

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, NEIGHBORHOOD
DEVELOPMENT AND THE HOMELESS

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Thursday, May 31, 2012
1:20 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL

RESOLUTION 120254 - Resolution authorizing the City Council Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development, and the Homeless to hold hearings concerning the impact of the Department of Parks and Recreation's proposed Regulation 769785 as it pertains to public feeding in Philadelphia.

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COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you, everyone. We're going to begin our public hearing with regard to Resolution 120254, which deals with outdoor feeding, and we're going to ask the Clerk to read the title of this resolution.

THE CLERK: Resolution authorizing the City Council Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development, and the Homeless to hold hearings concerning the impact of the Department of Parks and Recreation's proposed Regulation 769785 as it pertains to public feeding in Philadelphia.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you very much.

We would like to thank everyone who has come to deal with this issue of public feeding on the Parkway. We would note that we have written a letter to the Mayor asking him to hold up with regard to enforcement that is due to start tomorrow, June 1st, on this issue.

We believe that and we will

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2 hopefully -- Sister Mary Scullion has
3 written a statement also talking against
4 enforcement of this.

5 The Mayor has created a task
6 force, and this task force has met twice.
7 The task force certainly leads to the
8 opportunity to deal with this issue and
9 make its recommendations. We regret that
10 the Administration has not authorized
11 anyone from Parks and Recreation or
12 Dr. Evans or certainly Deputy Mayor
13 DiBerardinis to be present at our
14 hearing. Having said that, we will
15 proceed.

16 We want to thank our Majority
17 Leader, Curtis Jones, for being present
18 and all those who have come who realize
19 the importance of this issue. Again, we
20 thank you all for being here.

21 We're also requesting that
22 somebody from the Mayor's Administration
23 be available to provide testimony. We
24 feel that they should have been
25 authorized to be here. Again, this

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2 hearing is with regard to the Department
3 of Parks and Recreation's banning outdoor
4 serving in any of Philadelphia parks.

5 While it has been stated by
6 both the Mayor and his Administration
7 that this regulation is not targeting the
8 homeless, that is precisely what is
9 occurring. It attacks our most
10 vulnerable citizens and attempts to
11 starve off homeless from the Ben Franklin
12 Parkway and other areas of the City that
13 are readily available and visible to
14 tourists.

15 While there have been many
16 theories and much speculation as to the
17 reason for the regulation, there has been
18 no evidence, research or information made
19 available to show that this ban is
20 necessary or that it improves conditions.
21 One bit of information is that the
22 Administration has provided via Deputy
23 Mayor Don Schwarz service cuts, we
24 understand that on local and state
25 levels, and that homelessness will

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2 increase in Philadelphia. While we talk
3 about closings of Ridge Shelter and the
4 City's ability to provide social services
5 and that this could decrease, we still
6 feel that this ban only exacerbates the
7 situation. Instead of criticizing or
8 outlawing the good works of individuals
9 who try to feed people who are here
10 today, we feel that this ban only makes
11 matters worse.

12 Not only is the Administration
13 cutting people off from basic necessity
14 of food, but we are preventing young
15 people, and the first ones who will
16 testify are those from Mathematics,
17 Civics and Science Charter School. Also
18 we have Adam Bruckner's young folks,
19 students from other areas, who all feel
20 that it's part of their curriculum and
21 moral responsibility, as has Reverend
22 Brian Jenkins, to deal with this feeding
23 in this way.

24 From the beginning, the Mayor
25 and his Administration have said that the

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2 regulation is about four things: One,
3 dignity of the individual; two,
4 cleanliness of our parks; three, getting
5 people access to social service; and,
6 four, eliminating healthy concerns. And
7 it is ironic that the Mayor says this,
8 but yet he moves feeding right downstairs
9 near the northeast corner where they're
10 doing construction and it makes the
11 individual less safe and less healthy.
12 So we don't understand any of these
13 issues.

14 We have enclosed a copy of the
15 Department of Parks and Recreation's
16 responses to issues, and we feel again
17 that we further make people who are
18 already homeless who are hungry victims
19 certainly of the City's regulation that
20 is unfair. We also believe it is
21 impossible to enforce in an unbiased
22 manner, 92 acres of Fairmount Park
23 system, that this will only be done in
24 Center City and that it is unfair and
25 that it cannot be enforced across the

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2 City and that the Mayor, at the very
3 least, should not enforce starting
4 tomorrow, June 1st a homeless ban in the
5 City of Philadelphia.

6 So we tried to say a lot of
7 things, and we're going to call -- we did
8 have Panel 1, the Administration, but
9 they have not been authorized to be here,
10 so we're going to ask Jibir Witherspoon
11 and Myettia Peck and students at
12 Mathematics, Civics and Science Charter
13 School to come forward, after we call on
14 the Majority Leader, Curtis Jones, for
15 his remarks. That will be the first
16 panel. The second panel will be Reverend
17 Brian Jenkins, Chosen 300 Ministries.

18 Councilman Jones.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
20 Madam Chair. I just want to express deep
21 thanks to you as Chairperson and, more
22 importantly, champion of this worthwhile
23 issue.

24 Each week people have taken
25 advantage of the public comment period to

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2 express their opinion and concern about
3 this ban. A couple of things come to
4 mind. Number one, that there should not
5 be ever a hearing that is called by this
6 body that addresses some issue that a
7 department that this body appropriates
8 money for not be in attendance of. Even
9 if it is only to write or submit written
10 testimony, they should address it.

11 So for me, it raises deep
12 concern about their commitment to always
13 keeping an open dialogue, even when they
14 disagree with us, about issues and
15 concerns that we and you as Chair of this
16 Committee have. So I wanted to say that.

17 The second component --

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: You're
21 welcome, Madam Chair.

22 The second concern I have is
23 that when we address different issues as
24 a municipality, whether it's trying to be
25 the greenest city in the nation, you can

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2 see, read and articulate a plan about
3 dealing with that issue. When the Mayor
4 came out, and rightfully so, against
5 crime, he had a ten-point plan about how
6 to address the issue of crime, but it
7 seems to me lacking when it comes to
8 anti-poverty and ways to address
9 homelessness, hunger and other social
10 concerns like that. There is no clear
11 agenda plan for that, except for a ban on
12 public feeding.

13 So I raise that question, and
14 in light of the economy and in light of a
15 lot of people that have been historically
16 hungry and then there's the new-found
17 hungry and young people in being an
18 ever-increasing part of that number.
19 This is an important issue, and I just
20 want to thank you and the Committee for
21 not letting it go away or be swept under
22 the rug.

23 So thank you, Madam Chair.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you, Councilman Jones, Majority Leader of

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2 Council. We appreciate your support and
3 your attendance.

4 We also note that Councilman
5 Brian O'Neill, a member of this
6 Committee, is present, and we thank him
7 for being here.

8 Mathematics, Civics and
9 Sciences Charter School, are you here?
10 Are you prepared? Please come forward.

11 (Witnesses approached witness
12 table.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
14 you for being here and for your
15 leadership.

16 As many of you know, these
17 students are --

18 (Applause.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Not
20 only do they feed, they contribute, they
21 provide clothing as well as food to those
22 on the Parkway.

23 Feel free to identify yourself
24 for the record and begin your testimony.

25 MISS GEORGE: Good afternoon,

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2 City Council President Clarke and other
3 members of the City Council. My name is
4 Madeline George and I am an eighth grade
5 student at the Mathematics, Civics and
6 Sciences Charter School of Philadelphia.
7 I am here today with other fellow
8 students to inform you about our school's
9 homeless project.

10 The Mathematics, Civics and
11 Sciences Charter School Homeless Project,
12 which has been in operation since 2005,
13 is run exclusively by the youth and
14 students enrolled in our school.
15 Students from grades 1 through 12 donate
16 \$1 a week to feed over 500 homeless
17 citizens of Philadelphia. They raise
18 between \$800 and \$1,000 a week to help
19 fund this project.

20 In addition to money, the
21 students also donate socks, shoes, pants
22 and T-shirts. During the winter months,
23 jackets, blankets, hats, scarves and
24 gloves are also collected.

25 Every Tuesday a team of

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2 students makes over 500 sandwiches and
3 snacks, while another team makes over 100
4 bags of toiletry items, such as
5 toothpaste, deodorant, toothbrushes,
6 soap, washcloths, underwear and
7 undershirts.

8 And, finally, one last team
9 goes to our two distribution locations to
10 hand out these items, which are the Ridge
11 Avenue Shelter, where we help over 500
12 men, and Love Park, where we help over
13 150 men, women and children. Both
14 locations are within walking distance of
15 the school.

16 MISS PECK: Good afternoon. My
17 name is Myettia Peck and I am an eighth
18 grade student at the Mathematics, Civics
19 and Science Charter School.

20 A 2005 graduate of this school
21 who studies at Eastern College majoring
22 in business used the Homeless Project for
23 his community service assignment.
24 Students from a surrounding school
25 volunteer for their community service

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2 credit. Juvenile Court also accepts
3 hours from the project for community
4 service.

5 Unlike other homeless projects
6 throughout the nation, the Homeless
7 Project at MCSCS is the only one of its
8 kind because it is self-funded, without
9 any subsidies from outside agencies or
10 churches.

11 It is our mission at the
12 Mathematics, Civics and Science Charter
13 School to teach children at an early age
14 to be charitable toward the less
15 fortunate so they can continue this
16 practice of giving throughout their adult
17 lives.

18 We are against the ban of
19 outdoor feeding.

20 MR. WITHERSPOON: Good
21 afternoon, City Council President Clarke
22 and other Councilmembers present. I
23 would also like to acknowledge
24 Councilwoman Blackwell for holding this
25 public hearing. My name is Jibir Nassar

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2 Witherspoon and I am in the ninth grade
3 at the Mathematics, Civics and Sciences
4 Charter School.

5 I consider myself to be a
6 law-abiding, productive citizen here in
7 Philadelphia. As such, I believe it is
8 my civic duty to help the homeless. I
9 have donated many dollars towards the
10 Homeless Project at my school, and I
11 enjoy doing it.

12 At our school, giving, helping
13 and caring is part of our civics
14 curriculum. We are encouraged to help
15 others because it is the right thing to
16 do.

17 Every Thursday for the past
18 seven years, at 8 o'clock p.m.,
19 Mrs. Veronica Joyner, Founder and Chief
20 Administrative Officer, supervises our
21 Homeless Project, along with the other
22 dedicated students. We serve over 500
23 homeless citizens in the City of
24 Philadelphia, distributing food,
25 toiletries and clothes. Men make up the

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2 largest percentage of the homeless
3 population we serve. Some of the men we
4 serve are homeless veterans who fought
5 for our freedom. If these homeless
6 veterans risked their lives for America,
7 why should they suffer?

8 Every man and woman is entitled
9 to life, liberty and the pursuit of
10 happiness. Therefore, as productive
11 citizens, should we not help these people
12 in their time of need? Don't we owe this
13 to the people who fought for us so nobly?

14 I disagree with the ban on
15 outdoor feeding of the homeless as per
16 our Mayor's directive. He is making this
17 counterintuitive decision that will in
18 fact destroy the lives of thousands.

19 The economy is also to blame
20 for the increase in homelessness. Many
21 people are homeless because there are no
22 jobs. If this ban takes place, not only
23 will crime rise but also Philadelphia's
24 death rate. If people don't have food,
25 they die. If people are not clean, then

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2 there's a risk of spreading diseases, and
3 diseases do kill.

4 Please, Mayor Nutter, rethink
5 this ill-fated decision to ban the public
6 feeding of the homeless. Allow me and
7 the other dedicated members of the
8 Mathematics, Civics and Sciences Charter
9 School to continue the respectful work we
10 have been doing since 2005.

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. DOOLEY: Good afternoon,
14 Council President Clarke, Councilwoman
15 Blackwell and all other members of the
16 City Council. My name is Gregory Dooley.
17 I'm a ninth grader at Mathematics, Civics
18 and Sciences Charter School. I'm here to
19 speak against the ban on feeding the
20 homeless outdoors.

21 One of the arguments given by
22 our Mayor against feeding the homeless in
23 public is that it poses a health hazard.
24 In our situation, the food we distribute
25 is prepared in our school cafeteria under

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2 the same sanitary conditions as the food
3 that is served to the students. Since
4 the Board of Health has certified our
5 cafeteria as meeting the health codes set
6 forth in the law, I submit that there is
7 in fact very little liability to the
8 homeless.

9 It is clear to me that the
10 reason the Mayor has implemented this new
11 directive is because he simply does not
12 like how large groups of homeless people
13 in public looks to visitors and more
14 influential Philadelphians. I feel it would
15 be much more genuine to acknowledge the
16 City has a moral problem and to do
17 everything possible to deal with that
18 problem.

19 Homelessness in Philadelphia is
20 and has been an issue for many years. We
21 have yet to find a solution, a suitable
22 solution, and I feel strongly that
23 sweeping this issue under the rug will
24 hurt the City's image more than help it.

25 I've been volunteering with

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2 Ms. Veronica Joyner every Thursday night
3 for the past two years. My fellow
4 students and I feel a sense of great
5 reward at the end of each of these
6 evenings. We truly believe that we are
7 making a difference. We see instant
8 results from our labors.

9 While we are not fooling
10 ourselves into believing that this is a
11 long-term solution, we see our efforts as
12 a temporary measure to help people who
13 are less fortunate than ourselves.
14 Therefore, Mr. Mayor, I beg you to
15 reconsider your directive on banning the
16 public feeding of the homeless and
17 instead start looking for a long-term
18 solution to this problem.

19 Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you so much. We are so proud of all of
23 you, for we realize that we are our
24 brother's keeper and we realize that
25 there is no more important work. I would

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2 be afraid not to do the right thing when
3 it comes to people in need. And we are
4 just proud of Veronica Joyner and all of
5 you who realize that we have a
6 responsibility in this world to help
7 others and to share those things we have.

8 And so with this ban, with this
9 proposed ban and all of you who give
10 every week and who serve every week, if
11 they propose this ban tomorrow, what does
12 it do to your curriculum and what does it
13 do to the job that all of you give and
14 work that all of you perform?

15 MR. WITHERSPOON: Well, it goes
16 entirely against our curriculum.
17 Basically if this happens, I still think
18 that Ms. Joyner is still going to go out,
19 because it's the right thing to do, it's
20 moral. We should do this. We shouldn't
21 stop because someone says, Oh, you can't
22 feed the homeless, because they're going
23 to die if you don't.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you. We want to say thank you.

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2 Are there any questions for
3 these wonderful enlightened students?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Well,
6 we say thank you, and thank Veronica
7 Joyner as well for having you here today,
8 and God bless you.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Our
11 second panel is Reverend Brian Jenkins,
12 Chosen 300 Ministries.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
15 let me thank Reverend Jenkins, because
16 Reverend Jenkins has been the single most
17 important catalyst in all of this. Let
18 me thank him, let me thank his wife in
19 all that they do and the battle they
20 wage, a fearless battle. And I would
21 like him again to talk about where his
22 program is now and where he is overseas.

23 (Witness approached witness
24 table.)

25 REVEREND JENKINS: Good

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2 morning, Councilwoman Blackwell. We
3 definitely want to give honor to you and
4 thank you for all your support over the
5 years really battling for our cause and
6 those that actually serve the homeless.

7 Chosen 300, of course we're now
8 serving over a hundred thousand meals a
9 year throughout the Philadelphia region.
10 We have indoor locations in Center City
11 Philadelphia on the Spring Garden Street,
12 in West Philadelphia, currently at
13 Wallace and Lancaster Avenue. There's
14 another facility that we recently
15 purchased which we're working to get
16 through Licenses and Inspections, which
17 has been a long journey, to begin
18 renovations to open a second facility in
19 West Philadelphia. And then we also have
20 our facility in Pottstown, Pennsylvania.
21 In addition to our indoor programs, we
22 are providing meals every Saturday for
23 the last 16 years at 16th and the
24 Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

25 Ironically, the challenge with

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2 these regulations is not so much the
3 regulations themselves but the lies
4 surrounding them. Just this morning
5 we've received a lie. We spoke to
6 Christine Piven of the Mayor's Office,
7 who indicated that they did not receive
8 notification of this hearing until last
9 night. Just spoke to Chris from your
10 office, who indicated that it was
11 hand-delivered to David Evans -- Arthur
12 Evans, who is head of the task force. In
13 addition, it was also given to the Deputy
14 Mayor of Parks and Recreation several
15 weeks ago as well.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Excuse
17 me. Would you talk about where you are
18 overseas too. I want them to know.

19 REVEREND JENKINS: Yes. We're
20 in Guyana, Jamaica, India, Nigeria, South
21 Africa, Liberia and on the verge of
22 opening up in Ghana very shortly.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
24 you.

25 Let me note that Councilman

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2 Bill Greenlee is here. We thank him for
3 being present as well.

4 REVEREND JENKINS: Thank you so
5 much.

6 As far as the regulations
7 themselves, they're surrounding around
8 this idea of health and dignity. On
9 March the 25th, there was a hearing
10 with -- I'm sorry; March the 15th -- with
11 the Department of Health and the Board of
12 Health and there was a question asked to
13 Deputy Mayor Schwarz, was there any
14 record of any health-borne illnesses or
15 sicknesses resulting from outdoor
16 feedings, and the response was, I don't
17 know. Yet the regulations were proposed
18 when there was no record of health-borne
19 illnesses.

20 As President Bush was informed
21 several years ago that there's no weapons
22 of mass destruction, we'd like to inform
23 Mayor Nutter that there's no warm meals
24 that are damaging.

25 The homeless, however, did

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2 report at this hearing that in the
3 City-run shelters that are regulated by
4 the Health Department, the food is not
5 edible. They often have been sick. In
6 the recent task force meeting, a
7 representative from the City shelter
8 system indicated that it is shelter and
9 they maintain standards that are required
10 by law, but the homeless should not have
11 any expectations, because it is a
12 shelter. And this is the language that
13 we're hearing from them.

14 On the issue of dignity, the
15 Mayor indicated in a recent interview
16 that it was painful for him to see people
17 lined up on the Parkway waiting for a
18 meal, but on any given day in Center City
19 Philadelphia, there are people lined up
20 at food trucks, 30 to 50 office workers,
21 businesspeople, construction workers
22 lined up at food trucks in the heat, in
23 the rain, in the cold, and they're
24 waiting for a hot dog and a bag of chips
25 from a guy named Joe sweating behind a

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2 three-by-five box, handing their food out
3 the window, and they have to pay for it.
4 But on the same Parkway, homeless people
5 are lined up waiting for a warm meal that
6 consists of sometimes filet mignon, fried
7 chicken, fish, meatloaf, macaroni and
8 cheese, yams and peach cobbler. They're
9 greeted with hugs and prayers from
10 volunteers and offered a word of
11 encouragement to get them through the
12 day.

13 So the question is, where is
14 the dignity? The homeless are receiving
15 the dignity and respect that they
16 deserve.

17 On April 25th in a meeting with
18 Deputy Mayor DiBerardinis, he stated that
19 the reason that he supports this
20 regulation that, in his opinion, outdoor
21 meals to the homeless in the parks along
22 the Parkway are not the best use for
23 space, not the best use for space.

24 Mark McDonald, the Mayor's
25 Press Secretary, in an article in the

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2 Philadelphia Inquirer very recently,
3 actually on the 20th of this month, it
4 says, "It does not speak for other places
5 in the City, he said. If, for example, a
6 charitable group wants to serve food, for
7 instance, at 11th and Spring Garden on
8 the sidewalk, they can do it. It's my
9 belief that they are fully accommodated."

10 So the sidewalk on Spring
11 Garden Street is okay, but the park along
12 the Benjamin Franklin Parkway is not.

13 So the message is that the
14 homeless can have their dignity eating on
15 the sidewalk, but not in the public park.
16 These regulations are clearly designated
17 not with the intent of protecting the
18 health and dignity of the homeless, but
19 are designed to tuck the homeless in the
20 corner and to pretend that the problem
21 does not exist in our city.

22 The other issue is that it also
23 not only just imposes unfair regulations,
24 but it also takes away from the cycle of
25 compassion. I brought a lady with me

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2 today, a very important lady in my life,
3 Theresa Jemison. This is Theresa
4 Jemison. Why don't you stand real
5 quickly.

6 (Applause.)

7 REVEREND JENKINS: Many of you
8 know my story. I was actually in a
9 homeless orphanage in Philadelphia when I
10 was five years old. My mother died when
11 I was five. My father walked out on me
12 before I was born. But this lady,
13 Theresa Jemison, that is my foster
14 mother. My mother, I call her. And she
15 took me off the streets of Philadelphia.
16 But one of the things that I've learned
17 from her as I was growing up, I would
18 watch my mother in the kitchen. There
19 would be someone in the neighborhood,
20 someone that was sick down the street,
21 someone from the church that was invalid
22 or having challenges and couldn't make a
23 meal for themselves, and she would whip
24 up a meal in her kitchen and she would
25 send us over there to take the meal. And

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2 it was this cycle of compassion about
3 learning this.

4 My foster father, who is now
5 deceased now, never learned to read. He
6 was one of those folks that left school
7 at an early age to help take care of the
8 family. But he was filled with
9 compassion, and he was the greatest man I
10 ever knew.

11 I remember when I was eight
12 years old -- and this is probably one of
13 the most embarrassing stories for me to
14 share. But I had a wetting problem.
15 Don't laugh. But I had a wetting
16 problem, and I remember being in a party
17 one day and I had wet my pants and I had
18 a big stain up front, big stain up in the
19 back, pee going down my leg. All the
20 kids laughed at me, but my father picked
21 me up, put me on his lap, as soaked as I
22 was in pee, and hugged me and said, Leave
23 my son alone.

24 And so every time that I go
25 past a homeless person, whether they

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2 smell like the stench of urine or whether
3 they smell like a street ven or whether
4 they're struggling with addiction or
5 challenges or mental disabilities, I can
6 still wrap them in my arms, because of my
7 father's compassion, because of my
8 mother's compassion, and that cycle of
9 compassion has to continue.

10 I remember when I was growing
11 up as a teenager watching Jannie
12 Blackwell and her husband, Lucien
13 Blackwell. When the City was trying to
14 arrest the homeless for sleeping, for
15 sleeping, in the concourse of
16 Philadelphia and they went down to the
17 concourse and slept with them so that the
18 police would not arrest them. And I
19 remember watching them on the news, and I
20 admired them, and I said if I can just do
21 something like that.

22 Someone is watching us today.
23 All of you that serve are so vital and
24 are so important, because people are
25 watching us today. There's children,

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2 like the ones that were up here today,
3 that are watching us, that are counting
4 on us to continue to do what we do so
5 that we continue the cycle of compassion.

6 I don't want to talk too long,
7 but it's significant that we're in this
8 building. This building here holds so
9 much significance. From 1901 to 1908,
10 this building was the tallest building in
11 the world, in the world, the tallest
12 occupied building in the world. Up until
13 1932, it was the tallest building in the
14 State of Pennsylvania, and up until 1987,
15 until One Liberty Place was built, it was
16 the tallest occupied building in
17 Philadelphia.

18 The building holds the three
19 branches of government, which include the
20 legislative, the executive and the
21 judicial, which is the Court of Common
22 Pleas, the legislative being City Council
23 and the executive being the Mayor's
24 Office. But the idea of this building
25 being the tallest building was that it

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2 was to overlook the City and overlook the
3 people and protect every citizen from
4 injustice. But ironically in 1987, they
5 started building buildings above the head
6 of William Penn. Now, what happened is
7 that they put their eyes on wealth and
8 greed and stopped looking at the people.

9 (Applause.)

10 REVEREND JENKINS: You know,
11 it's significant that William Penn is at
12 the top of this building. When the
13 building was originally constructed, the
14 building was so that William Penn's face
15 would direct towards the south, which was
16 the commercial district. But it was
17 changed, it was changed to face the
18 northeast, and the reason why is because
19 in the northeast, the direction of the
20 northeast, is Penn Treaty Park, and in
21 1692, November 30th of 1692, William Penn
22 signed the Treaty with the Native
23 Americans of this city so that they would
24 be part of the City. But ironically he
25 did not go with the might and power of

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2 the military. He did not go with the
3 strength of his position or with
4 regulation, but the record states that he
5 went unarmed, and he said some very
6 powerful words, and I want to close with
7 these words. It says, "We meet on the
8 broad pathway of good faith and good
9 will. No advantage shall be taken on
10 either side, but all shall be openness
11 and love. We are the same as if one
12 man's body was divided in two parts. We
13 are one flesh and one blood."

14 Chief Tamanend, who was the
15 Chief of that native tribe, it says, "We
16 will live in love with William Penn and
17 his children as long as the creeks and
18 rivers run and while the sun, the moon
19 and stars endure."

20 There was a tree that was at
21 that site where William Penn signed that
22 Treaty. It was an elm tree. That tree
23 stood from 1693 until 1810, but
24 ironically when that storm knocked over
25 the tree, the seedlings and pieces from

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2 that tree were taken and they were
3 distributed in different areas of the
4 City, including the University of
5 Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Hospital,
6 Haverford College and throughout the
7 regions of the City, that the spirit of
8 this Treaty, that the spirit of love
9 would be continued to flow through the
10 City. And even as late as 2010 through
11 the Fairmount Park Commission, part of
12 the Commission that's passing these
13 regulations, there was another tree
14 planted in Penn Treaty Park that was the
15 offspring of this tree.

16 So if there's any word that we
17 can give the City Council, whether you're
18 listening by teleconference or whether
19 you're here today, we have to let love
20 abound. Love has to abound far beyond
21 the pinnacle of this building now. It
22 has to go to the highest pinnacle of the
23 City. It has to go down to our Mayor's
24 Office and convict them of this injustice
25 and tell him to turn off the firehoses of

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2 injustice.

3 We have to go back to the
4 Health Department and tell them to call
5 back the dogs that they have sent to eat
6 up the food that was intended for those
7 in need.

8 We have to go to the Parks and
9 Recreation and tell them to take down the
10 signs of inequality and say keep off our
11 grass, and we have to let love abound.
12 And we have to draw a line and say that
13 we are not going to allow Jim Crow laws
14 to come into our city.

15 The Mason-Dixon Line -- I'm
16 done, but the Mason-Dixon Line falls
17 right below the State of Pennsylvania.
18 The Mason -- and there are still signs up
19 till this day. My mother shared with me
20 about the mule train coming from
21 Washington, DC to Valley Forge Park.
22 Even after the death of Martin Luther
23 King, the Mason-Dixon Line still exists.
24 The Mason-Dixon Line now has rose to the
25 borders of our city and now it is about

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2 to enter, and we are allowing injustice
3 to come against the most vulnerable of
4 our city.

5 Thank you so much.

6 (Standing ovation.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
8 you, Reverend Jenkins. Your remarks were
9 profound.

10 Some of you may have seen the
11 cartoon in today's Daily News. One of my
12 colleagues in Council pointed it out. It
13 says, Why Jesus never preached in
14 Philadelphia, and it shows two people
15 passing out -- one has fish and the other
16 bread, and behind them is a Mayor saying,
17 Move it inside, get your kitchen
18 inspected. So it's ironic. It's a
19 cartoon in the Daily News.

20 Councilman Jones.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Every now
22 and then -- I am newer than the members
23 on the panel, but we age here in dog
24 years almost because of the intensity of
25 the work. But as long as I've been here,

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2 I've never understood as much as I do
3 today as why we should be here, and this
4 is why we should be here and to protect
5 what William Penn talked about and to
6 spread that love over commerce and, if I
7 understood your words, over the easy
8 things to do when it comes to society.

9 The reason we are here -- and
10 you're right, I grew up watching the
11 Blackwells do that feeding, and the
12 reason why I wanted to come here was to
13 help out with that.

14 So I'm glad I'm here. I'm glad
15 you're here and reminded us of that
16 mission.

17 So thank you.

18 REVEREND JENKINS: Thank you.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you.

21 Thank you, Reverend Jenkins.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you very much. Next we have One Step

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2 Away - Leslie Miles, Erik Younge, David
3 Shivel and Charles Helton. If you are
4 here, anyone from One Step Away, please
5 feel free to join us.

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: One
8 Step Away?

9 Please join us at the witness
10 table.

11 This is technically Panel 4.
12 Panel 3, sorry, I skipped you, Craig
13 Stroman, Founder, We Feed the Homeless
14 Philly, and Adam Bruckner, Philly
15 Restart, you're next.

16 (Witnesses approached witness
17 table.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
19 afternoon.

20 MS. MILES: Good afternoon,
21 Councilwoman Blackwell.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
23 afternoon.

24 MS. MILES: Hi. My name is
25 Leslie Miles. I am honored to be here

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2 today.

3 I don't know where to start,
4 but I can say I'm a native Philadelphian,
5 but also a Katrina survivor, and I came
6 back to Philadelphia. I have moved to
7 New Orleans in 2000. I came back through
8 Hurricane Katrina, and when I came back,
9 it was a welcoming home, because the City
10 had set up such a unique system to
11 welcome those from New Orleans to
12 Philadelphia, and by me being a
13 Philadelphian, I felt very proud to come
14 home to my city, who opened up their arms
15 and doors to others as well as myself.
16 And as I begin fixing my life back
17 together -- I had lost everything I owned
18 in New Orleans. My family was still
19 here, praise God. Thank God they were
20 still here. But I lost everything
21 possession of material-wise.

22 But I was able to regain a
23 sense of self-ability and stability when
24 I came back here due to the Mayor
25 allowing housing, food, funding,

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2 clothing. I was set up with all brand
3 new furniture, a permanent household to
4 live in through the process, and it took
5 some time. But I was homeless when I
6 returned to Philadelphia. I was a
7 homeless individual. And so through
8 that, it took time for me to stand up and
9 get back on my feet.

10 But right like maybe four years
11 into that, I fell ill to some health
12 problems, which was created by the
13 apartment I lived in. We had a mold
14 problem with a leak that had accumulated
15 a high level of mold that was
16 contributing to respiratory and lung
17 infections that I had no idea until I
18 kept going in and out of the hospital.
19 And then finally my doctors realized it
20 had to be something in the environment
21 where I was living, and so we searched a
22 little further. But the hospitalization
23 at that time was very serious, because I
24 had a severe lung infection. And I was
25 told then that the doctors suggested and

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2 really advised me not to return back home
3 to my living quarters because my health
4 was in jeopardy.

5 So here again, I had to make a
6 decision. I didn't have anybody that I
7 knew right off who can accommodate me and
8 my illness at the same time. So the
9 hospital had a social worker who told me
10 there was a shelter available, which a
11 family shelter for women and children,
12 and would I consider going there. They
13 can make arrangements for me to do that
14 within a matter of 24 hours, and I said
15 yes.

16 So I entered into the shelter
17 system, and for three months, I lived in
18 a shelter until I can find permanent
19 housing again.

20 So here again, I was living
21 homelessness. At the same time while
22 being in a shelter, I got to really hear
23 and meet people who had more severe
24 homelessness than I was experiencing, and
25 how from all different walks of life

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2 these people were coming from, not the
3 stereotypical people just don't want to
4 do better or people just don't want more
5 out of life. These are people such as
6 myself through such things as fate and
7 circumstances, we were placed in a
8 homeless situation.

9 But even in that endeavor,
10 there was a project being worked on
11 called One Step Away Homeless Newspaper.
12 While I was in the shelter, I was asked
13 would I be interested in going to a board
14 meeting concerning this newspaper about
15 homelessness, and I agreed. And I went
16 to this paper, to this meeting in
17 reference to this paper, and I realized
18 that this paper was so unique because it
19 allowed the people who were in shelters
20 or who experienced homelessness to have a
21 voice and also to let people know who
22 they were and what they can do to help
23 them. And through their stories and
24 through my stories, this paper today is
25 two years old and we have won an award by

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2 NAACP and an International Street Paper
3 Award, and I am still a reporter, writer,
4 on the advisory board, and also I have
5 just launched my own non-profit
6 organization through this newspaper
7 called Community Change. And through
8 Community Change, I am still able to
9 reach out into the community and more
10 likely the homeless community and
11 population.

12 And so I'm honored to be here
13 today to speak on behalf of One Step Away
14 and the homeless population. And, yes,
15 look at me today. Look at who I am
16 today, because people thought enough
17 about me to give me a chance to get back
18 up on my feet and pay back to society and
19 also my fellow brothers and sisters.

20 So, yes, I am here today to say
21 proudly that through the City of
22 Philadelphia, I was able to regain my
23 living as a human being again.

24 Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

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2 MR. SHIVEL: Good afternoon.

3 My name is David Shivel. I was an
4 alcoholic for 40 years. When you're an
5 addict -- there's many addicts out there.
6 After all these years, I was hopeless. I
7 didn't know how to stop. I was just
8 ready to lose everything.

9 Through the kindness of a
10 person through church who worked on me
11 two years to get me to walk in the doors,
12 I was able to be delivered from this
13 terrible addiction. And there's worse.
14 Alcoholics can be compared to crack.
15 It's devastating.

16 If we didn't have these people
17 that care about these people that are at
18 the bottom of the list, we would just
19 have more and more homeless people. We
20 would have more deaths. We must serve
21 these people. We must give them hope.
22 You can fix it. You can fix it, but it
23 takes somebody else to give them hope.

24 After I was delivered, the Lord
25 empowered me to go out and serve coffee

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2 and doughnuts to the men on the Parkway.

3 I had no idea what I was going to do, but

4 I had to listen and do what I was told,

5 because my life had been saved. This was

6 at 58 years old. I'll be 70 next year.

7 I've had two heart attacks, quadruple

8 bypass, but I'm still here. I work every

9 day, and I'm able to do this because I

10 have a passion, and we all, many people

11 here sitting here, have a passion and we

12 hear your hearts, we see your hearts.

13 It's very important.

14 The men that sleep on the

15 Parkway need to see our hearts. They

16 need to see our love.

17 We started handing out

18 doughnuts and coffee. By the way, I have

19 a gentleman who is 65 years old who

20 cannot read or write who was sleeping on

21 the sidewalk, who now goes out every

22 Sunday morning and hands out doughnuts to

23 400 men and women on the Parkway.

24 We do 300 bags of doughnuts to

25 basically people on the Parkway anywhere

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2 in Center City. There is right now 100
3 men that sleep on the floor in filth in
4 the concourse. It's gone up as high as
5 200.

6 We're breakfast. There's many
7 of us that serve the food. We don't even
8 know each other, but we're connected by
9 one God, and many of us have different
10 faiths. It really doesn't matter. These
11 men and women need to see somebody that
12 care to mentor them and guide them and
13 love them and give them a pair of shoes,
14 clothing, socks, whatever is needed to
15 help them on the way, basically give them
16 hope.

17 There was 50 men in Reading
18 Terminal. Two Sundays ago I was stopped
19 very unkindly by a policeman that said
20 because of Mayor Nutter's rules, I was
21 not allowed in Reading Terminal anymore.
22 I would have -- this is the second
23 morning. I would get a \$300 fine. I got
24 very emotional. I didn't curse or
25 anything, but he offered to arrest me for

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2 disorderly conduct.

3 I'm willing to go to jail if
4 this will help. You must see the need.
5 You must see these people you don't want
6 to look at.

7 Before I was delivered, I would
8 turn my head when I would see the man on
9 the ground, because I didn't want to
10 think about him. We have to think about
11 him. Matthew 25:35 to 46, When I was
12 hungry, you fed me. When I was naked,
13 you clothed me. You're damned if you
14 don't.

15 We must help, however we can.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. SHIVEL: We must help.

18 It's not me. I owe everything, my
19 sobriety, to the Lord.

20 We take 15 men. We go to the
21 Sunday Breakfast. We take 15 men to
22 church. I have a team of 80 women that
23 take turns fixing the meal. My
24 23-year-old adopted son, who is
25 schizophrenic, when he would get out of

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2 residential placement, when he came home,
3 he'd say, Dad, I can't wait to get home
4 and to have your cooking. My cooking was
5 TV dinners. I was a single parent.

6 But when we started this
7 ministry, I wanted to give him a
8 home-cooked meal. It's tough in a
9 shelter to get really super nice,
10 I-got-to-have-it food. So once a week,
11 they're going to get love from these
12 women that care so much about them.

13 This is after church. When we
14 get home, in my home we offer clothing,
15 toiletries, canned goods, whatever is
16 needed. Many before they go to church,
17 we stop at the house for a cup of coffee,
18 throw their clothing in the trash and get
19 new.

20 I am prepared to take a man off
21 the sidewalk and take him to church. I
22 don't care. The Lord says come as you
23 are. That's what we're going to do. It
24 doesn't matter how you look. And many of
25 our people at church are wearing minks

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2 and nice clothing, whatever.

3 I covered the different face of
4 Reading Terminal. The other thing I can
5 say is, we are taking care of the people
6 that fall through the cracks. We're
7 taking care of the people that aren't
8 going to go into a shelter. We're taking
9 care of the people that are just afraid
10 of authority. We get them a different
11 way, and we must be able to continue
12 getting them. We must. I've seen so
13 many that get into church and get some
14 mentoring and they get clean and sober.
15 They get a house, they get a job, they
16 get a wife. Boom, they're gone. It can
17 happen, but you can't stop us from what
18 we're doing, because you can't do it all.
19 You need us. You may not know that, but
20 you need us. And I'm willing to serve.
21 I don't get paid a penny for this.
22 Nothing. I owe my life, and these men
23 need us to serve them.

24 That's it. Thank you very
25 much.

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2 (Applause.)

3 MR. YOUNGE: Good afternoon.

4 My name is Erik Younge and I am a writer
5 for One Step Away, and I've been -- I
6 testified in March at the Health
7 Department that I've been helping to
8 serve people, particularly with food, for
9 over 35 years. It started with a group
10 that was dedicated to serving the needs
11 of the HIV community when it first began
12 and everybody was scared and people were
13 dying on a daily basis. And food was
14 then seen as one of the nutrients, one of
15 things that we needed to provide most,
16 and it's still true today. And I'm proud
17 to say that through one of the churches,
18 where it should be, started serving a
19 meal on a Tuesday and it has never missed
20 in all those years since 1985 a week of
21 serving those who are hungry.

22 And let me just say that I
23 think it starts out -- and this is what I
24 think people that are really concerned
25 about this city, this city for the second

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2 year in a row is the second hungriest
3 district in the entire country. That
4 should be the shame that drives us to
5 solve this problem. Again, let me say
6 for two years in a row, Philadelphia has
7 the reputation of being the second
8 hungriest district in the entire country.
9 That is a shame. When people see that,
10 when people hear -- you know, why aren't
11 you addressing this? Because this is a
12 problem that we can deal with. This is a
13 problem that everybody feels that we can
14 conquer. The question is, we have the
15 resources, so it must be the lack of
16 will. And this is what people who are
17 out here, people who love the city and
18 people who just love people in general,
19 are here to say.

20 As everybody has said, this is
21 a problem that you need help to deal
22 with, and either your false pride or your
23 lack of humility will put a ban in place
24 that would stop people from doing such a
25 basic thing.

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2 To me, it's a sacred trust and
3 an honor. I don't get paid to do it. I
4 wouldn't take any money to do that, to go
5 out there. I've been to most of these
6 feedings or many of these feedings and
7 the people -- and, again, it's a health
8 issue. Good health is both a civil right
9 and a human rights issue. As public
10 servants should keep in mind, the
11 citizens, the people are the number one
12 resources of this city, not the Barnes
13 Museum. It's not going to be the rink
14 that's going to be around. People are
15 the resources, are the number one
16 resources. And if you talk about a great
17 city, then you have to talk about its
18 number one resources, which are the
19 people.

20 The precious resource must be
21 served. Our needs must be heard, and it
22 must be met with all due dignity.

23 So we -- this is -- we set up a
24 petition online, and the petition I think
25 covers -- because this is not -- we're

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2 not adversaries. We think we can work
3 this out, and this is what we're here
4 today to talk about, that we can work
5 this problem out, and we need to work it
6 out.

7 We're opposed to this proposed
8 public policy ban on outdoor meal
9 distribution because it violates our
10 civil rights of the people. It violates
11 the homeless. It violates the hungry.
12 It violates the disabled, the elderly.
13 It violates children. These civil rights
14 are guaranteed and protected by the U.S.
15 Constitution. These regulations violate
16 our religious freedoms, also protected by
17 the U.S. Constitution. These regulations
18 are designed for the economic gain of a
19 few and not for the public health of the
20 many. Health regulations should never be
21 designed to hurt and always be designed
22 to help.

23 So we, Philadelphia residents
24 and United States citizens, propose
25 please eliminate the proposed legislation

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2 by the Health Department. Develop an
3 inclusive, honest task force of
4 providers, agencies, consumers and
5 community advocates to work on practices,
6 standards and programs to ensure quality
7 services at all levels. Provide free
8 voluntary food safety classes to groups
9 and providers who wish to voluntarily
10 participate. And the task force and the
11 City must unite to establish clean,
12 healthy, yes, indoor feeding when
13 necessary -- when available, programs
14 that can provide complete and holistic
15 services and solutions with dignity and
16 respect for all.

17 Now, this is an international
18 petition, and people around the world are
19 watching. The people signed this
20 petition online. And people around the
21 world are wondering if Philadelphia can
22 take the lead in providing the services.

23 And I'll end with this, that
24 the idea of feeding people is one of the
25 basic tenets of every religion, of every

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2 philosophy around the world. You can
3 check it out. And as whatever faith you
4 have -- it's also one of the -- even if
5 you're Atheist or agnostic, feeding
6 people and serving the needs of the
7 people is a fundamental right, and to ban
8 or to oppose it and not to work to solve
9 this problem, not only is it
10 unconstitutional, it's inhumane and will
11 not be tolerated.

12 So Philadelphia has a unique
13 opportunity. We ask you please to look
14 at this, look at your heart, but also
15 understand that we answer -- and I will
16 say this. Feeding people is a right that
17 can't be a bridge, because it's a higher
18 authority. And it's a test of faith,
19 because as Jesus of Nazareth said, there
20 are really two things to receive eternal
21 life: to love the Lord, your creator,
22 with all your heart, mind and soul; and
23 the second part, which can't be done
24 without -- if you really mean the first
25 part, is to love your neighbor as

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2 yourself.

3 And so using this and using the
4 God-given rights and using our U.S.
5 Constitutional rights, again, we are in a
6 unique position to lead the world and
7 show the world how we can deal with
8 hunger, because we are the second
9 hungriest district in the United States.
10 That can't be tolerated. And all of us
11 know that we have the compassion. We
12 must have the love, the compassion, and
13 we have the ability. All we need now is
14 the will. The will of the people is
15 there. The will of these providers, from
16 Chosen 300, from the Mathematics School,
17 from Pastor Dave, from One Step Away and
18 all these providers who are out there
19 with no compensation, their will is
20 strong, their faith is strong. Now we
21 want to see if the faith of the City
22 officials, who are public servants and
23 should be honored to be public servants,
24 can match that will.

25 Thank you.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
4 you very much. We appreciate your
5 commitment, your hard work and all that
6 you do. God bless you, and we agree with
7 all that you've said. Thank you very
8 much.

9 (Thank you.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Craig
11 Stroman, Founder, We Feed the Homeless
12 Philly; Adam Bruckner, Philly Restart.
13 Next after that will be Mary Jane
14 Shelter. Thank you very much.

15 (Witness approached witness
16 table.)

17 MR. BRUCKNER: My name is Adam
18 Bruckner. I run a program called Restart
19 out on the Parkway in Philadelphia.
20 We've been doing it for ten years. And
21 I'm a Youth Director over at the Helping
22 Hand Rescue Mission. So I work with the
23 indoor homeless and the outdoor service
24 of the homeless. And, first of all, I
25 found -- I've been at City Hall a lot

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2 lately, and I did not know there's a
3 secret bathroom for those of who you are
4 here. It's got a secret pass code that I
5 will not give you, but these are the sort
6 of things you learn when you come to City
7 Hall a bunch. So I've been here more in
8 the last month than I have in my whole
9 life.

10 I care very deeply about this.
11 I know that we have covered a lot of the
12 material. I just want to graze over a
13 couple things.

14 The four points Mayor Nutter
15 made were the dignity. We believe
16 dignity comes from having a choice, not
17 by giving somebody a meal at a
18 roundtable, even as wonderful as that
19 meal may be. The food quality we know
20 has been covered. The Parkway has been
21 covered.

22 What we do with our program is,
23 we provide a social service. We help
24 men, women and children get proper ID's
25 that will help them to get jobs, cash

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2 checks, get housing. It's essential. We
3 do this with about 5,000 men, women and
4 children a year. In fact, last month
5 from City Hall with Mayor Nutter's seal
6 on the top, City Hall referred a client
7 down to us. And so to say that we don't
8 provide social services at all on the
9 Parkway is a little bit erroneous.

10 The difficult thing for me is
11 that it is -- the arguments that keep
12 getting made about the food quality and
13 about the dignity of the men, it's just
14 an illogical argument when you say you
15 cannot do it in the Parkway but you can
16 do it on the sidewalk, because then -- I
17 mean, in fifth grade you could say, Well,
18 that doesn't make sense, because how does
19 that address dignity if you serve food
20 under the Ben Franklin Bridge and how
21 does that affect food quality. So it's
22 been difficult going through this process
23 to have those sort of answers.

24 I think it's important to look
25 at what's going to happen if the ban goes

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2 in tomorrow. The ban will go in

3 tomorrow. Will there be more dignity?

4 Will there be more food quality? No.

5 The men and women will stay down in the

6 Parkway. People will bring them food and

7 drop it off in boxes and drive away.

8 There will be little grandmothers making

9 stealth runs, getting stuff out of their

10 car and giving it, and the food quality

11 will get worse and the dignity will

12 decline, and it just -- and the health

13 won't even be addressed in a positive

14 way. The social services will change.

15 It will not get better with this ban. So

16 the next step is not a better step.

17 Many of us started these

18 programs out of response, out of

19 compassion, out of religious conviction.

20 Now the City's response to that has been

21 out of order, I think.

22 I'm on the task force with the

23 City, and we're just very far away from

24 being able to address the real problems

25 and get real solutions. So instead what

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2 we've done is -- we have a huge problem
3 with hunger in the City. It's not just
4 the homeless. We have many who are the
5 working poor, many who are on disability,
6 and they also come down to the Parkway to
7 eat. It's not just the street homeless.
8 So we really have a communal family
9 style.

10 So really what's going to
11 happen is, we've chosen, if we go through
12 with this as a city, to starve the men
13 and women off the Parkway, to ask them to
14 go into shelters and the food service
15 places that either don't exist or can't
16 hold the capacity. We've asked them to
17 then use the social services, which are
18 now being cut and are not addressed in
19 those places. And then we're asking the
20 volunteers who have been greatly opposed
21 in this and really become almost an enemy
22 in this, we're asking them to then serve
23 and to give to the City. And then we're
24 asking in these crazy times with the
25 crime and violence and school stuff,

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2 we're asking this to be a priority of
3 enforcement, that the police are going to
4 spend their time enforcing these things.
5 It just doesn't fit.

6 And so we are supportive,
7 obviously. And, Councilwoman Blackwell,
8 we thank you so much. Your name rings
9 golden on the streets of Philadelphia and
10 your legacy with your husband --

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. BRUCKNER: -- that will
13 truly carry for generations.

14 And so I guess if we're the
15 second hungriest city, if this ban goes
16 through, it really seems like we're going
17 to be shooting for number one pretty
18 soon, because it's really not a solution,
19 and we've got to find a different way.

20 Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you.

23 (Applause.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you. Thank you for the kind remarks, and

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2 I thank God for the privilege of service
3 and for this job so that it authorizes me
4 to do all that I can.

5 I'm on the task force too, and
6 I wanted your opinion on what you view --
7 so far that I've seen, I haven't seen
8 where we're going yet or how long they
9 want to operate. We have asked the Mayor
10 to hold up. It was his idea to have a
11 task force, and we've asked him to not
12 enforce any of these regulations that
13 he's come up with that are due to start
14 being enforced tomorrow, on June 1st, at
15 least until his task force has met and
16 has talked with people like yourself and
17 your work, Reverend Jenkins and all other
18 interested people, and I wonder what your
19 opinion is of where we are now on the
20 task force or if anything specific has
21 come out of those meetings yet.

22 MR. BRUCKNER: Yeah. We've had
23 a few meetings. If there was an easy
24 solution to this, someone would have done
25 it long ago. And so the task force is a

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2 great step that, in my opinion, should
3 have been done long before any ban was
4 put into effect. If you're building a
5 building, planning renovations, you do
6 the planning first and then you make
7 decisions based on that.

8 And so I am a part of the
9 process and I respect the process, and I
10 will be a helpful part of that, but we
11 are very, very far away from having real
12 tangible ways to feed more people in the
13 City. So I totally support what you're
14 saying. It would make complete sense to
15 postpone any enforcement until at least
16 the response of the task force comes
17 back, and then move from there.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you. Thank you very much.

20 MR. BRUCKNER: Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you so much.

23 Here's my friend.

24 MS. WILLIAMS: Hi. I'm
25 Mrs. Williams from the Mary Jane Home

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2 Enrichment Center. I see a lot of faces
3 in here. We are on Ridge Avenue in the
4 Francisville section. And I always said
5 that the feeding program just doesn't
6 stop at the Love Park, because we have a
7 lot of churches that support the Mary
8 Jane, and when they come in from Exton
9 and they come in from Freehold, New
10 Jersey and they come from Chews Landing
11 and to feed the homeless at the Love
12 Park. And I hear that starting tomorrow,
13 that might stop, and these people have
14 not been notified, but I'm wondering are
15 they prepared to stop feeding.

16 But I go back with Jannie
17 Blackwell. She inspired me. I've been
18 with the Mary Jane for 40 years. I'll be
19 74 years old come June the 13th, and as
20 the song said, I ain't nowhere tired. I
21 didn't come this for God and Jesus, the
22 Holy Spirit to leave me.

23 But Jannie inspired me some
24 years ago. She was down in the subway,
25 and I read in the newspaper where they

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2 tore her jacket. I say, Oh, my God. I
3 said, Jannie, you don't have to be down
4 here in the subway. So I bought my team
5 of homeless people from the Mary Jane
6 Shelter and went down in the subway, and
7 I never saw -- I didn't know that they
8 had big kittens coming out of the trash
9 can. Well, it was a big rat that came
10 out of the trash can eating out of the
11 trash can. At that time, homeless people
12 were having -- living in the subways and
13 dying in the subways and having babies in
14 the subways.

15 So over 40 years, Jannie, it
16 hasn't changed. The homeless will
17 never -- they'll still be there. We'll
18 always feed people and clothe people. So
19 I strongly suggest that the Mayor hold up
20 until you have something that's concrete
21 in place.

22 Every day at the Mary Jane, we
23 do feed people, and the reason why we so
24 energetically feed people, because I love
25 my city and on the -- by being on Ridge

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2 Avenue and as people pass by, I say,
3 Well, we can feed them a meal where they
4 don't have to come into Center City, to
5 break into someone's car or panhandle or
6 rob someone. So that is why I'm inspired
7 to continue to feed. Although I'm not at
8 the Love Park, but I do support people at
9 the Love Park that feed. I also support
10 people at the library that feed. I
11 support 100 percent, because it's a thing
12 that God has charged us to take care of
13 the poor. By the grace of God, the
14 people that sit in this room right now is
15 not homeless, because when I go into
16 Lower Merion schools and speak, by the
17 grace of God, that your house didn't
18 catch on fire and made you homeless or
19 had an electrical fire or windstorm.

20 So we don't know why people are
21 in the situation. And you say there is a
22 place to feed homeless people, but
23 everybody is not -- everybody is
24 different. So we must look at this here
25 big picture in the City of Philadelphia,

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2 not just in Center City feeding. We have
3 it in Northeast. I just left Entenmann's
4 up in the Northeast off of Byberry Road
5 and Academy feeding the homeless up
6 there. I was in Port Charlotte, Florida
7 two months ago feeding the homeless
8 there, upscale place. I was in Villanova
9 not too long ago feeding the homeless
10 there.

11 So it's not just a problem for
12 poor people. And homeless people might
13 not look like you and I and smell like
14 you and I, but they need help. And I
15 feel as though, Jannie, that -- and,
16 Councilman Greenlee, hi -- that you ask
17 the Mayor to hold off, please, because
18 everyone is looking at us right now.
19 It's -- I mean, they can't go into the
20 supermarket and roll the shopping cart
21 and get food and come back. We have a
22 lot of mental health people out there,
23 mental health. Because when we was
24 flooded with the crack cocaine 40 years
25 ago and the shelters was thriving, Mayor

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2 Wilson Goode had 5,000 people being
3 housed, until we got a handle on that
4 drugs. It destroyed families in
5 neighborhoods in the City of
6 Philadelphia. So in return, drugs burnt
7 your brain cells out and they became
8 mental, and with the mental piece, it
9 became the AIDS piece.

10 So I strongly suggest, if you
11 stop feeding the people, not just at the
12 Love Park and the Parkway, they will
13 break in more cars, snatch more
14 pocketbooks and more robberies. Trust
15 me. I see it every day. I've been
16 seeing it for 40 years, and, Jannie, it
17 has not changed. It has not changed,
18 Jannie. It's the same.

19 I see you now down in the
20 subway and Lou feeding the homeless down
21 there. Yes, yes, you inspired me. You
22 inspired my little niece too. She said,
23 I'll be there in spirit. I can't be with
24 you, Aunt Edna, she says, but keep on.

25 So, Councilman Greenlee, talk

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2 to our Mayor. Don't fight no fines. You
3 know, Jesus twice fed the 5,000 with the
4 fish and the loaves. And the Mary Jane
5 is not funded through the government, the
6 City or the state. Through Jesus Christ,
7 we're funded. We're funded through him,
8 so we continue to do it.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. WILLIAMS: The City needs
11 these organizations. The City needs
12 these organizations, trust me, to feed
13 these people, because we don't have it in
14 our budget, but we have a God-given
15 right. And the Holy Spirit speaks to us
16 every day to continue to feed the poor,
17 house the poor, because God provides. So
18 if God can provide for the birds, yes, he
19 can provide for the homeless too.

20 Amen. Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Amen.

23 Councilman Greenlee wants to
24 say something. And let me say that all
25 of those years ago, I'll never forget

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2 when we met and you said, You all are
3 feeding in the subway. As long as you
4 need a place to send someone, my place is
5 open to you.

6 MS. WILLIAMS: Exactly.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
8 all of these years later, you've never
9 turned anybody away, never said no, and
10 you have just been a blessing in my life
11 and to all who know you. Thank you.

12 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you,
13 Jannie.

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:
15 Ms. Williams.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
17 Ms. Williams, Mary Jane.

18 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That's
19 okay. I'll just say it.

20 Thank you, Madam Chair. I just
21 want to go on record, Ms. Williams and I
22 have known each other for a while, a long
23 time now. As she said, she's in
24 Francisville, which is part of the 15th
25 Ward. I always have to get that in

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2 there.

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, yes, yes.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

5 Councilman Jones can talk about the 4th
6 District all the time. I can talk about
7 the 15th Ward.

8 MS. WILLIAMS: You keep our
9 doors open too, you know that.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

11 Absolutely.

12 I think what's important is --
13 and Ms. Williams knows -- unfortunately
14 sometimes we go through some rough times
15 in Francisville. We've just had a
16 weekend of a spate of real serious
17 violence.

18 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes; three
19 killings.

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: But the
21 Mary Jane Shelter is always a place of
22 peace, and I think that's a testament to
23 all the work you do.

24 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Because

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2 nobody messes around Mary Jane.

3 MS. WILLIAMS: No, they don't.

4 No.

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So,

6 again, thank you for all you do.

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you,

8 Councilman.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
11 you very much. Thank you both very much.

12 Sister Mary Scullion, Project
13 H.O.M.E. I know Sister Mary said she
14 might not be able to be here because she
15 had to go to Harrisburg to fight health
16 cuts too, but that someone would be here
17 to read her statement.

18 (Witnesses approached witness
19 table.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you very much.

22 Is Paulette Adams here, PEC,
23 People's Emergency Center.

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I

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2 don't see Paulette.

3 Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

4 Good afternoon.

5 MS. WEINBAUM: Good afternoon.

6 My name is Laura Weinbaum. I'm the Vice
7 President of Public Affairs and Strategic
8 Initiative through Project H.O.M.E., and
9 I have with me Carol Thomas, who oversees
10 our Outreach Coordination Center, which
11 is, as you know, a partnership between
12 the City and five agencies who provide
13 outreach to people living on the street.

14 I think you guys have copies of
15 our longer testimony, so I'll spare you
16 some of the detail, but we want to just
17 say thank you for creating this forum for
18 people to express their concerns about
19 the impending implementation of the ban.
20 Clearly, it sparked incredible
21 controversy, and we've tried to have
22 conversation now with as many different
23 perspectives as we possibly can on this
24 issue, because initially we publicly
25 supported this policy based on our belief

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2 that it could lead to some positive
3 progress.

4 Let me assert at the outset
5 that we do believe that the
6 Administration and Council have very real
7 and genuine concern for the struggles of
8 our homeless sisters and brothers, and we
9 deeply value your leadership and
10 partnership. We all stand with you
11 solidly in your commitment to end
12 homelessness in Philadelphia.

13 We joined the Mayor in his
14 announcement because we believe that he
15 shares our desire to find a resolution to
16 the longstanding controversy of Parkway
17 feeding that would help us as a city make
18 progress in meeting the needs of those
19 who are on the street, and we continue to
20 support the City's commitment to
21 establishing indoor facilities with
22 healthy meals in a dignified setting and
23 with access to services that meet the
24 broader needs of those who are homeless.

25 The reality is that the

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2 proposed service-enriched dining centers
3 are not yet in place. Those on the
4 streets in need of food do not yet have
5 the appropriate alternatives. So June
6 1st, tomorrow, initiation of the policy
7 amounts to a ban on street feeding
8 without the additional availability of
9 indoor meals and services. Therefore, we
10 cannot support the ban of outdoor meals
11 in Fairmount Park at this time.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. WEINBAUM: It continues to
14 be our hope that this controversy can
15 still be an opportunity for us as a city
16 to make progress in addressing the
17 underlying issues of hunger, housing and
18 poverty. In this spirit, we respectfully
19 request that the ban on street feeding in
20 Fairmount Park not be enforced until the
21 appropriate quality dining centers are in
22 place.

23 We share with you, as you know,
24 a vision of a day when every
25 Philadelphian has a home and can enjoy

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2 healthy and sufficient meals, and we
3 intend to work with you and others to
4 hasten that day.

5 Thank you for your
6 consideration of these issues and for
7 your leadership on behalf of all
8 Philadelphians.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
11 you very much.

12 Councilman Greenlee.

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Just very
14 quickly. Good afternoon.

15 MS. WEINBAUM: Good afternoon.

16 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I think
17 you hit on a key thing that I've been
18 thinking about from the beginning of
19 this, and that's the word "alternative,"
20 and it just doesn't seem to have been
21 provided. I know there was that
22 conversation, as you said, about the
23 indoor facility. Do you know, is that in
24 any way close or is there a location?
25 You don't have to disclose what that

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2 location is, but, I mean, I'm just trying
3 to figure out where -- because I think
4 that's a key part of all this. If there
5 could be this alternative indoor
6 facility, it's a different conversation,
7 in my opinion.

8 So do you know anything? I
9 know the Administration is not here, and
10 I don't want you to give out any kind of
11 inside information.

12 MS. WEINBAUM: No. I can't say
13 that we've heard -- I don't think we've
14 heard in any official capacity, but there
15 are churches and other facilities around
16 town who have offered to extend indoor
17 feedings for -- indoor meal-sharing.
18 Gosh, please don't use that term -- for
19 people who are homeless and need
20 services. But, again, I don't -- I
21 think, you know, nothing more than what's
22 already been in the papers and so on.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So it's
24 still reasonably nebulous, I guess.

25 MS. WEINBAUM: It's important

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2 that it be in a dignified setting and
3 paired with services and that we're
4 really using this as an opportunity,
5 which is what we saw initially, to
6 advance the ball and to make things
7 better for people, not just people who
8 are homeless but people throughout the
9 City, as Adam and others referred to, who
10 don't have enough to eat and --

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Need
12 services, yeah. I got you. Okay. Thank
13 you.

14 Thank you, Madam Chair.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
16 you.

17 MS. WEINBAUM: Thank you.

18 MS. THOMAS: But I can say that
19 outreach and all the agencies have been
20 to the feeding sites to assist people
21 who -- we engage people, we offer
22 assistance and we offer them information
23 as to where to go, but, of course, we do
24 support there should not be a ban on
25 feeding until those facilities are in

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2 place, and they don't seem to be as of
3 yet.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We
5 agree. Thank you very, very much. Thank
6 you.

7 (Applause.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Give
9 Sister Mary our best.

10 Our next panel, Panel 6, Pastor
11 Bill Golderer, Broad Street Ministries;
12 Joe Rogers, Mental Health Association of
13 Southeastern Pennsylvania; Dick McMillen,
14 Sunday Breakfast Mission.

15 REVEREND JENKINS: Councilwoman
16 Blackwell, just to answer your question
17 and --

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
19 Please, take the mic, Reverend Jenkins.
20 (Witness approached witness
21 table.)

22 REVEREND JENKINS: I apologize.
23 I just wanted to answer that question
24 about the indoor space. There is not
25 enough indoor space. There's over 10,000

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2 homeless people in Philadelphia. Over a
3 quarter million people in Philadelphia
4 fall below the poverty level.
5 Sixty-seven percent of those are women.
6 And so the capacity is not even there.
7 There's only six major indoor meal
8 programs in Center City Philadelphia
9 alone, so that the capacity is not even
10 close and it's not even in the
11 foreseeable future. Not only that, that
12 even if there was enough space, there can
13 never be a ban in place because it is
14 unconstitutional and people have a choice
15 whether to eat in the park or not.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you, Reverend Jenkins.

20 (Witnesses approached witness
21 table.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
23 afternoon. You may go in any order.
24 Identify yourself and begin your
25 testimony, and, again, thank you for

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2 being here.

3 MR. ROGERS: My name is Joseph
4 Rogers and I'm with the Mental Health
5 Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania.
6 Good afternoon, and I appreciate the
7 invitation to speak today. Thanks to
8 Councilpeople for their interest to speak
9 on the potential impact to Section 109 of
10 Parks and Recreation Regulation 769785,
11 which would ban, quote, outdoor feeding,
12 unquote, in the Philadelphia parks, and
13 I'm honored to be part of the task force
14 that's been assembled to further examine
15 this issue.

16 Philadelphia is a beautiful
17 city with a unique park system that
18 provides wonderful places to sit and
19 enjoy a meal, and I've taken that
20 opportunity to enjoy lunch and the beauty
21 of nature myself, and I think there's
22 nothing innately wrong with people eating
23 outdoors.

24 The attempt by the City of
25 Philadelphia to increase the dignity and

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2 safety of those who are hungry is founded
3 on good intentions. Because there are
4 approximately 4,000 people who are
5 homeless in the City, it's important that
6 we continue to offer resources and
7 provide services. Clearly, food is a
8 vital resource that must be available.
9 While providing good, healthy food for
10 people, there is an opportunity to engage
11 them and offer other services that they
12 may need. Each encounter with a person
13 who is hungry or lacking adequate housing
14 is an opportunity to provide a connection
15 with mental health services, case
16 management services, employment and
17 health resources and many other supports.
18 Linking the provision of food to the
19 provision of other services is vital to
20 uncovering underlying issues that may be
21 at the heart of why someone has
22 experienced homelessness or hunger.

23 The Occupy Movement, for
24 example, and its presence in Dilworth
25 Plaza is an example of the relationship

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2 between food availability and potential
3 engagement that can occur while providing
4 meals. Based on the experience of
5 outreach workers who engaged people at
6 the site, we have learned that those who
7 are seeking food are most often also
8 seeking other resources. Again,
9 providing food is an opportunity to
10 engage someone and link with those
11 resources.

12 Outreach is an effective
13 intervention that can result in
14 improvements in housing outcomes,
15 improved mental health and decrease in
16 psychiatric admissions, a decrease in
17 substance abuse orders, increased
18 employment, increased social support,
19 reduced victimization, improved quality
20 of life.

21 We had a project called the
22 ACCESS project, which was a federal study
23 and which the Mental Health Association
24 collaborated, and the study found that
25 when community members are engaged to

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2 their presenting issue, in this case
3 hunger, they are often more readily
4 engaged in other needed services. The
5 result is more days spent in stable
6 housing, fewer days spent living on the
7 street, fewer psychiatric symptoms and
8 increased monthly income.

9 The interest that this
10 regulation is generating results in an
11 exciting opportunity for Philadelphia to
12 learn from other cities and develop best
13 practices around how both to feed and
14 engage people seeking resources.

15 And just one model I found
16 searching the Internet that I thought was
17 interesting is a program called Food
18 Cycle in London, where they actually set
19 out food centers and it's all volunteer.
20 They use a lot of students. They get
21 food donated by restaurants, and it's
22 done in an all-volunteer basis.
23 Unfortunately with the Governor's budget
24 cuts, it's going to look like we're going
25 to have to do things on a more volunteer

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2 basis. And I just want to applaud all
3 the wonderful volunteers that have spoken
4 and just say, you know, we've got to find
5 a way to tap that energy and use that
6 energy and not ban that energy and not in
7 any way discourage that energy.

8 So regardless of where people
9 are fed, the provision of food must be
10 linked to more holistic services and
11 interventions.

12 Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you. Pleasure to see you again, Joe.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. McMILLEN: My name is Dick
18 McMillen. I'm the Executive Director of
19 Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission. We've
20 been serving the homeless in the City of
21 Philadelphia continuously since 1877 at
22 Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission. To the
23 best of my knowledge, we are currently
24 the largest feeder of the homeless in
25 Center City. We serve three meals a day,

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2 breakfast, lunch and supper, seven days a
3 week. These meals are available to both
4 those in residence with us as well as
5 those who come to our doors at mealtimes.
6 We served almost 200,000 meals last year,
7 and daily we're serving between 300 and
8 600 meals and do have the capacity to
9 double that. Sunday Breakfast Rescue
10 Mission is about a five-minute walk from
11 the Parkway.

12 Quite honestly, I'm not as
13 concerned about whether feeding is done
14 outdoors or indoors as I am about the
15 individuals who are in need. Psalm 72:13
16 and 14 says, "He will have compassion on
17 the poor and needy, and he will save the
18 lives of the needy. He will redeem them
19 from oppression and violence, since their
20 lives are precious in his sight."

21 "Their lives are precious in
22 his sight" is a belief I think every one
23 of us feeding the homeless share. The
24 founders of Sunday Breakfast Rescue
25 Mission - John Wanamaker, Atlee Burpee,

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2 John Stetson and James Pollock - actually
3 started out feeding men on the street in
4 1878. However, it wasn't very long until
5 they realized that the needs of
6 individuals were greater than just a
7 meal.

8 Perhaps one of the positive
9 things that could come out of this
10 controversy over outdoor feeding is that
11 it would be a catalyst for various
12 organizations, public and private, to
13 work together more, not only on food for
14 the hungry but to address the various
15 needs of medical care, mental healthcare,
16 employment and many other basic life
17 necessities.

18 There certainly is a need, when
19 one is able, to do what they can to help
20 themselves. I'm not a believer in
21 removing personal responsibility for our
22 actions, but that individuals who are
23 stuck and cannot see the way out need to
24 have someone come alongside them to help.
25 There are individuals who fear entering a

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2 building and its confines for even a
3 meal. Their needs also have to be dealt
4 with.

5 Whatever the outcome of these
6 hearings and the decisions about outdoor
7 feeding, Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission
8 will continue to help the hungry,
9 homeless and hurting. Those groups who
10 would like an indoor feeding site, we
11 would be happy to work with to coordinate
12 the use of our kitchen and dining
13 facilities. We have some groups doing
14 this currently and certainly have room
15 for more. We also, for those that may
16 decide to, if the ban goes through,
17 decide to stop feeding, for those who
18 would care to, on our website, can print
19 and distribute cards that we have
20 available there with our mealtimes and
21 with our shelter services, all of it.

22 Please keep in mind that their
23 lives are precious in his sight.

24 Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: All we
3 can say is amen. Thank you. Thank you.
4 Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

5 Panel 7 -- and we'll allow you
6 to speak too, sir. Everyone who wants to
7 can.

8 Panel 7 are members of the task
9 force, John -- I'm sorry. Panel 6 was.
10 Panel 7, John Barbieri, Altressa
11 Boatwright, Laura Evangelisto and
12 Cranford Joseph Coulter.

13 (Witnesses approached witness
14 table.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
16 you for your patience and thanks for
17 being here. Feel free to identify
18 yourself for the record and begin.

19 MS. BOATWRIGHT: My name is
20 Altressa Boatwright and I am the
21 Operations Administrator for Chosen 300
22 Ministries, and I'm here today to present
23 testimony, but not in the sense of what
24 I've already heard. Many of you have
25 gotten up and you've given testimony on

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2 the civil rights, human rights, equality
3 issues, the issue of dealing with our
4 ability to meet the mandate that Christ
5 has given us, but I want to focus on a
6 different issue today. I want to focus
7 my attention on the impact that this law
8 or this policy has already had on those
9 that are in need.

10 As we all know, people go
11 hungry because of unexpected events. It
12 is not just the homeless, but it is also
13 individuals that live just above or just
14 below the poverty line.

15 Each day more and more people
16 are calling my office asking if there are
17 resources available to help pay the rent,
18 get medicine, get food, because they have
19 been turned down at so many other
20 existing agencies that are out there
21 that's supposed to be providing, but
22 because of cuts, that funding is no
23 longer available.

24 We are all just one step away
25 from being in the same situation that

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2 many of these individuals are in. All it
3 takes is a loss of a job, a loss of a
4 loved one, medical illness that prevents
5 us from working and, yes, even
6 addictions.

7 And that is not really the hard
8 issue. The hard issue that I have faced
9 over the last three weeks is that when
10 that phone call comes to the office,
11 there are no alternatives that I can give
12 them in order for them to survive. And
13 so I'm not talking about dignity issues
14 today. I'm talking about a matter of
15 life or death. I'm talking about
16 individuals, and I can give you an
17 example. I had a lady of Asian descent
18 that called me three weeks ago from the
19 Kensington section and she actually had
20 made -- that was her tenth call. She
21 called Pottstown. She called
22 Philadelphia. She had called churches
23 that were in Upper Darby, and someone
24 finally referred her to Chosen 300. And
25 she called and she said, We have been

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2 waiting for two weeks for someone to come
3 and bring food. The church used to come
4 and they've stopped coming, and we need
5 food. We need someone to help us. And I
6 had no answer for her. The only thing I
7 could tell her was, Come to Chosen 300
8 and you can get a meal, and she said,
9 We're too far away, these people can't
10 come there, we need someone to come to
11 us. And I had no answer.

12 There are two individual women
13 that come to Chosen 300 and to various
14 places throughout the City. I don't care
15 what shelter or what meal program that is
16 in effect. They know every day where
17 there is a meal. And even on the days
18 when there is not a meal, these two
19 sisters will show up. They are seniors,
20 Caucasian sisters that go throughout the
21 City seeking meals, and they have
22 indicated that they have to do this
23 because their Social Security does not
24 provide enough money for them to pay the
25 bills and get medicine and get food.

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2 Any time they're at Chosen 300,
3 you'll find them eating a meal, and they
4 will take a bagel and wrap it up in a
5 napkin to save it for later for the days
6 when they know that there's no one out
7 there feeding. And recently they've
8 indicated -- we went to the Parkway, but
9 they weren't there.

10 So what does that say about
11 Philadelphia when we can just leave
12 people right where they are and not
13 provide any means of access for -- it's
14 not because the food is not available,
15 but it's because we don't give them
16 access to the food.

17 We also understand for the
18 first time in the history of Chosen
19 300 -- and we have been serving meals on
20 the Parkway since 1995, and last week,
21 for the first time in the history of
22 Chosen 300, we ran out of food trying to
23 serve individuals, because the lines were
24 wrapped around the corner, because people
25 have stopped coming to serve. And so

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2 that means that whenever someone is out
3 there, the capacity doubles because they
4 are hungry.

5 So I leave you today with this
6 thought, that if the church walks away
7 and all of the individuals walk away that
8 have been previously providing these
9 support services, no matter how small or
10 how great, because it says that where
11 there are one or two that are together,
12 you can make a difference. So if they
13 stop serving, then who will serve these
14 individuals?

15 I encourage every church, every
16 organization, every individual that has
17 been serving on the Parkway to continue
18 to serve despite the fact that this law
19 is going into effect. And, in fact,
20 Chosen 300 is about more than just talk.
21 We have established a fund and we are
22 willing to pay the first ten fines that
23 any individual receives in order for that
24 service to continue.

25 (Applause.)

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2 MS. BOATWRIGHT: And we will do
3 whatever is necessary to make sure that
4 those services stay available until there
5 is a resolution that has been presented
6 that is doable and honorable to the
7 people that we serve and that it is a
8 place that will be established that will
9 provide dignity and provide the access
10 that they need in order to get what they
11 so richly deserve despite their
12 circumstances.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you very much.

16 MR. COULTER: Hello. Thank you
17 for allowing me to speak. I'm another
18 one of the old heads here, I guess. You
19 and I, Jannie, have been in this battle
20 before through the years. It's a delight
21 to see you still at it.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you.

24 MR. COULTER: I'm sorry. I'm
25 going to be emotional.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you. Thank you.

4 MR. COULTER: I wear a piece of
5 Philadelphia on my chest in the form of a
6 cross.

7 I'm sorry.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: That's
9 all right. It's all right.

10 MR. COULTER: This is serious
11 business.

12 My name is Cranford Joseph
13 Coulter. I've been doing this -- not
14 speaking here, but it's the first time
15 speaking here, but serving on the streets
16 of Philadelphia for over 25 years just
17 about every week. Twenty-three years ago
18 I became Founder and Director of the
19 King's Jubilee. We serve without a dime
20 of government funding as a mission to
21 brewing resources from the suburbs into
22 the City, because we saw the City of
23 Philadelphia -- I'm going off my script
24 here -- saw the City hurting because of
25 white flight, job flight from the City

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2 into the suburbs. The Jubilee Principle
3 of the Scripture says that it should flow
4 back.

5 So that is our mission, to have
6 it flow back. So we help not only just
7 directly the homeless, we help other
8 ministries that help the homeless and the
9 poor. We've helped bring resources back
10 into the City.

11 Now I'll get back on script.

12 We have been serving the poor
13 and homeless nearly every week on the
14 streets of Philadelphia for over 23
15 years. I have been told that I make the
16 best soup on the Parkway. That's by
17 somebody who has eaten at the Four
18 Seasons. I do receive a few complaints
19 about how hot it is, though. I tell -- I
20 remind folks that that is for their
21 safety. We keep it hot so that there's
22 no disease.

23 During the Rendell years, we
24 were harassed and investigated. On at
25 least three occasions, undercover police

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2 investigated us. They caught us on their
3 surveillance cameras cleaning up the Love
4 Park. You see, when I was in Girl
5 Scouts, I learned to leave a place
6 cleaner than what you found it. So we
7 always clean up after what the business
8 box lunch and latte crowd leave behind,
9 as well as any other tourists. I noted
10 that in their books. Mayor Rendell had
11 the attitude that the homeless were like
12 stray dogs. If you stop feeding them,
13 they will go to someone else's city.

14 I told him on at least three
15 occasions that no one is on the street
16 because the food is so good. It is the
17 other way around. We are there because
18 they are there. Mayor Rendell started
19 this meme that the Convention Center
20 failed because people were afraid to come
21 to Center City because of the homeless.
22 No one ever thought to be afraid of the
23 homeless until Fast Eddy suggested it
24 should be so. Insufficient parking, no
25 public restrooms open after 5:00 p.m.,

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2 badly negotiated union contracts, none of
3 these could have been to blame for the
4 Convention Center losing money, because
5 they were things that he maybe should
6 have thought of before he started to
7 build the thing. Anyway, we know no one
8 visits New York City because of all the
9 homeless there. I mean, there's a naked
10 cowboy in Times Square. The place is
11 desolate.

12 Now Mayor Nutter is repeating
13 the same meme with an added twist. He is
14 claiming that it hurts him to see his
15 fellow black men being fed with such
16 indignity. Well, he is the one who wants
17 to herd them into a dusty toxic feed lot
18 like so much cattle. He keeps referring
19 to what we all do as feeding them, as if
20 they were livestock or infants. We serve
21 the homeless.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. COULTER: We serve the
24 homeless people and poor people. They
25 feed themselves, thank you.

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2 We also provide spiritual
3 counsel, prayer, friendship, connection
4 when they move off of the street. We're
5 not just a mindless social service agency
6 that doesn't provide connection. We
7 don't just put them in boxes and leave
8 them homeless in boxes off of the street.
9 When they move off the street, we
10 maintain connection with them.

11 We grieve with them when they
12 lose loved ones. We grieve over them
13 when we lose them. This was made by a
14 man who lived with Alzheimer's on the
15 street off of salvaged wire from a
16 demolished building. And I still grieve
17 over Pops.

18 The Mayor does not really see
19 these people at all. He only sees their
20 clothes, and it is their clothes that he
21 does not approve of.

22 His decrees violate basic human
23 rights. They violate the Bill of Rights
24 of the Constitution. They violate the
25 14th Amendment. It's okay for rich

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2 people to eat in the parks and share
3 their food. It's not okay for poor
4 people.

5 They violate the United Nations
6 Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
7 which, by the way, says that it's okay to
8 share food with hungry people. So it's a
9 basic human right. Yet I have been told
10 that this body feels powerless to stop
11 him in his quest to oppress the poor and
12 those who would continue to serve them,
13 that the City Charter spells out
14 separation of powers. We can't have City
15 Council doing the Mayor's job too. Well,
16 it seems to me that the Mayor has
17 violated the spirit of that document and
18 maybe the letter too by doing the
19 Council's job of legislating on the
20 matter and not just regulating based on
21 existing ordinances.

22 Maybe it's time for
23 impeachment.

24 I was told by one of your
25 lawyers and by others that this hearing

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2 today is basically a waste of time, that
3 it is just window dressing. We are just
4 here beating our chests and stomping our
5 feet so that we can have the illusion of
6 having done something while actually
7 having done nothing.

8 While I am not an idealist, I
9 do still tilt at the occasional windmill.
10 I believe there is room for Council to
11 act. I think you must act to protect the
12 City from danger, financial harm and
13 social upheaval.

14 Our lawyer is filing suit in
15 federal court for an injunction to stop
16 the Mayor's regulations.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. COULTER: Now, do you want
19 to be the City that has the feds cleaning
20 up your mess because you failed to act or
21 do you want to be the adults here and
22 truly represent your constituents who
23 wholeheartedly oppose the Mayor on this?

24 I have people -- I have a sign
25 on the side of my car that says, "Serving

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2 the homeless is not a crime," and I have
3 people stopping me all over the City
4 saying, Give the Mayor hell and take him
5 down. I've never had that before. I've
6 never been on the right side of any
7 political issue, I don't think. This is
8 different.

9 The people of Philadelphia are
10 behind the Council on this in their
11 opposition to the Mayor. So you can act.

12 So I have proposed a rough
13 draft. I'm not a lawyer. My parents
14 were. We used to take out the
15 legislative manuals at dinnertime and be
16 there around the dinner table until 10,
17 11 o'clock with the Minnesota legislative
18 manuals going over all that. So I do
19 have some legislative in my blood.

20 Whereas, religious and
21 humanitarian groups serving meals to the
22 poor and the homeless in the parks of
23 Philadelphia and providing other needed
24 social contact with the wider community
25 are commendable activities and are

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2 historically universally recognized uses
3 of parks;

4 Whereas, religious and
5 humanitarian groups and individuals have
6 the right to share food with hungry
7 people wherever they find them, according
8 to the principles of the Pennsylvania
9 Freedom of Religion Act, the United
10 Nations Universal Declaration of Human
11 Rights, the principles of all world
12 religions and humanitarian doctrines;

13 Whereas, if the proposed Health
14 Department and Parks and Recreation
15 Department decrees go into effect, it
16 will expose the City to expensive
17 litigation, social unrest, economic
18 boycott and will harm the most vulnerable
19 of its citizens;

20 Be it resolved that no
21 regulation shall interfere with or
22 prohibit the free distribution of food,
23 clothing and other aid to people in any
24 parks in Philadelphia to as many as may
25 freely congregate there.

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2 Thank you. May God bless you.

3 We pray that God gives you wisdom. We
4 pray for peace on the streets and the
5 parks of Philadelphia, and may God bless
6 you, Jannie Blackwell.

7 Thank you.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
9 you. God bless you as well. Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
12 you both. Thank you. God bless you.
13 Pleasure to see you again as well.

14 Sueih Lee. Did I say it -- oh,
15 good. I guessed right. Eric Richardson,
16 Donald Craig. This is Panel 8. After
17 this, we'll have Joey T, radio
18 personality, Joey Temple; Paulette Adams,
19 PEC; and Bill Golderer, Broad Street
20 Ministries.

21 (Witnesses approached witness
22 table.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
24 you for your patience.

25 MS. LEE: Hello. My name is

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2 Sueih Lee and I am a resident of
3 Kensington. I recently moved there in
4 January to become a part of a Christian
5 intentional community and non-profit
6 organization called The Simple Way. The
7 Simple Way has its roots. Fifteen years
8 ago when a group of college students
9 decided to rebel against the mainstream
10 culture of being so self-segregated and
11 they decided to spend time at Love Park,
12 making friends and building relationships
13 and sharing food with those who
14 congregated there. And now 15 years
15 later, we're rooted in Kensington and we
16 share food with our neighbors through
17 food distribution bags, but the heart is
18 still the same, that it's all about
19 community and relationships and that
20 we're not all so different from each
21 other.

22 I myself decided to move to
23 Kensington because I was unhappy with the
24 way my previous lifestyle enforced walls
25 between me and others based on dividing

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2 lines such as race, privilege,
3 socioeconomic status, and I believe that
4 this ban seeks to enforce barriers based
5 on those same lines, which causes
6 discrimination against several groups of
7 people by treating them as a lesser
8 class.

9 And I think those of us in this
10 city who have lost sight that we are all
11 one have lost sight of what our identity
12 is, that we are all children of God made
13 in his image and that all of us share a
14 certain kind of poverty.

15 That's the poverty I was
16 fleeing from when I left my privileged
17 background in the suburbs with my ivy
18 league education. I left that to make
19 probably less than minimum wage that I
20 make now and also receiving food
21 donations so that I can survive. It was
22 that poverty of spirit that I realized I
23 needed other people, because we all need
24 one another, because we all have
25 different kinds of poverty. And we

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2 all -- when I see somebody who is lacking
3 food security or housing security, not
4 only do I see the face of Jesus in them,
5 as the Bible says we should, but I also
6 see myself, because I see my own
7 brokenness, my own poverty, my own
8 darkness. And I think that that's what
9 the Mayor and the Department of Parks and
10 Recreation needs to remember when they
11 try to treat people as belonging to a
12 lesser class and discriminating between
13 groups of people, that we are actually
14 all the same, we are all one.

15 As a follower of Jesus, I
16 believe that he came to earth as God
17 incarnate and died to take on our
18 darkness and brokenness and then rose
19 again to defeat all that separated us
20 from God. But not only did Jesus's
21 resurrection defeat the thing that
22 divided us from God, but it also
23 demolished the walls between us and our
24 fellow humans. So to paraphrase
25 Galatians 3:28, I believe that there's

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2 neither male nor female, nor rich nor
3 poor, black nor while, those with homes
4 and those without homes, because we are
5 all one in Christ.

6 And I really want to encourage
7 the City, as others have mentioned, to
8 draw on the resources that we do have.
9 Since there's budget cuts all over the
10 board, as others have stated, our
11 greatest resources are one another. Our
12 relationships are the people of this
13 city, are the people who share food with
14 others.

15 Just logically speaking, that's
16 people's personal time and money that
17 they're spending to help others. The
18 City doesn't even have to do anything.
19 Yet right now the City is trying to block
20 these individuals from doing what the
21 City itself cannot do, which makes no
22 sense. It's actually going to cost the
23 City more money to put this ban in
24 effect.

25 So I would just exert the City

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2 to just take advantage of those existing
3 relationships that all these different
4 groups and ministries have, that we are
5 walking alongside people, that we are
6 journeying together, that we are all
7 helping one another with our own
8 different types of poverty and that we
9 all really need each other. We all
10 really need each other, and there's no
11 distinguishing between different types of
12 poverty, and people with different types
13 of poverty should not be treated
14 differently than those of us who are
15 so-called privileged.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you.

20 MR. CRAIG: Good afternoon. My
21 name is Don Craig. I'm here as a
22 concerned Philadelphia citizen who has
23 gone through the homeless shelter system
24 the last four years, and I could not
25 stand by and let a ban like this go into

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2 place, because as so many people have
3 told me in the last four years, what's so
4 freely given to you must be so freely
5 given to others.

6 Thank you, Councilwoman
7 Blackwell, Councilman Clarke and Greenlee
8 for having us here today to speak.

9 As though you were walking in
10 here today, I was looking at the
11 northwest corner. You're talking about
12 safety and conditions. How can you have
13 a feeding station at that corner with the
14 traffic going around the corner like
15 whipping by, with the construction site,
16 which is you're so concerned about the
17 safety of the people eating the food, but
18 yet you're breathing in the smell of the
19 cars going by, the disabled trying to get
20 across that street. I mean, how can that
21 northwest corner be even considered as a
22 potential feeding station?

23 And also this must not be
24 important to the Mayor, because he would
25 have had a representative here today to

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2 be here to hear the concerns of the
3 people that elected the Mayor to this
4 post. And it just blows my mind just
5 hearing the many things that have been
6 said today that how could the Mayor just
7 even think of doing this, because I'm
8 sure he had a great dinner at the Barnes
9 dinner a couple weeks ago, and yet he
10 does not want us to feed the homeless
11 people out on the Parkway in a safe,
12 clean and available spot for anyone to
13 get to, because trying to have it at the
14 northwest corner right here where there's
15 traffic on the weekends or at nights,
16 other tourists coming by, the
17 construction site and all of that.

18 I mean, and also in closing,
19 for a ban to come into effect, you must
20 have at least, I think -- I'm no lawyer,
21 but you must have at least some kind of
22 contingency. From what I've been
23 hearing, the task force has only met
24 twice since March. And it seems like --
25 and as you walk out the northwest corner,

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2 there's no even feeding station there
3 ready to start serving people tomorrow.
4 I mean, how can you even do a ban without
5 going through the proper channels of at
6 least, I think -- I'm no lawyer -- I
7 think of at least six months of planning
8 to get this into effect.

9 So this ban has to be defeated.
10 And if they come up with sensible
11 measures about how to feed the 10,000
12 homeless people in the City, which I
13 can't see them doing, but yet I just had
14 to come and speak today.

15 Thank you. Thank you for
16 letting me come. Thank you.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
18 you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. RICHARDSON: Hello. My
21 name is Eric Richardson. I'm with Open
22 Arms Ministry.

23 Proverbs 31 and 9 says to "open
24 thy mouth, judge righteously and plead
25 the cause of the poor and the needy."

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2 Being a follower of Christ, I
3 believe that it's my job to go down and
4 feed the homeless, feed the less
5 fortunate. Not only do we feed them, we
6 clothe them. More importantly, we feed
7 them. You know, we speak to them about
8 God. We minister the word of God to
9 them.

10 We believe that we're
11 exercising our religious freedoms, and by
12 stopping us from feeding, you're taking
13 away our religious rights.

14 Something we can all agree on
15 that this city needs more is the word of
16 God.

17 Not every person receiving
18 meals on the Parkway is homeless. Some
19 of them just can't afford a decent meal.
20 So what happens to the mother that barely
21 makes enough to pay rent? Is she not
22 entitled to a decent meal for her and her
23 children?

24 Some people aren't homeless,
25 but they go for days without eating. We

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2 are told that the shelters are in
3 deplorable conditions and that the food
4 is horrible.

5 Mr. Mayor -- the Mayor is
6 fortunate to have a choice. Some people
7 don't. I ask you, would you choose to
8 live in these conditions? Would you eat
9 food from out of the garbage?

10 The bottom line, Mr. Mayor, is
11 that you're not homeless. Your family
12 isn't living in shelters or hungry.

13 So I challenge the Mayor today
14 to put himself in their shoes and to
15 remember that it could be him or I at any
16 given day.

17 We understand the Mayor's
18 concerns for safe food handling, but
19 there's not one recorded incident of
20 sickness from outdoor feeding, according
21 to Deputy Mayor Schwarz.

22 And another thing, when we
23 feed, our food is kept hot. We use
24 Sternos. We put the cold food on ice to
25 keep it cold. We use rubber gloves and

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2 hand sanitizer. We take all that stuff
3 down there with us. And we're not
4 receiving funding from the City. You
5 know, we're not looking for the City to
6 provide a facility for us, you know.

7 I'm an unemployed construction
8 worker and I take part of my unemployment
9 to make sure that I put it into my
10 ministry so that we can go down and feed.
11 We're not asking anything from the City,
12 but, you know, it's like where is the
13 compassion from the Mayor? We're said to
14 be the City of Brotherly Love, but we
15 can't even feed the people that needs
16 help.

17 And the gentleman back there,
18 he stated earlier that the Mayor stated
19 as a black man, it's painful, personally
20 painful, for me to walk up and down the
21 Parkway and see hundreds of people, many
22 whom are also African American males,
23 standing in 90-degree heat and long
24 lines. Well, it's painful for me to see
25 an African American Mayor not willing to

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2 allow the feeding of hundreds of African
3 American males.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. RICHARDSON: And for the
6 record, Mr. Mayor, hunger has no color,
7 race or gender. And I believe that this
8 is called by God, and I just want to
9 encourage everybody here, God is going to
10 make a way for us to continue to do this.
11 So just be encouraged, you know.

12 So thank you. God bless you.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you. God bless you as well.

16 Joey Temple; Paulette Adams,
17 PEC; Bill Golderer, Broad Street
18 Ministries.

19 (Witnesses approached witness
20 table.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you for your patience. Thank you for
23 being here. In any order. Please
24 identify yourself and begin your
25 testimony.

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2 MS. ADAMS: Certainly. My name
3 is Paulette Adams.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you, Paulette.

6 MS. ADAMS: And I am the
7 Manager of Community and External
8 Partnerships for People's Emergency
9 Center. PEC has been involved with the
10 plight of people who are managing or
11 negotiating homelessness for 40 years,
12 and specifically our services have been
13 around homeless women with children. And
14 I just want to read a bit of an excerpt
15 from Section 110 of the Amended Outdoor
16 Public Serving of Food, and it says that
17 no public serving of food should take
18 place anywhere in the Fairmount Park
19 system or any City of Philadelphia park
20 that is not subject to the regulations
21 governing the Fairmount Park system,
22 interpreting any park. And the exception
23 to this is the distribution of food as
24 part of a special event recognized by the
25 Managing Director's Office or a special

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2 event sponsored by a City agency.

3 A two-day music festival

4 sponsored by Jay-Z in Fairmount Park is a

5 special event. The Welcome America

6 Festival with its party on the Parkway

7 and dynamic fireworks display is a

8 special event. Daily access to food, a

9 meal and eating is not a special event.

10 It is a basic necessity, and it's a

11 fundamental right.

12 Good afternoon to Committee

13 Chairperson Councilwoman Blackwell, to

14 other City Councilmembers and all who are

15 assembled here today. In the interest of

16 time, I'm sure with your approval, I'm

17 going to keep my remarks brief.

18 PEC, in addition to providing

19 space, residence, indoor space for people

20 to live who are experiencing

21 homelessness, also operates a food

22 cupboard, and last year we provided food

23 for 1,700 individuals, and that's barely

24 scratching the surface.

25 The implementation of Section

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2 110, Outdoor Public Serving of Food, has
3 caused quite a stir in our city over the
4 last several months. Well-intentioned
5 people on both sides of the argument have
6 collided over policy, procedures and
7 process. I think all agree that there is
8 a problem. Residents of Philadelphia who
9 do not have food need access to food and
10 meals daily.

11 Our Philadelphia tradition of
12 grassroots activism has developed a
13 system that meets the need; that is,
14 distributing food through food cupboards
15 for those who have a place to prepare
16 food. Community and faith-based
17 organizations that have the capacity are
18 serving meals indoors to those who find
19 their way to the door, and, yes, there
20 are those who engage in meeting people
21 outdoors to share resources, sustenance,
22 food.

23 The latter approach has been
24 deemed inappropriate, dangerous and
25 dehumanizing by opponents to what has

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2 been labeled as public feeding. In the
3 City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly
4 Affection, we have always shared, and
5 isn't that what a community is about?
6 There have been strategy meetings to
7 determine a better approach, short-term
8 alternatives proposed, fines levied and
9 now Section 110. Is this really in our
10 best interest?

11 The unintentional consequence
12 of causing harm to those of our citizens
13 who have the most need; that is, the
14 poor, the mentally ill, some of our
15 veterans and other disenfranchised
16 individuals, is the unfortunate outcome
17 of Section 110. An ad hoc remedy that is
18 less than ideal should be counted by a
19 well-conceived piloted and tested and
20 implemented solution.

21 One in four households have a
22 food deficit, and a food deficit means
23 that there's a shortage of food or not
24 enough nutritious food. One in seven
25 senior citizen households has a food

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2 deficit. Donations are down, and you can
3 ask any food cupboard personnel, you can
4 ask Share or Philabundance, but the need
5 is still greater.

6 More options are required and
7 complimentary services to address
8 additional deficits of these, our most
9 challenged residents. At a time when
10 federal and state budget cuts have
11 greatly reduced resources to our existing
12 programs that facilitate sustainable
13 change for those experiencing
14 homelessness, job loss and other crisis,
15 we don't need to take away options for
16 people to show and receive benevolence.
17 There has to be a longer timeline, which
18 includes transitions that don't feel
19 punitive to the giver or to the receiver.
20 We don't need to criminalize hunger. And
21 that's been the outcome, and we've been
22 here before, where we've criminalized
23 people being on streets who had no place
24 else to go. We've criminalized people
25 congregating in public spaces, such as

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2 Love Park, because they were the
3 disenfranchised. And now we're
4 criminalizing people because they're
5 hungry.

6 And we respectfully agree that
7 there should be a halt to Section 110
8 while there's a longer time for people to
9 engage and determine what should be the
10 outcomes, and that we can trust people to
11 know where they should get their food.
12 It's okay for us to not feed them on the
13 Parkway, but it's okay for them to source
14 food from the backs of restaurants or to
15 try and find it on the street or to ask
16 somebody for leftover french fries.
17 That's going to be legal, and feeding
18 people out of our altruistic nature as
19 Philadelphians is going to be criminal.
20 That's something that we can't tolerate.

21 And we thank you for hearing us
22 today, Councilwoman Blackwell.

23 (Applause.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you. Thank you for your testimony.

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2 Thank you.

3 MR. TEMPLE: Good afternoon.

4 My name is Joey Temple. You said I'm a
5 radio personality, but I'm a child of
6 God.

7 I was sitting in here earlier,
8 Councilwoman Blackwell, listening to the
9 children from Veronica Joyner's school,
10 and that's what made me stay and keep
11 abreast of this hearing.

12 But I wear a shirt with Marvin
13 Gaye's picture on it. Marvin Gaye was
14 one of the greatest talented individuals
15 that we know in the entertainment
16 business. He wrote a song, "What's Going
17 On." I asked this question on May the
18 31st, 2012, What's going on here in
19 Philadelphia, where we can embrace an
20 entertainer coming on the Parkway making
21 money, but we can't embrace people
22 feeding those that's in need?

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. TEMPLE: I ask this
25 question to Philadelphia. We talk about

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2 the City of Brotherly Love, when all
3 we've been hearing lately is brotherly
4 hatred, children of one another. If you
5 think that there's not -- if you think
6 there's going to be peace when you
7 so-call stop people from feeding that's
8 fortunate than others, then Mayor
9 Goodfoot -- well, I got another name for
10 you, but sometimes it's being respectful.
11 You know, you got another foot coming.

12 You take away a person's food,
13 you take away their livelihood.

14 The young people that spoke
15 today showed you the ingredients of what
16 it is to go out of their way to feed
17 those less fortunate than others. Maybe
18 perhaps if you didn't go to St. Joe's
19 Prep or University of Penn, you would
20 understand the plight of those less
21 fortunate than you may be.

22 And I've been known as becoming
23 a radical individual, but sometimes
24 people become elected officials forget
25 what they become elected officials for.

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2 I remember in 1980, yourself and the
3 former Councilman Blackwell went down the
4 subways feeding those less fortunate than
5 others. I remember before the late
6 Congressman died, he had a hearing on the
7 homeless in Washington, DC.

8 Some people who sit here sit
9 here in this so-called magnificent
10 building forget those who helped get them
11 here. It was the homeless people -- let
12 me remind you, it was the homeless people
13 that went out during election times, hung
14 up your banners and got people to
15 distribute things for you. But once you
16 sat your behind down in the seat of
17 power, you forgot from which you come
18 from. You forgot that -- you so better
19 than thou, that you're so important.
20 You're no better than nobody. I'm not no
21 better than you and you're no better than
22 me. And sometimes, you know, it hurts me
23 to sit here and I see people who try to
24 do the right thing, but because those in
25 government get a big paycheck think they

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2 so better, they turn their back on those
3 less fortunate than others.

4 So, you know, we can quote from
5 the Bible. We can quote from any other
6 book, the Torah or Koran or whatever, but
7 until we start understanding from which
8 we come from as a people of God, then it
9 don't mean nothing. And I say this to
10 you: There's a word, you say ask and
11 there's a whole, but in the end, 215.
12 You know what I'm talking about.

13 Don't think that you are
14 better. Don't think that you're going to
15 wake up tomorrow and the world is going
16 to be right there in your hand.

17 Another songwriter -- I played
18 this song the other night on the radio by
19 Al Green. The message is love. Love is
20 the message. And if you ain't spreading
21 no love from the realness of your heart,
22 it don't mean nothing. Don't think that
23 you can come up and talk about passing
24 the budget and passing all this and
25 embracing Jay-Z, but you don't want to

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2 embrace those who are feeding those less
3 fortunate than others.

4 And I thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
7 you, Joey T. Thank you.

8 REVEREND GOLDERER: I don't
9 want to follow that.

10 Councilwoman, my name is
11 Reverend Bill Golderer. I pastor the
12 Broad Street Ministry on South Broad
13 Street and also the Arch Street
14 Presbyterian Church at 18th and Arch
15 Street. And I will be very brief.

16 The first word I want to enter
17 into the record is a word of humility. I
18 am much newer to this important work than
19 many of the people who are in this room,
20 Reverend Jenkins and others and my
21 colleague from Sunday Breakfast and
22 People's Emergency Center.

23 I'm not coming here as someone
24 who has answers. I want you to know I
25 come to you with both humility but also a

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2 sense of urgency. And I also see in this
3 moment that we are in an opportunity
4 that's not to be missed to exercise
5 leadership.

6 I think part of my concern of
7 what's going on here is that by not
8 binding ourselves more tightly together
9 and keeping in the front of our view
10 those who are suffering, who are sleeping
11 outside, who do not have the basics of
12 what they need to experience survival
13 much less the biblical notion of
14 flourishing, that's what we are looking
15 for for people.

16 What I'm here to do primarily
17 is, one, to maintain a posture of
18 openness to any group that wants to
19 explore a deepening partnership with
20 Broad Street Ministry, who has made a
21 great investment in trying to make
22 provision for people to have a dining
23 experience inside with people -- for
24 folks who have nowhere else to go and
25 feel cut off from other places of

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2 belonging and connection.

3 There's the presenting symptom
4 of food and food scarcity. The deeper
5 issue for me is a sense of disconnection
6 and that you are not of value, you are
7 not valuable in the eyes of God or of the
8 City, and that's the moment. For me, the
9 platform, whatever it is we're trying to
10 solve, cannot stop at the right to feed
11 our neighbors outside or inside. This is
12 about a systemic breakdown where people
13 are systematically discriminated against
14 and not given what they need to
15 experience the fullness of life.

16 And for me, I want to keep on
17 the table as we have this conversation
18 how do we make provision not just for
19 food but for health, and not just for
20 food and health but for friendship, and
21 not just for food and health and
22 friendship but also housing. This must
23 be -- all of this must be on the table.
24 And, Councilwoman, you are leading the
25 way, and I am grateful for you. And the

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2 question that I have for those of us who
3 have been committed to this work for a
4 long time, I'm begging that we would come
5 together.

6 I think some of us are fighting
7 unnecessarily, and I'm hoping we can find
8 a way to work together, and I'm hoping
9 City Council can keep this issue at the
10 top of the agenda. I'm afraid we're just
11 going to get distracted, as we do in our
12 society, and move on to the next thing.
13 And to me, the measure of who we are as a
14 city hangs in the balance. We have had
15 many breakthroughs in the areas of
16 culture and arts and maybe even the
17 Eagles will win it this year, I don't
18 know, but to me, we are not the City we
19 need to be while we continue to punish
20 those who are already suffering and
21 struggling. That's the perception I
22 have.

23 So my plea to my friends is
24 that we not allow money, ego and turf to
25 keep us from cooperating and

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2 collaborating on this vital issue on the
3 one hand, and on the other hand, that
4 this be recognized for what it is, which
5 is a leadership moment, where we need
6 very strong and fearless leadership to
7 reestablish the priority that every
8 person that you encounter is deserving of
9 an opportunity to have -- to experience
10 flourishing in this life.

11 And so I'm grateful to you.
12 I'm grateful to the people who have come
13 out today. And I'm hereby opening my
14 door for any conversation about how we
15 can move something forward that would be
16 really meaningful. Because a ban is not
17 a solution, but I must say with humility,
18 what we have been doing isn't all that we
19 could be doing, and I want to see
20 something -- I want to see this moment be
21 a new day for our friends and neighbors
22 who are suffering, and I'm thinking that
23 this could be our moment if we can seize
24 it.

25 Thank you, Councilwoman.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
4 you very much. I have a question.
5 Pastor Golderer, you are on the task
6 force; are you not?

7 REVEREND GOLDERER: Yes,
8 Councilwoman, I am.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: My
10 question to you is, have you seen some
11 level of resolve that would dictate
12 starting enforcement tomorrow, June 1st,
13 or is the task force still defining what
14 it will do and what its mission will be
15 and what it wants to see occur?

16 REVEREND GOLDERER:
17 Councilwoman, I didn't take an oath, but
18 I'm a truth-teller. The task force has a
19 lot of work in front of it and the first
20 work that needs to be done is to build
21 trust. I don't feel as though everybody
22 in the room feels -- and I believe
23 there's good reason for that. I don't
24 think there's been sufficient candor all
25 around. And so for me, the task force at

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2 this moment is no further along to be --

3 I mean, I'm sometimes overly frank and I

4 get in trouble, but that group could

5 bring something powerful forward, but

6 right now, there are no solutions that

7 I'm aware of.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I'm on

9 the task force as well, and I concur.

10 REVEREND GOLDERER: Are we in

11 agreement on that?

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Oh,

13 yes. And there are few of us who are on

14 the task force who have spoken and who

15 agree that the task force has not come up

16 with any solution, any consensus. And

17 since the Mayor created it, perhaps that

18 may give him pause to realize that we're

19 not ready for any enforcement tomorrow.

20 Thank you.

21 REVEREND GOLDERER: And to

22 me -- just, Councilwoman, if I may. The

23 way forward as this city, I can tell you

24 this: Enforcement of this ban will be a

25 concrete step in the wrong direction.

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2 What we need is a deeper commitment and
3 resolve to do better, everybody, me too,
4 starting with me. But that's my sense.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
6 you very much. Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Pat
9 Franklin, Diane Holland, Ronald Brackton
10 and Shawn Laney.

11 And let me say as they come
12 forward that we haven't talked a lot
13 about people being fined either. So
14 across the board, it's negative. How can
15 you fine people who give, who buy food,
16 who prepare food? How can one do that?
17 So it means we're all made victims of an
18 inhumane policy and again appealing to
19 the Administration not to enforce this
20 starting June 1st, tomorrow.

21 (Witnesses approached witness
22 table.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
24 afternoon, ladies. Feel free to identify
25 yourself for the record and begin your

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2 testimony.

3 MS. FRANKLIN: Good afternoon,
4 Councilwoman Blackwell, and thank you so
5 much for having me. My name is Patricia
6 Franklin and I feed the homeless on the
7 street, my daughter and I, every week.
8 It's not a crime to feed the homeless,
9 and I'm not a criminal.

10 In the Metro, it said feeding
11 the homeless is more than handing out a
12 bunch of sandwiches out of the trunk of
13 your car and driving off into the night,
14 like a thief in the night. That's what
15 Mayor Nutter said. But I'm not a thief.
16 I'm just a citizen who feels that it's my
17 God-given duty to serve and feed the less
18 fortunate of this city.

19 We do not serve just at the
20 Parkway, but we do drive around and serve
21 people in various sections of the City.
22 I am sure that all of you got up this
23 morning and you showered, put on your
24 clean clothes, ate your breakfast and
25 probably your lunch today. The homeless

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2 do not have the luxury of having a place
3 to stay or food to eat when they want to.
4 They do not know where their next meal is
5 coming from.

6 So many individuals do not want
7 to go into shelters feeling that the
8 system has let them down. The few
9 shelters that are open are not enough to
10 serve the growing homeless population.
11 Some do not trust the shelters, and that
12 leaves them on the street to fend for
13 themselves. At any moment, any one of us
14 in this room in an instant could be
15 homeless and on the street. I am sure
16 that most of those individuals would not
17 choose to live on the street if they had
18 an option to do otherwise.

19 I have been feeding the
20 homeless for four years. I also provide
21 toiletries, socks, soap, wash clothes,
22 toothpaste, shirts, blankets and also
23 spiritual support. My daughter, Sherry
24 Franklin, and her friend, Shannon Taylor,
25 go out with me every week, because this

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2 is something that we are committed to do.
3 We do this from our hearts. We receive
4 some donations from friends and we use
5 our own money to purchase what we need.
6 The audacity to fine us for something
7 that we are doing for others for free
8 just blows my mind.

9 We certainly are not trying to
10 harm anyone. However, I somehow feel
11 that you want to create a ban and punish
12 us for acts of kindness and service. Our
13 acts are not criminal and should not be
14 banned or fined.

15 I really don't understand the
16 logic when everyone in this room who
17 feeds the homeless is trying to help the
18 situation. Hunger is a huge, huge
19 epidemic, and it's growing larger and
20 larger every day. It is clearly a
21 problem that is not going to go away just
22 because you say so. This problem needs
23 your sincere help and not just
24 condemnation and ban. You must realize
25 that our acts of serving our fellow men

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2 and women is not criminal, but a
3 committed act of benevolence.

4 We can paint all the pretty
5 pictures that you want over that old
6 canvas, but the problem still remains
7 underneath. There are more people out on
8 the street due to closing shelters, the
9 economy, jobs lost, budget cutbacks and
10 mental instability. There are not enough
11 facilities to service and meet the needs
12 of these many forgotten and overlooked
13 individuals. We have no alternative --
14 who have no alternative but to live on
15 the street.

16 We need to do more, not less,
17 and stop looking the other way and
18 pretending that the problem does not
19 exist. Oh, by the way, what is the name
20 of this city? Oh, Philadelphia. Did
21 they call Philadelphia the City of
22 Brotherly Love? Picture that.

23 After teaching in the School
24 District of Philadelphia for 32 years, as
25 a retired school teacher, my service to

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2 humanity is being likened to Mayor Nutter
3 as a thief in the night. I am not a
4 thief. I always taught my students the
5 meaning of brotherly love and how to pass
6 it around, because you know, it is
7 contagious. We are our brother's keeper
8 and our sister's keeper. Agape love
9 unconditionally.

10 The people that I serve look
11 for us every week and they have not lost
12 their faith, and I do not intend to let
13 them down.

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
17 you very much. Thank you.

18 MS. FRANKLIN: May I say one
19 other thing? Sometimes I feel,
20 especially with that article that was in
21 the Daily News, that if it were up to
22 Mayor Nutter, if Jesus and his angels
23 were sitting on the corner singing, he
24 would want to have them locked up for
25 vagrancy.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you very much. Your point well taken.

4 MS. FRANKLIN: Thank you.

5 MS. HOLLAND: My name is Diane
6 Holland. I want to thank you for giving
7 us the opportunity to speak here, and I
8 want to thank everybody that has spoken
9 already for the great work that they do.
10 And I also want to say that this is the
11 third hearing I've had the privilege to
12 speak at, and each time I get to the
13 microphone, my composure is shaken. It's
14 shaken by the words that I hear and it's
15 shaken by the passion of the people in
16 the room, but it's also that I'm outraged
17 that we have to have the conversation.
18 And so thank you for bringing us here to
19 have the conversation.

20 I come from a little bit of a
21 different perspective than maybe some of
22 the other people in the room. I work at
23 a corporation that's right across the
24 street, the building with the big
25 clothespin. You might recognize it. And

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2 I lead the Corporate Social
3 Responsibility Committee in that
4 building, and as such, the corporation is
5 just developing its Corporate Social
6 Responsibility Policies. Clients are
7 more and more asking what is your
8 corporate social footprint? What do you
9 do to help the world around you?

10 So we have a new mission that
11 we have pledged to form and gather to
12 help those in the community to give back.

13 People looking for jobs are
14 looking at companies, companies that are
15 looking to attract and retain talent, and
16 they're asking the question, What's your
17 company's Corporate Social Responsibility
18 Policy. So corporations are budgeting
19 heart into the budget. So as such, I
20 volunteer outside of my eight hours a day
21 to lead that committee, and we became
22 involved in many acts of volunteerism and
23 giving, and we became involved with
24 Chosen 300 Ministries. So I lead groups
25 of 20 people approximately to Chosen 300,

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2 and what that's done is spread an
3 awareness of the situation of
4 homelessness and hunger throughout the
5 900-and-some associates that we have in
6 the building. Those that travel collect
7 hotel sample toiletries and bring them
8 back, and we collect them and bring them
9 to -- well, Brian picks them up from our
10 company.

11 We have a coat and blanket
12 drive, and people now invite their
13 families, bring their children to come
14 with them to go serve dinner at Chosen
15 300. So like those students that spoke
16 first from the charter school that made
17 us all proud of younger generations and
18 their commitment and what they can
19 possibly achieve, we're now able to bring
20 our children with us and teach them about
21 the issues that surround us.

22 And so on a personal level,
23 I've also been able to bring family
24 members, and I've been able to share with
25 them and I'll now share with you that

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2 when I leave from performing this
3 service, I take out my TransPass, which
4 I'm lucky enough to have because I have a
5 job, and I can go anywhere in the City on
6 that TransPass, and I go home. I'm lucky
7 enough to have that home. And I can take
8 a nice hot or cold shower depending on my
9 choice, and I can open the refrigerator
10 and choose anything, a variety of foods.
11 And I'm lucky enough, privileged enough
12 because I have a job. Like Altressa
13 said, we're all one step away from not
14 having that job, physical accident, a
15 mental illness. Every one of us that is
16 in this room, we could all be easily put
17 in the position of needing services,
18 which include food.

19 My son -- I'm a single mother.
20 I raised my son and put him through
21 college. He graduated in December. Not
22 my choice of the way I wanted to do it,
23 by myself, but that's what life is. He
24 graduated employed with a nice starting
25 salary, and after two months, the company

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2 closed. So I go to the shelter and I see
3 the college students. I see families
4 with children choosing between paying
5 rent and feeding their children.

6 So life is full of a lot of
7 very difficult choices. The choice
8 shouldn't be for these people who so
9 humbly come and serve the homeless should
10 I come and continue to serve, should I
11 risk getting fined. Just like Chosen 300
12 seen participation in those willing to
13 come out dwindle, I have the same
14 questions as part of this community
15 service that we do at the corporation.
16 Will I be fined, will I be arrested, what
17 will happen to me if I come help as well?

18 I'm glad that there is a task
19 force and that solutions are being looked
20 at, and I echo the sentiment of everyone
21 in the room, please postpone the ban
22 until solutions are found. The problems
23 have been mentioned numerous times in the
24 room today. Thank God for the people who
25 come out, people of faith, people of

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2 moral conviction, for whatever the
3 reasons may be, to serve others. I think
4 that the circumstances would be dire and
5 drastic if they were to be afraid to come
6 out because they'd be afraid of
7 persecution or being called a thief in
8 the night. And so I implore everyone to
9 postpone the ban until solutions are
10 found.

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
14 you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

15 MR. LANEY: Good afternoon,
16 Ms. Jannie Blackwell.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
18 afternoon.

19 MR. LANEY: My name is Shawn
20 Laney. At the present time, I am a
21 homeless person. Of course, God have
22 ordered -- well, to give you some
23 background on myself, I am a mechanical
24 engineer by profession, and about ten
25 years ago, I was living in Kansas City

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2 and I was about to move to Atlantic
3 City -- excuse me; to Atlanta, Georgia,
4 and God ordered my steps here back to
5 Philadelphia. I had no reason -- I had
6 no idea why he wanted me to come back to
7 Philadelphia until I got here. And he
8 also called me to ministry. He also
9 called me to share the gospel of Christ.

10 At the present time -- in
11 ordering my steps back to Philadelphia,
12 he sent me through New York. He also
13 sent me back to Philadelphia, and he also
14 gave me a job making about \$80,000 a
15 year.

16 I was on that job -- I worked
17 at that particular company for about two
18 or three months, and God ordered me off
19 that job to experience the disadvantage
20 of -- to experience what people go
21 through in a homeless lifestyle.

22 Now, that might seem incredible
23 to you, but it's not incredible to me,
24 because my personal ambition is to please
25 God in all that I do, and in pleasing God

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2 means also being obedient to his will.

3 And in my struggles and homelessness,

4 I've met lawyers. I've met people with

5 MBAs. I've met folks who struggle with

6 personal illnesses. I've met folks who

7 are homeless because of apartments being

8 shut down, all different kinds of reasons

9 why people are homeless. And in my

10 endeavors in trying to figure out why all

11 this is so, I've talked to quite a number

12 of people who have expressed their

13 personal stories to me.

14 And I've also spoke with a lot

15 of ministry leaders who I've talked to,

16 who I've asked, Well, what brings you to

17 feed the homeless, what brings you to

18 care for the homeless. And all of them

19 told me that God had ordered their steps

20 here. And so that tells me a number of

21 things, that God is concerned about the

22 disadvantaged. God is concerned about

23 people's needs being met. God is

24 concerned about the ministry of Chosen

25 300, Broad Street Ministries and the

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2 Helping Hand Rescue Mission, Sunday
3 Breakfast. He's concerned about
4 organizations, people who have ordered to
5 take care of people who society have
6 abandoned. And he has also called me to
7 express not only this attitude, but to
8 show me what it takes to help people who
9 are disadvantaged.

10 Now, I hope and pray that our
11 leadership of our city and, of course,
12 our Mayor will take to heart that God had
13 ordered these people to feed the
14 homeless. God ordered these people and
15 ministries to give of themselves in order
16 that the disadvantaged in our city can
17 enjoy somewhat of a normal lifestyle.

18 Now, some homeless people feel
19 as though that the City has abandoned
20 them, and I'm praying that that is not
21 so, and I'm also praying that God will
22 give wisdom to those who can make the
23 decision to stop this legislation and
24 hope to come to some kind of reasonable
25 solution as to how we can better serve

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2 the homeless and also people who are
3 disadvantaged in our city.

4 Thank you very much.

5 (Applause.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
7 you very much. Thank you all. God bless
8 you for your efforts. Thank you.

9 Our final panel and then we'll
10 open it up to whomever is here who would
11 like to speak, Tyrone Pierce, Robert
12 Franklin, Charles Leonard, Erica Harris
13 and Andre Cureton. If any of you are
14 here, feel free to come forward.

15 This is our final panel. So
16 anyone else who would like to speak,
17 we'll certainly open up the floor for you
18 to speak after this last panel.

19 (Witnesses approached witness
20 table.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you. You may start in any order.

23 MR. PIERCE: Good afternoon,
24 City Council, Jannie Blackwell and other
25 members that are here and honorable. I'd

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2 like to thank y'all for having us here
3 today. Also I'd like to thank all the
4 present speakers who eloquently gave all
5 the information that you need. I mean,
6 they gave you everything that you need to
7 know that this need not to be passed.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Please
9 provide your name.

10 MR. PIERCE: Oh, I'm sorry. My
11 name is Tyrone Pierce.

12 This ban for me being a former
13 on and off homeless person and have been
14 and received benefits of the churches, of
15 the students who comes out on Thursday
16 nights and feed them, the churches that
17 feed, my church, Chosen 300 Ministries,
18 that also with the churches, they bring
19 not just food to the people, they bring
20 them spiritual food to give them some
21 hope while they're out there lost, where
22 they feel that no one cares about them.
23 Of course you know that, Jannie
24 Blackwell, better than most because you
25 have been out there with us for numerous

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2 years, and I thank you for that.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
4 you.

5 MR. PIERCE: I'd like to say as
6 a Philadelphian and I've lived over
7 60-plus years in the City, this has been
8 my city since my birth at Hahnemann
9 Hospital, and I find that this bill and
10 anyone that's thinking of passing a bill
11 where you prohibit people from feeding
12 someone that needs to be fed is immoral.
13 It's an outrage, and it's against every
14 human rights principle that this country
15 and what the Constitution stands for as
16 far as separation of state and powers. I
17 find this is appalling, and that it needs
18 to be stopped and shouldn't have never
19 got to this point, as one of the other
20 speakers have already said.

21 You have people out there now
22 on a daily basis worrying about whether
23 the police of the City are going to stop
24 and make a move from the areas. They
25 worried about whether they're going to

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2 have anything in their stomach at night
3 to go to sleep with.

4 There have been scenes and
5 there will be scenes, as someone spoke
6 about the crime going up as far as that
7 there, because people are going to eat.
8 I've talked to some of the homeless
9 brothers that I know out there. They're
10 not going to go hungry, and if they must,
11 they will go in the store and get them
12 something to eat.

13 Now, how can we provide -- use
14 the resource of the courts for other
15 things and you going to have somebody up
16 here being brought in just because they
17 got something to eat? To me that's
18 immorally wrong. We have resources for
19 other things.

20 Now, to the homeless
21 community -- and I'm not speaking for
22 them all, but from my point of view, I
23 believe it's politically being used to
24 correct the -- because of the funding
25 that money that bring tourists here. I'm

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2 all for everything that uplift our city,
3 but when it comes down to where you put a
4 doubt on the foot of the person that
5 doesn't have anything and that is living
6 already within poverty level trying to
7 make means meet for their family, for the
8 children, there's going to be problems,
9 and that problem is going to cost more
10 resources.

11 We say let the other churches
12 open up more and have more space and
13 schedule times for the feedings. There
14 are people that cannot travel. The woman
15 spoke earlier about the two sisters.
16 Yes, they come to 300. They come
17 sometimes on the Parkway, because they
18 can travel that distance or they have a
19 friend that's going to be with them to
20 travel that distance with them, but there
21 are others that cannot even make that.

22 When I had the time, when I
23 wasn't even living off the street, I had
24 to take -- I would take and come down and
25 get food because I didn't have food in my

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2 house, take a peanut butter and jelly
3 sandwich home sometimes. That is hard.
4 It takes a lot of pride for people that
5 got to do that, but we do this because we
6 try to survive. And we have to go to
7 like Adam on Mondays to ask him to help
8 us with getting ID or helping us with the
9 funds to get the ID or birth certificate
10 that we need so we can walk around the
11 streets and not be treated like a
12 criminal. This is the things that these
13 churches and these people do. The Mayor
14 doesn't see it, and he needs to
15 understand to leave the churches alone,
16 because that is something God has them
17 doing, and no one can stop that.

18 That's all I have to say.

19 (Applause.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you.

22 MR. FRANKLIN: Hi. My name is
23 Robert Franklin. I'm one of the homeless
24 too.

25 Can I ask, is anybody here from

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2 the Mayor's Office? No, I didn't think
3 so.

4 I got people behind me like
5 Brian Jenkins and his wife and the rest
6 of their crew. They feed me almost every
7 other day. That's a blessing, not only
8 to me but a blessing to everybody that's
9 homeless. Everybody here that's homeless
10 right now, put your hand up, please.

11 I got three people in here, but
12 I got 10,000 people in the street. Yet
13 the City has no money, but the City has
14 money to put an ice skating rink out
15 front of City Hall?

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. FRANKLIN: This is the
18 Mayor's thing. Okay? Listen, this man
19 right here and this lady right here, out
20 of kindness of their heart -- and I know
21 it's their heart because God sent them
22 there -- they feed us. They give us
23 clothes. See right here? This came from
24 Brian. Okay? See them kids right there,
25 all the kids back there? Them kids come

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2 all the time. They come every other
3 weekend. They stand there. They feed.
4 They volunteer. Everybody sits there.
5 They bring the food to them. They bring
6 everything to them. They pray for them.

7 We are so thankful, especially
8 because these people here, they come all
9 the time, especially because -- everybody
10 sits on these special events.

11 Ms. Blackwell has her own special event
12 in her head, because Ms. Blackwell, the
13 City don't do it for her. She do it.
14 Okay?

15 Hey, y'all, Christmastime and
16 Thanksgiving time, do you know -- matter
17 of fact, Christmastime, let me get
18 Christmastime. There's kids all over the
19 City who can't eat, who can't -- parents
20 who can't buy them nothing. There's
21 people like me, females too, who can't
22 buy themselves anything, can't eat. But
23 Ms. Blackwell did. Ms. Blackwell said, I
24 want the Convention Center. She said,
25 Out of my money, I want the Convention

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2 Center. I want to give these kids, these
3 little kids, something for Christmas.
4 I'm going to give them something to eat.
5 Ms. Blackwell does it every year, right
6 out front, but they took her space. They
7 took her space. God gave her the space
8 and they took her space. Okay?

9 They can't help us eat, but
10 they can spend money on everything else.
11 Okay? On building buildings, right
12 across the street, all over the place,
13 but what? Like I said, an ice skating
14 rink. It costs a million dollars. Brian
15 spends that money going feeding the
16 people all across this world, Mr. Jenkins
17 and his wife. Okay? These little kids
18 that come out, they take it in their
19 heart. They say, dag, these people are
20 here. They need some help. They really
21 do. They really need that blessing.

22 These gentlemen from the
23 church, these guys from all the churches,
24 these ladies and gentlemen here who take
25 it out of their time, they don't get paid

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2 for it. Honestly, they don't. I swear
3 to God they don't. But they come out and
4 they say -- every other day, every day,
5 every chance they get. They say, Listen,
6 I know y'all ain't got this, but take
7 some of mine.

8 Me, myself, I'm homeless, like
9 I said, but Brian will tell you, this
10 gentleman right here will tell you, if I
11 see you outside and I have something to
12 eat and I still got something in my hand,
13 God said bless those who can bless
14 someone else. And I'm for it all the
15 time. If anybody in here, God -- in this
16 building, okay, who wanted our help doing
17 something, all you got to do is ask.
18 We're asking one little thing. Stop the
19 bill and help feed us, help clothe us,
20 help give us shelter, a real shelter.

21 Thank you very much for your
22 time.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
24 you.

25 (Applause.)

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
3 our summer event you know is July 13th,
4 Friday, the 13th. That's coming up soon
5 too, our barbecue in the summer.

6 MR. FRANKLIN: Oh, we'll be
7 there.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Our
9 birthday, everybody's birthday.

10 MR. FRANKLIN: We're going to
11 have a whole bunch of party.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Okay.
13 Fine.

14 Yes, sir.

15 DR. LEONARD: Good afternoon.
16 I'm Dr. Charles Leonard. I'm Pastor at
17 St. Marks Lutheran Church at Broad and
18 Chelton and also Professor on the faculty
19 of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in
20 Philadelphia, and I want to first of all
21 thank you, Councilwoman Blackwell. Thank
22 you as one of the few people who have
23 stood up to really say no to this and
24 that you were able to make this hearing
25 this afternoon, make it possible.

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2 I think we as a church, we have
3 been feeding for over 15 years. We've
4 been feeding the homeless, and I watch
5 the people. People take their money.
6 It's not money coming from the City, none
7 coming from our national church or
8 anything. It's people who are willing,
9 who are moved to serve in such a way,
10 realizing that the homeless are very
11 important. The poor are very close to
12 the heart of God, and we take that very
13 seriously. To see the people, it takes
14 them at least, when they go to feed, it's
15 at least four days in preparation of
16 buying the food, preparing the food and a
17 decent kitchen that's, of course, DPW
18 certified and so forth, the Board of
19 Health. All of that is done. And then
20 what we do is realizing because we're
21 north of the City, we're coming -- we're
22 driving in the vehicles into downtown and
23 we're making sure that the people,
24 wherever they are, not just on the
25 Parkway, we're over at 30th Street, we're

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2 in front of City Hall, we're driving over
3 all different parts of the City where we
4 know the people are and we're going to
5 some of the shelters.

6 I would say -- I heard someone
7 mention about the quality of the food at
8 the shelters. I know that's not good
9 quality food. You hear that many times
10 that people say it's either not enough or
11 it's not good quality. We put our heart
12 and our soul into preparing that food,
13 and we put a lot of money into it just as
14 a church, and we're committed to do that.
15 And I have to say too that a lot of
16 people have come. We have people coming
17 from out of town, people come even over
18 in Jersey coming to say, I want to help
19 y'all with feeding the homeless. We
20 care. We want to help y'all. And many
21 of those people have come in the last few
22 weeks, last couple of months, they've
23 been very worried about this ban. We
24 speak against it definitely. It's an
25 abomination that the Mayor will come up

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2 with something like this.

3 But people have come to say,
4 Are y'all afraid? Are y'all going to
5 still go and feed? You know you're going
6 to be fined. And I've said over and over
7 to them, along with others, Look,
8 regardless of what it takes, no matter
9 how many times we're fined, we're going
10 to feed, because the people are there.
11 They look for us to be there. We have to
12 go there and be alongside of the
13 people --

14 (Applause.)

15 DR. LEONARD: -- regardless.
16 So however many times we're fined, that's
17 okay. We're going to move ahead with it.

18 We feel that the Mayor
19 somehow -- many of us here have talked
20 about God moving us to do what we've
21 done, and I think the homeless are really
22 appreciative, realizing that it's a gift
23 from God. I know that that's not where
24 the Mayor is coming from. It's not about
25 God. It's about -- for the Mayor, it's

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2 about either bringing the tourists into
3 the City and so forth, although that's
4 denied, but that has to be the case.

5 We've been accused many times
6 of saying that we're elitists because we
7 stand up at times for the rights of the
8 people. We're elitists. But that's not
9 it. That we care, we care about human
10 beings and care about where people are,
11 and that's what we have to begin.

12 All the speakers this
13 afternoon, all of them, have spoke
14 eloquently, very eloquently, and I just
15 hope and pray that the Mayor will hear
16 what we're saying, hear what we're
17 saying, understand we're speaking about
18 human dignity. That's what we're
19 speaking about. He uses the word
20 dignity, but I'm not quite sure if the
21 definition that the Mayor has for dignity
22 is the same definition that the rest of
23 us here today have about dignity. I'm
24 not quite sure.

25 (Applause.)

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2 DR. LEONARD: That's a problem.

3 And I would -- I pray for him. I do. I
4 pray for him. I think some of the
5 directions that we're moving, a lot is
6 about money, money, money, money. We
7 know money is short, but we cannot,
8 cannot abandon being human just because
9 of the money. We cannot. We are human
10 beings and we relate to each other and
11 care for each other. We connect. As
12 someone said earlier, we connect to each
13 other, because that's the way God has
14 created us and it's God's desire that we
15 care for each other.

16 And I would just finish out by
17 saying to the Mayor, yes, many of us, we
18 pray for him, pray for him that God give
19 him wisdom, God give him understanding
20 and God have mercy on his soul.

21 (Applause.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you very much.

24 MR. FRANKLIN: Councilwoman,
25 excuse me. Ronald Franklin again.

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2 I have one question. Can you
3 ask the Mayor, since he thinks that he
4 knows that he's going to help the City by
5 pulling us away and pulling y'all people
6 away from helping us eat, ask him to come
7 and live with us for -- I mean live with
8 us. I'm asking. I'm asking. Tell him
9 to come and live with us. I will show
10 him around for 24 hours, for 24 hours.
11 Bring his family too.

12 I had a little boy come last
13 week when I was outside, because that's
14 where I slept, outside. Okay? And the
15 little boy came with seven of his
16 friends. They do this every four weeks.
17 They come out. They put up all the money
18 themselves. They make peanut butter
19 sandwiches. They make meat sandwiches.
20 They give out socks. They give out
21 coffee. They come out all night long.
22 This little boy didn't know what was
23 going on and asked me to show him around
24 the City, just show him the shelters,
25 show him what the people do. He stayed

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2 with me all night long and all day. He
3 learned more from me -- this boy goes to
4 college. He learned more from me, he
5 said, than he did at all the years he's
6 been at college.

7 The love that him -- that he
8 has and the love that some of these
9 churches and stuff have for us, like the
10 gentleman said, really, City of Brotherly
11 Love? I can find a place in this city
12 every day to feed the homeless. Well, at
13 least try to feed the homeless, but guess
14 what? This is the City of Brotherly
15 Love. We need some place to sleep.

16 I cannot -- I can take anybody
17 in this building, I'm telling you, I can
18 do it, I can take anybody in this
19 building right now and tonight you will
20 not have a place to sleep. Can you
21 believe that? But the Mayor has \$50,000
22 or \$40,000, he's got this big bill. He
23 carries the money all in his pocket. You
24 know what I mean? But he won't come out
25 like Ms. Blackwell. He won't come out

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2 and say, Listen, here, let me give you a
3 sandwich. This is from us. This is from
4 me and my family. Okay?

5 If these people right here -- I
6 love all these people right here, all
7 these people who have been out here. You
8 know why? Because they help. Because
9 they help. They mean what they do.

10 Mr. Nutter, come on down and
11 see us. It must not have been that
12 important. This right here must not have
13 been that important that you couldn't be
14 here. So come down here and be with us,
15 like I said. Come down here to Sunday
16 Breakfast. Come down here to the Parkway
17 and come and sit with us and eat with us.
18 Not the food that you eat every day. You
19 go in the refrigerator, you go anywhere,
20 you can wash your clothes. We can't wash
21 our clothes. You know what I mean? We
22 can't go downstairs and say, dag, I need
23 a cup of milk out the refrigerator, I can
24 turn the channel on the TV. You know
25 what I mean? I can ask -- I can go to

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2 church with the Reverend, ask the
3 Reverend to come get me. I ask this
4 gentleman to come get me. No, he don't
5 do that. He don't want to do that. What
6 he want to do is sit over there in the
7 big old chair, you know what I mean, like
8 he want to write stuff to stop people
9 from helping us.

10 If you want to help us get off
11 the street, get back to where we need to
12 be, then you need to let these people do
13 it. Just let them do it.

14 DR. LEONARD: I think that's an
15 excellent idea, to have the Mayor come on
16 to the street and watch what we do, spend
17 the evening with the people and eat along
18 with them.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you.

21 MR. FRANKLIN: I don't want him
22 to come and watch, because to come and
23 watch -- I want you to come and sit
24 with -- I want you to come and live with
25 me, live with me like a homeless person.

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2 Bring your family and live with me and
3 the rest of these people. Give me 48
4 hours. Come see me. My name Bob
5 Franklin. I will come to you in a
6 minute. I will come to you.

7 DR. LEONARD: That's it.

8 MR. FRANKLIN: Mr. Price over
9 here, I know he got enough heart -- Mr.
10 Pierce, I know he got enough heart. I
11 know he'll do it too. I know a whole
12 bunch of people. If you come down to
13 Sunday Breakfast, matter of fact, you
14 know what, if you come down to Chosen
15 300, okay, you can see how many people
16 these people take out of their time to
17 feed us, to help us, you know. So come
18 and help us.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you for your points. Thanks.

21 (Applause.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you. Thank you.

24 Thank you for your patience.
25 Please identify yourself and begin your

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2 testimony.

3 MS. HARRIS: Good afternoon,
4 Councilwoman Blackwell and members of the
5 Committee. My name is Erica Harris and I
6 come before you once again to ask that
7 they postpone this bill. As we approach
8 the upcoming 4th of July holiday, I am
9 saddened to think of the hypocrisy of our
10 Mayor and those who support this bill.
11 On one hand, Mayor Nutter will host a
12 multi-million-dollar celebration called
13 Welcome America. On the other hand, he
14 don't want our citizens to lend a hand to
15 those who are homeless or hungry.

16 During the holiday, this city
17 will proudly boast of being the
18 birthplace of America. We will highlight
19 and show off our great hospitality to the
20 world while we secretly mistreat those
21 who are homeless and hungry.

22 We will invite America to come
23 and spend millions in our great
24 restaurants and businesses, but won't
25 allow our citizens to freely feed those

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2 who are without. Is this what "welcome
3 America" looks like? Aren't we supposed
4 to be celebrating the American dream of
5 fairness and equal opportunity and not
6 creating the American nightmare of
7 inequality and despair?

8 Our Mayor is spending millions
9 of dollars creating what he calls a
10 people-friendly plaza in front of City
11 Hall for those who have. Yet at the same
12 time, he will ban those who are in need
13 from this so-called people-friendly
14 plaza.

15 In a country that was created
16 to help those who are in need, how can we
17 turn our backs on those who need us the
18 most? How can we think that it's
19 important to plant pretty flowers in the
20 public park than to feed God's beautiful
21 creations in those same parks? How can
22 building art museums be more important
23 than building shelters or feeding the
24 homeless?

25 Mayor Nutter should be ashamed

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2 of himself. How can he be so heartless?

3 The Mayor's bill is not only an
4 embarrassment of those of us who live in
5 the American birthplace, this bill goes
6 against the very core of what Welcome
7 America is supposed to stand for.

8 I ask you, the members of City
9 Council, to stand up for what is right.
10 Let's truly welcome America by postponing
11 this bill.

12 I just want to leave you saying
13 "God has called all of us to active
14 duty." That's First John 3:18. "Open
15 your mouth, judge righteously and plead
16 the cause of the poor and the needy."
17 That's Proverbs 31:9.

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you, Ms. Harris. Thank you very much.

22 MR. CURETON: Good evening,
23 everyone. My name is Andre Cureton and
24 I'm formerly homeless here in the City of
25 Philadelphia, and when I first arrived

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2 here in Philadelphia, I came here to go
3 to school, but I have no family or
4 friends here. So I didn't trust the
5 shelter systems, because they was pretty
6 horrific, so I chose to stay on the
7 streets. And I went through the EMT
8 program sleeping on the streets, and I
9 counted on outreach teams, churches,
10 things of that nature to come out to feed
11 me, because during that period of time,
12 I'm in school from 7:30 to 4:30 in the
13 evening, so there was no place for me to
14 go eat during that time I was in school.

15 You know, my story is no
16 different than a lot of other young men
17 and women that's sleeping on the street
18 as of today. I got a chance to meet some
19 of the most wonderful people doing
20 outreach that, you know, came out and
21 showed that they cared. People from all
22 over the country, North Carolina,
23 Florida, Texas, came all the way to
24 Philadelphia to do the Lord's work. And
25 I really believe if the Mayor bill was to

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2 take this away from a lot of people
3 within the homeless community, it would
4 be a travesty. It really will.

5 It was so many times I wanted
6 to give up while I was in school. I was
7 hungry and trying to study at the same
8 time. That was the most difficult part
9 of school for me. But I had outreach
10 teams that came out that gave me bagged
11 lunches, that gave me, you know, tokens,
12 things of that nature, so I can finish
13 school. They helped me study. Not only
14 did they feed me, but they gave me
15 spiritual food as well.

16 Right now a lot of them are
17 contacting me, and this, believe it or
18 not, has hit the country of what's going
19 on here in Philadelphia. My friends from
20 Waco, Texas e-mailed me the other day and
21 could not believe what they was reading
22 about what the Mayor is trying to do here
23 in the City of Philadelphia with the
24 homeless community.

25 I remember when he ran for

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2 office, he promised to do a lot of things
3 for the homeless community, and not once
4 has he kept his word on it. He literally
5 turned his back on the community, on the
6 homeless community. He really did.

7 You know, I'm not here to Mayor
8 bash and things of that nature. I'm not.
9 That's not the type of human being I am.
10 We need to find a solution to try to fix
11 this problem before it totally get out of
12 control. There are a lot of young people
13 on the street today that count on people
14 feeding, like Chosen 300, Broad Street
15 Ministries, 17th and Locust, you know,
16 churches from New Jersey that comes by
17 and feed just on a whim. Regular
18 families that earned a little extra money
19 that month will put bagged lunches
20 together and will come out to Love Park
21 or down the Parkway just to give out
22 food, out of their own pockets. And if
23 we was to take that away, what do that
24 say about humanity, about us as human
25 beings?

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2 You know, my great-grandmother,
3 she lived to be 103 years old, and I miss
4 her dearly. She said, Andre, God created
5 us for two reasons and two reasons only.

6 And I said, What's that, Momma?

7 She said, To worship him and to
8 help each other. That was it.
9 Everything else has fallen between. And
10 I hold fast to that to this day.

11 You know, I'm blessed to be a
12 certified EMT and I'm also blessed to
13 work for a faith-based organization with
14 the homeless community, which I found out
15 to be my passion, my love, it's working
16 within the homeless community. And I
17 couldn't even see myself not doing this
18 work. And by the Mayor -- by the City
19 trying to pass this bill, that will take
20 away from a lot of people. And I'm going
21 to say something a little selfish. That
22 will take away from me as well from doing
23 outreach, and I love doing outreach.

24 We have a group here which is
25 called the YACHT Club, Youth Against

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2 Complacency and Homelessness Today, from
3 Eastern University. I met these young
4 people in my homelessness state. They
5 loved me. They cared for me. They fed
6 me. They prayed with me. And I'm
7 blessed to say for the past four years,
8 I've been going out as much as I can with
9 the YACHT Club. We have people come --
10 we have youth with the Youth Initiative
11 program at Broad Street Ministries that
12 comes from all over the country. We had
13 groups come from Ireland to Philadelphia
14 to the homeless community and served and
15 volunteer and help the homeless.

16 We cannot let this bill pass.
17 This will take away from humanity, you
18 know. And I have to say this. You know,
19 I grew up in the '60s. It was a time
20 where people say we could not eat
21 anywhere. Now they telling us we cannot
22 feed anyone anywhere. Make that make
23 sense to me, please. Please make that
24 make sense to me.

25 Thank you very much.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
4 you very much. Mr. Cureton, I understand
5 you're on the task force?

6 MR. CURETON: Yes, ma'am. My
7 apologies. Yes, ma'am.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Not at
9 all.

10 MR. CURETON: Yes, ma'am.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Is it
12 your opinion that they are ready to -- is
13 it your opinion that something has
14 happened that would indicate that they're
15 ready for some statement of where to go
16 or what to do or is it your opinion
17 they're still at the very beginning of
18 that whole process?

19 MR. CURETON: I believe they're
20 still in the beginning stages of this
21 process, because I attended the very
22 first meeting last week. So I'm new at
23 this. So I really believe this task
24 force is going to come up with something
25 to present to the Mayor's Office to where

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2 we can find a solution to this problem,
3 all of us collectively.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you.

6 MR. CURETON: You're welcome.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
8 you very much.

9 MR. CURETON: You're welcome.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Is
11 there anyone else here who would like to
12 testify?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: As all
15 of you will note, we asked everyone who
16 testified who is on the task force, as I
17 am, where they thought the task force
18 was. Now, again, remember, the Mayor
19 created this task force to come up with
20 solutions to this issue. And each person
21 said they're not there yet. However
22 well-meaning they may be, they're just
23 not there yet.

24 And so, again, we ask the Mayor
25 not to fine people who want to serve or

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2 feed on the Parkway, certainly not to
3 enforce any regulations when your own
4 task force is just in the beginning --
5 we've only had like two meetings -- just
6 in the beginning of this process of
7 trying to come up with the solutions, and
8 to be sensitive to the fact that this is
9 a moral issue. It absolutely is a moral
10 issue. Sure, it's political because we
11 politicians make decisions about it, but
12 it's certainly much bigger than that. It
13 is a moral issue, and many of us feel
14 that it is our responsibility to do what
15 we can to help one another, because God
16 created us all, and we feel we have a
17 responsibility to share that which he
18 gives us.

19 And so we thank all of you who
20 have been here, who have waited all day
21 who have come to testify, who have done
22 an excellent job at letting this
23 Administration and the City and all who
24 are here know how important this issue is
25 and that we must do what we can in our

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2 commitment to help those less fortunate
3 than we, that we must do what we can and
4 that we will remain committed to that
5 because we have a responsibility to do
6 so.

7 I hope many of my colleagues
8 who were not here had a chance to hear it
9 from their chambers. I certainly thank
10 our Majority Leader, Curtis Jones, for
11 being here through all of this hearing.
12 All of those -- the other Councilmen who
13 have participated, we thank you all for
14 coming, and say that this hearing will be
15 continued, subject to the call of the
16 Chair.

17 God bless you all, and thank
18 you.

19 (Applause.)

20 (Committee on Housing,
21 Neighborhood Development, and the
22 Homeless adjourned at 4:20 p.m.)

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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 on May 31, 2012, and that
this is a true and correct transcript of same.

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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