
25 helping the City build its capacity and

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2 understanding and embracing this sector.

3 MS. GAUTHIER: Sure. We
4 absolutely want to be a partner in this
5 effort, and in fact, I have this -- I
6 think that there are so many companies
7 out in the Philadelphia area that already
8 are acting in ways that are sustainable,
9 that already are giving back to their
10 communities, that already are
11 prioritizing working with local vendors,
12 and there may still be things for those
13 companies to learn to get to sort of full
14 B corp status, but I want to use this as
15 a way to approach companies that already
16 have an interest in doing good and kind
17 of help to move them along the spectrum.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Very well.

19 Councilman Green.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Just one
21 other question. What has been the
22 outreach in reference to communities of
23 color regarding B corporations?

24 MR. SAVALIA: That's a great
25 question. On average, it skews depending

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 on the year, but it's somewhere
3 between -- and I'm speaking specifically
4 to the B corporations that are owned by
5 people of color. It's somewhere between
6 35 percent to 42 percent of the B corp
7 community, which is, I think, much higher
8 than the average business community.

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you
11 both.

12 (Thank you.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: To be
14 continued.

15 Panel No. 2, Chris Jacobs,
16 Solutions for Progress; Elizabeth Guman,
17 Strategy Arts; Nicole -- I'm going to ask
18 you to pronounce your last name for me --
19 Forsei Consulting; and Marcus Iannozzi,
20 Message Agency; Robert Cheetham, Azavea.

21 (Witnesses approached witness
22 table.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Chris
24 Jacobs, Solutions for Progress. Good
25 afternoon.

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 MS. WHELAN: Good afternoon,
3 and obviously I'm not Chris Jacobs and I
4 don't have his eloquent British accent
5 either, so bear with me. And Chris
6 apologizes. He had a commitment that he
7 had to make and could not be here this
8 afternoon. But we are strongly in
9 support of City Ordinances 160132 and
10 160133.

11 As a member of the SBN, we
12 believe that these bills will reduce the
13 tax burden for new sustainable businesses
14 and increase the Sustainable Business
15 Credit. They support the establishment
16 and viability of for-profit businesses,
17 as we've heard, that really are mission
18 driven and believe in that triple bottom
19 line of profit, people, planet.

20 I believe reviewing SFP's
21 history briefly, in the interest of time,
22 background and how the company is
23 contributing to the sustainable business
24 culture of the City of Philadelphia will
25 show how these bills can contribute both

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 to the economic and cultural health of
3 Philadelphia. SFP is a 20-year-old,
4 mission-driven, Pennsylvania registered B
5 corp. We combine technology and public
6 policy with a commitment to community
7 outreach to deliver practical solutions
8 to the complex problems of poverty. As
9 we like to say, we're moving people from
10 crisis to choice. Helping individuals in
11 households overcome the devastating
12 effects of the crisis of poverty and
13 become self-sufficient is at the core of
14 our mission. To achieve this, we develop
15 and operate a set of cloud-based
16 platforms, the Benefit Bank and My Budget
17 Coach, that enable our thousands of
18 outreach partners to help low- and
19 moderate-income individuals and families
20 stabilize through enhanced access to
21 federal, state, and local work and income
22 supports, obtain assistance in job
23 preparedness, and build and manage
24 financial assets, ultimately arriving at
25 the point at which they can genuinely

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 make choices in their lives.

3 From both a business and
4 personal perspective, the ownership and
5 employees view Philadelphia as their
6 home. Although we are in multiple
7 states, we consider ourselves a
8 Philadelphia company. We were
9 established and have always been based in
10 Center City. The mass -- the vast
11 majority of our staff also live, many
12 raising families, within the City
13 boundaries.

14 One of the goals that Chris set
15 for himself and the company when he
16 became CEO was that as the next
17 generation of civic technology leaders in
18 Philadelphia are trained and developed,
19 not only are they given the great tech
20 skills but also a model of the culture
21 that actively supports people inside the
22 business and in the community.

23 Recognizing the intense
24 deadline-based pressures of a technology
25 company, our own company of employees are

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 supported with time to recover and
3 revitalize. We offer a minimum of three
4 weeks paid vacation, go through low
5 turnover, again showing how we really are
6 worried about the culture of our company.
7 A vast majority of our staff qualify for
8 four weeks. We also have unlimited
9 personal days, fully paid sick leave, and
10 12 weeks of paid parental leave.

11 We have been proud to be
12 recognized by the Philadelphia Business
13 Journal as a 2015 "Healthiest Employer,"
14 by the American Heart Association as a
15 "fit-friendly worksite," and by the
16 League of American Bicyclists as a
17 "bicycle-friendly business," one of only
18 161 companies nationwide. Chris himself
19 is biking into work tomorrow for National
20 Bike to Work Day.

21 We believe in giving back and
22 contributing to the community. We do
23 this through offering facilities for
24 community gatherings, giving preference
25 to local sustainable and fair trade

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 suppliers, supporting staff in pursuing
3 community volunteer interests, and
4 organizing volunteer opportunities during
5 work hours.

6 As far as being a B corp, when
7 formed, we chose to become a
8 private-sector company because of the
9 flexibility, discipline, and speed of
10 response the private sector offers.
11 However, operating the space that has
12 been traditionally seen as the purview of
13 government and the non-profit sector, we
14 were fighting the perception that we were
15 only in it for the money. To demonstrate
16 to our partners and potential partners
17 that we had a commitment to the
18 communities we served, we pursued
19 becoming a B corp and were pleased to be
20 certified by B Lab in 2012 and again in
21 2014. This offered independent
22 verification of our commitment to do well
23 by doing good, both to communities across
24 the country and to our own employees.
25 The B corp certification demonstrates

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 that SFP meets the rigorous standards
3 that you have just heard about. It is a
4 good fit with our own values and allows
5 the company to offer a unique combination
6 of skills, attitudes, and experience to
7 fight to defeat poverty, and our goal is
8 to defeat poverty, not as some would seek
9 to manage poverty more neatly.

10 We are also a registered
11 "benefit corporation" in the State of
12 Pennsylvania. We became one of the first
13 when Pennsylvania passed the legislation.
14 In March of 2013, we were honored to be
15 recognized by B Lab as one of the ten
16 best for the world. And we are having an
17 impact in our services to the community.
18 TBB since 2006 nationwide we have served
19 a million households in ten states and
20 claimed 2.1 billion in public benefits
21 and tax credits. In Philadelphia alone,
22 we have generated more than 78.4 million
23 in benefits and credit. A majority of
24 these funds are being claimed from
25 federal sources, and multiple studies

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 have found money injected into a state
3 from outside the state is critical to
4 generating economic activity.

5 For example, it is estimated
6 that for every dollar of SNAP benefits
7 received, that generates between \$1.70
8 and \$1.84 in economic activity.

9 As far as My Budget Coach, a
10 recently independent two-year evaluation
11 conducted in Pennsylvania, Ohio,
12 Maryland, and Texas showed that
13 individuals using the service report
14 significant improvement in their
15 household budget, ability to live within
16 their means, avoidance of late fees by
17 paying bills on time, and confidence to
18 cope with the loss of income. Overall,
19 the 300 project participants report
20 having paid down over \$60,000 in debt and
21 having saved over 100,000.

22 The example SFP provides can be
23 replicated by other for-profit
24 businesses. So it gets back to what was
25 being talked about earlier with the

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 burden to becoming a B corp and taking
3 this commitment to be admission driven.

4 As more businesses become motivated to
5 think beyond its traditional bottom line
6 and monetary profit and think about
7 supporting their employees and local
8 communities, this commitment should be
9 supported by the City.

10 For early-stage companies, this
11 is both difficult and costly to do, as
12 we've heard. Council Bill 160132 sends a
13 loud message to this new type of business
14 that going the extra two miles is
15 rewarded both financially as well as with
16 their overall reputation. It speaks
17 directly to the entrepreneur, be it in
18 Nicetown, West Oak Lane, Bridesburg,
19 Mantua, Germantown, and elsewhere off the
20 beaten path, that the City wants to
21 support all businesses that take on the
22 challenge of contributing to their
23 community and looking after their staff.
24 At the same time, the business is
25 building a sustainable operation that

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 will have an overall impact on the
3 economic health of the City.

4 With regard to Council Bill
5 160133, for the last two years, we have
6 applied for the business tax credit. In
7 2015, we were wait-listed, and this year
8 we were winners. Increasing the number
9 of businesses eligible for the tax credit
10 takes away the sense that it is a lottery
11 and changes it to a positive reward to
12 actively working to improve the community
13 in which we live and work. Raising the
14 value of the tax credit enforces the
15 message that the City recognizes that
16 there is a cost to being conscious about
17 how you act and that the failure to act
18 consciously costs the City and all of us
19 who live and work here.

20 The double bottom line in this
21 case is that we respectfully ask that you
22 report Bills 160132 and 160133 out of
23 Committee today. I believe these bills
24 will continue to grow business culture in
25 the City of Philadelphia that goes beyond

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 the profit margin, but looks at what is
3 best for our employees, our communities,
4 and our overall planet.

5 I thank you for your time and
6 will answer any questions you may have.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. I
8 failed to do two things at the opening of
9 your statement. First for you to
10 identify yourself.

11 MS. WHELAN: I'm Mary Whelan.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mary?

13 MS. WHELAN: Whelan.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So what
15 organization were you speaking for?

16 MS. WHELAN: Solutions for
17 Progress. I was speaking for Chris
18 Jacobs.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.
20 Very, very well.

21 And then I would like to remind
22 everyone who is here, your enthusiasm is
23 clear; however, we have many bills we
24 have to get through, and typically the
25 request is that you limit your testimony

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 to two minutes.

3 MS. WHELAN: Oh, I'm sorry.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That's
5 quite all right. I didn't give you the
6 instruction on the front end. So I'm
7 giving the advice on the back end for
8 those to follow so that we can get
9 through this afternoon's work and move to
10 a public meeting so that we can take
11 action. Okay?

12 All right, then. With that
13 said, if you could state your name for
14 the record and proceed with your
15 testimony.

16 MS. GUMAN: Thank you. I'm
17 Elizabeth Guman and my business is
18 Strategy Arts. I own Strategy Arts with
19 my business partner. We're a consulting
20 firm doing strategic planning, meeting
21 facilitation, and leadership development
22 in the Philadelphia and the surrounding
23 region. We are a founding B corp,
24 meaning that we were part of the original
25 businesses that received the B corp

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 certification.

3 I'm speaking in support of this
4 legislation, the two bills that we've
5 been talking about, and we believe it
6 will support more businesses adopting
7 practices that are good for the
8 Philadelphia community, and I have three
9 points that I wanted to share to support
10 that.

11 First, in our experience, the B
12 Impact Assessment makes doing good
13 business very concrete and very
14 accessible. For me, this is not a new
15 idea. It's something that I learned
16 growing up. My dad was an executive of a
17 small hometown bank, and people would
18 tell me that he gave them the loan that
19 got them started in business. These were
20 the same people that we bought our
21 refrigerator from and that we bought our
22 clothes from. Also people who worked for
23 him told me how much they respected him
24 and he was a good person to work for.

25 As a business owner, I wanted

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 to emulate these principles, and the B
3 Impact Assessment gives me a way to
4 measure myself on those principles. It
5 moves us past the model of having an
6 office of social responsibility to a
7 model of incorporating these practices
8 into the very fabric of our businesses.

9 Second, the certification
10 process challenges us to continue its
11 improvement by having to go through a
12 certification every two years. And with
13 the way that B Lab continues to evolve
14 the standards, we continue to evolve as
15 businesses. So when we recertified last
16 fall, our team sat around the table
17 together and went through the assessment
18 and used it as an opportunity to
19 challenge ourselves to how do we do even
20 better.

21 And, third, it's about creating
22 a business environment where we expect
23 this of people who do business in the
24 City and we support each other and we
25 hold each other accountable.

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 When I started my business in
3 the 1990s, it wasn't easy to find other
4 businesses that shared these same values
5 and wanted to engage in a conversation
6 about them. There are now 56 B
7 corporations in the Philadelphia region.
8 We're a thriving community, and we make
9 important contributions to the local
10 economy. We meet and we share practices
11 and talk about how to have even a more
12 positive impact in Philadelphia. And the
13 question that came up about diversity
14 within the B corp community, one of the
15 things that we've talked about is we're
16 passionate about increasing that
17 diversity of business ownership in the
18 Philadelphia region.

19 We don't do this because it's a
20 competitive advantage. We do it because
21 it's the kind of community we want to
22 live in and work in. So it's not -- for
23 us it's not about having more B's in the
24 City, although we'd like to see that
25 number double in the next three years.

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 It's about creating a culture in the City
3 that says we expect our businesses to be
4 good citizens and we welcome businesses
5 that are good at making a profit,
6 creating jobs that support healthy lives,
7 and have practices that are good for
8 people and the environment.

9 Business isn't neutral. It's a
10 force in our community, and it can have a
11 good impact or a not so good impact, and
12 the challenges that we face can't be
13 solved by government and non-profits
14 alone. Businesses have to be part of
15 that solution, driving a strong economy
16 and creating jobs and economic
17 opportunity.

18 So I'm speaking in support of
19 this legislation.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: How old is
21 your business?

22 MS. GUMAN: We are 13 years
23 old.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And how
25 long have you been a B corp?

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 MS. GUMAN: We've been a B corp
3 since the beginning.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Terrific.
5 Thank you for your testimony.

6 Councilman, please.

7 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: One
8 quick question and, that is, how many
9 employees?

10 MS. GUMAN: We are a total --
11 our team is a total of five.

12 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
13 you. Oh, and just for clarification, you
14 said your father was a small town bank.
15 What small town?

16 MS. GUMAN: West Chester, First
17 National Bank of West Chester.

18 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
19 you.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.
21 Now if we could invite up the
22 principal for Forsei Consulting. Please
23 join Ms. Nicole at the table, Massage
24 Agency, Marcus Iannozzi, and Azavea,
25 Robert Cheetham.

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 (Witnesses approached witness
3 table.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: State your
5 full name, pronounce your last name for
6 us, and proceed with your testimony.

7 MS. KOEDYKER: Thank you,
8 Councilmembers, for listening to our
9 stories today. My name is Nicole
10 Koedyker and I am co-founder of Forsei
11 Consulting. We are a social and
12 environmental consulting firm here in
13 downtown Philadelphia. I am here today
14 in support of the two pieces of
15 legislation proposing tax incentives for
16 sustainable businesses. I believe the
17 support for social enterprise tax
18 incentives is the first step towards
19 making Philadelphia a more sustainable
20 economy.

21 My journey starts across the
22 country in the dry, hot desert of
23 Southern Arizona. I spent my childhood
24 on my father's cattle ranch called the
25 Last Chance Ranch in the outskirts of

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 Tucson, Arizona where nature and playtime
3 were one and the same. This time outside
4 gave me a deep-rooted connection to
5 nature and was ultimately what fueled my
6 passion for sustainability and
7 environmental responsibility. I ventured
8 to Philadelphia to attend Drexel
9 University as a Business Administration
10 major, knowing that I wanted to make
11 business the solution, not the problem.

12 As I was about to graduate from
13 Drexel in 2012, I searched for local jobs
14 that aligned with my educational
15 background and my values rooted in making
16 the world a better place. With little
17 success, I sat down with one of my best
18 friends at a coffee shop and we decided
19 to start our own company, and that was
20 the day Forsei Consulting was born. With
21 my love for sustainable business and my
22 partner's passion for community
23 development and philanthropy, we made the
24 perfect team. Forsei Consulting was
25 created to fill a gap that we saw in the

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 market. Businesses want to do good, but
3 don't always know how.

4 Upon the incorporation of our
5 company, my partner and I agreed that we
6 had to walk the walk and talk to talk.
7 As a result, we are a Pennsylvania
8 benefit corporation and a certified B
9 corp since the inception.

10 As often as we can, we work
11 with local businesses. We purchase 100
12 percent renewable energy. We use a local
13 credit union, and overall our mission is
14 to increase the social and environmental
15 impact for businesses and other
16 organizations.

17 Forsei is a social and
18 environmental consulting company that
19 uses third-party frameworks like the B
20 Corp Impact Assessment, a questionnaire
21 completed by businesses in order to
22 become B corps, to find gaps and provide
23 recommendations for businesses to improve
24 their social and environmental programs
25 and policies. We have worked with B

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 corps, B corp wanna-be's and other
3 organizations who just want to do better.

4 Our clients range from a commercial
5 cleaning company that hires formerly
6 homeless individuals into low-skill
7 positions, a digital marketing agency
8 that helps their clients make the most
9 environmentally responsible decisions
10 when printing and creating content, and
11 even a corporate event company that is
12 improving their transportation policies
13 as they travel over 750,000 miles around
14 the world every year. All of these
15 companies are based in Philadelphia with
16 employees who live in the greater
17 Philadelphia area. Their charitable
18 contributions, their volunteer hours,
19 their workforce training, community
20 partnerships all exist within our city.

21 I've had many people ask me why
22 I don't just move to San Francisco or
23 Portland where everyone is already doing
24 this, but time and time again, I shake my
25 head and tell them that I like a

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 challenge. We've seen the high potential
3 in businesses that make up our
4 neighborhood corridors in Philadelphia,
5 from restaurants that pay all their
6 employees a living wage to technology
7 companies that are changing the status
8 quo of what you have to look like to work
9 in a tech company. While many of these
10 businesses may not identify themselves as
11 sustainable, they do it just because they
12 think it's right and we need to reward
13 these businesses, to tell them to keep
14 going and keep investing in them to show
15 that we're committed to the work that
16 they do.

17 I'm fully invested in doing our
18 part to make Philadelphia the social
19 enterprise or B Corp Capital of the
20 World. If these two pieces of
21 legislation are passed today, we will be
22 the first city in the nation to promote
23 economic incentives for social
24 enterprises, paving the way for other
25 programs and initiatives that also

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 support responsible business in our
3 economy. The conversations among City
4 Councilmembers about paid leave, the
5 living wage, workers' rights, and job
6 creation are all on the table at once. B
7 corps are more likely to pay a living
8 wage, provide paid leave, donate a
9 portion of profits to local charities,
10 and likely be owned by women and minority
11 entrepreneurs.

12 I came to Philadelphia to go to
13 school, but I stayed to make a
14 difference. I know many entrepreneurs
15 and individuals, many of whom are
16 testifying today, feel the same way. I
17 sit before you today presenting the
18 potential that we have right at our
19 fingertips, something greater than all of
20 us, a movement towards a more responsible
21 economy, and I hope that you'll move
22 forward with us.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We're glad
24 you stayed. Thank you.

25 Please, sir.

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 MR. IANNOZZI: Good afternoon.

3 Thank you very much for the opportunity
4 to speak today. My name is Marcus
5 Iannozzi and I am the founder and
6 principal of Message Agency, not Massage
7 Agency. I just wanted to thank
8 Councilwoman Quinones-Sanchez for
9 supporting B corporations and introducing
10 this legislation, and thank you for
11 listening to this testimony.

12 Just a little bit about our
13 company. So Message Agency builds better
14 websites for the greater good.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Pull your
16 mic closer so we don't miss anything.

17 MR. IANNOZZI: We are a
18 certified B corporation and a social
19 enterprise, committed to ensuring the
20 sustainability and viability of the
21 non-profit sector through technology. We
22 exclusively serve non-profits,
23 universities, government agencies, and
24 other sustainable businesses using open
25 source tools that help good folks

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 leverage great technology to fulfill
3 their missions.

4 We're also a "Best for the
5 World" B corporation and we have been --

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: A what?

7 MR. IANNOZZI: It's called
8 "Best for the World" B corporation. That
9 means that our score on the assessment is
10 in the top 10 percent of all B corps, and
11 we're very proud of that, and our
12 business actually achieved that score the
13 first time we took the assessment. So it
14 just underscores sort of how powerful
15 this assessment is for helping existing
16 businesses who operate in this way to
17 find a community and find a way to
18 communicate their value to their
19 stakeholders.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN:
21 Congratulations.

22 MR. IANNOZZI: Yes. And then
23 so our business model leverages
24 efficiencies in web development and in
25 our consulting services to keep our

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 services accessible and affordable to
3 non-profits. We do have big-name
4 clients, but we actually don't just chase
5 large contracts. We have a mission to
6 also support small non-profit
7 organizations and help them grow along
8 with us. To date, we've helped over 300
9 organizations in the area and across the
10 country to raise more money, to reach
11 more supporters, and to serve more
12 community members and to serve them
13 better.

14 I founded this business in 1995
15 originally as a solo consultant, but I've
16 grown it into a leading firm in the open
17 source space. We employ 16 people
18 currently in Philadelphia and will likely
19 reach about 20 by year's end.

20 After graduating from the
21 University of Pennsylvania in 1991, I
22 chose specifically to remain in
23 Philadelphia and invest in what I saw was
24 tremendous promise and potential here,
25 and since then, I've not only grown this

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 business, but I've been an active
3 contributor in the broader community
4 through economic development initiatives
5 and business associations and local
6 chambers.

7 I firmly believe that business
8 can have a positive social impact beyond
9 just the creation of jobs. Those jobs
10 should be good ones, jobs that provide
11 opportunity, a living wage, and
12 professional development. And I think
13 most of the owners of B corporations
14 share that perspective and are also folks
15 who are engaged in their communities in
16 other ways as well.

17 While our growth may not have
18 been as rapid as some start-ups, we have
19 tripled in size in a little over two
20 years and doubled our revenue over the
21 same time. We provide jobs with
22 excellent benefits and opportunities for
23 a diverse group of Philadelphians. We
24 have a staff that is 38 percent women, 31
25 percent people of color, and 31 percent

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 LGBT, and 75 percent of our staff belong
3 to a traditionally underrepresented
4 minority group. Also a majority of the
5 leadership in our organization, so team
6 leads, so 75 percent also belong to one
7 of those groups. So we have a very
8 diverse workplace.

9 As a triple bottom line
10 business, we're often challenged by the
11 competing demands of investing in our
12 staff, serving our clients and their
13 communities, and making a profit. And in
14 our case, we choose people and planet
15 over profit margin, unlike many of our
16 competitors. While our clients tend to
17 understand and appreciate this aspect of
18 our business, de-prioritizing profit
19 makes it far more difficult to compete
20 for employees, invest in marketing and
21 sponsorships, and position ourselves
22 alongside agencies for whom profit is
23 still a primary criterion in their
24 decision-making. Programs such as the
25 Sustainable Business Tax Credit help to

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 reduce our tax burden and provide some
3 relief, allowing us to offset costs such
4 that we could invest in better benefit
5 plans for our employees.

6 I just wanted to note we do not
7 have a beer fridge or ping pong tables as
8 a tech company. So this credit would not
9 go towards that.

10 We've taken advantage of the
11 business tax credit in previous years,
12 but we do feel that it was unfortunate
13 that that could have excluded other B
14 corporations from accessing this credit.
15 So we are very much in favor of removing
16 that restriction and applaud increasing
17 the credit from \$4,000 to 8,000.

18 We believe it's in the City's
19 best interest to promote the formation
20 and growth of businesses that have a
21 social impact and act in environmentally
22 responsible ways. If the City seeks to
23 promote business formation and job
24 creation, it should invest in the
25 creation of good jobs and better

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 companies that don't just have an
3 economic impact but a broader social one
4 too. In supporting this legislation, you
5 are supporting the efforts of people like
6 me who seek to make Philadelphia a
7 better, more innovative, and more
8 sustainable and human place to live,
9 work, and raise our families.

10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.
12 Great testimony. Where's your business
13 located?

14 MR. IANNOZZI: We are currently
15 at 8th and Callowhill. We were
16 previously at 16th and South.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That's
18 awesome.

19 Please, sir.

20 MR. CHEETHAM: Good afternoon,
21 members of the Environment Committee. My
22 name is Robert Cheetham. I'm the founder
23 and CEO of Azavea. As both a B
24 corporation and a member of the
25 Sustainable Business Network, Azavea

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2 strongly supports the proposed ordinances
3 aimed at reducing the tax burden for new
4 businesses and increasing the credit.

5 I'd like to speak briefly about
6 my background a little bit, why we
7 support these legislative initiatives.

8 I'm originally from the Midwest. I came
9 to Philadelphia in 1994 to go to graduate
10 school. Like Marcus, I decided to stay
11 here in Philadelphia. It was a
12 deliberate decision to help contribute to
13 a place that I felt had a lot of
14 potential. I worked for the Philadelphia
15 Police Department for two years and then
16 for what is now the Office of Innovation
17 and Technology. After four years working
18 with the City, I decided to start my own
19 business.

20 Azavea began with me working
21 out of my apartment. Over the past 15
22 years, Azavea has grown from one person
23 to 55 people, and we expect to be at 60
24 by the end of the year, almost all of
25 whom live and work in Philadelphia.

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2 Despite the high taxes in the
3 City, Philadelphia has been very good to
4 my company. Many of our products began
5 with ideas generated by people and
6 organizations here, and we now sell them
7 around the United States and even the
8 world.

9 When we started in 2001, there
10 were no B corporations, but I founded
11 Azavea with a mission in mind around
12 applying geospatial technology for civic,
13 social, and environmental impact. The
14 firm's public service mission ends up
15 being expressed in a lot of different
16 ways. We seek out projects that have the
17 potential for civic, social, and
18 environmental impact. We offer a summer
19 student mentoring program called Summer
20 of Maps in which we match up non-profit
21 organizations with students studying data
22 analysis in school. We donate a portion
23 of our profits each year to non-profits.
24 We actively collaborate with academic
25 researchers in order to do advance and

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2 state of the art. We develop and support
3 open data efforts like the Open Data
4 Philly data catalogue that the City now
5 uses. We share a lot of our software
6 under open source licenses so that others
7 can use it. We have great benefits. And
8 in 2010, we became a B corporation.

9 Why would we do all these
10 things? Why give away a portion of our
11 profits? Why limit ourselves to certain
12 kinds of business? Why become a B
13 corporation? This may sound a bit cheesy
14 to all of you, but I believe in the power
15 of technology to create better cities and
16 better communities, and I believe in the
17 power of business to accomplish good
18 things in the world. B corporations use
19 the power of business to solve social and
20 environmental problems.

21 While there may be many causes
22 to the recent economic meltdown we had, I
23 think one of the reasons was a broad
24 cultural mandate or allowance that
25 encouraged business owners and managers

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2 to pursue profits at the expense of
3 people and the planet. This was not only
4 the case. There was a time not many
5 decades ago when I think most business
6 and business owners felt a responsibility
7 for their communities in which they
8 operated. In the past few decades, we've
9 seen an increasing number of companies
10 that operate purely for the purpose of
11 increasing shareholder value. The
12 results are all around us, rising
13 inequality, spoiled environments, and
14 chronic poverty.

15 As a business owner, I believe
16 we need to restore a sense of what some
17 people have called conscious capitalism,
18 businesses operated for the sake of a
19 broad group of stakeholders that include
20 customers, employees, communities, and
21 perhaps even the shareholders as well.

22 That may seem like a tall order
23 and, to be honest, I don't think B
24 corporations and other sustainable
25 businesses are anything more than part of

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2 the answer, but my experience is that a
3 company who looks after its employees
4 ends up recruiting better people, has
5 better retention and higher levels of
6 commitment, better customer service and
7 higher revenues and profits. For Azavea,
8 becoming a B corporation has been
9 critical to enabling us to convince
10 prospective job candidates from all over
11 the United States to consider relocating
12 to Philadelphia. We have extremely
13 exacting standards for who we hire, and
14 we end up recruiting from all over the
15 country.

16 Azavea has participated in the
17 Sustainable Business Tax Credit, the
18 subject of this testimony, for the past
19 three years. I'm grateful for the nudge,
20 but at its current level, it feels like a
21 symbolic gesture, with limited impact on
22 my business. To be honest, for a
23 business our size, raising the tax credit
24 will not make a difference between
25 whether or not I continue to locate here

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 or even whether I hire a new person, but
3 it's a powerful, powerful message, one
4 that suggests that Philadelphia
5 recognizes, welcomes, and cultivates
6 businesses that are out for more than
7 profits. I believe these bills will help
8 cultivate a business ecosystem that
9 supports employees, communities, and our
10 environment, and I respectfully ask that
11 you support the two proposed ordinances.

12 Thank you for your
13 consideration.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You are
15 welcome.

16 Councilwoman Sanchez, any
17 comments, observations?

18 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: I just
19 really want to thank the businesses.
20 We've had an opportunity to visit some of
21 the folks and talk to Nicole and really
22 were even more inspired about what these
23 businesses represent for the future of
24 our economy as we talk about not only
25 protecting our planet but really their

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 insight about the eliteness of having
3 people aspire to even adopt some of the
4 practices, whether they ultimately make
5 the certification or not.

6 So I want to thank everyone,
7 and I really look forward to working with
8 them through this process.

9 To Robert's point around the
10 difficulty around the administration of
11 the tax credit, I wanted to ask you,
12 Madam Chair, if we can bring the Revenue
13 Department. The Administration has asked
14 us for some technical amendments, but
15 they've also asked us to cap the effort,
16 and so I'd like for the Revenue
17 Department to speak to that, as in any
18 acceptance of their amendment is a
19 decision that I want to do after we have
20 an on-the-record conversation about how
21 do you administer this and how do we have
22 the broadest impact.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Very well.
24 We will do that.

25 Let me ask Councilman

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2 Taubenberger.

3 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I
4 would be interested in speaking to the
5 Revenue Department as well, but I do also
6 have a question for Ms. Knapp, if I could
7 have her return.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So let me
9 just say thank you. I'm deeply inspired
10 by your testimony and your example that
11 you can do well and then do good. It's
12 quite, quite, quite inspiring.

13 I did want to ask Massage --
14 Massage Agency. Let me get it right.
15 You say you do web development?

16 MR. IANNOZZI: We do.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Did all of
18 you leave testimony?

19 MR. IANNOZZI: I did not, but I
20 will do that.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Could you,
22 please.

23 MR. IANNOZZI: Yes.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We thank
25 you all very, very much for your

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 important testimony.

3 If we could ask Christine Knapp
4 to come back to the witness table, along
5 with Marisa Waxman, the Administration
6 members to come to the witness table.

7 (Witnesses approached witness
8 table.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Hadji,
10 could you make sure we get testimony from
11 those that were just at the witness
12 table. Thank you.

13 Councilman Taubenberger.

14 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
15 you, Madam Chair.

16 Ms. Knapp, one question, and
17 that's as follows: With the increase in
18 the tax credit, how many businesses do
19 you estimate or do you think will apply?

20 MS. KNAPP: It's hard to answer
21 that question. I mean, our experience
22 over the last several years is that the
23 number of folks applying has gone down,
24 but we do think that the change that's
25 being proposed would become more

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2 attractive. So it's really hard to
3 guess. I think part of it hinges a
4 little bit also on the point that's been
5 raised of how it's advertised and
6 promoted. So if there's going to be an
7 increased effort to promote that, that
8 should certainly increase the number of
9 folks that are aware of it and may take
10 advantage of it.

11 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
12 you.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Is that
14 sufficient for you?

15 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: That
16 is sufficient. And should we go to
17 Councilwoman Sanchez? Because I do have
18 a question for Revenue as well.

19 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Why
20 don't you pursue.

21 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
22 you. Thank you, Councilwoman Sanchez.

23 With Revenue, the question is
24 as follows: It seems like the only
25 deterrence is really -- well, let me

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 phrase it this way. If the bill is right
3 and it now seems opening the door for --
4 the only fraud that could possibly -- not
5 the only fraud. The only punishment for
6 failing to meet the standards is to pay
7 back taxes that you would be owed anyway
8 and possibly maybe an additional penalty.
9 If you look at it this way, it could be
10 used as a free loan by the users and we
11 catch you if we catch you kind of a
12 thing. I think we might open the door to
13 some fraud if we don't watch this more
14 carefully or have a greater penalty. I
15 mean, that's why I'm asking about having
16 the possibility of a greater penalty.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:

18 Hi. Thank you, Councilman. Marisa
19 Waxman, First Deputy Revenue
20 Commissioner.

21 So I would say two things
22 there. One, we're certainly open to
23 looking at what are the penalties
24 consistent with ensuring that folks --
25 this credit program, all of our credit

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2 programs, are only being taken advantage
3 of appropriately. That is really
4 important to us. We also do have a
5 strong sort of audit and compliance
6 program within the Department of Revenue.

7 I will also note that firms
8 can't just write in a credit amount on
9 their tax return. There actually is an
10 application process up front that is run
11 by the Mayor's Office of Sustainability.
12 So everyone who gets into this program
13 actually has to get checked on the front
14 end before they can even get in. So we
15 think that those two things -- but we're
16 happy, of course, to have conversations
17 about what the appropriate penalties are
18 for folks who try and defraud the City
19 and the taxpayers.

20 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Am I
21 correct in saying that the penalty right
22 now would be just to pay back the taxes
23 that you would pay anyway with additional
24 penalty? Is that a correct answer?

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN: I

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2 want to go check, because sometimes stuff
3 is embedded in the credit itself.
4 Otherwise there's some provisions that
5 are for the entire section of the
6 business income and receipts tax code.
7 So I want to make sure that what is the
8 standard at any time if you claim
9 anything you shouldn't, underreport,
10 there are some standard penalties where
11 interest and penalty. So we can look at
12 that.

13 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: You
14 might open the door to what is like the
15 movie Catch Me If You Can kind of thing,
16 which we wouldn't want.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:
18 Yeah. Great.

19 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
20 you very much.

21 Madam Chair, thank you.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:
23 Thank you, Councilman.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You're
25 very welcome.

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2 Councilwoman Sanchez.

3 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
4 you. I wanted Marisa for the record to
5 kind of speak to how many of the
6 businesses currently apply for it and how
7 administratively they look to streamline
8 this tax credit program.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN: So
10 currently I think the most recent year
11 there were 25 businesses that applied.
12 One of the more interesting things,
13 though, is that even upon being approved,
14 folks don't necessarily take the credit.
15 So I think some of the changes in here --
16 the change for making it simply a gross
17 receipts tax, which is unusual compared
18 to the rest of our tax credits, and
19 making it apply to both the net income as
20 well as the gross receipts side is going
21 to make this a lot more user friendly to
22 any of the taxpayers.

23 I would say roughly half of the
24 folks who take advantage of this, their
25 entire tax bill is less than \$1,000, but

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2 they're not even taking advantage of the
3 program, which they could if they had tax
4 bills up to 4,000, but they don't even
5 need the 4,000, but because it's not open
6 on both the gross receipts and net income
7 side, they're not able to take the full
8 benefit. So by expanding this to the net
9 income side, it really does make this
10 program more worthwhile to the folks who
11 are already taking advantage of it. And
12 that's consistent with all of our other
13 tax credits as well.

14 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: How are
15 we going to realign this tax credit with
16 other tax credits to make it -- to
17 simplify it? I mean, if we're finding
18 particularly, as Christine said, you had
19 less people applying, what are we doing
20 to improve that outreach?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN: So
22 one of the things that the Department
23 does is that we have a number of outreach
24 programs. First of all, we make a point
25 to talk to tax professionals, because

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2 really that's where a lot of businesses
3 hear about this sort of thing. If you're
4 busy starting a new business, you're not
5 necessarily thinking about the taxes.
6 You're thinking about the business you're
7 trying to build and how you want it to
8 work.

9 So over the course of each tax
10 season, we meet with about 1,000 tax
11 professionals, accountants, bookkeepers,
12 CPAs, tax attorneys. And so we make sure
13 to include this in all of our information
14 for those folks. Also recently we have
15 launched a new program called Revenue 101
16 where we're meeting with the folks who
17 connect folks with credits as well as
18 just general tax compliance. And so, for
19 example, this month we've got three
20 events we're doing in conjunction with
21 PIDC where we're meeting with groups of
22 35 to 50 small business owners, making
23 sure they understand what credits are out
24 there. And so we're continuing to build
25 up those events where we're going out and

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2 talking to folks, letting them know

3 what's out there.

4 We're also in the process of
5 upgrading and updating our departmental
6 website as part of the alpha.gov. We're
7 hoping that makes it a lot easier to
8 navigate for folks who are looking for
9 this information. And probably one of
10 the best things that we rolled out this
11 year is the new tax credit form, Schedule
12 SE, in our BIRT return, which makes it a
13 lot easier for folks to sort of keep
14 track of their credits, make sure that
15 they're claiming them. And it actually
16 does have an outreach impact too, that if
17 folks are looking at their return and
18 there's this schedule for tax credits
19 that lists every single one the City
20 offers, a light might go off, where they
21 would have never actively gone and looked
22 for that credit. Now it's part of their
23 tax return. They're going to see that
24 they're not getting it, so it may prompt
25 them to ask.

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2 So we've got a number of
3 different initiatives in the works to
4 make sure that this and all of our
5 programs are accessible to folks.

6 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Madam
7 Chair, the Administration has asked for a
8 cap, so I wanted kind of Marisa to speak
9 to the need for a cap, and they would
10 prefer that we keep the credit at 4,
11 understanding that in the previous
12 legislation it was applied to the BIRT.

13 So as was mentioned previously, you
14 needed to have gross receipts of about \$2
15 million to be able to exercise that.

16 When you apply the 4,000 at gross and
17 nets, there's more of a significant
18 impact. The reason we had asked for
19 8,000, for me I looked at this tax credit
20 as an opportunity for folks not only to
21 be rewarded and incentivized for doing
22 right, but also an opportunity for people
23 to buy and locate in particular
24 districts, and that's why I felt the need
25 for more money. But I'll let Marisa

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2 speak to why they feel they need a cap,
3 and just really want to go on the record
4 because I'm very reluctant to accept it,
5 but I like to get things done. So I'll
6 let Marisa.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:

8 Sure. So this program, we're looking for
9 capping the number of participants, and
10 that's consistent with every other tax
11 credit program that the City currently
12 offers, the CDC, the job creation, the
13 PREP, which is for returning citizens.
14 And the reason caps are important is, it
15 allows us predictability in terms of
16 understanding what revenues are going to
17 come in and what the City's exposure are.
18 As we do our budget each year and we have
19 to figure out exactly how much revenue we
20 have and how we're going to spend it, we
21 need that predictability of being able to
22 project forward how much money we're
23 going to collect from this tax, and the
24 caps on these programs help us figure out
25 what our sort of maximum exposure is. So

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2 obviously they can be amended in the
3 future if the demand is great. That's
4 happened with a number of other tax
5 credit programs, but we need that sort of
6 protection each year to understand what's
7 the most that could be claimed. And so
8 if you look at programs like the CDC, the
9 amount of credit changed over time, the
10 number of organizations that were
11 eligible for that, they changed, but
12 there's always been a cap. The same has
13 been true in the job creation tax credit.
14 So we want to make sure that this is
15 consistent with how all other tax credits
16 are administered and that we're balancing
17 the desire to provide incentives to these
18 businesses to making sure that we have
19 the resources needed for the entire City.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Who or
21 what becomes the trigger that there is a
22 need to revisit a piece of legislation
23 and amend the cap?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN: It
25 can come from a variety of places, but

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2 typically that would be from Council
3 folks as you're hearing from
4 constituents. In some of the other
5 programs that's how it's always been, or
6 the Administration noticing that there's
7 a need and looking for expansion.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Please.

9 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Again,
10 that being a problem that we want.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You say --

12 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: That
13 being a problem that we want, because
14 ideally, as I said, we spend quite a bit
15 of resources here advocating for these
16 types of businesses and people to adopt
17 these types of values.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN:
19 Opportunities.

20 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Again, I
21 still believe that 8,000 is a better
22 figure, but for the purposes of moving
23 this along and getting it started.

24 I do want to kind of go on the
25 record that I think it's important that

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 this tax credit not be something that is
3 singled out, but it is something that, as
4 the Mayor has articulated, is embraced by
5 the Department of Commerce as well as our
6 Office of Sustainability as an area of
7 growth and that our outreach efforts with
8 our stakeholders, SBN and others, that we
9 really have a plan for that, and just
10 want to make sure that if I come back to
11 this Committee in the future saying we
12 need more, that they understand that I
13 reluctantly agreed for less from the
14 beginning.

15 I don't think this is -- I
16 think this is being overthought too much.
17 I think this is much simpler, but I
18 understand that like anything else when
19 you're dealing with a massive
20 bureaucracy, it takes a little bit longer
21 for folks, but I'm encouraged that the
22 Administration will work with us on that
23 and I hope that the advocates in
24 particular will be included in how we
25 outreach to this.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: It is a
3 starting point. And by way of
4 information, Christine Knapp or maybe
5 even Hadji Maloumian might help me
6 remember a tax credit that we offered for
7 developers, and we discovered that only
8 four developers were taking advantage of
9 it. So we tweaked it and amended --

10 MS. KNAPP: The green roof tax
11 credit.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The green
13 roof tax credit. Because there was not
14 enough, A, awareness; B, awareness; and,
15 C, awareness and, therefore, little to no
16 activity. So we circled back, and we
17 just re-tweaked and amended that bill to
18 hopefully incentive and raise the
19 awareness for more developers to take
20 advantage of it. That was actually
21 brought to our attention by a developer.
22 And so it will be incumbent upon the
23 environmental and sustainable community
24 to pay attention and keep this on the
25 radar screen.

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2 So here's the question given
3 Councilwoman Sanchez's concerns: Would
4 there be value in putting in the
5 legislation -- I'm simply asking -- a
6 sunset that at X period of time, 12
7 months from now, 24 months from now, the
8 Revenue Department is required to come
9 back and report back how well this is
10 being used? I don't know.

11 MS. KNAPP: I believe annual
12 reporting is already a part of the --

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What did
14 you say, Christine Knapp?

15 MS. KNAPP: Annual reporting is
16 already something that is required
17 through the legislation.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What kind
19 of reporting?

20 MS. KNAPP: Annual.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:
22 Each year there's a report that talks
23 about the utilization, number of firms
24 applied, credits taken.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So to my

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 question, annual reporting happens. I'm
3 asking, suggesting maybe we take it a
4 step further, that Revenue is required to
5 come back. Because this is a new
6 universe. This is a new world, if you
7 will, and it's unlike any of the
8 departments or any of the tax credits
9 you've mentioned given -- because this is
10 all about the future. And so with that,
11 would the Revenue Department entertain
12 reporting back to --

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:

14 Oh, certainly.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: -- to
16 Council and the Committee what the facts
17 are as they relate to raising the cap?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:

19 Absolutely. We can certainly come back
20 to present our annual report, certainly.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So then
22 it's really incumbent upon the sponsor of
23 the bill to have another resolution that
24 calls for hearings to hear a report.

25 Council Lady.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Again,
3 we intend, you know -- I intend to
4 utilize this new tool in the toolbox to
5 draw businesses to my district. I have a
6 great interest in creating a hub and
7 really embracing this sector in my
8 district. So we will be vigilant, and it
9 is my hope that the Administration will
10 take advantage of our advocates and the
11 existing business community that exists
12 in this sector and really utilize that to
13 create an environment, as Robert and some
14 of the other folks said, the awareness.
15 Whether people actually get to the
16 certification or not, that process I
17 think is an important one.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes, it
19 is.

20 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: And,
21 again, the City wants to be open for
22 business, and I think this sends a
23 message that it's not about any business
24 but it's about sustainable businesses
25 that provide good-paying, sustainable

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 jobs. And so out of respect for the work
3 that they've already done up to now, I
4 think it's important that we move this
5 forward.

6 So I very reluctantly, because
7 I hate to put a cap when you haven't even
8 started, but I think this is too
9 important and I think we will be able to,
10 in the next year, prove to the
11 Administration that this is worthy, that
12 this is going to be a job creator, and
13 we'll be back at this Committee asking to
14 raise these caps.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So put a
16 tickler in your computer that come May
17 2017, report back in a meeting with the
18 sponsor of it what the facts are, because
19 that will trigger and inform what the
20 next steps should be.

21 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: With the
22 caveat that it's about how we streamline
23 that internally. I think one of the
24 challenges we've all -- and I'm glad to
25 hear that the Revenue Department has

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 recognized this and really worked towards
3 this. We need to make this easy for
4 people to be able to leverage it. It's
5 very disheartening for those of us who
6 legislate this work to find out that
7 folks don't know about it. And one of
8 the things I've learned with the use and
9 occupancy exemption and others, when we
10 engrain it in the returns, I think it
11 helps highlight that for folks, but I
12 really want this to be a cause. This
13 whole B corp piece has to be something
14 that we absolutely can promote and, like
15 I said, it not becomes isolation of the
16 Office of Sustainability but one where
17 Commerce and others are very proactive in
18 saying this is the types of businesses
19 that we want in the City.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: It's very,
21 very exciting.

22 Would you agree?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:

24 Yes.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN:

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 Absolutely. Okay, then. So we've heard
3 the charge and the appeal from the
4 sponsor, and we trust that you'll take
5 that to heart.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:

7 Absolutely.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: All right.

9 Okay, then. Let's move to Bill No.

10 160362 and ask our Clerk to please read
11 the title of the bill.

12 THE CLERK: Bill No. 160362, an
13 ordinance amending Chapter 16-300 of The
14 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Maintenance
15 and Supervision," to require installation
16 of LED lighting in connection with large
17 City public works projects, all under
18 certain terms and conditions.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. And
20 so I will offer a special thank you to
21 the Mayor's Office of Sustainability and
22 the Department of Public Property for
23 working with my staff throughout this
24 process. I introduced this bill to
25 require installation of LED lighting in

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 connection with large City public works
3 projects, like this building. Utilizing
4 LED lights is by far one of the most
5 efficient and cost-effective methods of
6 reducing our city's overall energy
7 consumption.

8 And so with that, we're going
9 to move to Christine Knapp, Mayor's
10 Office of Sustainability, and then we'll
11 ask the next panel to be prepared to
12 speak on Resolution 160203.

13 Christine Knapp.

14 MS. KNAPP: Good afternoon
15 again. I am Christine Knapp, Director of
16 the Office of Sustainability, testifying
17 in support of Bill No. 160362, which
18 requires the installation of
19 energy-efficient light-emitting diode, or
20 LED, lighting in every major renovation
21 or new construction project funded
22 primarily with City capital dollars. I
23 want to thank Councilwoman Reynolds Brown
24 for your continued leadership and the
25 Department of Public Property who worked

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 closely with our office on this bill.

3 The Office of Sustainability is
4 responsible for the implementation of
5 Greenworks Philadelphia, the City's
6 comprehensive sustainability plan. Bill
7 No. 160362 supports several overarching
8 Greenworks objectives, including energy
9 conservation, reduced greenhouse gas
10 emissions, and improving energy
11 efficiency of the City's building stock.

12 As the largest energy user in
13 Philadelphia, we know that every dollar
14 the City saves on energy is a dollar that
15 we can invest in essential City services.
16 Requiring LED lighting in new
17 construction and major renovations in
18 City facilities will improve building
19 performance, reduce maintenance costs,
20 and save energy and money. LEDs can last
21 25 times longer, use 75 percent less
22 energy, and offer comparable or better
23 light quality than other types of
24 lighting. The overall lifecycle cost of
25 most applications of LEDs is extremely

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 favorable, and the City is already
3 incorporating LED lighting in many new
4 construction projects and major
5 renovations of existing structures. This
6 is already seeing environmental and
7 economic benefits.

8 A few highlights:

9 The Office of Sustainability,
10 through its Energy Efficiency Fund, has
11 upgraded to LED lighting at three fleet
12 repair shops. These projects have
13 reduced energy use at the sites
14 significantly and provide savings of over
15 \$50,000 annually.

16 The Office of Sustainability is
17 currently working with the Department of
18 Parks and Recreation and the Department
19 of Public Property to replace lighting in
20 fire stations and recreation centers also
21 through the Energy Efficiency Fund.

22 The quadplex project, focused
23 on energy conservation measures in the
24 City's four largest office buildings,
25 included a number of LED retrofits,

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 including an upgrade of the iconic City
3 Hall clock tower lighting to LEDs, which
4 saves approximately \$10,000 in energy
5 costs annually.

6 In the future, should
7 technology advance, this legislation
8 provides the flexibility to install
9 lighting that exceeds the efficiency of
10 LEDs. It also allows for exceptions in
11 cases where LEDs are either financially
12 or technically not feasible.

13 The Office of Sustainability
14 supports this bill because it is a simple
15 step to codify a best practice and ensure
16 that energy-efficient lighting is
17 budgeted for and evaluated for inclusion
18 in every City-funded major renovation or
19 development project.

20 Thank you for your time. I'm
21 happy to answer any questions you may
22 have.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any
24 questions for the Administration?

25 (No response.)

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you
3 very much, Christine, for the continued
4 partnership with our office.

5 MS. KNAPP: Thank you.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: If the
7 Clerk would please read the title of
8 Resolution No. 160203.

9 THE CLERK: Resolution No.
10 160203, a resolution authorizing the
11 Committee on the Environment to conduct
12 public hearings to investigate the
13 relationship between poor Indoor
14 Environmental Quality and high incidences
15 of childhood asthma.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you
17 very much. And we are delighted to have
18 Dr. Thomas Farley, M.D., MPH, City of
19 Philadelphia Health Commissioner.
20 Welcome.

21 DR. FARLEY: Thank you very
22 much.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You're
24 welcome. Please proceed with your
25 testimony.

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 DR. FARLEY: Good afternoon.

3 I'm Dr. Thomas Farley, Commissioner of
4 the Philadelphia Department of Public
5 Health. Thank you for the opportunity to
6 present testimony on Resolution No.
7 160203 on the issue of environmental
8 quality and child asthma in Philadelphia.

9 Asthma is a disease in which
10 the airways in the lungs become irritated
11 and narrowed. It causes repeated
12 episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, and
13 nighttime or early morning coughing.

14 Asthma keeps children from taking part in
15 physical activities, causes them to miss
16 school days due to frequent hospital and
17 doctors visits, and interferes with their
18 sleep. For reasons that are not clear,
19 asthma rates are rising in this country
20 and hospitalizations for asthma are
21 increasing in Philadelphia. Asthma rates
22 are higher in African Americans than in
23 whites and are higher in people with
24 lower incomes.

25 Asthma attacks are triggered by

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 breathing in small particles or chemicals
3 that irritate the airways. Important
4 asthma triggers in the home include
5 tobacco smoke, mold, dust and dust mites,
6 cockroach and mice allergens, and furry
7 pets.

8 Fortunately, interventions in
9 the home to reduce these asthma triggers
10 have been successful in reducing asthma
11 exacerbations, reducing hospitalizations,
12 and missed days of school and saving
13 costs for medical care. Some of the
14 important research demonstrating the
15 effectiveness of these programs has been
16 done by experts here in Philadelphia, and
17 I think you're about to hear from one of
18 those experts in just a minute. And
19 there are ongoing outreach programs
20 conducted by hospitals and funded by
21 health plans in Philadelphia to reduce
22 in-home triggers for children with asthma
23 or educate parents on how to do that.

24 The Department of Public Health
25 runs the Healthy Homes, Healthy Kids

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 Program, an initiative to prevent and
3 correct significant hazards in homes of
4 children with persistent or
5 difficult-to-control asthma. The program
6 was originally funded by the U.S.

7 Department of Housing and Urban
8 Development. Since the HUD grant ended
9 in December 2013, we have continued the
10 program with limited physical home
11 remediation using General Fund dollars.

12 The limited remediation includes
13 personalized environmental action plan
14 and motivational interviews, assistance
15 with clutter reduction and smoking
16 cessation, integrated pest management
17 services, child and caregiver education,
18 and limited physical remediation such as
19 replacing carpets. Since 2011, the
20 program has helped over 160 families, and
21 we are continuing to receive referrals
22 from Saint Christopher's Hospital for
23 Children and two of the City's health
24 centers.

25 Thank you for your interest in

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 this important topic, and I'm happy to
3 answer any of your questions.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You're
5 very welcome.

6 Any questions or comments for
7 our witness, our Health Commissioner?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You are
10 welcome. We thank you for your
11 expertise.

12 DR. FARLEY: Thank you.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We would
14 like to call up the last panel, Dr. Tyra
15 Bryant-Stephens, Medical Director of the
16 Community Asthma Prevention Program at
17 Philadelphia Children's Hospital. Nancy
18 De Leon Link, Chief Operating Officer of
19 the National Nursing Centers Consortium,
20 report to the witness table. Stefanie
21 Fleischer Seldin, Esquire, Executive
22 Director of Rebuilding Together
23 Philadelphia; Jill Roberts, Executive
24 Director of the Healthy Rowhouse Project;
25 and Frank Monaghan, Executive Director at

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 Habitat for Humanity.

3 (Witnesses approached witness
4 table.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good
6 afternoon, all.

7 (Good afternoon.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Please
9 speak into the mic. State your name for
10 the record and proceed with your
11 testimony.

12 DR. BRYANT-STEPHENS: Good
13 afternoon. My name is Tyra
14 Bryant-Stephens. I'm an attending
15 physician at the Philadelphia Children's
16 Hospital of Philadelphia and founder and
17 Medical Director of the Community Asthma
18 Prevention Program of CHOP. It's a
19 program that I began 19 years ago because
20 of the high rates of pediatric asthma, as
21 Dr. Farley referred to, in our
22 communities, and I would like before I
23 begin to thank Councilwoman Blondell
24 Reynolds Brown and the Philadelphia City
25 Council's Committee on the Environment

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 for holding this hearing on the important
3 issue of indoor air quality and its
4 impacts on asthma in children.

5 Asthma is the most common
6 childhood disease and the number one
7 reason why children miss school. In
8 fact, in a study that we conducted at
9 CHOP, we found that nearly 25 percent of
10 children, both in the schools and in the
11 community, had a diagnosis of asthma, and
12 we know there are many that are
13 undiagnosed. We also know that children
14 with uncontrolled asthma have nighttime
15 symptoms, and this interferes with their
16 ability to sleep; therefore, their
17 ability to learn the next day.

18 As Medical Director of the
19 Community Asthma Prevention Program at
20 Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, over
21 the past 18 years I've seen the
22 detrimental effects of poor indoor air
23 quality on asthma control for children.

24 The Community Asthma Prevention
25 Program at CHOP provides free asthma

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 classes in familiar environments such as
3 schools, churches, day care centers, and
4 community centers throughout the City.
5 We've had over 183 class series with over
6 2,700 participants. We also provide
7 asthma resources for professionals and
8 students in school, as well as home
9 visits in West, Southwest, and North
10 Philadelphia. Within our home visits are
11 CAPP's expert staff, who are community
12 health workers, have conducted over
13 15,000 home visits for children with
14 asthma, and what we do -- what our staff
15 does there is helps parents learn how to
16 remove common asthma indoor triggers, as
17 well as we give supplies to families to
18 help them remove indoor triggers such as
19 mattress and pillow covers. We replace
20 carpet with vinyl tiles. We also give
21 them roach and mice bait.

22 The families are then
23 responsible for making the home
24 improvements -- we monitor that for a
25 year -- that will reduce these asthma

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 triggers, and within this, we see
3 reduction in hospitalization and
4 emergency room visits.

5 Children should be safe where
6 they live, learn, play, sleep, and
7 worship. However, poor housing and poor
8 school environments cause these children
9 to be exposed to excess moisture, mold,
10 rodents, roaches, and dust from holes in
11 the wall, all of which are triggers for
12 asthma.

13 You should have hopefully
14 pictures that we've seen. Do you see
15 attached to the testimony before and
16 after? And you can see some of the
17 environments that we encounter. Also
18 most recently CAPP has initiated the West
19 Philadelphia Asthma Care Collaborative to
20 formulate a comprehensive plan to reduce
21 disparities in asthma outcomes.

22 As part of our fact-finding, we
23 actually took the data that Children's
24 Hospital has around emergency room visits
25 and hospitalizations and we overlaid L&I

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 violations, and as you can see also in
3 the maps that I attached to my testimony,
4 there are definite pockets where if we
5 would band together to improve housing,
6 we could probably reduce a lot of the
7 hospitalization and emergency room visits
8 that we see. And I really think that we
9 have to approach this block by block and
10 neighborhood by neighborhood until we
11 have adequate housing for all children in
12 Philadelphia.

13 In terms of remediation,
14 however, schools cannot be forgotten,
15 because during the week, that's where
16 school-age students spend the majority of
17 their time. Unfortunately, in
18 Philadelphia due to the age of the
19 buildings and in many cases inadequate
20 funding, our children are exposed to the
21 same triggers that we find in inadequate
22 housing, including mice, mold, and
23 cockroaches. Our partners at the School
24 District of Philadelphia's Office of
25 Environmental Management Services have

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 done due diligence in identifying school
3 buildings that need capital improvement,
4 but they unfortunately don't have the
5 funding in their budget to implement the
6 changes. It's important for children's
7 health that each school's indoor air
8 quality meets the standard of green
9 healthy buildings, and I hope that the
10 Council would support funding to
11 accomplish this.

12 I'd like to conclude by telling
13 a story that I shared with President
14 Obama about a year ago where I had the
15 honor of representing my patients in
16 Children's Hospital in a small roundtable
17 discussion on climate change and public
18 health. I met with the President and
19 with the U.S. Surgeon General, Vivek
20 Murthy.

21 In the year after Hurricane
22 Irene, a young boy came to CHOP's
23 emergency department six times and, after
24 that, was admitted to the hospital
25 multiple times due to asthma attack. He

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 was referred to the Community Asthma
3 Prevention Program. We had our staff
4 member visit the house, and you could see
5 obvious mold growing on the walls. She
6 was able to connect -- our staff was able
7 to connect the mom with additional
8 resources, which resulted in him moving
9 out of the house and during the year
10 after that move, he only had one
11 emergency room visit and no
12 hospitalizations. So clearly this is an
13 example of what we can do if we really
14 tackle housing, tackle the indoor air
15 quality. And unfortunately we cannot
16 reach every household of children with
17 asthma. We know that there's 35,000 in
18 the School District, and if 25 percent of
19 the children have asthma, you can imagine
20 the number of houses. So we really need
21 a systemwide way to create
22 asthma-friendly environments for children
23 with asthma.

24 In closing, all levels of
25 government need to work together to

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 ensure that Philadelphia's children
3 attend school in safe buildings and live
4 in safe housing, which is asthma trigger
5 free. This will result in reduction of
6 asthma hospitalizations, asthma symptoms,
7 and even death due to asthma and, very
8 importantly, increase school performance
9 and attendance.

10 Thank you again for the
11 opportunity to testify.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We thank
13 you as well. We will hear from all of
14 the panelists and then pose questions.
15 Thank you.

16 Please, state your name for the
17 record, proceed with your testimony.

18 MS. LINK: Thank you. My name
19 is Nancy De Leon Link. I'm the Chief
20 Operating Officer for the National
21 Nurse-Led Consortium, or NNCC. We're a
22 national non-profit housed in
23 Philadelphia and we have over 15 years of
24 experience implementing programs related
25 to environmental health and children's

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 health and asthmas. I'd like to thank

3 the members of the Committee for the

4 opportunity to submit testimony today.

5 This is a very serious issue, as has been

6 discussed, and NNCC is requesting that

7 City Council consider increased funding

8 for relevant programming, home repairs

9 and education, as well as increased

10 support of tenants' rights and building

11 the capacity of the Department of

12 Licenses and Inspections to enforce

13 existing housing codes.

14 NNCC has a long history of

15 implementing programs that address indoor

16 environmental health and improve health

17 outcomes for children. We're currently

18 the grantee of the Southeastern

19 Pennsylvania Lead and Healthy Homes

20 program, which is funded by the state

21 Department of Health. This three-year

22 program provides healthy home visiting

23 services to low-income households with

24 children in an eight-county region,

25 including Philadelphia.

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 NNCC works with partner
3 agencies to provide families with home
4 visiting services, and we conduct about
5 250 of those visits to households in
6 Philadelphia each year. These home
7 visiting services include providing home
8 assessments, comprehensive environmental
9 health education, and needed low-cost
10 interventions such as those described by
11 Dr. Stephens, as well as limited hazard
12 remediation. The Philadelphia Department
13 of Public Health is a valued partner with
14 us on this program.

15 As was discussed, Philadelphia
16 faces many issues related to indoor
17 environmental quality. In 2013, the
18 National Center for Healthy Housing
19 stated that Philadelphia was ranked as
20 one of the most unhealthy cities in the
21 U.S., in part due to its older housing
22 stock and high levels of poverty. These
23 unhealthy housing conditions can lead to
24 asthma and other respiratory problems.
25 This often occurs, as was described,

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 during an increased presence of asthma
3 triggers in the home; for example, mold
4 and moisture associated with leaks, also
5 poor ventilation, as well as pest
6 infestations.

7 In 2015, Philadelphia was
8 listed as the third most challenging
9 place for asthmatics to live in the U.S.
10 and, as also stated, almost 22 percent of
11 Philadelphia children have asthma.

12 I just want to tell you a story
13 based on our own program to illustrate
14 the impact that indoor environmental
15 quality can have on asthma.

16 So last month with our Lead and
17 Healthy Homes program, we conducted a
18 hazard remediation in a low-income
19 Philadelphia household with a severely
20 asthmatic child. She was suffering from
21 frequent asthma symptoms, using her
22 rescue medication often, and not sleeping
23 through the night due to her asthma.
24 NNCC's Healthy Home specialist conducted
25 an assessment of the home and recognized

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 a number of asthma triggers, including a
3 roof leak linked to mold growth and moldy
4 carpeting in the child's bedroom. NNCC
5 worked with a local contractor to fix the
6 roof leak and remove the carpet. When
7 the Healthy Home specialist returned to
8 the home after the remediation had been
9 completed, the child's father told her
10 that since the remediation, his daughter
11 had been sleeping through the night and
12 not waking up to control her asthma. The
13 father said his daughter ran downstairs
14 the morning following the remediation,
15 gave him a huge hug and said, Dad, I can
16 finally breathe.

17 This is why we do what we do,
18 and experiences such as this reenforce
19 the impact that services can have on
20 improving asthma to better children's
21 health as well as the health of our
22 community.

23 With these points in mind, NNCC
24 respectfully requests that City Council
25 consider the following:

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 Discussing the importance of
3 indoor environmental quality and its
4 relationship to asthma at City Council's
5 upcoming Public Health budget hearing,
6 specifically related to dedicated funding
7 for ongoing healthy homes programming
8 citywide; increased funding for new and
9 existing home repair programs, including
10 Basic Systems Repair, weatherization
11 services, and mold abatement remediation;
12 increased efforts to work in coordination
13 with organizations such as Habitat for
14 Humanity, Rebuilding Together
15 Philadelphia, and other organizations;
16 increase funding to provide education to
17 Philadelphia residents regarding indoor
18 environmental quality, its relationship
19 to asthma, and available related
20 resources.

21 Second, increase support of
22 tenants' rights related to indoor
23 environmental quality; for example,
24 increasing education resources and
25 policies around a tenant's right to

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 high-quality indoor air.

3 And, third, build and ensure
4 the capacity of the Department of
5 Licenses and Inspections to enforce
6 existing housing codes.

7 By implementing these requests,
8 Philadelphia will contribute
9 significantly to reducing the negative
10 impact that poor indoor environmental
11 quality can have on childhood asthma,
12 which in turn will improve public health.

13 Thank you for your time.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Very
15 welcome.

16 Good afternoon.

17 MS. ROBERTS: Good afternoon.

18 I'm Jill Roberts, the Executive Director
19 of the Healthy Rowhouse Project, an
20 initiative of the Center for
21 Architecture. The Healthy Rowhouse
22 Project was founded in 2014 with the goal
23 of researching, creating, and testing a
24 model on how to bring home repair to
25 scale in order to preserve existing

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 affordable housing and improve the health
3 of the people living in those homes.

4 For 2016, our goal is to
5 research the health conditions that cause
6 Philadelphians to miss school and work or
7 hasten their moving into assisted care
8 facilities and determine how many homes
9 in Philadelphia are in need of repairs
10 that will stabilize and preserve the
11 house and approve the health of the
12 occupants.

13 Philadelphia has a huge
14 affordable housing asset in our blocks
15 and blocks of rowhomes, but 38 percent of
16 homeowners in Philadelphia make less than
17 \$35,000 a year. These homeowners want to
18 stay in their homes, but cannot afford to
19 repair them, and that leaking roof and
20 the resulting mold and dampness are
21 making the residents sick.

22 Asthma in particular is a
23 fast-growing public health problem.
24 Unhealthy housing conditions cause 40
25 percent of all asthma incidences and

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 contribute to poor behavior and
3 performance in schools.

4 On the Healthy Rowhouse Project
5 website, we have volumes of data and
6 information in our resource library that
7 outline in detail programs and studies
8 across the country and right here in our
9 own city that show housing and poor
10 repair has a direct effect on the health
11 of the occupants.

12 Repairs to homes in
13 Philadelphia is a well-documented need.
14 The repair needs go beyond indoor
15 environmental quality, but IEQ is a
16 distinct part of any repair program.
17 Philadelphia has several really good
18 government and non-profit programs that
19 repair homes, but we need to bring home
20 repairs to scale. Our neighborhoods have
21 lost thousands of affordable homes to
22 abandonment over the past 60 years due to
23 the families' inability to afford the
24 deferred maintenance costs and simply
25 abandon the home. There is no reason to

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 lose more.

3 If we repair a home that is
4 owned outright and, therefore,
5 affordable, we can maintain the health of
6 the home and its occupants, as well as
7 the block and the neighborhood, prevent
8 home abandonment, reduce housing
9 insecurity and homelessness.

10 A collaborative project with
11 Saint Christopher's Hospital and the
12 Philadelphia Department of Public Health
13 invested an average of \$3,500 into 160
14 homes that had children with severe
15 asthma. The home repairs included
16 repairing leaks, remediating mold and
17 water damage, removing carpeting and
18 refinishing floors, and instituting a
19 pest management program. After the
20 repairs from January 2011 through
21 December 2013, the group reported 70
22 percent fewer hospitalizations, 76
23 percent fewer ER visits, 62 percent fewer
24 doctors visits, and 53 percent fewer
25 missed days of school or day care due to

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 asthma, and that is just one program with
3 a small population sample, but the
4 results are extraordinary when it comes
5 to recognizing the value of the health
6 improvements to the children and the
7 preservation of their homes.

8 In 2009, the Robert Wood
9 Johnson Foundation Commission to Build a
10 Healthier America reported in a study
11 that 40 percent of asthma episodes are
12 due to asthma triggers in the home,
13 representing \$5 billion annually in
14 preventable medical costs.

15 The Healthy Rowhouse Project,
16 along with several other programs in the
17 City, wants to find a way to bring home
18 repairs to scale in Philadelphia to
19 improve not just indoor environmental
20 quality, but the overall quality of the
21 existing affordable housing stock in this
22 great city and, at the same time, improve
23 the health of the residents of the homes
24 so that they can be successful and
25 healthy City citizens.

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 Thank you.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You're
4 very welcome as well.

5 Any questions or comments from
6 members of this panel?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We want to
9 thank you for the visual, Children's
10 Hospital, PowerPoint. It helps us
11 visualize the magnitude of the problem.

12 Councilwoman Bass.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes. Thank
14 you very much.

15 And I want to thank the panel
16 for being here today and for your
17 comments and for not just coming with the
18 experiences that you've had but also
19 ideas to help us deal with the problem.
20 And as someone who has a number of family
21 members with asthma, there's nothing more
22 frightening than when you're around
23 someone who can't breathe and if they
24 don't have their inhaler. It's just the
25 worst thing in the world. Breathing is

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 something that's so natural that we do
3 it, we don't think about it, and when
4 you're around someone who is having
5 trouble with breathing, their access is
6 restricted, their lungs are restricted,
7 then it becomes quite a fearful
8 experience, I'll put it that way.

9 But I wanted to thank you all
10 for the recommendations that you gave us
11 in terms of how to fix the problem,
12 particularly suggestions on additional
13 dollars for Basic Systems Repair, things
14 of that nature that would help us
15 remediate mold in particular, which is so
16 problematic in folks with asthma.

17 Also I wanted to take this as
18 an opportunity to recognize that Council
19 President Darrell Clarke has a plan that
20 I think would be very helpful in dealing
21 with this situation. He has introduced a
22 home preservation plan that would put
23 additional dollars into preserving
24 existing homes here in our in-need
25 neighborhoods, in neighborhoods that are

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 underserved and in those communities that
3 are most at need, and I think that that
4 will go a long way in terms of making a
5 difference with asthma, with mold, with
6 all the remediation, and not just around
7 asthma as it relates to the mold but your
8 quality and environment and living
9 conditions altogether.

10 So I just wanted to take this
11 as an opportunity to applaud our Council
12 President, even though he's not here
13 right now, but just to recognize that we
14 do have something on the table right now
15 that I think will be very, very helpful
16 regarding this matter.

17 So thank you, Madam Chair.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: You are
19 welcome.

20 Thank you, ladies. Appreciate
21 your intellect and the work that you're
22 doing in this area on this issue. Thank
23 you very much.

24 So others here to testify, our
25 last panel, Stefanie Fleischer Seldin,

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 Esquire; Frank Monaghan. If you proceed
3 to the witness table and give us your
4 testimony.

5 (Witness approached witness
6 table.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good
8 afternoon.

9 MS. SELDIN: Good afternoon.
10 Chairwoman Reynolds Brown and members of
11 the Committee, thank you so much for the
12 opportunity to testify. Councilman
13 Taubenberger, before you leave, I just
14 want to --

15 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I'm
16 not leaving. I'm actually getting a
17 pencil so I can take down more testimony.

18 MS. SELDIN: Oh, good. I
19 wanted to thank you for joining me at our
20 recent Rebuilding Days in Mantua.

21 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER:
22 You're welcome.

23 MS. SELDIN: Rebuilding
24 Together Philadelphia renovates the homes
25 of low-income families, about 75

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 owner-occupied homes a year, by
3 mobilizing volunteers, and thankfully
4 Councilmember Taubenberger was not in so
5 much pain when he was walking around on
6 our building, apparently got a good visit
7 and enjoyed meeting with our homeowners.

8 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I
9 did. It was a very nice meeting and
10 really hands-on on what you were doing,
11 and I like that. Actually, I was
12 actually in more pain than I am today
13 because I didn't have this boot on. This
14 boot relieves a lot of pain, for anyone
15 that wants to know. It's a great thing.
16 It's an old soccer injury. And I
17 actually was hobbling around more so at
18 your place than here.

19 MS. SELDIN: Well, hooray for
20 healthcare. And that's what we're
21 talking about today, is the health and
22 safety of our children and those affected
23 by asthma.

24 So at the build that the
25 Councilman was at, we had about 500

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 volunteers and we renovated 15 homes in
3 Mantua. And I just want to tell you one
4 story about one of those homeowners that
5 directly goes to what we're talking about
6 today.

7 So this homeowner is Tanisha
8 Smith. She is the single mother of five.
9 One of her children has asthma. We
10 removed the carpet from her home that was
11 old and dirty and full of pollen and pet
12 dander and pests. And we got a call just
13 yesterday, I just want to let you know my
14 daughter is coughing less.

15 So I'm an asthmatic and I know
16 that asthma is not just wheezing. It's
17 coughing. So we really helped this one
18 child in a month just by removing carpet.
19 So what are the other things that we do?
20 All of our home repairs are based on 25
21 health and safety principles created by
22 the National Center for Healthy Homes and
23 about nine Rebuilding Together affiliates
24 across the country, including Rebuilding
25 Together Philadelphia. And I attached

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 for you the list for goals, and the
3 highlighted ones on Page 2 are the ones
4 that directly impact asthma. They're the
5 carpet removal I just talked about. It's
6 the moisture problems that were talked
7 about in the prior panel. It's pests and
8 pet dander removal. So all of those
9 things are what Rebuilding Together does
10 every day in the blocks all around the
11 City of Philadelphia.

12 I want to also thank Councilman
13 Green for joining Councilmember
14 Taubenberger at our recent block build,
15 and of course I want to invite
16 Councilwoman Bass and Councilwoman
17 Reynolds Brown to our next build, which
18 is in West Oak Lane. We worked with
19 State Representative Evans, and we'll be
20 repairing 15 homes on June 3rd, not very
21 far from your district, Councilwoman
22 Bass. So we'd love to have you there to
23 show what we do and what we can do with
24 volunteers and really cost effectively to
25 reduce asthma and other health problems

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 in our community for a very limited
3 amount of money. Our average investment
4 is \$8,000.

5 So you've heard, I'm sure, all
6 the statistics. My colleague Jill did a
7 fabulous job at giving you some of those.
8 I'm sure the Health Commissioner did as
9 well, so I don't want to belabor the
10 point they already made, but I do want to
11 emphasize that the substandard housing
12 that we have in Philadelphia really
13 contributes to the lack of health for our
14 children and our families, and the work
15 that Rebuilding Together and Habitat,
16 since my colleague Frank is not here --
17 no, he didn't show. So Frank, Habitat
18 does a fabulous job as well. We partner
19 with them. We partner with NNCC, whom
20 you heard from earlier.

21 So we're really hoping that
22 Council President Clarke's initiative
23 will go -- will work not only to reduce
24 that wait list, but also to recognize the
25 work that Habitat and Rebuilding Together

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 are already doing cost effectively in the
3 community, and perhaps some of that \$60
4 million could also go to expand our
5 programs and let us make an impact with
6 our volunteers as opposed to just with
7 City money. We really can leverage the
8 City money in our volunteers, I think,
9 frankly, a little more cost effectively
10 than PHDC, whom we partner with a lot,
11 but I just couldn't let the opportunity
12 slip by to make a pitch for the work that
13 we do.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So in many
15 ways, you've answered the question, but
16 we do want to put on the record, the
17 Council President recently introduced a
18 proposal to provide \$100 million towards
19 housing preservation efforts. Do you
20 think this proposal would improve the
21 indoor environmental quality of
22 Philadelphia's housing stock and
23 subsequently lower the childhood asthma
24 rate?

25 MS. SELDIN: I do, because as

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 everyone has spoken to today, the
3 repairs, the Basic Systems Repairs
4 actually have a huge impact on asthma.
5 If you don't have an impermeable roof,
6 you have moisture, and that triggers
7 asthma. So if you have a leaky plumbing
8 fixture, right, again, moisture problem.
9 They do the whole entire exterior of a
10 house. If you just plug a single hole in
11 the exterior of a house, you prevent
12 pests from coming in, and I'm sure the
13 Health Commissioner talked about how
14 pests can cause asthma.

15 So, yes, absolutely. Basic
16 System Repair is part of the problem, but
17 what they won't do that Rebuilding
18 Together and Habitat will do is remove
19 carpet. They won't do that. They won't
20 actually take up old, dirty, ratty carpet
21 and put down vinyl floor that will
22 prevent other asthma attacks. So there's
23 a limit to what the Basic System Repair
24 is allowed to do.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. All

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 right.

3 Question or comments from
4 members of the Committee?

5 Councilman Green.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

7 And, Ms. Seldin, thank you for
8 your commentary. Thank you for inviting
9 the Councilmembers to your next rebuild.
10 However, you may have forgotten that you
11 could also invite maybe not Councilman
12 Taubenberger because he's still in
13 recovery, but both Councilwomen Brown and
14 Bass for an outstanding outdoor activity
15 this Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m., which
16 is the Rebuilding Together Philadelphia
17 5K in the park at Forbidden Drive, which
18 I've already signed up to run. I'm not
19 going to challenge -- oh, and
20 Councilwoman Sanchez. I'm sorry. I
21 forgot.

22 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: You
23 don't need to challenge me.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I didn't
25 challenge. I just said invite to

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 participate.

3 But I just want to take -- I'll
4 allow them to answer or choose not to
5 answer on that invitation. But I do want
6 to thank Ms. Seldin as well as Ms. Link
7 and Dr. Bryant-Stephens and Ms. Roberts
8 for your testimony in reference to the
9 issue of asthma as it pertains to the
10 housing stock we have here in the City of
11 Philadelphia. As everyone on this panel
12 and in this body knows, Philadelphia is a
13 city of neighborhoods. We have a very
14 high homeownership rate, and because of
15 being a city of neighborhoods, people
16 live in homes that are often older and we
17 don't have the resources that we need to
18 at times maintain these homes, in which
19 some people don't focus on the connection
20 between maintaining homes in the City of
21 Philadelphia and some of the health
22 issues and concerns like asthma as well
23 as some of the other concerns.

24 So I want to thank all of you
25 for your testimony and your advocacy in

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 this regard.

3 MS. SELDIN: Thank you so much,
4 and thank you for joining us tomorrow.
5 And anyone else is, of course, welcome.
6 Thank you for the plug. But really we'd
7 love to see you during the day, during
8 your weekday on June 3rd to see us in
9 action. So any time during the day.
10 Nine o'clock is the press event. So
11 hopefully we'll see anyone who hasn't
12 been yet or -- you're going to work this
13 time, right, Councilman? I was going to
14 get you in a t-shirt this time, right?

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I plan on
16 trying to do that, like I've done in
17 Logan in the past.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So thank
19 you for the --

20 MS. SELDIN: Thank you.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Schedule
22 permitting.

23 MS. SELDIN: Okay.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you
25 for the challenge. I am not one to back

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 down or back away from anything physical
3 fitness related, but I'm committed for
4 this Saturday, so we'll get a rain check.

5 MS. SELDIN: Okay. It's
6 probably a good thing because I think
7 it's supposed to rain. That was a good
8 choice. We have ponchos. We bought
9 ponchos. You're good to go.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you
11 very much.

12 MS. SELDIN: Thank you.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Anyone
14 else to testify on this resolution?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: With that,
17 then, there being no further testimony,
18 we will close our public hearing and go
19 into a public meeting.

20 The Chair recognizes
21 Councilwoman Bass for a motion on Bill
22 No. 160132.

23 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: I got an
24 amendment.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes; for

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 amendment to the Bill 160132.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
4 Madam Chair. An amendment has been
5 offered to Bill No. 160132. Copies of
6 the amendment have been circulated to all
7 members of the Committee, and I move that
8 the amendment to Bill No. 160132 be
9 approved.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any
11 second?

12 (Duly seconded.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: It has
14 been moved and properly seconded that the
15 amendment to Bill No. 160132 be approved.

16 All those in favor signify by
17 saying aye.

18 (Aye.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any
20 opposition?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.
23 There being no opposition, this motion is
24 carried.

25 I now recognize Councilwoman

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 Bass for a motion on the bill, as
3 amended.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
5 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No.
6 160132, as amended, be moved out of this
7 Committee with a favorable recommendation
8 and I further move that the rules of
9 Council be suspended to allow first
10 reading at our next public session.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Is there a
12 second?

13 (Duly seconded.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Duly
15 seconded. It has been properly moved and
16 properly seconded that Bill No. 160132,
17 as amended, be reported from this
18 Committee with a favorable recommendation
19 and further moved that the rules of
20 Council be suspended so as to permit
21 first reading of this bill at the next
22 scheduled session of City Council.

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

25 (Aye.)

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Is there
3 any opposition?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: There
6 being none, this motion is carried.

7 And let me just congratulate
8 Councilwoman Sanchez on this B corp and
9 how exciting that is, and offline I'll
10 share with you some ideas about how to
11 promote this through social media.

12 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: There's
13 also an amendment on 133.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.
15 That's where we're headed.

16 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Can you
17 just real quick before we do 133.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes.

19 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: So as I
20 spoke to and I had the Administration
21 come forward, for some of the members who
22 may have been out of the room when we had
23 the discussion, the Administration -- and
24 I'm very reluctantly accepting these
25 amendments about capping the number of

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 businesses. Right now the current cap is
3 25. We are doing 50 for year 2017 and
4 2018 and 75 for year 2019 through 2022.
5 I wanted to put on the record that I may
6 be coming back. The Administration says
7 they need this for predictability.

8 The other amendment which
9 really hurts me is that they're insisting
10 on keeping the benefit at 4,000 as it is
11 applied to net income as opposed to just
12 the 4,000 that was applied to gross and
13 not the 8 that I propose. There again, I
14 reserve the right to come back to this
15 Committee if we feel that this is not
16 enough. I think, as was testified,
17 there's quite a bit of obstacles about
18 getting to B corp certification. We're
19 asking folks to pay a living wage. We're
20 asking them to do all of the things that
21 we legislate here. And really the goal
22 for me is for B corps to look at our
23 commercial corridors and, in my district
24 in particular, creating a hub and really
25 buying into the neighborhood, not just

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 renting. And so, there again, I'm going
3 to accept it for the purposes of moving
4 this forward and really making this
5 statement that we're going to embrace
6 this, but I just want to note that if in
7 fact we find a huge interest in this, we
8 will be coming back to the Environment
9 Committee, because I'm very reluctant
10 about accepting the caps and the
11 limitations for something that we all
12 agree is incredible potential for diverse
13 sustainable businesses.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Well taken
15 for the record, and the Administration
16 did testify on the record that they will
17 report back within the year. So it's
18 incumbent upon them to signal their
19 computers to circle back.

20 Okay, then. That being stated,
21 the Chair again recognizes Councilwoman
22 Bass for an amendment to Bill No. 160133.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
24 Madam Chair. There have been amendments
25 offered for Bill No. 160133. Copies of

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 the amendments have been circulated to
3 all members of the Committee, and I move
4 that amendments to Bill No. 160133 be
5 approved.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any
7 second?

8 (Duly seconded.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: This bill
10 has now been moved and properly seconded
11 that the amendments to Bill No. 160133 be
12 approved.

13 All those in favor signify by
14 saying aye.

15 (Aye.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any
17 opposition?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: There
20 being none, this motion is carried.

21 Now the Chair recognizes
22 Councilwoman Bass to make a motion on the
23 bill, as amended.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
25 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No.

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.
2 160133, as amended, be moved out of this
3 Committee with a favorable recommendation
4 and I further move that the rules of
5 Council be suspended to allow first
6 reading at our next public session.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any
8 second?

9 (Duly seconded.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Very good.
11 It has been properly moved and seconded
12 that Bill No. 160133, as amended, be
13 reported from this Committee with a
14 favorable recommendation and further
15 moved that the rules of Council be
16 suspended so as to permit first reading
17 of this bill at our next scheduled
18 session.

19 All those in favor signify by
20 saying aye.

21 (Aye.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any
23 opposition?

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: There

1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 being none, this motion is carried.

3 We now move to Bill No. 160362.

4 The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Bass
5 regarding Bill No. 160362.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
7 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No. 160362
8 be moved out of this Committee with a
9 favorable recommendation and further move
10 that the rules of Council be suspended to
11 allow first reading at our next public
12 session.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any
14 second?

15 (Duly seconded.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: It has
17 been moved and properly seconded that
18 Bill No. 160362 be reported from this
19 Committee with a favorable recommendation
20 and further moved that the rules of
21 Council be suspended so as to permit
22 first reading at our next scheduled
23 session.

24 All those in favor will signify
25 by saying aye.

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1 5/19/16 - ENVIRONMENT - BILL 160132, etc.

2 (Aye.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Any
4 opposition?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: There
7 being none, the motion is carried and
8 Bill No. 160362 will be moved out of this
9 Committee with a favorable recommendation
10 and further moved that the rules of
11 Council be suspended to permit first
12 reading at our next scheduled session.

13 The Chair recognizes
14 Councilwoman Bass for a motion on
15 Resolution No. -- I've been advised that
16 Resolution No. 160203 will be held at the
17 call of the Chair.

18 That concludes the City Council
19 Committee on the Environment and
20 Sustainability, and I thank my colleagues
21 for your participation. Thank you very
22 much.

23 (Committee on the Environment
24 concluded at 3:25 p.m.)

25 - - -

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CERTIFICATE

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

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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