

Committee on Fiscal Stability and Intergovernmental Cooperation
April 13, 2021

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON FISCAL STABILITY AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Tuesday, April 13, 2021
2:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

RESOLUTION: 210269

1 - - -

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good
3 afternoon. This hearing is called to
4 order and I recognize the presence of a
5 quorum of Committee members. Members of
6 the Committee in attendance who are
7 attending are Vice-Chair Brian O'Neill,
8 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson and
9 Councilmember Bass.

10 This is the public hearing of
11 the Committee on Fiscal Stability and
12 Intergovernmental Cooperation. And the
13 purpose of this public hearing today is
14 to hear testimony on Resolution 210269.
15 I introduced this resolution with
16 co-sponsors Councilmembers Gilmore
17 Richardson, Councilmember Brooks,
18 Councilmember Jones, Councilmember
19 Green, Councilmember Quinones-Sanchez,
20 Councilmember Parker, Councilmember
21 Bass, Councilmember Thomas and
22 Councilmember Squilla. And I want to
23 thank them all for their support on this
24 important topic.

25 I understand that state law

1 currently requires that the following
2 announcement be made at the beginning of
3 every remote public hearing as follows:
4 Due to the current public health
5 emergency, City Council Committees are
6 currently meeting remotely. We are
7 using Microsoft Teams to make these
8 remote hearings possible.

9 Instructions for how the public
10 may view and offer public testimony at
11 public hearings of Council Committees
12 are included in the public hearing
13 notices that are published in the Daily
14 News, Inquirer and Legal Intelligencer
15 prior to the hearings and can also be
16 found on PHLCouncil.com.

17 The Clerk will now please read
18 the title of the resolution before this
19 Committee today.

20 THE CLERK: Authorizing the
21 Committee on Fiscal Stability and
22 Intergovernmental Cooperation to hold a
23 hearing examining the use and impact of
24 the stimulus dollars allocated for
25 Philadelphia under President Biden's

1 American Rescue Plan Act.

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

3 Thank you everyone for being here this
4 afternoon. We have a big agenda today
5 so I want to get started as quickly as
6 possible. I have a few comments before
7 we get started.

8 Before we start, I want to take
9 a moment and recognize the passing of a
10 Philadelphia icon, Ron Rubin. Our
11 condolences to his family and friends.
12 Ron was a champion for Philadelphia.
13 And besides being a larger-than-life
14 figure and developer of the Market East
15 and Bellevue, he was the Founder of the
16 Center City District which became a
17 model duplicated across the United
18 States. He loved Philadelphia and was a
19 tremendous mentor for many of us in
20 showing us the example of how to give
21 back and help the City we all love.
22 Again, my condolences to his family and
23 friends. We will miss him and we will
24 remember him.

25 In preparation of this hearing,

1 I was reminded of the Winston Churchill
2 quote, "Never let a good crisis go to
3 waste." And while I don't think a
4 crisis is ever good, it can force us to
5 look at things a bit different. I know
6 it's common to pick on government for
7 ending up behind the eight ball on
8 things, trailing innovation or sometimes
9 even blocking it for fear of change.
10 But I think this body, especially in the
11 last year, has responded to this
12 pandemic with thoughtfulness about what
13 our people need right now and we've
14 provided much-needed leadership on major
15 issues facing the City.

16 This resolution is in
17 recognition of the work and seeks to
18 continue our strong role in determining
19 Philadelphia's trajectory from here. On
20 March 10th, the President of the United
21 States enacted a \$1.9 trillion stimulus
22 package named the American Rescue Plan
23 Act.

24 Philadelphia stands to receive
25 an estimated \$1.4 billion in assistance

1 in order to recover from the economic
2 downturn brought on by the COVID-19
3 pandemic and bring back a stronger
4 vibrant city with opportunities for
5 everyone to get back on their feet
6 again. Today we will hear from just a
7 subset of Philadelphia's civic and
8 community leaders who have some
9 interesting ideas around how we can use
10 this short-term investment for our
11 City's long-term gain and benefit.

12 I thank my co-sponsors on this
13 resolution, Councilmembers Gilmore
14 Richardson, Brooks, Jones, Green,
15 Quinones-Sanchez, Parker, Bass, Thomas
16 and Squilla. I look forward to this
17 hearing and hope we all use this as an
18 opportunity to brainstorm and share
19 ideas for this coming budget season and
20 beyond. Thank you and let's get
21 started.

22 Ms. Grbach, please call the
23 first panel of witnesses.

24 THE CLERK: Councilman, the
25 first panel of witnesses are Michael

1 Gleeson, Harvey Rice and Bruce Katz.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Mr. Chair.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yes. Oh,
5 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Yes. Good afternoon.

8 Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. I just
9 wanted to quickly come on at the onset
10 of the hearing to thank you for your
11 foresight, your insight and your
12 leadership in ensuring that we have an
13 opportunity to adequately review the
14 infusion of dollars that will be coming
15 into the City of Philadelphia, City of
16 the First Class, not only a city but a
17 county, a city (inaudible), to really
18 think about how we plan for this
19 infusion of dollars in the City of
20 Philadelphia.

21 And I think we have to
22 understand that not only as we look at
23 the American Rescue Plan but the
24 anticipation of the passage of the
25 infrastructure plan, that it is

1 important for us to have a plan from the
2 City perspective on how that will impact
3 us in the days ahead as we look towards
4 our recovery and making our environment
5 advantageous to the impending recovery.

6 So I just wanted to say thank
7 you for your leadership on this issue
8 and I'm looking forward to this hearing
9 and hearing some of the feedback from
10 all of the panels we have listed on how
11 we can ensure we are ready for this
12 plan. Thank you very, very much.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
14 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson. And
15 thank you for supporting us being an
16 ally and being here. Thank you so much.

17 This is an important time for
18 us. So let's get started. I guess
19 Mr. Gleeson is first. Just state your
20 name and go forward with your testimony.

21 MR. GLEESON: Absolutely.
22 Thank you so much, Councilmember. My
23 name is Michael Gleeson. I am a
24 Legislative Manager for the National
25 League of Cities in Washington, D.C.

1 I'm here today to talk as you said at
2 the outset about the \$1.4 billion that
3 Philadelphia stands to get from the
4 federal government.

5 This is a transformative amount
6 of money that will be coming. And I
7 think one of the things to keep in mind
8 as I get to my slide in a second is that
9 this money can be spent over five years.
10 So as you guys are planning your budgets
11 thinking about the dollars that are
12 coming, it doesn't all have to be
13 allocated in the first year or two.
14 This is something that can be
15 transformative in a way that can make
16 Philadelphia a much better city and
17 increase its viability in the coming
18 years to come.

19 My presentation today is really
20 going to focus on the allowable uses
21 because I think that's where a lot of
22 people are most focused on, what is
23 going to be -- how this money can be
24 used and the best way to do so. So I'm
25 going to pull up a slide now with the

1 allowable uses and now to just briefly
2 walk through these.

3 So the first one is to respond
4 to the public health emergency with
5 respect to the COVID-19 or its negative
6 economic impacts. Basically, this is no
7 more restrictive than the CARES Act and
8 you can use this for a number of ways,
9 both for the public health emergency, so
10 if you're interested in talking about
11 PPE or other products for first
12 responders or doing assistance to
13 households, small businesses or
14 nonprofits. So if the City of
15 Philadelphia has stood up its own rental
16 assistance or small business grants or
17 assistance to nonprofits, these will be
18 allowable uses under the money that will
19 be coming to your City.

20 A second is allowing
21 municipalities to provide eligible
22 workers who perform essential work with
23 money above their usual pay, which is
24 \$13 above regular wages.

25 The third is the reduction in

1 revenue. And this will be based on the
2 most recent budget prior to the fiscal
3 pandemic. And during the
4 question-and-answer session, I'd be
5 happy to talk to you about what we've
6 heard from Treasury about exactly what
7 that means. But at this point, they're
8 still seeking clarity -- and we just had
9 a call with them yesterday -- as they're
10 probing City budgets and trying to
11 understand better how budgets are used.
12 So we don't have an exact date prior to
13 the emergency.

14 And finally, the last use is to
15 make necessary investments in the water,
16 sewer or broadband. We're going to have
17 to wait for the Treasury to provide
18 guidance on this one. This is one where
19 I think there's going to be a lot of
20 people who are interested in doing
21 investment. And it's also not linked as
22 the other three are where you see COVID
23 mentioned to any necessary COVID
24 downturn. So for example, if you have
25 an investment that you want to make in

1 water, sewer or broadband, that doesn't
2 necessarily have to be tied to school
3 children not being able to access their
4 Wi-Fi because their schools are closed.

5 In summary, I'm happy to take
6 any questions that the Council may have.
7 But it's just a brief overview of how
8 this money may be able to be spent, and
9 I look forward to speaking with you
10 during this panel. Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
12 very much. We're going to go through
13 all three people on the first panel and
14 then we'll open it up for questions.

15 I think Mr. Rice is next.

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Harvey Rice,
18 are you ready to go?

19 MR. RICE: Yes. I'm sorry,
20 Councilman.

21 COUNCILMAN DOMB: It's okay.

22 MR. RICE: Good afternoon,
23 Councilman Domb and the members of the
24 City Council Fiscal Stability and
25 Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority.

1 My name is Harvey Rice. I'm the
2 Executive Director of the Pennsylvania
3 Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority,
4 the state oversight agency for the City
5 of Philadelphia.

6 Thank you for allowing me to
7 testify today on your resolution,
8 examining the use and impact of the
9 stimulus dollars allocated to the City
10 of Philadelphia under President Biden's
11 American Rescue Plan.

12 First, I would like to
13 recognize that this hearing I believe is
14 a significant step in ensuring that this
15 once-in-a-lifetime infusion of federal
16 dollars are used in both prudent and
17 creative ways.

18 As you noted, President Biden's
19 American Rescue Plan Act or the ARP, the
20 City is expected to receive
21 approximately 1.4 billion in federal
22 funds under the Coronavirus State and
23 Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. These
24 funds are to combat the adverse economic
25 impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on City

1 tax revenues and new costs related to
2 the pandemic.

3 This federal recovery aid can
4 help the City reduce the economic
5 consequences of the global pandemic and
6 its negative impact not only on City tax
7 revenues but services. In addition, the
8 City will be receiving direct federal
9 funding for vaccine-related activities
10 and testing, emergency rental
11 assistance, housing in support of
12 services for homeless populations which
13 is estimated about 42.6 million,
14 broadband reimbursement for libraries,
15 airport relief as well as direct aid to
16 the School District, SEPTA and other
17 institutions of higher education.

18 While it is not PICA's role to
19 advise on City policy or how the City
20 should spend its revenues, as requested
21 I'm here today to share some insights on
22 this recovery funding. These federal
23 dollars can be used to cover eligible
24 expenditures through December 31, 2024,
25 and this time period covers three and a

1 half years of the upcoming FY22 to FY26
2 Five Year Plans. These funds will be
3 received in two installments. One in
4 May of 2021 and the second installment a
5 year later.

6 As such, the City should use
7 these funds to balance both the annual
8 Operating Budget and the Five Year Plan.
9 This one-time allocation of federal
10 support should not be used to initiate
11 new programs that are unsustainable in
12 future years, as occurred with the
13 School District in Fiscal Year 2011-12
14 when the ARRA funding came through,
15 which resulted in a projected 500
16 million deficit due in part to the loss
17 of federal stimulus aid. This reliance
18 on one-time federal funding led to the
19 largest School District deficit in
20 recent District history.

21 The City should ensure that
22 these federal stimulus funds continue
23 building on the progress it has made in
24 recent years to not only stabilize City
25 finances for the long-term, but to

1 continue to fund programs that address
2 the high poverty rate in Philadelphia.
3 These federal stimulus funds should be
4 used to balance the budget in the long-
5 term in addition to the projected budget
6 gap of 450 million for Fiscal Year 2022.

7 The general consensus among
8 economists is that the economy will
9 recover but in a more subdued and
10 protracted rate. Therefore, the City
11 should ensure that these funds are used
12 to fill potential budget gaps in the
13 coming years. The City should again, as
14 PICA has always recommended in our Five
15 Year Plans, start contributing to the
16 budget stabilization reserve fund or the
17 rainy day fund.

18 The City made its first deposit
19 into its rainy day fund in Fiscal Year
20 2020 and was almost immediately used in
21 Fiscal Year 2021 to balance the City
22 budget. Currently, the City must make a
23 deposit in the reserve when the General
24 Fund balance for the upcoming fiscal
25 year equals or exceeds 3 percent of

1 General Fund expenditures.

2 The rainy day fund will ensure
3 that the City again has a reserve to
4 fall back on in times of fiscal distress
5 as we have seen this past year. These
6 funds should also be used to restore the
7 critical services that may have been cut
8 during the pandemic. Further, the City
9 should use programs in the ARP to the
10 best of their ability to assist
11 struggling small businesses and also
12 assist those who lost their businesses
13 during the pandemic and support
14 Philadelphia businesses in pursuing
15 funding under the ARP small business
16 assistance and support funding. In
17 doing this, we will increase our
18 revenues which will then assist the
19 City's budget going forward.

20 In addition to utilizing these
21 funds effectively, the City should make
22 every effort to maximize the amount of
23 federal and state stimulus funds it
24 receives. President Biden's stimulus
25 money should not be the end of

1 opportunities for aid to the City. The
2 City will also qualify for other funding
3 from federal agencies, some of which may
4 be funneled through the state, including
5 programs for housing, rental assistance,
6 the airport and FEMA. No money should
7 be left on the table when there will be
8 such great and varying need for this
9 post-pandemic aid.

10 Prior to the pandemic, the City
11 experienced a significant level of tax
12 growth not seen in many decades while
13 making great strides in stabilizing City
14 finances, generating significant fund
15 balances. Unfortunately, the impact of
16 the pandemic on the local economy
17 derailed the positive progress the City
18 was making. However, through prudent
19 fiscal practices, effective use of the
20 ARP funds and forward-looking budgeting,
21 we're confident that the City can get
22 back on track towards fiscal stability.

23 Further, the PICA Board would
24 also hope to see the City utilize these
25 funds to address some of the

1 recommendations the PICA Board has made
2 in the past in our reports on the Five
3 Year Plans. Thank you for allowing me
4 to testify at this hearing and I welcome
5 any questions and I'm available to
6 answer.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
8 Mr. Rice. Thank you very much for your
9 testimony.

10 Our next panelist on Panel No.
11 1 is Bruce Katz from the Lindy Institute
12 of Drexel University. Bruce, please
13 introduce yourself and proceed with your
14 testimony.

15 MR. KATZ: Thank you,
16 Mr. Chairman. My name is Bruce Katz,
17 Director of the Nowak Metro Finance Lab
18 at Drexel University. I will present a
19 short deck going fairly quickly that
20 builds directly on Michael and Harvey's
21 testimony. It is really critical to
22 understand the breadth and the depth of
23 this American Rescue Plan.

24 Next slide. So we at Drexel
25 have put together a federal investment

1 guide that looks at 84 programs across
2 19 federal agencies that are allocated
3 by seven different distribution methods,
4 block grants to the states, block grants
5 to public authorities, to the City
6 itself, competitive grants, tax
7 incentives, capital products. So the
8 key here is to understand how to get
9 your arms around this and leverage it
10 for full equitable impact in an
11 effective way. And the focus on the
12 flex funds or the fiscal relief funds
13 coming directly to City Hall is only one
14 piece of this. The government will play
15 many different roles in the delivery of
16 these different funds.

17 Next slide. It is key as you
18 pull yourself together here to set
19 priorities. The federal government is
20 the big investor. But at the end of the
21 day, cities will lead by planning on how
22 to deploy these funds in alignment with
23 local priorities and challenges. What
24 we have is really big sources and uses
25 exercised. So once you understand the

1 available federal dollars, establish
2 local priorities, then you can match-
3 make here sources and uses.

4 Next slide. Priorities or
5 principles for these funds: This is a
6 moment for transformation and this is a
7 moment for leverage for funds to support
8 capacity-building within the government
9 across public authorities and agencies
10 with your private, civic and nonprofit
11 partners so they can leverage up other
12 funds and the impact of the \$1.4 billion
13 that go directly could be amplified.

14 Equity has to be baked into all of this
15 given the disparate impact that this
16 pandemic has had, particularly on Black
17 and Latino communities and Black and
18 Latino businesses.

19 Next slide. So let's just use
20 small businesses very quickly. And all
21 of this is accessible on the Drexel
22 website, an example of the cross-cutting
23 nature of the American Rescue Plan.
24 Philadelphia like all American cities
25 starts with Black, Latino and Asian

1 enterprises being small, low payroll,
2 low revenue and mostly concentrated in
3 sectors that are low wage and low growth
4 and were disproportionately affected by
5 the pandemic. So going forward, the
6 need here is to think strategically
7 about a surge in Black, Latino and Asian
8 entrepreneurship, particularly in
9 sectors that can professionalize and
10 grow its scale.

11 Next slide. This is where
12 sources and uses come into effect. When
13 you think about having the maximum
14 impact on Black and Brown businesses, we
15 need to think about an ecosystem,
16 entrepreneurial support, access to
17 quality capital, supplier diversity from
18 eds, meds, corps., government,
19 commercial corridors and sector
20 upgrading and sector diversification.
21 Those are the uses. Those are the
22 priorities coming from the ground up
23 with different practitioners playing
24 different roles.

25 And then you do this

1 matchmaking exercise to federal sources.
2 Yes, the funds are going directly to the
3 City but also the state, public
4 authorities, competitive funds and
5 capital products. One example, the
6 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will be
7 getting a substantial amount of funding
8 in State Small Business Credit
9 Initiative funds. That can match very
10 nicely to capital access to different
11 forms of capital to small businesses.

12 Next slide. One particular
13 element here is child care. The
14 American Rescue Plan supports provides
15 substantial funding for both the demand
16 and supply side for child care. And
17 this is a sector where Black business
18 dominates, is highly concentrated. So
19 if these funds are distributed in a
20 strategic way, they can help Black-owned
21 businesses upgrade their services,
22 professionalize and have real growth
23 potential.

24 And last slide, these are the
25 funds going to child care. Substantial

1 block grants on the demand side. A
2 child tax credit on the demand. But on
3 the supply side, a child care
4 stabilization fund focusing on the
5 business side of the equation. So
6 getting your arms around not just the
7 funds going directly to City Hall, but
8 the funds going through multiple sources
9 for multiple uses is the path forward to
10 an inclusive recovery and equitable
11 impact. With that, I'll go back to the
12 full screen.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Bruce, are
14 you finished with your testimony?

15 MR. KATZ: Yes, I am.

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
17 you very much. I wasn't sure. That was
18 very, very informative. I have a few
19 questions for everybody so I'll start
20 off. And if my colleagues have any
21 questions, please post your question in
22 the chat room and I'll pick it up.

23 Let me start with Michael
24 Gleeson from the National League of
25 Cities. On the White House

1 Intergovernmental call last week, I
2 listened to Gene Sperling. He said the
3 Administration's working diligently to
4 create rules and regulations for the use
5 of its funding. But the current focus
6 is on feedback rather than issuing final
7 rules.

8 Do you have any sense when we
9 might get more clarity about what kind
10 of uses are eligible from the direct
11 allocation?

12 MR. GLEESON: Absolutely, sir.
13 We've been talking to the White House
14 and Treasury directly almost on a daily
15 basis. Our first call with the Treasury
16 Department we learned that they're
17 probably going to take all 60 days that
18 is allowed under the statute to create
19 the allocation as well as the rules.
20 They're trying to make the rules as
21 robust as possible to avoid what
22 happened under the CARES Act when there
23 were nine iterations of rolling
24 guidance.

25 So what they're trying to do

1 now is use this time and be very
2 consultative in their practice in
3 working with organizations like the
4 National League of Cities to get these
5 rules right at the outset instead of
6 having to constantly go back and
7 re-adjust them later.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
9 you.

10 My next question is going to be
11 for Harvey Rice. Harvey, after the
12 City's annual spring economist meeting,
13 what does it look like we'll see long-
14 term impacts from the pandemic for the
15 City of Philadelphia?

16 MR. RICE: We see in talking to
17 our economists who assist PICA, we see a
18 slow but gradual increase in revenues.
19 In some revenues, you'll see when it
20 opens up in say the fall and we see the
21 Eagles games and the Phillies games are
22 full capacity, then you're going to see
23 those amusement taxes maybe shift up
24 higher, quicker than some of the other
25 taxes, but we see a gradual increase

1 overall in all the tax bases.

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: One of my
3 biggest concerns is the wage tax. What
4 is PICA's forecast on the recovery of
5 wage taxes for the City of Philadelphia,
6 understanding 40, 41 percent of the wage
7 tax is paid by the suburbanites who work
8 in the City?

9 MR. RICE: I think we like
10 every other entity are concerned about
11 the impact of the stay-at-home and the
12 pandemic has had on the non-resident
13 wage as well as being home and not
14 paying it. So I think as of now we've
15 seen about \$50 million of people
16 requesting refunds. Obviously, it's
17 going to have an impact and I think it's
18 going to have a long-term impact. We
19 just don't know -- we won't know for at
20 least another year how will businesses
21 come about when everything is opened up
22 and then we will see what businesses
23 have come full back into the City and
24 then we'll have a better sense over the
25 Five Year Plan of what has been the

1 total impact on the wage tax, especially
2 the non-resident tax. It's too early to
3 say what that impact will be, but it
4 will be an impact.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And I do
6 think the quality-of-life issue is going
7 to play a role in that too and getting
8 people back into the City and getting
9 suburbanites back in also.

10 So, Bruce Katz, that was a very
11 informative presentation you gave. And
12 my takeaway, and correct me if I'm
13 wrong, is that besides the \$1.4 billion
14 the City's getting and the 1.3 the
15 School District's getting, there's a
16 whole other category of federal funds
17 that we really need to focus on, and I
18 think your presentation was like pick
19 three or four or five areas of what our
20 focus should be.

21 If you are looking at the City
22 of Philadelphia, what do you think those
23 three, four, four or five focus areas
24 specifically in your opinion that we
25 should be focused on? And number two,

1 has the Administration reached out to
2 you? Have you discussed this with them
3 because it was a very informative
4 presentation today and I think it will
5 be very helpful for the City of
6 Philadelphia?

7 MR. KATZ: Well, thank you for
8 those questions. We have been working
9 very closely with Mayor Kenney's staff,
10 both the Chief Financial Officer, Mike
11 Rashid at Commerce and Fadullon at
12 Planning. It's an exceptional staff.

13 And what we've been doing
14 across the U.S. led by Mayor Garcetti
15 and Mayor Fischer of Louisville is to
16 advise cities to set up command centers
17 so they can get their arms around both
18 the funds that are directly coming to
19 City Hall, but also help leverage all of
20 these other funds. So every city has a
21 different set of priorities frankly, but
22 the common priorities and the ones I
23 think we've been working very closely
24 with the Philadelphia Equity Alliance,
25 with Paul Levy and others is to focus on

1 several things.

2 Gun violence is a critical
3 issue and can be addressed through
4 multiple sources, school jobs for the
5 summer but also in new kinds of
6 community investments. And we've put
7 forward some ideas with the Philadelphia
8 Equity Alliance around wait-and-see kind
9 of efforts that work very well in past
10 decades.

11 Small business, the disparate
12 effect on small business, Black and
13 Latino business is very, very clear. So
14 we think there should be a focus, as I
15 put forward in my presentation, on
16 supplier diversity. A lot of federal
17 funding's coming, particularly for
18 infrastructure that could affect
19 construction, capital access but also
20 commercial corridors because those are
21 the nodes of not just commerce, but the
22 nodes of the civic life. And as
23 businesses have been devastated, the
24 corridors have been decimated.

25 And the last piece is

1 homelessness. This has become an issue
2 gripping the major cities all over the
3 United States and there is some funding
4 directly to help the homeless
5 population. But again, it cuts across
6 multiple funding sources and could
7 generate some substantial innovative
8 practices as we move forward. So I
9 would say gun violence, small business
10 writ large and homelessness would be
11 three priorities I can see Philadelphia
12 embrace.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.
14 And I was on a call maybe two weeks ago,
15 and they said to me that in the past --
16 I'm going back 5, 10 or maybe even 15
17 years ago -- Philadelphia didn't always
18 get their fair share of these federal
19 monies when they came to the table. So
20 I guess my concern is how do we make
21 sure that we get at least our fair share
22 and not be shortchanged?

23 MR. KATZ: Well, I think
24 Philadelphia, and I've said this
25 repeatedly, not just in Philadelphia but

1 outside of Philadelphia, I think you
2 have one of the deepest benches of
3 practitioners in the United States, a
4 strong network. Let's talk about small
5 business. Strong network of CDFIs. The
6 Enterprise Center is one of the top
7 entrepreneurial support organizations in
8 the entire country, a history of focus
9 on commercial corridors, the PAGE
10 initiative, BIDs like Center City and
11 University City that are the best in the
12 country. So you've got a practitioner
13 base that is deep and broad, and let
14 them loose. This is the time for them
15 to draw down more than Philadelphia's
16 fair share across these multiple sources
17 towards the north star of equitable
18 impact.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Last question
20 for me and then I'll turn it over to my
21 colleagues. In the long run, all this
22 money that's coming into our economy
23 from the federal government, what does
24 that mean for the economy in 5, 10 years
25 from now? Does that mean more

1 inflation? What would you tell us that
2 we have to look out for? And as a city,
3 what should we be considering in that
4 light?

5 MR. KATZ: Well, from my own
6 perspective, and this has to be coupled
7 with the American Jobs Plan, because the
8 American Jobs Plan is really President
9 Biden's effort to build back better and
10 restructure the economy towards new
11 areas of innovative growth, clean
12 energy, Philadelphia can play
13 substantially in economic restructuring.
14 So I think the key here is not just to
15 focus on the lowest common denominator.

16 Really treat this moment as the
17 potential to rethink the function of the
18 Philadelphia economy because you have
19 not been performing at the level you
20 need to perform at in terms of growing
21 quality jobs for which a large portion
22 of your population with the right skills
23 and credentials could occupy and move up
24 the ladder of opportunity. So this is
25 not to do the obvious, the conventional,

1 what was done in the past.

2 I think this is a moment to
3 take President Biden at his word and
4 think about what should the Philadelphia
5 economy be 10 years from now, 15 years
6 from now and back up from that. You are
7 a global leader in genomics, gene and
8 cell therapy, precision medicine, next
9 generation energy, advanced
10 manufacturing. This is a time for you
11 to seize the moment and use these
12 federal funds to cement your position in
13 these sectors of our economy that have
14 multiplier effects on quality jobs and
15 then train the hell out of the
16 population to fill them. That's what
17 this moment calls for.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: All right.
19 Thank you. That's great. Thank you
20 very much.

21 I'd like to recognize my
22 colleague Councilmember Green who's
23 joined us. And I also want to thank
24 you, Councilman Green, for connecting us
25 with the National League of Cities. And

1 I know you have some questions, so
2 please go right ahead. Thank you,
3 Councilman Green.

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

6 I want to thank this panel. In
7 particular, I want thank Mike Gleeson
8 from National League of Cities. We've
9 been on various panels. It seems like
10 we've been on a road show from your
11 presentations for National Black Caucus
12 of Local Elected Officials as well as
13 our NLC Board. So thank you for being
14 here and providing information.

15 And also, I just want to thank
16 the League for their work not only with
17 us here in Philadelphia, but also the
18 Pennsylvania Municipal League where I
19 serve as President. And I know,
20 Mr. Gleeson, you also presented and
21 provided information to us to help
22 cities around the Commonwealth.

23 Mr. Katz, thank you for your
24 presentation. And, Mr. Rice from PICA,
25 also thank you for your perspective as

1 well. I have a question that -- and I
2 try to be very specific in questions
3 generally but considering the three
4 people on this panel, this is going to
5 be a broader question.

6 One of the challenges that
7 Philadelphia historically has is how we
8 spend dollars. We generally only
9 provide resources based on where
10 resources have come from. So if those
11 resources get reduced, then we don't
12 make up for those dollars using General
13 Fund dollars. We continue to use the
14 lesser amount that we received.

15 So over the years, Community
16 Block Grant was a much larger amount.
17 That's shrunk significantly from years
18 past being well over \$100 million to now
19 it's probably in the \$30 million or \$40
20 million. So initially, housing
21 counseling and other programs that came
22 out of the City's Division of Housing
23 and Community Development started to
24 shrink because we received less dollars.
25 And unlike other cities, we didn't put

1 more General Fund dollars in from that
2 perspective. And you can replicate that
3 over a whole host of different areas for
4 the City.

5 My question is considering that
6 the dollars coming from the American
7 Rescue Plan is -- I don't want to use
8 the word once in a lifetime because
9 that's somewhat cliché because you never
10 know what's going to happen in the
11 future, but we have a lot of competing
12 pressures and we can do something very
13 bold and allocate a significant amount
14 of resources for a couple of different
15 areas or we can spread the dollars
16 around over a number of areas.

17 And when you think about the
18 fact that, one, we have a \$450 million
19 deficit for FY22, we have significant
20 issues with our homeless population and
21 those dealing with addiction like opioid
22 addiction, public safety challenges is
23 very well-documented now with the 499
24 homicides last year, already at a
25 percentage much higher this year

1 already, the fact that the cause of the
2 pandemic, we had a significant reduction
3 in non-resident wage tax coming to the
4 City. We are so reliant on that as well
5 as Business Income Receipt Tax, much
6 different than what you see in Boston
7 where the reliability of real estate is
8 a much higher percentage of the income
9 coming to the City as well as our
10 pension issues and a depleted rainy day
11 fund as well as some of the other
12 infrastructure perspectives that we have
13 considering our City as a whole.

14 So I guess my question,
15 considering how we traditionally have
16 received dollars and that we only use
17 the dollars that have come based on what
18 the source was, either from the state
19 and the federal government, and I'm
20 curious also of your insight you may
21 have seen in other cities, where would
22 you say we should spend these dollars?

23 I know Mr. Katz kind of gave
24 some perspective. And I know
25 Mr. Gleeson from your presentation and

1 my knowledge of the American Rescue
2 Plan, we can spend some money on
3 infrastructure or should we wait and
4 spend money -- hopefully the American
5 Jobs Plan gets passed in reconciliation
6 in the fall and use that as an
7 infrastructure opportunity. Ideas like
8 earmarks that may be coming back or the
9 rainy day fund or changing our tax
10 structure as Councilmember Domb has
11 proposed.

12 So considering the various
13 dynamics, I'm just curious as to how
14 would you allocate dollars if you had
15 that perspective? Do we do a little bit
16 across a bunch of different areas or do
17 we really take these dollars to really
18 target specific issues to make
19 fundamental changes and what would those
20 issues be?

21 MR. GLEESON: I will defer to
22 Bruce first and then I'll follow him.

23 MR. KATZ: So, Councilman, it's
24 a great question and I would say as you
25 cycle across the multiple challenges and

1 opportunities that the City faces, the
2 investment of dollars in certain areas
3 will leverage private and civic capital,
4 because this is the way in which our
5 economy works, whereas in other sectors
6 the public sector dominates.

7 So if you take small business,
8 and I would say set some hairy audacious
9 goals for the next decade because your
10 starting point on Black and Brown
11 businesses both in terms of their number
12 and their size and their sector needs a
13 transformative impact. We need an
14 entrepreneurial surge essentially in
15 these communities to build wealth and to
16 grow diverse hiring. So
17 capacity-building here could have a
18 tremendous effect.

19 And I'll just give you one
20 example. The Paycheck Protection
21 Program as initially devised went
22 primarily to midsize and larger small
23 businesses because they have
24 relationships with banks and financial
25 institutions. We learned our lesson.

1 Della Clarke, Enterprise Center,
2 basically created an ecosystem where
3 bookkeepers, accountants and lawyers
4 were connected to small Black- and
5 Brown-owned businesses who were then
6 linked to CDFIs, traditional banks and
7 Fintech lenders. A small investment in
8 that ecosystem will leverage up
9 substantial amounts of private capital
10 which is backed by public dollars, and
11 that's just one example of many in the
12 small business realm.

13 Supplier diversity, you're
14 looking at billions coming in
15 infrastructure spending potentially.
16 That should be in the service of growing
17 Black and Brown pre-construction and
18 post-construction firms. A little
19 investment in the capacity of a new kind
20 of supplier diversity intermediary,
21 really a complement to PAGE on the
22 public side. Deal with the Port, the
23 airport, water, sewer, PHA, the schools,
24 that's the way to grow these small
25 business enterprises.

1 So I would think about leverage
2 and higher return on investment with
3 certain market-oriented investments with
4 other service-oriented investments.

5 There still may be a marked effect, but
6 the public sector might dominate more
7 dramatically. I hope that's responsive.

8 MR. RICE: I'll also answer
9 that, Councilman Green. As PICA, our
10 role is more limited in that we have to
11 ensure that the City is financially
12 sound, that they don't run deficits
13 through a Five Year Plan, so that is our
14 first main goal.

15 Then the second goal is, and as
16 I stated in my statement, I think the
17 City needs to continue their sound
18 fiscal policies, do better budgeting so
19 that we can put money into the rainy day
20 fund. And as we recall before this
21 pandemic, we were seeing fund balances
22 in the \$200 million and \$300 million,
23 which helped us through this pandemic as
24 well as the \$38 million that went into
25 the budget stabilization reserve fund.

1 So I would say that is all important
2 still.

3 However, I also discussed
4 critical services and it's not just
5 going back to those services. We need
6 to know what services are needed, are
7 they performing well, are we getting our
8 best bang for the buck, are they really
9 serving the people that they're there to
10 serve. And I think the City when this
11 money comes in before they start just
12 putting the money back into the City
13 services, they really need to -- and I
14 know some people in Council as well as
15 PICA, we have been trying to get the
16 City to do better performance measuring
17 of the services and the tax dollars
18 going into those services so that, one,
19 we are delivering the needed services
20 the most appropriate way and in the most
21 fiscally sound way.

22 So I think they need to keep
23 that in their vision as they see these
24 funds come in from the federal
25 government and through the state

1 government and make sure that we restore
2 critical services, but we do it wisely
3 and fiscally sound.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And I just
5 have one brief follow-up because I know
6 we have a number of panelists and other
7 members of Council would like to
8 testify.

9 I just want to give one other
10 analogy, and I think one of the
11 challenges is that because of the pain
12 of the pandemic not only from all the
13 lives lost, businesses lost and jobs
14 lost, people are dealing with very
15 significant economic challenges, where
16 others have benefited financially from
17 the pandemic because of stock market and
18 other types of investments.

19 So because of that, I haven't
20 seen a proposal here. But let's say
21 some other city, a real push to say,
22 let's do what Michael Tubbs did in
23 Compton and provide direct dollars to
24 individuals in their jurisdiction, and
25 we should do that because people are

1 really challenged by the pandemic,
2 either direct dollars or type of direct
3 financial resources to constituents, and
4 they'll spend those dollars in the City
5 with small businesses and that will
6 circulate the economy, or what I heard
7 from Mr. Katz saying, let's use dollars
8 to really invest in businesses. And
9 I'll use Philadelphia as an example, to
10 really grow Black and Brown businesses.

11 And when you see the fact that
12 we have a 25 percent poverty rate, the
13 fact that 43 percent is of
14 African-American population, but only 6
15 percent of the businesses with employees
16 are owned by African-Americans, 15
17 percent Latin population but only 4
18 percent of the businesses with employees
19 are owned from people of Latin decent.
20 So both are different policy decisions
21 on how you spend dollars.

22 One is direct assistance either
23 through direct dollars of the financial
24 program that directly go to constituents
25 that will be spent from a positive

1 perspective in the community, but that's
2 immediate benefit. But some would say a
3 longer term benefit that would provide a
4 better leverage -- using your words,
5 Mr. Katz -- would be invested in
6 businesses. But that's not always the
7 area that gets the most attention,
8 because it's a lot easier for people to
9 see, well, the benefit I'm getting right
10 now is some type of financial benefit
11 that's coming directly as a result of
12 these dollars that could help people who
13 are really going through some financial
14 challenges because of the pandemic, but
15 long-term it may be a better
16 financial -- I don't want to use the
17 word play -- but better financial
18 benefit for the City by growing those
19 businesses in various communities,
20 specifically African-American and Latin
21 communities which can provide additional
22 long-term and multiply those dollars
23 versus a short-term and immediate impact
24 on dollars being spent in the City. So
25 I'm curious about your perspective on

1 that conundrum that I see us and the
2 City of Philadelphia and other cities
3 dealing with.

4 MR. GLEESON: One of the things
5 that the New York Federal Reserve Bank
6 actually came out I believe last week
7 was a study about how stimulus funds
8 have been used. So if you provide a
9 direct allocation of funds to the City's
10 portion to residents, it may be used to
11 savings to provide safety nets. It may
12 be used to pay down debt, but it may not
13 be necessarily used to provide the
14 injection into the economy that you're
15 looking for.

16 I think Mr. Katz's presentation
17 has been excellent today. I think he's
18 done a great job of laying out the idea
19 of leveraging up dollars to make long-
20 term investments. And I believe sort of
21 that's the spirit that this bill and the
22 American Rescue Plan has in mind,
23 Councilman Green.

24 MR. KATZ: Councilman Green, I
25 would just say this, I think in the

1 long-term we need to radically reduce
2 racial and ethnic and spatial
3 disparities of income, health and
4 wealth, and that's going to require a
5 very close collaboration with the
6 private and civic sectors. Philadelphia
7 has one of the most advanced financial
8 services sectors in the United States.
9 You've got innovative efforts emerging
10 like Coded by Kids. I think you're
11 going to hear from Sylvester later. New
12 kinds of capital, more equity-like,
13 seed, pre-seed for Black founders,
14 Latino founders, revenue-based financial
15 models that are emerging in parts of the
16 country.

17 I don't think we're coming out
18 of this pandemic with the same kind of
19 focus or approach to growing Black and
20 Latino business as we have pre-COVID.
21 Frankly, pre-COVID I don't think we had
22 any focus. So we're coming out of this
23 with a different level of commitment and
24 potentially with radically different
25 kinds of products which could be sourced

1 with private capital, but potentially
2 catalyzed by the public sector and then
3 codified, routinized as we've done in
4 prior parts of our history.

5 So I think Philadelphia frankly
6 is primed to pioneer these products.
7 And if you do so, you'll be growing from
8 within, but you may be also attracting
9 Black and Latino entrepreneurs from
10 other parts of our country, which will
11 be helpful for growing the population
12 and growing the pie. So long-term,
13 building wealth, building community
14 wealth has to be a central component of
15 this.

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
17 Councilmember Domb, Mr. Chair.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.
19 Thank you, Councilmember Green.

20 I have one quick last question
21 or a takeaway. I want to make sure I
22 understood, Bruce, your presentation.
23 You're basically saying that the Federal
24 Investment Guide illustrates how the ARP
25 funds -- I'm reading this from your

1 presentation -- will flow to 84 programs
2 from 19 federal agencies via 7
3 distribution methods touching 15-plus
4 policy areas. And on top of that, we
5 also have the 1.4 billion coming to the
6 City.

7 And so, would a recommended
8 pathway for us be let's see how we fill
9 all those other programs before we get
10 to the 1.4 coming to us and see if we
11 can allocate all of our needs into those
12 other programs so we can serve the 1.4?

13 MR. KATZ: Well, I think just
14 given the other presentations, you've
15 got to use the 1.4 billion with some
16 deliberateness. You've got a structural
17 deficit. It's very real. I think Paul
18 Levy and others have put forward some
19 very interesting proposals on the tax
20 side. The Equity Alliance and others
21 have put forward very strategic targeted
22 areas of investment around gun violence,
23 around summer school, around investments
24 in small business that could leverage
25 other public but also private capital.

1 So the bottom line with 1.4 billion is
2 you just got to be incredibly deliberate
3 about how you use those funds knowing
4 that there are other sources and knowing
5 that certain investments have leveraging
6 effects, big leveraging effects.

7 And so, I think all that has to
8 be taken into account. But again, I am
9 really struck working in multiple cities
10 in the United States at the depth and
11 breadth of your practitioner community
12 and of the research community, so at
13 least you have at your fingertips the
14 evidence and information you need to
15 make some smart choices.

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
17 you. I want thank you, Mr. Gleeson. I
18 want to thank you, Mr. Rice. I want to
19 thank Bruce Katz for your testimony
20 today.

21 I'd like to call on Panel No. 2
22 now.

23 THE CLERK: Sharmain
24 Matlock-Turner, Bill Golderer,
25 Dr. Caterina Roman and Lauren Gilchrist.

1 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. I
2 think we're going to start at the first,
3 and that will be Sharmain Matlock-Turner
4 from the Urban Affairs Coalition. Good
5 afternoon, Sharmain. Please go right
6 ahead.

7 MS. MATLOCK-TURNER: Thank you,
8 Councilman. Thank you very much for the
9 invitation. I hope that everyone can
10 hear me.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: You're good.

12 MS. MATLOCK-TURNER: Okay.
13 Good. I also want to thank Councilman
14 O'Neill, Co-Chair of the Committee, as
15 well as all the other members of Council
16 who are here today to talk about this
17 very, very important effort. Again, my
18 name is Sharmain Matlock-Turner. I'm
19 the President and CEO of the Urban
20 Affairs Coalition and I appreciate the
21 opportunity to talk about how the 1.4
22 billion in estimated federal aid coming
23 to the City of Philadelphia through the
24 American Rescue Plan can support those
25 who are most in need in our City.

1 UAC has been a trusted partner
2 in supporting Americans for 50 years.
3 We are a network of more than 80 area
4 nonprofits and social entrepreneurs, who
5 are part of our UAC family of programs.
6 UAC really applauds the federal
7 government for really being very
8 thoughtful with the stimulus dollars,
9 making sure that there is direct aid
10 that goes to individuals, working
11 families and benefits that will bridge
12 the economic recovery, inclusive of the
13 \$1400 stimulus checks, extending the
14 \$300-a-week unemployment benefit and
15 increased eligibility for SNAP, and for
16 those who don't know that title, for
17 food stamp benefits.

18 We also commend that the plan
19 specifies funding for homelessness,
20 which we've talked about already a
21 little bit this afternoon, emergency
22 rental assistance which is absolutely
23 critical in keeping people in their
24 homes to make sure that we are fighting
25 homelessness as well as efforts around

1 eviction prevention and expanding as
2 Councilman Green I think talked a little
3 bit about earlier, housing counseling,
4 the continuation of relief for direct
5 loan borrowers and fair housing
6 activities for communities, families and
7 individuals that help stem historic
8 inequities in our City as we recover for
9 all.

10 Given the City's identified
11 COVID-related budget deficit, we do
12 advocate that Philadelphia's allocation
13 of 1.4 billion in stimulus funds be used
14 to offset budget reductions of current
15 City-funded nonprofit efforts striving
16 to address the multiple needs of low-
17 and moderate-income Philadelphians that
18 have been impacted by the COVID
19 pandemic.

20 We believe that a focus on
21 those who are most in need is critical.
22 We know that before the pandemic we had
23 at least 400,000 Philadelphians of our
24 1.6 million citizens living below the
25 poverty line, and we know that they are

1 children, they are adults from working
2 families and senior citizens.

3 UAC and our partner
4 organizations work every day to
5 counteract the deep and often
6 generational impact of poverty from
7 being a strategic partner in
8 Philadelphia Pre-K. We're so glad to
9 see that that was highlighted in the
10 presentation by the earlier panel,
11 improving childhood education to leading
12 on the Read by 4th Leadership Council,
13 expanding early childhood literacy to
14 providing a number of life-enrichment
15 programs and activities throughout the
16 year, from sports and wellness to
17 afterschool programs that support and
18 value working families in Philadelphia.

19 I am encouraged that
20 discussions on actions to reduce poverty
21 led by Council President Clarke, you
22 Councilman Domb, and Councilwoman
23 Quinones-Sanchez resulted in the
24 creation of Council's Philadelphia
25 Poverty Action Plan. As Co-Chair along

1 with Councilwoman Sanchez and you of the
2 Reducing Poverty Committee, I attest
3 that the Poverty Action Plan features
4 game-changing innovations that invest
5 directly in people.

6 They include Philadelphia's
7 first basic income and local housing
8 subsidy programs, expanded benefit
9 access tools for untaxed state and
10 federal dollars, which I know you've
11 been a big proponent of and supporting,
12 and a robust partnership between the
13 School District of Philadelphia and
14 Community College to invest in community
15 schools and programs that close the
16 skills gap through transitions from
17 poverty-wage jobs to family-sustaining
18 careers.

19 These recommended Poverty
20 Action Plan initiatives are a particular
21 benefit to the City's working families
22 and lower-, moderate-income households.
23 We recommend that additional funding
24 should be allocated from the City's
25 stimulus allocation. Under the federal

1 plan for the first time in generations,
2 the new child tax credit will reduce
3 child poverty nationally and infusion of
4 financial assistance will be provided
5 for child care, broadband and devices to
6 homes without them, food assistance and
7 eviction protection for families who are
8 desperately in need.

9 UAC advocates that an
10 investment of Philadelphia stimulus
11 funds to be made to augment the
12 expansion of local support for working
13 families could be helpful. And of
14 course, we must think of the next
15 generation. I want to thank City
16 Council and Councilmembers Clarke,
17 Quinones-Sanchez and Domb and Green and
18 so many others for leading the charge
19 just this week to expand opportunities
20 in the Summer Youth Employment Program,
21 by identifying new funding for that
22 support.

23 This year we expect to have
24 8,000 young people working for the
25 summer. I absolutely encourage us

1 though to not stop there. We have an
2 opportunity under this plan to finally
3 get to what we know is critical for the
4 next generation of Philadelphia's
5 workers, and that's full employment for
6 Philadelphia teens in the summer. An
7 investment of \$30 million in stimulus
8 funds could take us a long way over the
9 next several years to get to full youth
10 employment.

11 As our City recharges, we must
12 ensure that all Philadelphians grow with
13 our City through diversity, equity and
14 inclusion framework and have equal
15 opportunities to prosper. Again, I
16 thank you for this hearing today, for
17 all of us having an opportunity to see
18 the big picture but not to forget about
19 those who are most in need, who an
20 investment will build the bridge from
21 poverty into the middle class. Thank
22 you very much and I'm available for any
23 questions.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
25 very much. We'll come back to you.

1 We'll go through the whole panel.

2 I guess next is Bill Golderer
3 from the United Way of Greater
4 Philadelphia.

5 MR. GOLDERER: Councilmember
6 Domb, I hope everyone can hear me okay.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yes.

8 MR. GOLDERER: First, I would
9 be remiss if I didn't acknowledge United
10 Way Board member and treasured friend
11 Sharmain Matlock-Turner. Thank you for
12 your testimony. Councilmember, thank
13 you for this opportunity to testify and
14 thank you and all your colleagues for
15 your sure-footed and clear-headed
16 leadership in a very trying moment for
17 our neighbors.

18 Let me first introduce myself.
19 My name is Bill Golderer and I'm proud
20 to serve the mission of our communities
21 United Way, serving over 160 community
22 organizations throughout our region, 400
23 private investor companies that have
24 welcomed us to help drive different
25 impact in our community. I sit at the

1 table of private philanthropy and trying
2 to work collaboratively and collegially
3 with you all elected officials who share
4 our common mission to meaningfully and
5 measurably reduce poverty in our region
6 and in our City, and with a sense of
7 urgency work for greater opportunity for
8 all of our neighbors.

9 I don't have to remind any of
10 you that our last season where we were
11 in this position from 2009 to 2019,
12 Philadelphia had the least equitable
13 economic recovery of any major city,
14 which means if you are in the top four
15 quintiles or the top 80 percent of
16 earnings, it was better to live in the
17 Philadelphia region than anywhere in the
18 country. Stable food prices, there was
19 a nice availability of housing stock,
20 affordability, there was economic
21 opportunity.

22 But if you found yourself in
23 the bottom quintile, the bottom 25
24 percent, you found yourself and your
25 family moving backward by -4 percent.

1 That kind of disparity is untenable, and
2 that is why this is the most urgent
3 issue facing our City as we try to
4 imagine a recovery that reaches every
5 one of our neighbors.

6 So to break this down, it's a
7 very complex issue, a set of issues
8 before us. But poverty and opportunity
9 are about wealth creation full stop.
10 Building wealth is really the only way
11 to escape poverty, and our neighbors
12 need our help and our focus more than
13 ever.

14 Long before the stimulus
15 passed, we were working with leaders
16 from City Council to imagine ways to get
17 money directly into Philadelphians'
18 pockets starting with every dollar that
19 is owed to them through tax refunds,
20 benefits available at the municipal
21 level, the state level and the federal
22 level.

23 Legislation with vision was
24 passed by City Council in November of
25 2020 to establish the Poverty Action

1 Fund that provided for so many a beacon
2 of hope and a commitment to all of our
3 neighbors that was really prescient.
4 Council met the moment. And in the face
5 of the pandemic and facing a yawning
6 deficit, this was a bold vision that put
7 people first and took a risk on -- it
8 looked at the need for short-term
9 provisions to reimagine systems so that
10 supports that could allow Philadelphians
11 to receive all that they qualify for
12 could begin to become a reality.

13 In the near term inside of
14 three years through a renewed spirit of
15 collaboration, focus and commitment
16 among the private sector, private
17 philanthropy and community partners, our
18 collective efforts stand to build the
19 capacity of organizations large and
20 small that can help our residents move
21 meaningfully out of poverty.

22 The United Way is working in
23 partnership with a legion of donors and
24 investors to match the \$10 million that
25 was appropriated through the Poverty

1 Action Fund. So that with private funds
2 and public funds together, we can
3 implement evidence-based solutions that
4 lift our neighbors out of poverty and
5 open them to new opportunities. For the
6 first time we are looking at an effort
7 that stands to help us scale
8 interventions that actually work.

9 As the City considers how to
10 invest local stimulus funds, I encourage
11 you to stay the course on this bold
12 trajectory as we seek proven and
13 promising solutions that respond to the
14 very real and very urgent needs that our
15 neighbors are facing. And the setbacks
16 that came in front of them as a result
17 of this pandemic that are not limited to
18 the pandemic, there were underlying
19 forces including systemic racism that
20 have been holding so many of our
21 neighbors back from them realizing their
22 chance to pursue happiness and well-
23 being.

24 The first round of investments
25 could stand to be a lesson for how we

1 think about the future in what we call
2 the family stability challenge. It
3 combines a rare combination of trying to
4 segment particular expertise that helps
5 people draw benefits with trusted,
6 culturally relevant community
7 organizations that have built trust over
8 decades. By putting those kinds of
9 organizations and collaborations
10 together, we think there will be a new
11 result. It will reach every
12 Philadelphia zip code and it will have a
13 direct benefit in terms of cash and new
14 income into our neighbors' benefits
15 accounts.

16 Across zip codes, across areas
17 of expertise and even across different
18 ideologies, people have come together
19 because they knew the urgency that we
20 were all up against. The investment
21 strategy is laser-focused and it's
22 focused on doing three things well, and
23 I think this has implications for the
24 other things that we might consider as
25 we walk through this murky future

1 together scaling, collaborating and
2 being accountable to outcomes.

3 First, you're investing
4 significant resources in community-based
5 organizations so they can scale the good
6 work they're already doing. For years
7 and years we've asked partners in
8 communities to do more with less as we
9 often do. Because the scale of the
10 issues we're facing are greater, we need
11 to invite them to do more with more and
12 carefully measure what incredible work
13 they're able to do if they're
14 appropriately resourced.

15 The Poverty Action Plan
16 invested in community-based
17 organizations to provide on-the-ground
18 outreach alongside trusted, culturally
19 relevant organizations that have reached
20 trust in communities that are often
21 overlooked and have reason to not have
22 trust. It's important to invest in new
23 technologies, new approaches, new models
24 that can really change the game for
25 getting income into our neighbors'

1 pockets, but that can never replace
2 familiar faces in your neighborhoods who
3 are carrying a proverbial clipboard who
4 are a part of the communities where
5 these services are being offered. It
6 needs to be a both and new models, new
7 approaches, curiosity, technology-
8 forward ideas and solutions with a
9 combination of being in communities with
10 people that are trusted. That's how we
11 put people first.

12 The second piece that is --
13 before I move on, we need to know the
14 cost of not succeeding in this way. We
15 know in the first round of stimulus
16 payments a little north of 60,000
17 Philadelphians did not collect the
18 payments that they were owed and missed
19 out on a collective \$7 million more in
20 desperately needed support. And this
21 time around the stakes are even higher
22 for us to get it right. Families with
23 children will receive on average an
24 additional \$6600 and could see as much
25 as \$10,000 in new income. This is

1 game-changing for lower-income families
2 who are trying every day to make their
3 reality a little bit better. The
4 courageous vision of the Poverty Action
5 Fund, the driving of scaling initiatives
6 to meet the amount of need, the desire
7 and sense of urgency of putting cash in
8 people's pockets is what needs to guide
9 our future.

10 Are people better in a way that
11 we can demonstrate for having put
12 forward programs that serve people's
13 needs, that leads me to the second
14 point. What is missing. This is hard
15 to measure but its impact is unlimited.
16 What is missing and what is needed is
17 incentivizing and investing
18 collaboration over the long term. It
19 took us more than a minute to get to
20 this place and it's going to take
21 courage and commitment to stay the
22 course and it will require more than a
23 little will on the part of members of
24 City Council and the Administration.
25 But for decades, and we've got to own

1 this, we have practiced the hunger games
2 among community organizations and we've
3 also found our way into splintering a
4 million worthy initiatives. But when we
5 practice the hunger games by pitting
6 community organizations against each
7 other for resources and have a million
8 splintered different initiatives with
9 different objectives and not a common
10 center of measures, it dilutes our
11 impact and it erodes trust. It creates
12 cynicism on the ground.

13 We believe that by getting
14 behind a unified Poverty Action Plan
15 with a clear set of metrics, what lies
16 beneath it is the need to structure an
17 initiative that has emphasized
18 organizational humility and drives deep
19 partnership. People need to know why
20 collaboration can scale our efforts and
21 why we will be able to grow the pie of
22 resources if we find ways to
23 meaningfully adopt this approach,
24 because if we don't, our neighbors get
25 hurt, our neighbors lose out on

1 resources from which they are eligible.
2 And while accessing benefits is not the
3 most sizzly idea that anyone has ever
4 come up with, it is proven intervention
5 that leads our neighbors on a pathway to
6 greater prosperity and we need to stay
7 focused. And whether or not we are
8 being successful relies on our ability
9 to drive meaningful collaboration and to
10 work to build trust.

11 The third and I'll be finished
12 with this one, there's a family
13 stability challenge under way and the
14 next challenge that's part of the
15 Poverty Action Plan is about jobs and
16 opportunity. And throughout every
17 challenge that we embark upon on this
18 public-private partnership that has no
19 precedent is to build underneath it a
20 measurement and accountability framework
21 that helps us better understand what
22 works and why when it comes to
23 alleviating poverty and driving
24 opportunity for more of our neighbors.

25 We will invest in services that

1 Philadelphians can count on to deliver
2 results. If we can't evaluate the
3 impact of our efforts, the framework
4 needs to adapt and adjust to make sure
5 that we are -- our resources are being
6 used in a way that really lift our
7 neighbors.

8 I want to acknowledge the
9 leadership of Council President Clarke,
10 of Councilwoman Sanchez, of you
11 Councilman Domb, for many of your and
12 all of your colleagues who have leaned
13 in shoulder-to-shoulder in a moment
14 where it was particularly hard to do and
15 I'm at your service to create the sense
16 of urgency and investment that our
17 neighbors most deserve. Thank you for
18 the opportunity.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
20 very much for your testimony. I'll come
21 back with some questions. Thank you for
22 your testimony.

23 Now, we'll go to Dr. Caterina
24 Roman, Temple University.

25 DR. ROMAN: Hello. Can

1 everybody hear me okay?

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yes, you're
3 good.

4 DR. ROMAN: Great. Thank you
5 all for having me today. My name is
6 Caterina Roman. And I'm a Professor in
7 the Department of Criminal Justice at
8 Temple University. In my testimony
9 today, I draw on 30 years as a
10 researcher and evaluator studying
11 community violence and evaluating
12 promising neighborhood-based gun
13 violence reduction initiatives not only
14 in Philadelphia, but around the country.
15 I don't have to tell you that we're in a
16 very challenging situation in
17 Philadelphia. The escalation of
18 homicides and shootings is particularly
19 troubling. However, in the coming
20 months the City and the Commonwealth of
21 Pennsylvania will have an opportunity to
22 be creative and direct resources to
23 organize efforts to address violent
24 crime, and I specifically mean
25 shootings.

1 As a researcher here in
2 Philadelphia, I've evaluated both law
3 enforcement and community-based models
4 that include, for example, Focused
5 Deterrence, Philadelphia CeaseFire, the
6 Kensington Initiative which is ongoing
7 now in Kensington, the District
8 Attorney's CARES Model, which is a
9 trauma-informed crisis-support program
10 for survivors of homicide. I've been
11 asked today to discuss evidence-based
12 solutions to gun violence and how the
13 City could address Philadelphia's
14 epidemic of gun violence if more
15 resources were available.

16 In the recent past, I've
17 testified a number of times in
18 Philadelphia and at the state level
19 about specific models that are
20 considered evidence-based such as
21 CeaseFire, also known as Cure Violence
22 and Focused Deterrence. So at this
23 time, I would like to go one step
24 further and address what I consider to
25 be the process and structural aspects of

1 community gun violence reduction. And I
2 do believe, and I can explain this more
3 in the questions, that we should start
4 by creating a single entity, a
5 collaborative guiding body that both
6 facilitates short-term safety and long-
7 term peace, one that generates enough
8 returns on the investment to fund future
9 prevention and intervention initiatives
10 past the range of this current funding.

11 We have a historic gun violence
12 problem. Right now I think we're at 550
13 shootings in less than four months. The
14 scale of the solution has to be equal to
15 the scale of the problem. We can't
16 simply implement evidence-based
17 interventions that target only the
18 shooters or those already arrested on
19 gun charges. Neither can we do things
20 piecemeal with little coordination and
21 then expect great reductions in
22 violence. We have to use a
23 comprehensive public health framework
24 that includes not only models of
25 intervention but directed at prevention.

1 And prevention means investment in
2 coordinated efforts at the population or
3 community level that are geared toward
4 reducing those risk conditions and
5 expanding resiliency. And simply put,
6 we need to get in front of the violence
7 before it occurs.

8 So I recommend the City's new
9 funds to create a collaborative entity
10 that has the singular focus of
11 coordinating and implementing
12 community-driven, state-of-the-art
13 models of gun violence and intervention
14 in targeted areas that are home to most
15 of the gun violence. The programs and
16 services delivered should be explicitly
17 coordinated both within and across the
18 neighborhoods with activities and
19 results measured at every step.

20 The leadership of this group
21 which would include community voices
22 would work together toward careful
23 implementation and adherence to
24 research-based or evidence-based
25 practices. This entity could include or

1 have a separate philanthropic group that
2 can provide oversight and leadership
3 towards this effort and help leverage
4 additional funds. The implicit
5 assumption here is that an array of
6 carefully executed coordinated evidence-
7 based activities towards a common goal
8 can bring about greater success with the
9 desired outcome than any single set of
10 programs or activities operating in
11 isolation.

12 So drawing on the research
13 evidence, I'm going to put forth six
14 evidence-based principles that could
15 help define a collaborative body and
16 achieve maximum effectiveness across gun
17 violence efforts:

18 Principle 1, use data and
19 analysis to focus on a specific set of
20 neighborhoods where most of the gun
21 violence is occurring. We know from the
22 current work of the Philadelphia Police
23 Department, the Office of the Attorney
24 General and my colleagues and my work
25 evaluating CeaseFire and Focused

1 Deterrence that a police-based focus
2 using careful assessment of the drivers
3 of violence, both social and
4 environmental which can include the
5 physical environment, delivering
6 prevention and intervention to those
7 drivers in these specific geographic
8 locations can maximize success. The
9 collective entity would help oversee
10 these locally-based community-led
11 efforts in each neighborhood.

12 Principle 2, work from a sound
13 knowledge base using and really getting
14 a deep understanding of the community.
15 We should build from what works and what
16 worked before. Many of you here know
17 that the City and Temple worked together
18 and implemented and studied Philadelphia
19 CeaseFire, which was in the 22nd Police
20 District. And in over a two-year
21 period, the targeted hotspots had 30
22 percent fewer shootings versus the
23 hotspots that did not have CeaseFire.

24 The program utilizes credible
25 messengers from the target area and play

1 a mentoring role in assisting their
2 clients to make choices that could
3 impact the rest of their lives. We need
4 to implement this effective program in
5 additional areas in the City and
6 continue to measure how successful it
7 is. An important point here is being
8 implemented with fidelity and that not
9 all organizations have the capacity to
10 stand up a tried and true model.

11 Principle 3, be
12 community-driven. It will help build
13 civic engagement and community cohesion,
14 and these strategies that are
15 implemented should reflect the cultural
16 norms and the histories of the
17 communities, and the community partners
18 can help find the balance between
19 evidence-based programs and their
20 practical liability on the ground in the
21 neighborhoods which are so different and
22 each have their own sets of
23 vulnerability and their own sets of
24 strengths.

25 Principle 4, work together.

1 The leadership body must coalesce and
2 streamline, be focused on removing the
3 redundant bureaucracies, the gaps in
4 planning, the duplication of services
5 that we know exist but we so not want to
6 talk about. Interagency collaboration
7 and a true partnership with the
8 community requires dedicated staff whose
9 job is to coordinate, build
10 relationships and will be receptive to
11 different approaches.

12 With the onset of COVID-19 and
13 the pandemic, Marla Davis-Bellamy of
14 Philadelphia CeaseFire launched the
15 Philly Hub. And I think she recently
16 testified to this public health approach
17 that crime prevention breaks down silos
18 and they've brought over 20
19 organizations together weekly to provide
20 immediate support services to families
21 and area residents who in most instances
22 have been impacted by violent crime.

23 With new resources, the Philly
24 Hub could incorporate a CeaseFire street
25 outreach team, expand its trauma-

1 informed approach to reach most major
2 hotspots. We did a return-on-investment
3 analysis for CeaseFire and found a
4 positive return. Just think what the
5 City could do linking the collaborative
6 Hub model to CeaseFire.

7 Principal 5, and I only have a
8 few more, begin earlier by supporting
9 primary prevention. We heard a lot
10 about this earlier. Prioritize children
11 and young people focusing on building
12 resiliency of all developmental stages.
13 This includes high-quality child care,
14 Headstart for instance. Prevention in
15 this vain would lead to multi-faceted
16 outcomes beyond violence reduction,
17 including academic success, increased
18 employability and economic self-
19 sufficiency.

20 We often don't think of -- when
21 someone says violence reduction or gun
22 violence, we don't always think about
23 these prevention efforts. But they
24 should all be considered on this
25 continuum that work towards gun violence

1 reduction.

2 Principle 6, make adequate
3 resources available for the
4 comprehensive strategy. And I'm just
5 going to mention two priorities here.
6 The resource investment should be
7 directed towards building a culture of
8 nonviolence across prevention and
9 intervention activities where we're
10 looking closely at the models that
11 support the norms that are pro-social
12 and affording individuals and children,
13 youth, families these social
14 connections. This will help build
15 resilience.

16 Basically, we know that the
17 pro-social connections are the bread and
18 butter of prevention from churches,
19 athletics, school attachment, adult role
20 modeling and peer mentoring such as
21 CeaseFire and Cure Violence and the
22 District Attorney's CARES program
23 offers.

24 The second priority would be
25 ample provision of resources for

1 training and technical assistance that's
2 expressly devoted to increasing
3 organizational and collaborative
4 capacity. This is a lot like the
5 community capacity development that I
6 think it was Dr. Katz and others talked
7 about in the earlier panel. It is so
8 common in violence reduction program
9 that we forget how to think about what
10 is needed in the different communities.
11 There are misunderstandings in how to
12 target a program to the right
13 population. It's often difficult to do
14 implementation in programs that are
15 complex. Community providers don't have
16 sufficient resources for data systems.
17 There's weak performance reporting or
18 limited planning for sustainability.

19 The trainings could include a
20 public health approach to gun violence
21 prevention, data-driven problem-solving,
22 risk and resiliency factors, performance
23 reporting. I think I mentioned a lot
24 more in my written testimony.

25 And last, and we heard about

1 this before, be accountable. We must be
2 collecting data on performance and
3 reporting out to the public at regular
4 periods in including a plan for rigorous
5 evaluation. This is not just so these
6 programs hold strategies accountable to
7 the public, but also helps to be able to
8 reflect and change course or
9 autocorrect, if needed. And I know
10 there's often pushback from government
11 agencies and communities not wanting to
12 use dollars for outside evaluation
13 because it takes needed money away from
14 services. And then the City and state
15 could work with foundations to leverage
16 their funds for research and evaluation.
17 Arnold Ventures and Chan Zuckerberg's
18 new Justice Accelerator Fund are two
19 great examples of private foundations
20 making the commitment to research and
21 evaluation.

22 In conclusion, I believe a
23 comprehensive coordinated strategy with
24 ample investment in a violence reduction
25 infrastructure with systematic research-

1 informed processes will provide a
2 lifeline to organizations and efforts
3 like Philadelphia CeaseFire, Cure
4 Violence, the Group Violence
5 Intervention, the DOA CARES school
6 diversion program and others that have a
7 proven track record. With this
8 coordination and increased capacity,
9 they can expand their programs to meet
10 the scale of the program and ultimately
11 save lives. Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
13 very much, Dr. Roman. And we'll come
14 back to you with some questions.

15 Our last panelist on Panel No.
16 2 is Lauren Gilchrist from Philadelphia
17 Real Estate Alliance. So, Lauren, take
18 it away.

19 MS. GILCHRIST: Thank you so
20 much, Chairman Domb and members of the
21 Committee on Fiscal Stability and
22 Intergovernmental Cooperation. We
23 really appreciate the opportunity to
24 testify today. As Councilman Domb said,
25 my name is Lauren Gilchrist and I'm the

1 SVP of Research at JLL in Philadelphia,
2 along with the immediate past President
3 of NAIOP Greater Philadelphia and the
4 current Co-chair of NAIOP's Government
5 Affairs Committee.

6 I'm here though today in a
7 slightly different capacity to introduce
8 a new high-level and forward-thinking
9 coalition in the real estate industry,
10 the Philadelphia Real Estate Alliance.
11 The Alliance is made up of residents of
12 BOMA, the Building Owners and Managers
13 Association, the BIA, the Building
14 Industry Association, the GBCA, the
15 General Building Contractors Association
16 and NAIOP, which is the Commercial Real
17 Estate Development Association.

18 Together the constituents of
19 these organizations represent a
20 cross-section of the largest owners,
21 developers, investors, property
22 management firms and construction
23 contractors in the City across all
24 sectors, including residential,
25 commercial and industrial. Today I'm

1 joined by three of my colleagues in this
2 capacity, Mo Rushdy from the BIA, Don
3 Haas from BOMA as well as Ben Connors
4 from the GBCA should the Committee have
5 any questions directly for them once I
6 finish my testimony.

7 The Philadelphia Real Estate
8 Alliance promotes the inclusive growth
9 of Philadelphia by supporting policies
10 that foster Philadelphia's economic
11 competitiveness, promoting a predictable
12 real estate development regulatory
13 environment and encouraging investment
14 domestically and internationally.

15 To achieve this purpose, the
16 Alliance brings together diverse real
17 estate organizations to collaborate with
18 government and industry for solutions to
19 Philadelphia's business, economic and
20 social challenges that can be addressed
21 through real estate policy, development
22 and investment. We seek to partner with
23 the Administration as well as City
24 Council to achieve these goals.

25 We're here today to provide our

1 thoughts on the unique opportunity that
2 the funding from the federal American
3 Rescue Plan Act presents to
4 Philadelphia, by sharing a set of
5 principles we believe the City should
6 consider in allocating these resources.

7 So we have three principles:

8 One, we believe that the ARP funds
9 should be used to restore necessary
10 COVID-19 budget cuts first and foremost
11 to allow the City to fiscally bridge the
12 gap in revenues from the pandemic and
13 associated economic downturn until
14 there's a full economic recovery. And
15 this process negates the need for any
16 tax increases while the City's
17 residences and businesses recover from
18 the economic downturn.

19 Given these are one-time
20 resources, we believe the focus of their
21 use should be on one-time expenditures.
22 We do not believe the City should create
23 new programs or obligations that the
24 budget would need to sustain once the
25 ARP funds is expended.

1 Number 2, we believe ARP funds
2 should be expended quickly, effectively
3 and efficiently providing an immediate
4 boost to the economy to trigger
5 recovery. We need to entice employers,
6 employees, customers and visitors to
7 come back to the City. We believe a
8 specific focus on making public
9 transportation a safe and healthy option
10 for residents, the workforce and
11 visitors will be critical to this
12 effort. But we also think long-term use
13 through these funds should lay the
14 groundwork for sustained growth. We
15 believe using the ARP fund for
16 initiatives that will have immediate
17 impact within the next 12 to 18 months
18 while also laying this long-term
19 groundwork for a prosperous Philadelphia
20 over the next 10 to 20 years are its
21 best uses.

22 Finally, as members of the real
23 estate industry, we want to highlight
24 one specific area where we see an
25 immediate need. We're beginning to

1 observe a potential challenge and
2 construction capacity overall, but
3 particularly with regard to the
4 construction workforce and minority- and
5 women-owned firms. Federal capital
6 funds are being provided to the City,
7 the Philadelphia School District, the
8 airport and other public agencies which
9 is going to result in unprecedented
10 increases in construction demand.

11 Furthermore, the residential
12 real estate community's focus on the
13 timing of the change of the City's tax
14 abatement program is creating a large
15 number of projects aiming to obtain
16 permits this year to start construction
17 next year. The convergence of these
18 factors may create a perfect storm
19 where government and the real estate
20 industry will face serious capacity
21 issues with regard to contractors and
22 labor. Therefore, we recommend some
23 portion of the ARP funds to be used to
24 broaden the pool of potential workers by
25 opening up larger and more frequent

1 apprenticeship programs and building the
2 capacity for small contractors to grow
3 by training construction workers. These
4 funds could also be used to finance the
5 growth and development of construction
6 businesses with a special focus on the
7 minority community and Black and Brown
8 construction firms.

9 In conclusion, we're facing a
10 once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and need
11 to succeed at the highest level at this
12 moment in time. This is our collective
13 chance to promote the City's comeback
14 from COVID. The City had a strong run
15 in the last 10 years gaining jobs,
16 population and tax revenues. But we
17 cannot assume that this trend will
18 necessarily continue post-pandemic.
19 Much has changed and the City must be
20 focused and aware of the need to
21 re-establish its role as the center of a
22 growing local and regional economy,
23 rebuilding jobs and business growth
24 opportunities for a more inclusive and
25 diverse group of participants.

1 These ARP funds should have a
2 strong focus on fostering the City's
3 economy and create a climate for the
4 City to have strong, sustained inclusive
5 growth. Investments in infrastructure,
6 safe and dependable public transit,
7 workforce development and advancement of
8 small Black and Brown businesses will
9 pay dividends for generations to come.
10 We greatly appreciate the opportunity to
11 testify today and the Alliance will be
12 happy to address your questions.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
14 very much, Lauren. Thank you. And I do
15 have a few quick questions for everyone.

16 I'm going to start with
17 Sharmain Matlock-Turner there. And,
18 Sharmain, I saw you taking a lot of
19 notes. That's pretty good.

20 MS. MATLOCK-TURNER: Thank you.

21 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Sure. So
22 when you talked about the funding and
23 you talked about the summer jobs
24 program, I know we had an appropriations
25 meeting where we approved some money,

1 but give us an idea of the types of
2 results we can see when we invest in
3 those programs, the summer programs and
4 the benefits so people can really
5 understand how important that is.

6 MS. MATLOCK-TURNER: Yes. This
7 program has been studied over the years.
8 We've had studies by Brookings. We've
9 had studies from others looking at
10 programs not only in Philadelphia, but
11 looking at programs in Boston and in
12 Chicago and we know that connecting
13 young people to jobs early in their
14 careers really gives them an opportunity
15 to do two things:

16 One, to focus on school and
17 graduation. The idea is that they see
18 the possibility that they could be doing
19 something different than maybe what they
20 see in the communities and that they
21 ultimately make better choices. They
22 also have dollars and resources
23 available to support themselves and
24 their families and they make real
25 connections in the broader community so

1 that they have other kinds of
2 opportunities, other caring adults to
3 connect to. So we have looked at this
4 area for a long period of time and the
5 demand is there.

6 Last summer in the middle of
7 the pandemic, 20,000 young people signed
8 up to say I want to work. And what did
9 we have to say to them? Sorry, we
10 really don't want you to get involved in
11 those other things, but we don't have
12 anything for you other than the 6,000
13 that we were able to help. We believe
14 that if we ultimately say to young
15 people all of the other things that we
16 need them to know early on, but that in
17 Philadelphia you have a partner to the
18 middle class through youth and
19 employment opportunities, that we are
20 going to see a difference in not only
21 violence but really in hope. This is
22 not just about talking about what we're
23 trying to fight against. This is
24 talking about what we're trying to build
25 into.

1 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

2 I'm a big supporter of that program and
3 I hope we can give you more money for
4 it. I would love to expand it by the
5 way to make it an opportunity for our
6 high school students in 9th, 10th, 11th
7 and 12th grade to take a page out of the
8 Cristo Rey book and allow them to work
9 one day a week and go to school for four
10 days and have four different job
11 experiences. It would be a game-changer
12 for them. And so, whatever we can do to
13 support that.

14 MS. MATLOCK-TURNER: Thank you,
15 Councilman. Thank you very much. And
16 on behalf of our young people, thank
17 you.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thanks. Bill
19 Golderer, you're doing an amazing job at
20 United Way. Poverty Action Fund has
21 distributed about 4.5 million I think so
22 far in grants. Can you share a little
23 about which groups received those
24 grants, the kind of work they do, its
25 impact on poverty and how is Poverty

1 Action Fund prioritizing the
2 grant-giving and is that a model do you
3 think could work for prioritizing where
4 the ARP dollars are going?

5 MR. GOLDERER: You would think
6 I would know how to do mute by now.
7 Forgive me. Councilman, thank you for
8 your leadership again. And let me
9 explain the impact this way. You've
10 asked this question before, but I want
11 to make sure we keep our eyes on the
12 prize for this kind of \$4.5 million of
13 investment in building a collaborative
14 infrastructure that combines the
15 expertise of household names like
16 Benefits Data Trust, like Campaign for
17 Working Families. These are names of
18 organizations that you know that are
19 trusted and they're proven.

20 But what's different about this
21 initiative is it is combining what I
22 call the app and the clipboard. It is
23 not enough to provide technology
24 solutions when communities want to see
25 someone holding a clipboard and they

1 want to know the person who's holding
2 that clipboard, oh, you're related to or
3 I know you or I remember you from. It's
4 got to be reaching aggressively into
5 communities that do not feel like
6 they're able to trust.

7 So one of the things that was
8 powerful -- I'll just tell you a quick
9 story -- John Chin from Chinatown
10 Development Corporation called me on the
11 phone and said, you're asking us to do
12 this on an incredibly aggressive
13 timeline and in some ways it's really
14 going to be difficult for us to do this
15 well, and yet we're going to be working
16 with Otis Bullock for the first time
17 from Diversified Community Services,
18 we've never ever worked together. And
19 then I called ACANA on the phone to say,
20 listen, we've got to pull this together.
21 We have greater resources, that's
22 important, but the need is so great that
23 if we don't reach across our geography,
24 our discipline, our reach for this once
25 in a frankly generation effort, how

1 could we ask City Council and other
2 philanthropists to focus their attention
3 if we're not willing to focus.

4 And here's what's on the line,
5 Councilman, and I'll cede the floor. We
6 need to get serious about how we are
7 doing relative to other markets, right.
8 I would tell you, and I'm not trying to
9 create a controversy here, but Baltimore
10 is much better at drawing down benefits
11 than we are, like on the order of their
12 success rate in terms of impoverished
13 communities pulling down these benefits,
14 they're about 24 percent than we are on
15 a per capita basis.

16 We have to be ambitious about
17 getting better and demonstrating that
18 this kind of work returns, as you know,
19 the number 13-to-1. Every dollar we
20 invest in this, there's a 13-to-1. Now,
21 there's diminishing returns after a
22 point but for right now, we're very far
23 away from that point. And so, driving
24 this kind of community investment with
25 expertise in partnership making sizable

1 investment and measuring what happened
2 as my University colleague mentioned, if
3 it's not measured, it doesn't matter.
4 And we need to be serious about
5 measurement, particularly as it relates
6 to our neighbors.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

8 I just want to take a moment and
9 recognize that Councilman Squilla has
10 joined us and so has Councilmember
11 Quinones-Sanchez. So thank you for
12 being here.

13 And, Bill, let me just ask you
14 this question: How can Baltimore be
15 doing a better job than us? We need to
16 do better. That's not good. What do we
17 have to do to improve?

18 MR. GOLDERER: There's two
19 answers there. The first is when you --
20 I would say there's a parallel, and I'm
21 not making light of this. When you have
22 very limited resources whether you're a
23 family or a city, you're trying to get
24 the highest impact return on the
25 available resources. So you have to

1 give your best guess as to what
2 methodology is going to yield the
3 biggest return.

4 And just in all candor right
5 now as I referenced before, we weren't
6 betting on the collaborative approach.
7 We were doing the hunger games. We were
8 picking this organization but not
9 looking into community insight. We are
10 looking at these folks with the
11 technology, which is very, very
12 important, but we were not looking at
13 the clipboard. We've got to be more
14 approximate to people's struggle.
15 That's what's new about this.

16 The second thing, Allan, is the
17 worst we can do -- excuse me,
18 Councilmember, is to do it once for six
19 months and then walk away and try
20 something else. Our initiatives and
21 social change and social mobility
22 suffers from attention deficit disorder.
23 We started on this bold initiative. We
24 are literally 60 days into it. We have
25 to stay the course for three years and

1 measure the return. Otherwise, we will
2 have frankly wasted resources and time
3 and frankly hope.

4 People are beginning to believe
5 that collaborations can work, that we
6 should invest in those. But I don't
7 need to tell my friend Sharmain this
8 town cultivates cynicism in the water,
9 and it's a spiritual crisis. We need to
10 believe in the better angels of each
11 other and drive real collaboration. And
12 I'll you, there's a number of folks who
13 are sitting on the sidelines of this
14 initiative who are waiting for it to
15 fail. And we just got to be like no,
16 not this time, not with these stakes.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
18 you. Thank you very much.

19 One quick question for
20 Dr. Roman: You mentioned the crime
21 prevention programs. It sounded to me
22 like CeaseFire was used by the City a
23 few years ago, maybe in the 2010, 2011
24 time period. Have they stopped using
25 those programs?

1 DR. ROMAN: So CeaseFire came
2 about through a federal grant that Marla
3 Davis-Bellamy wrote. The solicitation
4 required that the government be the
5 fiscal agent. So that \$2.5 million that
6 started, hit the ground, I think
7 probably by the time everything was
8 implemented was spring of 2013. When
9 that ended, there was not a commitment
10 by the City to continue supporting that
11 street team by Temple University.

12 And I think you'll see there
13 are different views about why it ended.
14 I was the evaluator on that. I really
15 believe that a lot of people in the City
16 wanted to fund rightly so community
17 groups and Temple University is a big
18 institution, but a lot of individuals
19 didn't take the time to see the
20 individuals who were hired as part of
21 the street team and how it was run and
22 how community-driven it was and the
23 partnership approach that was used.

24 So when the federal funding
25 ended, there was no sustainability plan

1 from the City. Marla, myself and a
2 number of colleagues were scrambling to
3 write grants to keep it going. To date,
4 Marla has funded her street team and
5 Kathy Reeves and others through Cure
6 Violence and CeaseFire with other money
7 that aren't necessarily City dollars.
8 The street team has been funded through
9 PCCD state grants coming down from
10 federal dollars.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Do you have
12 any information on a proposal for the
13 City on utilizing CeaseFire over a one-,
14 two-, three-year period and what the
15 results might be?

16 DR. ROMAN: Yes. I know Marla
17 has been working on that. So her dream
18 and what we've been discussing is
19 linking -- and I mentioned that in my
20 testimony is creating a comprehensive
21 structure that incorporates the street
22 outreach team of CeaseFire with the Hub
23 model. So you're doing crisis
24 intervention. You're doing prevention
25 and intervention jointly. And so, the

1 goal is to find funding to expand that
2 to between 6 and 10 hotspots in and
3 around North Philly, the wide swaths of
4 North Philly that would include
5 Kensington and Central North. And I
6 think the amount of money that she's
7 been discussing and running the budget
8 has been about \$6 million, should create
9 a huge return on the investment because
10 we know what I mentioned earlier just
11 from CeaseFire without the Hub model,
12 CeaseFire returned I think it was \$1.60
13 in health care costs. But if you take
14 that down to the social cost and add in
15 the cost of a prison term, not being
16 employed, other harms of being involved
17 in gun violence, I jotted some numbers
18 down, if you took the \$6 million and I'm
19 not even adding on the value from the
20 Hub, you can have a \$192 million return
21 when you take those downstream costs
22 that you wouldn't be incurring because
23 of this model.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Is that 6
25 million, Dr. Roman, over a year, two

1 years or three years?

2 DR. ROMAN: That 6 million --
3 so in calculating that, I think it might
4 be over two years. So that's usually
5 the time that you think about
6 implementing, getting everyone on board
7 and implementing it and saying we need a
8 good two years to have this implemented,
9 operational and making an impact. So I
10 think that's about a two-year period of
11 cost and then where the measurement
12 would come in.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Do you have
14 any statistic on what the percentage of
15 homicide reduction would be?

16 DR. ROMAN: So I evaluated the
17 police Focused Deterrence also and Cure
18 Violence and the outreach team, the Cure
19 Violence CeaseFire model, I think -- and
20 the literature from the evaluations from
21 around the country show that if you
22 implement CeaseFire with fidelity, that
23 you can expect anywhere from a 25- to a
24 40-percent reduction in shootings. And
25 so, in Philadelphia in those hotspots we

1 saw a 30 percent in shootings over a
2 two-year period. But that's still a
3 couple hundred lives in that period.
4 And just think about getting that to
5 scale. And New York City has done much
6 of this in bringing it to scale in those
7 communities.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Is this the
9 same program that's also being used in
10 Chicago with Arne Duncan? Is it
11 similar?

12 DR. ROMAN: So what's happening
13 in Chicago now, Chicago still has Cure
14 Violence, but they've also extended it.
15 There's a program called READI Chicago
16 that has decided that you can't just do
17 the peer model, you also need to get
18 individuals involved into jobs. So the
19 peer outreach model would then go out
20 and do the outreach, do the mediations
21 and the violence interruption and then
22 try to get those individuals into
23 transitional jobs. That is a separate
24 component and that has shown with an
25 experimental design evaluation in

1 Chicago much success.

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So I just
3 want to be concise here, you're saying
4 it's about a \$6 million over a two- or
5 three-year period and you think we can
6 cut the gun violence 20 to 30 percent
7 per year?

8 DR. ROMAN: 30 percent, yes.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: This seems
10 like this is something we need to be
11 doing immediately based on those
12 numbers.

13 DR. ROMAN: We've been saying
14 this. And again, I'm saying this -- I
15 come from the Urban Institute. I worked
16 at a think tank for 20 years before I
17 came to Temple University where I
18 traveled around the country and
19 evaluated all types of programs, gang
20 intervention, prevention, comprehensive
21 program modeling. And I truly believe
22 that the central core of this
23 peer-mentoring outreach coupled with if
24 you have the hub and resources available
25 for jobs, for transitional jobs, you can

1 make a huge dent in violence. But
2 again, it's implementing it with
3 fidelity. Not everyone can do it.

4 I think you know that another
5 organization is running a street
6 outreach model, but they're not trained
7 in the evidence-based model and they're
8 not -- they don't have the support,
9 well, the knowledge of the support and
10 the training from Cure Violence Global
11 to re-evaluate when needed, and I think
12 that really matters too.

13 You can't just take any
14 outreach program is what I'm saying and
15 say we have some outreach workers, put
16 them in the community and it will work.
17 It needs to be a strong attention to
18 fidelity to the model.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: All right.
20 Well, thank you. I think we'll be back
21 to you sooner than later. I do think
22 that's a really good program. And if
23 the City can't fund it, I would go to
24 the business community to fund this.
25 This is something we should be doing.

1 This is a no-brainer to me.

2 DR. ROMAN: Lastly, there are
3 models of business funding and other
4 funding. Chicago uses their athletes,
5 their professional athletes, brought
6 them all together to say this is our
7 goal, but there has to be a singular
8 focus on this mission of reducing gun
9 violence.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: We'll be back
11 to you and I know my colleagues will
12 probably want to work on this with you.
13 So we'll be back to you on this because
14 this sounds like a good idea. It really
15 does. So thank you very much.

16 So now, let's go to Lauren. I
17 have a couple of questions for you,
18 Lauren. Thanks for your testimony. The
19 role of office space and commercial real
20 estate in Philadelphia's economy is so
21 important. How has this sector really
22 fared in the past 12 months during the
23 pandemic and what will it take in your
24 opinion for this sector to make a robust
25 recovery and come back?

1 MS. GILCHRIST: Sure thing,
2 Councilman Domb. The first thing I
3 would say is that it's important to note
4 just how severe the impact has been. So
5 we calculated that we have lost just in
6 Center City over the course of the
7 pandemic approximately \$1 billion in
8 retail demand, which is significant when
9 you think about all of the small
10 businesses, particularly that serve
11 office workers.

12 At the height of the pandemic,
13 we would have calculated that
14 approximately only a 10 percent of the
15 office workforce was actually in
16 offices, which is what supports that
17 retail demand drop-off. We at JLL
18 believe net we will see a 5 percent
19 overall drop-off in demand for office
20 space over the next three years.

21 But the question is how do we
22 get from call it that 10- to 20-percent
23 figure people in offices now back up to
24 what we should be which is 85 percent of
25 the workforce in offices, and a lot of

1 that has to do very specifically with
2 the transportation-related issues. So
3 making sure that people feel safe coming
4 and going on SEPTA, coming and going on
5 the subway system.

6 And it also depends on
7 quality-of-life-related issues.

8 Businesses want to have their employees
9 together when they can host meetings and
10 when they can be out and about together.

11 And with all of the retail and
12 hospitality closed, with the increasing
13 number of homeless and panhandling
14 experiences that people are having, I
15 think a lot of folks are kind of going
16 hold on, we're not sure that -- this is
17 the environment that we can bring
18 professional visitors to. So I think a
19 lot will depend upon quality of life
20 overall. And then we also need to give
21 it a few more months for the corporate
22 real estate community to determine how
23 much office they'll be using.

24 Our major corporate clients
25 have pushed the decision-making timeline

1 into call it the summer and fall not
2 just for return to work, but in terms of
3 are we going to see people restack or
4 replan for offices. So there are some
5 question marks there, and some of that
6 will be determined by how do workers
7 feel coming back.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you. I
9 think it's 40 or 41 percent of our
10 workforce does not live in the City and
11 pays us wage tax. So we want to make
12 sure they come back to the City and work
13 and we have that base. Because it's not
14 just the wage taxes and working in the
15 City, it's their activity in the City.
16 It's all the demand they bring into the
17 City, whether they're buying at retail
18 stores or restaurants or whatever
19 they're shopping for. That demand is
20 sorely needed by our retailers and
21 entrepreneurs in the City.

22 For your group, Lauren, the 1.4
23 billion, what would your recommendations
24 be from the City's standpoint? Would it
25 be transit, safety, lifestyle, tax

1 issues? Where would you like to see
2 some of that money invested?

3 MS. GILCHRIST: Well, I think
4 as I stated in my testimony first and
5 foremost we'd like to make sure there
6 are no tax increases. Certainly,
7 there's been discussions that we've had
8 on many occasions about tax decreases
9 which would be ideal for overall
10 competitiveness. But first and
11 foremost, we can't make it more
12 expensive to do business in the City.
13 And I think that's one of the real
14 promises of the ARP funds.

15 The second would be to focus on
16 those public transit issues that I had
17 mentioned overall to make sure that
18 people believe that they can get to and
19 from the City safely. And then third,
20 the public safety and the call it
21 quality-of-life issues are also
22 important, that they feel comfortable
23 continuing to do business.

24 I also think that there is a
25 generational moment here, as I think

1 many of the other panelists have talked
2 about in that where we need to be
3 thinking about what are the catalytic
4 investments that we can be making
5 infrastructure-wise that will return
6 multiple x the dollar figures that we've
7 been awarded. Because when we've set
8 the benchmarks for the long-term growth
9 of the City, think about that 10- to
10 20-year plan, as I think you know,
11 Councilman, you put a certain percentage
12 of money into a program, a project or
13 real estate deal, and it returns
14 multiple x, those investment dollars.

15 So we need to think about not
16 just how do we stop the bleeding to how
17 do we advance the economy to how do we
18 actually plan for the kind of
19 Philadelphia that we all want to be
20 living in and working in 20 years from
21 now, and there's enough money here to do
22 that. And one of the reasons we
23 mentioned Black and Brown real estate
24 businesses, Black and Brown contractors
25 was because we believe that our industry

1 can play also a catalytic role when we
2 have new projects to bring new
3 participants into the workforce through
4 job training, through education and
5 through participation in real estate
6 moving forward.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
8 you. I appreciate that. Thank you very
9 much. I want to thank Panel No. 2,
10 Sharmain Matlock-Turner, Bill Golderer,
11 Dr. Caterina Roman and Lauren Gilchrist.
12 Thank you for your testimony. Thank you
13 for being here. Very informative.
14 Thank you very much.

15 MS. GILCHRIST: Thank you.

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Let's go with
17 Panel No. 3.

18 MS. MATLOCK-TURNER: Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Mr. Chair.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yes.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: I had a very quick comment
25 for Panel No. 2.

1 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: I just wanted to thank each
4 and every panelist from Panel No. 2,
5 Sharmain Matlock-Turner from Urban
6 Affairs Coalition, Bill Golderer from
7 the United Way of Greater Philadelphia,
8 Dr. Roman from Temple and Lauren
9 Gilchrist from the Philadelphia Real
10 Estate Alliance. I appreciate a lot of
11 the feedback you shared and offered and
12 I think it's really a blueprint for us
13 as we move into the budget session to
14 figure out what we are focusing on as we
15 look ahead to our City's recovery. So I
16 just wanted to thank you so much for
17 your needed testimony and some of the
18 recommendations that you offered.

19 MS. MATLOCK-TURNER: Thank you
20 and we're here to continue the
21 conversation. Thank you.

22 MS. GILCHRIST: Our pleasure.
23 Thank you.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

25 RICHARDSON: Great. Thank you so much.

1 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
2 Councilmember. Thank you so much.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.
6 Let's go to Panel No. 3 and we can call
7 the next panel.

8 THE CLERK: The next panel is
9 Logan Welde, Matt Rader and David Fair.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Mr. Welde, if
11 you can identify yourself and start with
12 your testimony, that will be great.

13 MS. WELDE: Hi, everyone,
14 Councilmember Domb, and I see
15 Councilwoman Katherine Gilmore
16 Richardson. Thank you so much for
17 having me. I really appreciate this
18 opportunity. And, Councilmember Domb,
19 you should know Laurel did a great job
20 of organizing this, so I appreciate all
21 of the work she did also.

22 So as I said, my name is Logan
23 Welde. I'm a Staff Attorney and the
24 Legislative Director for Clean Air
25 Council. We're an environmental

1 nonprofit based on environment and
2 health in Philadelphia. I'm also a
3 block captain and Ward 14 Committee
4 person. I did submit written testimony
5 and I'm not going to read everything. I
6 also submitted a separate list of policy
7 ideas to Laurel.

8 I want to say at the outset
9 that there were a lot of good things
10 that people said earlier today. One of
11 the most important I think is, and you
12 all know this by now, there will be
13 other funds. Don't duplicate efforts,
14 work with other agencies -- that was
15 going to be part of my testimony so I'm
16 not going to cover that -- but DVRPC and
17 some of the really great government
18 agencies and nongovernment agencies in
19 Philadelphia.

20 It's already been stated over
21 and over this is a wonderful opportunity
22 and I know you guys don't want to
23 squander this as much as the residents
24 and people who work in Philadelphia want
25 this to be successful. We need to

1 really maximize the investments and look
2 towards immediate relief and then long-
3 term benefits.

4 We need to first address
5 inequality. This City has a long
6 history of having racial divide and we
7 have a high low-income rate and these
8 funds could be so transformative.
9 Someone else mentioned that a lot of
10 people haven't even received their
11 funds, Councilmember Domb. And I know
12 you have worked in the past to make sure
13 people received their funds.

14 I have a few homeless people on
15 my block that I've worked with to get
16 them registered so they can receive
17 these funds. I think that will be one
18 of the most important things we could
19 do. Someone mentioned earlier that is
20 transformative. This person literally
21 has no money. Imagine he's getting
22 \$1400. That would change his life. So
23 whatever efforts we can do to reach out
24 to Philadelphians to make sure they get
25 these funds, the individual funds, I'm

1 not talking about the 1.4 billion
2 obviously.

3 So along with COVID-19, we are
4 experiencing multiple concurrent crises.
5 The school system is failing too many
6 people. The escalating gun violence
7 that we've heard a lot about today.
8 There's inundation of litter, broken
9 sidewalks, lack of green space. We've
10 got the highest asthma rate, obesity
11 rates, safe housing for people. We need
12 to address these sources of drama, and
13 Clean Air Council really believes that
14 this money can go a long way. But you
15 the leaders must be willing to open your
16 minds and think outside of the box.

17 Look towards other programs
18 throughout the country and even
19 throughout the world that have shown to
20 be cost-wise and return on the
21 investment almost immediately. You got
22 to look at the data. When you do look
23 at the data, you'll see that investing
24 and cleaning up the City is one of the
25 most important things we can do.

1 I know Dr. Roman just talked
2 about gun violence. And, Councilmember
3 Domb, she did have a great program that
4 would reduce it by 30 percent and you'll
5 hear I think from another group today
6 about another way to reduce gun
7 violence, and that's cleaning up
8 neighborhoods and greening them. When
9 people live in clean and green spaces,
10 they just feel better.

11 I live in a very trashed
12 neighborhood. When I walk into cleaner
13 neighborhoods, I can just feel the
14 burden being lifted off of my shoulders.
15 It's a real thing. When you live in a
16 trashed neighborhood, you start feeling
17 that internally. But trash isn't
18 something that we should just start
19 bailing out of the City like we've been
20 doing for so long.

21 Think about the analogy of
22 having a leak in your house and the leak
23 is overwhelming. It's flooding your
24 house. You wouldn't immediately go out
25 and get pails to bail that water out.

1 You would cut your water supply off.
2 Then you would either fix the leak or
3 you would call someone in to fix it. We
4 have the same analogy with all of this
5 trash that's coming into our
6 communities.

7 We have the ability to stop
8 some of this from coming in. Think
9 about it, when you go to a grocery
10 store, everything is packaged, right.
11 When you buy anything, it's filled with
12 packaging. You get almost as much
13 packaging with items as you do with the
14 food or whatever product that you're
15 buying. We need to find ways to reduce
16 that.

17 The companies are pushing --
18 it's called extender producer
19 responsibility. The companies are
20 literally making taxpayers like us pay
21 for their products, the excess
22 packaging. We need to address all of
23 the litter and the waste that's coming
24 into the City because it's just like the
25 water in your house. You wouldn't just

1 bail it out. And we're spending \$100
2 million a year getting all of this stuff
3 out of the City. We can stop doing
4 that.

5 If I were to spend this money,
6 I would dedicate it to litter clean-up
7 and I would do community centers. We
8 spent \$1 billion a year on policing the
9 City. Imagine if we spent \$1 billion a
10 year on helping the youth in this City
11 find good jobs and safe places to be and
12 safe places to eat. They can take their
13 clothes there and wash their clothes if
14 they don't have a working -- one time I
15 spoke with a teacher who said he
16 literally takes his kids' clothes home
17 to wash them because they don't have
18 clean clothes and they're embarrassed to
19 come to school when they smell bad.

20 We need community centers to
21 give these kids hope. We need to have
22 exciting classes like coding. I think
23 you're going to hear from someone later
24 about coding. Imagine if a kid could at
25 7:00 p.m. go to a community center, play

1 a game of basketball and then there was
2 a coding class and they could learn how
3 to code or they could learn music
4 producing, there's a DJ class or
5 something like that. We need to reach
6 these kids on where they are and how the
7 jobs of the future are going to be.

8 Learning math is great, but
9 kids want to learn things like coding
10 and things like music producing. So I
11 would say we got to clean up this City
12 and there are so many programs that we
13 could institute in this City. I have a
14 list of about 20 of them. And I think
15 if we implemented most of those ideas,
16 we would save the City about \$86 million
17 per year. We are wasting money. We're
18 chasing this flood in our homes instead
19 of cutting off the source of it.

20 We're putting kids into jail
21 instead of providing -- we're spending
22 tens of thousands of dollars every year
23 on a kid going to jail. Imagine if we
24 spent that money keeping the kid out of
25 jail. These are where this money should

1 go. We need to reach the youth and we
2 need to clean up this City.

3 I hear over and over from
4 Councilmembers, from the Mayor's Office,
5 hey, we're a poor city, we can't do that
6 in Philadelphia. Well, that's not an
7 excuse. We need to start implementing
8 these programs that are going to make
9 these differences and stop us from being
10 a poor city. We need to look to the
11 future and this money really should be
12 what changes the City.

13 And someone said earlier, this
14 is going to be a once-in-a-generation
15 type thing. And I'm glad,
16 Councilmembers, that I see on this call
17 that you guys are in charge because I
18 really have faith that you can do this.
19 And I, Clean Air Council and all of us
20 really want to work with you, so please
21 call us in and ask us about these policy
22 ideas and more specifics.

23 And I'll just wrap up in case
24 you got any questions, and I know you
25 want to hear from the other people. But

1 we have one of the best systems in
2 America. It's called the block captain
3 system. It is being ignored and I pull
4 my hair out when I talk to
5 Councilmembers and say we can't use it
6 because it's the Streets Department.
7 No, it is Philadelphia's program. Take
8 it back and use it. Ask these people
9 who are the most dedicated
10 Philadelphians to do something above and
11 beyond what the block captain system
12 currently asks, which is basically
13 nothing. We meet once a year and that's
14 about it.

15 Ask us, the block captains and
16 the Ward, ask the committee people to do
17 more. So take the block captain system
18 back and make it a really robust system.
19 Imagine if we gave an award for the
20 cleanest block, \$25,000. You say, hey,
21 cleanest block in Philadelphia, you get
22 \$25,000. That would just -- I can't
23 even explain what my block would do. We
24 would be clean every single day so I'll
25 let other people go. And I've talked to

1 so many of you so many times, but I'm
2 always happy to talk to you and give you
3 more ideas.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
5 Logan. Thank you for your testimony.

6 Let's go to Matt Rader from
7 Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.
8 Matt.

9 MR. RADER: Hello, everyone.
10 Thank you, Chairman Domb, members of the
11 Committee for being here. We really
12 appreciate the opportunity to testify
13 and all the thought leadership and
14 partnership you give to us all yearlong.
15 I think we all know that Philadelphians
16 face some pretty daunting challenges
17 right now that are exacerbated by COVID.

18 We have surging gun violence.
19 We have 11 percent unemployment. We
20 have 1 in 5 families food insecure, deep
21 and longstanding poverty and rising
22 summer heat. These challenges
23 disproportionately impact neighborhoods
24 that are home to majority Black and
25 Brown Philadelphians.

1 I'm here to talk about
2 greening, which I believe offers a
3 really powerful pretty affordable tool
4 to address these challenges and increase
5 equity. And to paraphrase Dr. Ruth
6 Abaya speaking on Radio Times last week,
7 solving these systemic challenges we
8 face will require systemic investment,
9 and I think ARP offers an opportunity to
10 make that investment.

11 My big idea is pretty simple.
12 It is to invest in scaling up three
13 systems of neighborhood green
14 infrastructure, cleaned and green vacant
15 lots, healthy tree canopy and strong
16 community gardens and leverage these
17 investments to create jobs and small
18 business opportunities across the City.
19 We should focus with the recovery funds
20 in the neighborhoods most impacted by
21 violence, poverty and inequitable health
22 outcomes, and we must as always work in
23 support of residents and community
24 organizations.

25 Data show that this

1 infrastructure investment can
2 significantly reduce violence, create
3 immediate employment and build community
4 today while transforming health outcomes
5 for the long-term. So I propose to you
6 all a Philadelphia green equity
7 initiative to invest an additional \$10
8 million per year on top of current
9 spending to, number one, make clean and
10 green the standard for all vacant land
11 in Philadelphia and begin by cleaning
12 and greening 10,000 additional parcels
13 and doubling the number of workforce
14 development positions provided by
15 Philadelphia LandCare.

16 The LandCare clean and green
17 treatment, which PHS delivers in
18 partnership with 33 small businesses and
19 community organizations with City
20 funding, reduces gun violence by 29
21 percent within a half of mile and
22 reduces feelings of depression by 68
23 percent for people living in
24 neighborhoods below the poverty line.

25 Today LandCare creates about

1 250 jobs each year, including 75 for
2 returning citizens, and it creates paid
3 work for 33 small businesses and
4 nonprofits, 79 percent of which are
5 Black- or Brown-led. And yet only about
6 a third of Philadelphia's vacant lots
7 are cleaned and greened today. I
8 propose investing an additional \$6
9 million dollars per year to
10 significantly increase the number of
11 lots stabilized each year, add new
12 community partners to the program and
13 create 75 new workforce development
14 positions. Over five years, this
15 investment will extend the benefits of
16 land care to 10,000 more lots than
17 today.

18 Priority No. 2 is to
19 significantly increase tree canopies
20 city-wide, starting by doubling the
21 number of trees planted by tree vendors
22 and creating employment opportunities
23 for residents to plant and tend trees.
24 Data show increased tree canopy reduces
25 violent crime, cut asthma rates and

1 reduces the urban heat island effect in
2 low canopy neighborhoods.

3 U.S. Forest Service researchers
4 in Philadelphia estimate in achieving 30
5 percent tree canopy would prevent 400
6 premature deaths per year. Our tree
7 canopy today is about 20 percent and
8 it's declined by 6 percent over the 10
9 years to 2018, and in some neighborhoods
10 it's as low as 2 percent. I think we
11 should invest \$2 million a year to
12 double to 4,000 the number of trees that
13 tree tenders plant in their
14 neighborhoods and employ 50 residents to
15 take care of trees through a youth
16 stewardship corp.

17 And then my third priority is
18 community gardens. Establishing
19 community gardens is critical
20 neighborhood infrastructure in
21 strengthening 75 community gardens.
22 Residents across the City invest their
23 sweat, equity and their passion to turn
24 vacant land into community gardens that
25 build community, produce food and remove

1 blight, but there are few support
2 services. Those that are there come
3 from Parks & Rec, from PHS, from
4 Neighborhood Gardens Trust, from Soil
5 Generation and from other nonprofits
6 that help support this movement.

7 We need to institutionalize
8 these as part of our City's
9 infrastructure. I propose investing \$2
10 million per year to permanently preserve
11 land for an additional 25 gardens and
12 improve infrastructure at 75 gardens
13 across the City. Our purpose as an
14 organization, PHS's purpose is to use
15 horticultural to advance health and
16 well-being in Philadelphia and the
17 region. We rely on financial support
18 from the City, from our members and from
19 many others and we're skilled at
20 bringing those partners together to fund
21 investments in public infrastructure,
22 and we work with a diverse network of
23 volunteers, community organizations and
24 small businesses to deliver green
25 services and build green infrastructure

1 in neighborhoods across the City.

2 This Philadelphia green equity
3 initiative will really significantly
4 increase the impact of greening,
5 reducing crime, cooling streets,
6 creating immediate employment and
7 expanding food access. And this is a
8 true investment that will create an
9 infrastructure that will drive equity
10 far into the future. And we along with
11 our partners are very ready to help you
12 make it happen. Thanks for your time.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
14 very much, Matt Rader.

15 I want to recognize
16 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
18 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you so
19 much, Mr. Chair. You know I had to
20 chime in here as the Chair of the
21 Committee on Environment, but also as
22 someone who has been supportive of the
23 PHS model.

24 I just wanted to say thank you,
25 Matt Rader, so much for your testimony

1 and for really detailing how we can move
2 towards creating equity in building our
3 green infrastructure here in the City of
4 Philadelphia. And for the record, I
5 wanted to drill down on one of the
6 programs you talked about specifically.
7 You know I love them all. You know that
8 already.

9 You know I'm a huge fan of us
10 creating traditional tree canopy in
11 Philadelphia because I know that I've
12 shared this with you before. But my
13 mother's from North Philadelphia from a
14 small street on Seybert Street. There's
15 still no trees on that block to this
16 day. There's no tree canopy there.

17 Typically in those areas, the
18 urban heat island impact is much greater
19 from a temperature perspective than
20 other communities across our City. And
21 that was the reason why in the '70s my
22 mother moved from North Philadelphia and
23 moved here to Wynnefield where I still
24 live, because you know in Wynnefield we
25 have lots and lots of trees. And she

1 would say, don't cut down the trees, I
2 love it even if it looks like a jungle
3 around our home. She would say, keep
4 all of our trees. So I want to thank
5 you for bringing up the tree canopy
6 piece.

7 I wanted to drill down on the
8 workforce development component of what
9 you talked about in the green equity
10 plan, because we recently had a briefing
11 with Senator Casey. And we talked about
12 the forthcoming infrastructure plan and
13 the \$2 trillion plan.

14 And we specifically talked
15 about how when we think of
16 infrastructure, we think of hard things,
17 buildings. But in this particular plan,
18 we want to focus on human infrastructure
19 as well, and I thought that was a very
20 interesting concept of human
21 infrastructure versus what we
22 traditionally think of as
23 infrastructure.

24 So because of that, I want to
25 drill down more closely on the Youth

1 Tree Stewardship Corp. program that you
2 talked about from an environmental
3 perspective and also from a workforce
4 development perspective. Just for the
5 record, can you give us additional
6 details about that program and some
7 examples of this program that's in
8 operation elsewhere, particularly around
9 the effectiveness of this program for
10 young people.

11 MR. RADER: So this is a new
12 idea for us. And we have recently
13 received a grant from the Knight
14 Foundation to do a major reforestation
15 effort in Southwest Philadelphia working
16 in partnership with Bartram's and the
17 community. And there we will pilot this
18 employing people to help plant trees.
19 So we should have better data a little
20 ways out.

21 We do have good data from our
22 Roots to Re-Entry work, which trains
23 adults mostly leaving the prison system
24 to take jobs with the contractors who
25 maintain vacant lots through the

1 LandCare program, and I don't have great
2 recidivism data to share with you that's
3 updated, but it is significant
4 improvement. And the vast majority, I
5 think more than 90 percent of the people
6 that we train each year, are actually
7 placed in jobs with the contractors who
8 maintain vacant lots.

9 I can certainly share more with
10 you offline, Councilwoman. And I think
11 bringing together this youth employment
12 idea and also employing residents to
13 plant and tend trees is a real
14 opportunity to make this investment in
15 tree canopy infrastructure a
16 co-investment in the human
17 infrastructure.

18 I actually started my day
19 talking with an employer who employs
20 people to care for trees, and demand for
21 labor to do the job is his greatest
22 constraint. So there is real
23 opportunity here if we can match it, and
24 maybe I could convince Sharmain to work
25 with me also on the youth employment

1 piece.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Thank you for that. And I
4 wanted to drill down further there on
5 how we can really collaborate from a
6 workforce development perspective and
7 the environmental perspective, because I
8 think that's something that we don't
9 talk about enough, is to figure out how
10 we create equity in the environmental
11 space by utilizing workforce development
12 as a tool. So can you just talk about
13 that as we continue to think about how
14 this plan will impact Philadelphia? And
15 like I said, I know in fact my office is
16 setting up a briefing with the workforce
17 development providers and Senator Casey
18 as additional follow-up from our last
19 meeting.

20 But I just want you to sort of
21 talk about for the record why it's
22 important for us to have growth in the
23 workforce development component of our
24 environmental work and as we think about
25 how we create equity in this space.

1 MR. RADER: So the first
2 intuition is that I don't believe that
3 we sees trees, clean and green vacant
4 land to community gardens as part of our
5 infrastructure today. And I think
6 that's to our detriment. So the first
7 intuition is saying where those things
8 are not present we are missing out on
9 things that materially impact violence,
10 impact livability and just make life a
11 little better.

12 And so, we have to flip from
13 seeing these things as kind of luxuries
14 that we're happy to see where they occur
15 to actually things that should exist and
16 where they're absent, we got a problem.
17 That's a huge mindset shift. And then
18 we get to your point which is if we
19 spend the money to do them, we can then
20 turn the vast majority of that spending
21 into dollars to create jobs for local
22 residents as we do through LandCare and
23 we'll do through trees, and also for
24 local small businesses and nonprofits.

25 So we have 33 small businesses

1 and nonprofits that work for LandCare.
2 79 percent are Black- and Brown-led.
3 LandCare has been the work that has
4 helped them scale, become
5 MWBE-certified, find new business
6 opportunities and in the process of
7 managing them as contractors for our
8 work, we're able to provide mentorship,
9 support, connect them to other resources
10 and get them growing, and we can do the
11 same thing for jobs. We do it already
12 with LandCare and basically, the more we
13 spend on this infrastructure and the
14 more pervasive it is, the more jobs we
15 can create, and PHS is certainly
16 committed to doing the work in that way,
17 so that it directly benefits residents
18 and businesses and nonprofits within
19 those local communities. And I think we
20 can work together on that and would love
21 to join that briefing if it's still an
22 option.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Absolutely. So I
25 definitely will have my team follow up

1 with you on that and anyone who's
2 interested in that briefing. But I just
3 wanted to thank you for presenting this
4 plan and I'll definitely be following up
5 with you and thank you all for your work
6 on the subcommittees as well.

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 MR. RADER: Thank you,
9 Councilmember.

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.
11 And our next panelist is David Fair from
12 Turning Points for Children, Youth
13 Coalition. Mr. Fair, please state your
14 name for the record and proceed.

15 MR. FAIR: (Muted).

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I think your
17 mute button is on maybe.

18 MR. FAIR: Most people will
19 appreciate that when my mute button is
20 on. Good afternoon. My name is David
21 Fair and I speak today on behalf of the
22 Philly Homes 4 Youth Coalition, which
23 represents 30 youth-serving agencies as
24 well as a significant number of youth
25 and young adults with lived experience

1 of homelessness.

2 According to the Pennsylvania
3 Department of Education, during 2019
4 there were almost 8,000 students in
5 Philadelphia public schools who were
6 homeless. And 2 out of 3 of them were
7 "either living double-up with friends or
8 relatives, living in places not for
9 human habitation or living on the
10 street."

11 A 2020 Penn survey found that
12 among older youth recently or currently
13 in foster care, that is, youth under the
14 protection of the government, 43 percent
15 "reported COVID-19 as having a negative
16 impact on their living situation and
17 over 7 percent were living on the street
18 at the time they were surveyed." Our
19 Coalition believes that ARP funds
20 provide a rare opportunity to make
21 significant progress on the affordable
22 and solvable problem of homelessness
23 among young people in Philadelphia.

24 A meaningful investment in the
25 targeted strategy to prevent and resolve

1 youth and young adult homelessness
2 begins with the following seven urgent
3 priorities. One, Philadelphia is one of
4 the few major cities that does not have
5 a 24-hour drop-in center for homeless
6 youth and young adults. Accessing the
7 variety of youth services available in
8 the City is made unnecessarily
9 difficult, especially for street
10 homeless youth. The drop-in center
11 would allow our organizations to offer
12 their help in the central location
13 trusted by young people as well as
14 provide basic help such as showers,
15 food, clothing, et cetera.

16 Two, our City also fails to
17 appropriately help what are called
18 transition youth, that is the over 1400
19 youth aged 14 to 21 who are in the
20 process of aging out of the foster care
21 and juvenile justice systems. Several
22 hundred of whom age out every year
23 directly into homelessness.

24 We recommend creating a
25 director of transition age youth

1 services at the Department of Human
2 Services. Such a law would allow DHS to
3 develop stronger accountability and
4 coordinate it across systems of care.

5 Three, unfortunately high case
6 loads in the community umbrella agency
7 system often interfere with the
8 provision of case management services
9 required by older youth. We recommend
10 expanding core capacity by creating a
11 minimum of three new full-time
12 transition case manager positions in
13 each (inaudible) solely to work with
14 youth 14 and older to ensure that they
15 are getting the attention and support
16 necessary for successful transition from
17 care.

18 Four, also youth people aging
19 out of DHS deserve the case management
20 support of individuals with expertise in
21 working with and accessing services for
22 transition-aged youth. To reduce the
23 number of youth DHS discharges from
24 foster care every year to homelessness,
25 we encourage you to invest stimulus

1 funds in expanding significantly the
2 services of the Achieving Independent
3 Center operated by Valley Youth House
4 and LifeSet operated by my organization
5 Turning Points for Children, for youth
6 who have left or about to leave care.

7 Both programs provide the
8 intensive support these youth
9 desperately need to avoid becoming
10 homeless after discharge. DHS should
11 also increase the age limit for youth
12 and supervised living arrangements which
13 would reduce homelessness and trauma for
14 this population.

15 Five, peer support programs
16 have been proven effective at engaging
17 any consumer and programs benefit from
18 respecting the wisdom and skill that
19 comes from lived experience. A
20 successful effort to attack youth
21 homelessness must engage and listen to
22 young people. To do this, it is
23 essential that we start investing in
24 peer support programs as a vital part of
25 our continuum of services.

1 Six, while all of these
2 services are critically needed, nothing
3 will alleviate the increasing rates of
4 youth homelessness more effectively than
5 more youth-specific housing. Providing
6 rental assistance in housing for this
7 group is urgent and can assist not only
8 with the cost of housing, but also by
9 supporting young people with achieving
10 their employment, educational and
11 savings goals.

12 And finally seven, we request
13 that the stimulus funds be utilized to
14 restore funding with the Philly Homes 4
15 Youth Coalition itself. In 2018, OHS
16 specifically identified the Coalition as
17 its primary partner to "develop a
18 coordinated response to youth
19 homelessness in the Roadmap to Homes
20 Strategic Plan." After providing
21 funding to facilitate the Coalition up
22 until last fiscal year, this funding was
23 terminated in Fiscal '21.

24 We request that Coalition
25 funding continue to be provided at least

1 while the current strategic plan is in
2 the process of being implemented. Thank
3 you for your time, attention and
4 consideration. I've attached additional
5 information to my written testimony
6 which was previously submitted. Thank
7 you.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
9 (inaudible). I want to thank each of
10 you for your testimony, your insight and
11 we appreciate your testimony and we look
12 forward to working with you.

13 I'm now going to ask the Clerk
14 to please call the next panel of
15 witnesses. And thank you all again for
16 being here today. Thank you very much.

17 THE CLERK: Our next panel is
18 Tayyib Smith, Sylvester Mobley and
19 Michael Allegretti.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Let's start
21 with Tayyib first.

22 MR. SMITH: Thank you,
23 Councilmember Domb. Good to see you.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good to see
25 you.

1 MR. SMITH: Respectfully, I
2 called our mutual friend David Grasso
3 halfway through this and asked him to
4 pray for me. Because I believe if I'm
5 correct, Ms. Sharmain is the only
6 African-American that spoke as of yet
7 before me; is that correct?

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Possibly.

9 MR. SMITH: Possibly? I need a
10 fact-check here. Can you get somebody
11 from CNN or somebody from a reputable
12 journalist organization other than the
13 Inquirer to fact-check this?

14 Just to stay on message because
15 I don't need to look at talking points,
16 I can speak from the heart and I can
17 speak as a third-generation
18 Philadelphian whose grandfather moved up
19 here in 1923. And you know, 1919 was
20 the Red Summer when all over the country
21 there were riots, White riots, where
22 they were killing African-Americans.
23 And most often we only talk about Black
24 Wall Street in Oklahoma, but there has
25 been White violence against Black people

1 just for speaking honestly like I'm
2 going to do today or for owning a
3 printing press or for having a license
4 to, you know, be an undertaker.

5 And after all of the
6 international embarrassments that
7 Philadelphia received when the City had,
8 I think, three uprisings, multiple
9 police scandals, when I think of some of
10 my colleagues who preceded me and some
11 of my colleagues who are going to be
12 after me, I have to ask some of my
13 elders, some of my friends to pray for
14 me because I know I can be a very
15 polarizing figure in the business
16 community.

17 Traditionally, African-American
18 business people I would say since the
19 Nixon generation has had a myth that
20 there's an alliance with White power
21 where you don't speak from a space of
22 Black liberation. And that is not how I
23 was raised as a third-generation
24 Philadelphian.

25 So although I have heard my

1 friend Bruce Katz who wrote a brilliant
2 book with Jeremy Nowak called the New
3 Localism that talks about how we should
4 think of not just cities but regions,
5 right. So in Philadelphia, we have a
6 Chamber of Commerce who's going to go
7 after me that is a 13-county Chamber,
8 right. And although many of my
9 colleagues have spoken rhetorically
10 about structural racism and all the
11 reasons why we have a 10x differential
12 in wealth between White households and
13 Black households, they have not spoken
14 about their boards, their trustees,
15 their own investment packages and what
16 they're doing to do restitution of the
17 intentionality of why we have the
18 differentials and access to health and
19 wealth.

20 And if we think about the
21 Philadelphia region, in Philadelphia
22 approximately \$13,000 is spent in spaces
23 where Black children live, right, and we
24 have a reading level for 3rd graders at
25 approximately 30 percent. And in the

1 Western suburbs, it's between 23,000 to
2 30,000. And if you go to private
3 school, it can be between 35 to God
4 knows what.

5 And when you and I first met,
6 you told me a story about how you first
7 got into real estate. And I'll ask you
8 to share that later or anyone can
9 interview you about that, but I believe
10 you got into real estate because you
11 were inspired because there was a WASP
12 gentleman I would assume, who excluded
13 your family from living in the Western
14 suburbs, the same Western suburbs where
15 my fiancée's family lives. And my
16 family has been held in shackles of
17 structural racism that is intentional,
18 right, because there are organizations
19 like the Society of Odd Fellows in
20 Philadelphia.

21 They had a rule, that if you
22 were a mason or a craftsman and you
23 taught an African-American child, you
24 would never work again. My dad's friend
25 Bilal Calhoun, I shared that story with

1 him because I read the Past, Present
2 Future of Philadelphia, it's a book that
3 was written about 100 -- it was written
4 in the '90s, but it's about a gentleman
5 about 100 years ago.

6 And it describes that in the
7 intentionality of excluding the
8 African-Americans who were moving here
9 in the great migration when Philadelphia
10 was defined as New Jerusalem because
11 there were more African-American free
12 people here for many reasons, right.
13 There were ex-pats who were Haitians who
14 moved here during the Toussaint
15 uprising, who were the barbers and the
16 caterers of wealthy Whites and they were
17 able to make a very good living and they
18 lived free here.

19 So African-Americans have lived
20 here since William Penn founded this
21 City. Yet only 2.3 percent, maybe 2.5
22 percent of the businesses are owned by
23 African-Americans. And I've had to
24 suffer through colleagues frankly who
25 gasp with me and I've given them free

1 labor on this line-up, like Bill
2 Golderer.

3 And, Bill, I will say honestly
4 to you publicly that I gave a year of
5 free labor to the United Way for your
6 analysis as a Black and Brown business
7 ecosystem. I was one of the only
8 African-Americans on that task force or
9 whatever it was called, and you didn't
10 show up to one meeting and you didn't
11 even thank the people who gave you the
12 free labor. Most of the comments you
13 said today were the work of people like
14 Michael Banks, all right. And then
15 there's so many people throughout these
16 ecosystems -- I'm going to wrap up.
17 And --

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: This is what
19 I would like you to think about, the
20 goal for today --

21 MR. SMITH: Let me just finish
22 one thing.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Go
24 ahead.

25 MR. SMITH: There are people

1 like Sylvie Howard who is no longer with
2 the City, Harold Epps who was supposed
3 to be on this line-up, Dyshaun Hines at
4 the Global Identity Project, there are
5 Black and Brown women across
6 institutions public-private partnership
7 or corporations who have to carry bullet
8 points for White people who do not want
9 to change their privilege. And frankly,
10 it's disrespectful that there hasn't
11 been a specific Islander, Asian or
12 Native American or a person of immigrant
13 decent because these economies are
14 exploitation of labor, right.

15 And I as a person who has
16 benefited from understanding capitalism
17 know that most of these workforce
18 development programs have never done a
19 thing for a person like me. So I want
20 to be respectful to this audience,
21 right. And I want to also say that I've
22 had to temper what I actually want to
23 express because of the amount of free
24 labor I've given to the City, I've given
25 to philanthropic organizations and I've

1 given to nonprofits that are led by
2 white people who make a very good living
3 off of poverty-pimping in the biggest
4 poor Black city in the United States.

5 And respectfully, I'm going to
6 turn to my brother Sylvester Mobley
7 who's also invested in African-American
8 and women, entrepreneurs such as myself
9 and who I have worked with for the last
10 seven years approximately and who's also
11 been gaslit by most of this line-up. So
12 with that, I'm open to questions after
13 the rest of the people.

14 And we should really think
15 about this line-up, right. And we
16 should think about what our
17 neighborhoods look like and we should
18 think about the fact that this City is
19 67 percent BIPOC And 43 percent Black.
20 And there are people who are more
21 intelligent than me who might not have
22 my male privilege and or my bravado who
23 have done work and I sit on their
24 shoulders today when I speak. And I'm
25 tempering the rage of this City.

1 And the only reason some of you
2 have had the come-to-Jesus moment or are
3 even thinking about African-American
4 entrepreneurs or women or BIPOC
5 communities is because there's new
6 mandates from Wall Street to Corporate
7 America to invest in us. And most of
8 you are trying to figure out JV
9 partnerships to get access to the money.
10 And you're just pivoting old programs
11 from the '70s and the '80s and not
12 investing in people like me. Thank you.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Tayyib, thank
14 you for your honesty. I'll come back to
15 you with some questions. And let's go
16 to Sylvester Mobley, Coded by Kids.

17 MR. MOBLEY: Councilmembers, I
18 want to thank you for giving me the
19 opportunity to speak today. I'm
20 Sylvester Mobley, CEO of Coded by Kids.
21 I also want to say I don't know if it's
22 fair to go after Tayyib. Next time we
23 want to think about the line-up.

24 MR. SMITH: Undefeated, my
25 brother.

1 MR. MOBLEY: So as we think
2 about how this money gets spent, any
3 conversations that we have about the
4 money, we do have to have an honest
5 conversation with ourselves about the
6 fact that the things we've done in the
7 past have not worked. That's not an
8 opinion. That's an objective.

9 If you look at data around
10 inequity in the City of Philadelphia,
11 what we've done has not worked. So we
12 have to start there and be honest with
13 ourselves. And that's not to cast
14 blame, that's not to point the finger.
15 That's to have an appropriate starting
16 point for what we need to do to move
17 forward.

18 And within that, we've had a
19 lot of conversations about poverty.
20 People talked about workforce
21 development. One of the consistent
22 problems that we've had as a City is we
23 treat poverty as if poverty is the
24 problem. Poverty is not the problem.
25 Poverty is the symptom of deeper

1 ingrained systemic problems. We take an
2 approach where we essentially act like a
3 doctor who's treating a cancer patient.
4 And we give them painkillers to treat
5 the pain, but never actually address the
6 cancer. That's what we do year after
7 year when we're addressing poverty and
8 treating poverty as if it's the problem.

9 At some point we do need to
10 back up and start looking at what drives
11 poverty, what are the main things that
12 we see as racial inequity and address
13 that. As an example, 41 percent of
14 Black males who grew up rich will end up
15 either lower middle class or poor in
16 their outcomes. So you're talking about
17 half of Black males who grew up rich are
18 ending up either lower middle class or
19 poor. They're not ending up that way
20 because they were poor, because that's
21 not where they started. They're ending
22 up that way because of the role that
23 racial inequity plays.

24 If you start to think about how
25 that plays a role in poverty, our

1 programs only help people once they're
2 poor. We don't do anything to help
3 people and keep them where they are. If
4 you have almost half of Black males who
5 are being pushed down the ladder, if you
6 look at socioeconomic data for Black
7 families, if you're hemorrhaging more
8 Black people from the middle class, then
9 our programs are actually moving into
10 the middle class which when you look at
11 the data, our programs aren't moving
12 many people into the middle class if
13 we're honest about what's happening.

14 We've created an unsolvable
15 problem. We can't actually solve
16 poverty if you have more people moving
17 into poverty than people you're moving
18 out. So at some point we do need to be
19 honest and take a step back and start to
20 think about how do we address the
21 drivers and the roots of the problem and
22 recognizing that things like workforce
23 development in its current state hasn't
24 worked.

25 Councilman Domb, we've had

1 enough conversations. You know I always
2 push for tech, how do we move as many
3 Black and Brown people in the City into
4 tech. We have to focus on the spaces
5 that we know are growing, the
6 opportunities that we know are going to
7 be there. I have a lot conversations
8 with people running workforce
9 development programs. And time and time
10 again when I look at the jobs they're
11 training people for, you can match those
12 jobs up on a list of jobs that are
13 currently being placed by automation, so
14 it's hard to make the argument to me
15 that a workforce development program is
16 helping someone if that job will not
17 exist in five years. You're basically
18 giving someone something for today
19 knowing it's going to go away and that
20 person is going to be in that exact same
21 position that they were in today.

22 The space that has the
23 opportunity, the space that has the
24 ability to move people forward and
25 keeping where they are is the tech and

1 innovation space, but we're not doing
2 enough to move that individual in the
3 City of Philadelphia into the space.
4 When you talk about entrepreneurship,
5 whenever we talk about entrepreneurship
6 in the context of Black and Brown
7 people, it's always in the vein of small
8 business.

9 I'm in the tech space. We're
10 talking about how do you raise venture
11 capital, how do you build high growth
12 scalable companies. We never have those
13 conversations when we're talking about
14 Black and Brown people. I think it's a
15 missed opportunity for the City to not
16 have a deliberate focus on how do we
17 move Black and Brown people into the
18 startup space so they're building
19 scalable high-growth companies. We have
20 to at some point shift the way we think,
21 shift the way we look at these things
22 and recognize and accept that if we're
23 not able to move our Black and Brown
24 people into the tech and innovation
25 space in a meaningful way, we're not

1 actually going to solve these problems.
2 We're just going to keep committing
3 resources, time, committing funds to
4 things and just keep spinning our
5 wheels. So I'm going to stop there and
6 yield to, I know there's another
7 gentleman coming after me.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: All right.
9 Thank you, Sylvester.

10 Let's go to Michael Allegretti
11 with Rubicon.

12 MR. ALLEGRETTI: Well, Chairman
13 Domb, thank you very much. Vice-Chair
14 O'Neill, thank you for having me today.
15 Wow, we saved the fourth panel for the
16 incredibly impactful panel. I'm not a
17 member of the Philadelphia civic
18 community so I've been listening to this
19 hearing now, now going on three hours
20 and getting a great education in the
21 City. And Tayyib and Sylvester, thank
22 you for your comments because they'll
23 inform my remarks now to a certain
24 degree.

25 I'm going to take things in a

1 somewhat different direction. And I do
2 want to say we are honored to be invited
3 to talk to you about how the City can
4 consider deploying some of this federal
5 money, particularly around technology
6 and particularly with a focus towards
7 sustainability, resiliency and equity.
8 And I'll try to touch on what those
9 themes mean for our product and for our
10 business.

11 So my name's Michael
12 Allegretti. I'm Chief Strategy Officer
13 at a company called Rubicon, and I think
14 to date so far on the panel there
15 haven't really been a lot of forprofit
16 companies talking. And what I'm going
17 to try to do in the next five minutes is
18 basically tell you what the heck Rubicon
19 is because I'm assuming that most of you
20 don't know our company or our product,
21 and then tell a story about one city
22 close by, Baltimore, how they used it to
23 transform an important public service.
24 It's the service of waste, right,
25 picking up the garbage and recycling and

1 what the pandemic meant for that
2 department.

3 So my focus is really on
4 government efficiency, taxpayer savings
5 and delivering equitable service
6 regardless of zip code. And then I can
7 just leave you with some thoughts
8 generally about how from my perspective
9 or our perspective you might want to
10 think about deploying some portion of
11 this money towards technology, what are
12 kind of the themes you might want to
13 consider regardless of which tech you
14 use.

15 Just quickly on Rubicon, we are
16 a software company that provides
17 solutions specifically for waste and
18 recycling. We have customers in
19 business and in government. On the
20 business side, we're servicing the waste
21 and recycling needs of most of the
22 nation's leading brands, whether it's a
23 Starbucks in an Apple store or whether
24 it's a Dollar General which some of you
25 might know or not know, or a Wawa store

1 or a 7-Eleven as an example, and we also
2 work with about 55 cities now across the
3 United States.

4 We're a B Corp. That means
5 we're essentially a social enterprise.
6 We're focused of course as a forprofit
7 business on doing well, but we also have
8 a mission to work in partnership with
9 government and to do more than simply
10 deliver a good bottom line. The
11 company's mission is to end waste. And
12 what that primarily means of course is
13 keeping materials out of landfills. And
14 Councilwoman Gilmore Richardson will be
15 familiar with the need to do that,
16 create more circularity in communities
17 and in supply chains. But we look at
18 that mission of waste reduction much
19 more broadly, particularly with cities.

20 We say where are the
21 opportunities for cities to reduce
22 wasted time, wasted tax dollars, wasted
23 public labor, wasted human potential, so
24 it's a holistic look. Four years ago we
25 launched a product called

1 RUBICONSmartCity. That is our offering
2 for cities. And the goal is simple, how
3 do we help our City partners run
4 smarter, faster and more effective waste
5 recycling and fleet operations.

6 We built it on the Amazon web
7 services platform and I'll go back to
8 why that's important. It's the notion
9 of being on a cloud-based platform and
10 having a cloud-based solution. It's
11 that you have maximum flexibility with
12 the technology. It has to be secure,
13 reliable, intuitive. But you as a city
14 if you're going to invest in any tech,
15 you want flexibility.

16 What does the tech do, and then
17 I'll kind of go into example, it does
18 some really basic stuff. But it's stuff
19 that I believe is very important to the
20 functioning of the City and to creating
21 good quality of life regardless of zip
22 code. It ensures that every resident's
23 trash and recycling is picked up when
24 it's scheduled to be picked up. There
25 are no missed pickups and that every

1 neighborhood is getting that same level
2 of services.

3 It documents important
4 quality-of-life issues which lead to
5 communities kind of deteriorating over
6 time if they're not addressed, whether
7 that's litter, bulky waste, illegal
8 dumping. It sees that at the source.
9 It photographs that and it lets you
10 action that before it becomes a larger
11 problem. It focuses on reducing
12 contamination in your recycling stream.
13 This matters for environmental justice
14 reasons and simply for economic reasons.
15 If you can have a cleaner recycling
16 stream, you as a city can command a
17 better price getting those recyclable
18 commodities for sale into the secondary
19 market.

20 It reduces costs overall in
21 your municipal operation, whether it's
22 fewer vehicle miles traveled which
23 matter for things like emissions and
24 wear and tear and safety or whether it's
25 ensuring that your trucks are in better

1 shape. And finally, I'll say this point
2 again, it ensures equity across zip
3 codes. Every neighborhood in any city,
4 whether it's Philadelphia or Pittsburgh,
5 it doesn't matter, you have to be
6 providing the same level of service to
7 every citizen, and technology platforms
8 can provide you that line of sight.

9 There's one other thing, and I
10 think this might resonate both for the
11 panelists as much as the Council. We
12 look at these trucks and we say, you as
13 a city have invested inordinate amounts
14 of money in your solid waste vehicles
15 and all of these various fleet vehicles
16 that you have and particularly your
17 garbage trucks, your streetsweepers,
18 they're going up and down every street
19 of the City at least once a week.

20 You can do more with them than
21 just pick up the trash. Could you look
22 for things in the community that need to
23 be remediated, graffiti, potholes,
24 broken curb-cuts, these kind of
25 quality-of-life issues. And if you can

1 get ahead of those, if you can spot
2 those before the citizen calls to
3 complain or before they become a crisis,
4 suddenly your city is now in the
5 business of delivering proactive
6 government, and that's really the gold
7 standard, especially if you do the
8 neighborhoods beyond the city center.

9 So a story and then some
10 thoughts about how to think about
11 technology deployment. So you have a
12 once-in-a-generation opportunity here
13 with this federal money to make long-
14 term investments, but they have to be
15 ones that ultimately can pay for
16 themselves. You can't do something and
17 then a year later, where are the funds
18 for it. So you have to think about ROI
19 very thoughtfully and I think every
20 panelist today, the subsequent panelists
21 as well, have alluded to that.

22 Nailing the basics is a thing.
23 So smart, efficient, reliable service
24 that doesn't discriminate based on zip
25 code is important. It's important for

1 assistance satisfaction, but it also as
2 we saw from the pandemic has a big
3 public health component to it and has an
4 environment component. If you're trying
5 to reach zero waste goals, you need to
6 be focusing on technology deployments
7 that get you towards the (inaudible).

8 But there's the public worker
9 as well and this has kind of been lost
10 in the pandemic. So there was a
11 universal truth during this pandemic
12 and, that is, the trash still needs to
13 get picked up. And the men and women
14 who are doing that work, they're kind of
15 unsung heroes. These are frontline
16 workers who came to work every day
17 during the pandemic. They did before
18 and they will after and it has been
19 harder and harder for these departments,
20 solid waste departments, not just in
21 Philly, across the country to maintain
22 staffing levels and to maintain the
23 quality of service that they need as a
24 city grows.

25 So what happened in COVID, men

1 and women kept coming to work. But over
2 time quickly those numbers started to
3 dwindle due unfortunately to COVID
4 deaths, exposure, contact tracing. And
5 next thing you knew, cities needed to
6 start cutting recycling programs,
7 pulling back on services, the trash
8 wasn't picked up and Councilmember
9 Gilmore Richardson wrote a really
10 thoughtful op-ed about this issue. And
11 I think you as Philadelphians, I'm a New
12 Yorker, we kind of have similar
13 challenges.

14 So we focused on this in the
15 Baltimore example, I'll just tell you
16 what happened there. Baltimore was
17 having a similar problem. And in August
18 of 2020, Baltimore suspended curbside
19 recycling programs. They couldn't get
20 the math to work anymore and they had
21 labor shortages. Residents obviously
22 said, well, yeah, we have to keep our
23 sanitation workers safe, but they were
24 also very unhappy to see all of their
25 recyclable material headed to a

1 landfill.

2 So fall of 2020, Baltimore
3 actually used what was then the COVID
4 Relief Fund, so a federally funded
5 stream. They purchased our
6 technology -- purchase any technology
7 that would work for you -- and they did
8 a few things. They digitized their
9 routes. So they got paper out of the
10 process and immediately started to get
11 cost-savings. They improved their
12 routes, right. So they made their
13 routes smarter and basically cost less
14 money.

15 And most importantly in January
16 of 2021, so not long after, about six
17 months later, they fired up their
18 recycling program again. So there was a
19 public labor win, there was an
20 environmental win. Mayor Brandon Scott
21 said, this technology got us to digitize
22 our routes and finally allowed us to
23 deliver this effective service. So it
24 can happen. I think the main takeaway
25 from Baltimore is it can happen quickly.

1 And so, as you say to yourself as a
2 Council and as a City, how do you want
3 to invest this money. Everyone has a
4 different thing that they're pushing, so
5 I can only speak from the technology
6 perspective.

7 I think some good principles
8 are flexibility, agility, real ROI and
9 quick deployment. So you ask yourself
10 will a technology investment create more
11 optionality and flexibility for our City
12 in the future. Cloud-based platforms,
13 Rubicon is one, there are many out
14 there. They are purpose-built. They
15 are by design portable, so they allow
16 for that sort of flexibility and
17 adjustment over the long haul.

18 Ask yourself is a given
19 solution financially sustainable and
20 quickly deployable or is it going to
21 blow holes in your future budgets, is it
22 going to take years to demonstrate ROI
23 and to get deployed, again SaaS software
24 is a service technologies, like Rubicon
25 there are others. They are generally

1 more affordable. They can generally be
2 deployed in a matter of weeks versus
3 months and years, and their cost can be
4 fixed, right.

5 If I'm sitting in your shoes, I
6 want to know, tell me what the price is
7 and I want to see that price over the
8 long-term and ideally be able to fund it
9 very clearly with the savings that I get
10 from that deployment. So I'll stop
11 there. Very honored to be here and I
12 appreciate the opportunity. Thank you.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you
14 very much. Thank you. And I want to
15 thank the panel.

16 I have a question for
17 Sylvester. Sylvester, I think you and I
18 involved maybe 20 or 25 high schools
19 over the last few years where we had I
20 think it was in the 10th grade, 15
21 students in the 10th and then we went to
22 11th and 12th, and you were teaching
23 them tech and coding. Can you give me
24 an idea of the result of that and the
25 benefits?

1 MR. MOBLEY: So based on those
2 programs, more than 80 percent have gone
3 on to college. So we now have our first
4 groups that are coming up on their
5 senior years and we'll start to see what
6 the college graduation rates look like.
7 For us the next step is always higher
8 education. There's a lot of debates
9 about should kids go directly into
10 college or, that is, is college worth
11 it.

12 There's a couple of things that
13 get missed in those debates. One, there
14 is data that shows a Black person going
15 into tech without a college degree will
16 do worse than their White counterparts.
17 Knowing that, the question we always
18 have to ask ourselves is are we putting
19 them at a disadvantage if we don't
20 prepare them for higher education. The
21 other part to it is we have historically
22 done a poorer job at preparing Black and
23 Brown kids for higher education, and
24 then we throw our hands up and say,
25 well, maybe higher education isn't for

1 everyone. We feel like it's our
2 responsibility to prepare them and then
3 let that decision be driven by them
4 instead of us driving the decision
5 because we won't prepare them for it.

6 The other thing when we talk
7 about is the degree worth it, Black
8 people are currently concentrated in the
9 college majors of the lowest return on
10 its investment. So there's a
11 concentration in the lowest-paying
12 college majors. And the college majors
13 that have the highest return on
14 investment were not present at all, so
15 we also do the let's make sure you're
16 going into majors like computer science,
17 software engineering, MIS. So we're at
18 about 80 percent with the young people
19 who have gone through those programs
20 with --

21 MR. SMITH: Sylvester, can I
22 just add a little color to what you're
23 saying.

24 So, Allan, a venture capital
25 investment thus far, only 2 percent has

1 gone to Black people, women and people
2 of color. But men who are born in
3 certain census tracts benefit from
4 having aunts and uncles who can do a
5 family round have good and bad ideas
6 where they live off of the capital
7 investment. So whether the idea is good
8 or bad, they eat off of the fees and
9 they're able to make very good livings,
10 while Black and Brown entrepreneurs who
11 come through ecosystems like Sylvester's
12 or programs like my own at the Institute
13 of Hip Hop Entrepreneurship or IF Lab
14 which works in tandem with Coded by
15 Kids. Often times the people they have
16 to pitch to don't have the cultural
17 competency to understand the products
18 and services that they're attempting to
19 provide for their own communities or for
20 society writ large.

21 And I'll just end with the
22 average White person is approximately 57
23 in the United States. The average Asian
24 and African-American is 26. And the
25 average Latinx or Hispanic is 9. So

1 corporations have an understanding of
2 that from extractive capital exploration
3 perspective, but I've heard many ideas
4 today about putting people in a system
5 of workforce development to get them as
6 a part of the labor economy, but I've
7 heard very few that are trying to put
8 them into incubators, accelerators or
9 programs like Coded by Kids or IF Lab or
10 the Institute of Hip Hop
11 Entrepreneurship to give people the
12 opportunity to scale up and be a part of
13 the larger capital economy.

14 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Let me ask
15 you both a question because I've been
16 talking about this for five or six
17 years, I think. I can't figure out why
18 I can't get traction on it. Why are we
19 not teaching mandatory from PreK to 12th
20 grade financial literacy, technology and
21 entrepreneurship?

22 MR. SMITH: So thank you for
23 that, Allan. And sorry to cut you off
24 and feel free to jump in, Sylvester.

25 But, Allan, you and I went on a

1 road show and I met five or six bankers.
2 And through that -- I won't call those
3 bankers out now -- but most of those
4 people either didn't have a solution or
5 an answer for why since the CRA Act of
6 1976 why they have capital investment
7 products that are extractive capital in
8 Black communities, yet they don't have
9 proven best practices with KPIs or
10 performance indicators that benefit
11 Black communities, right. So
12 unbeknownst to most people, most Black
13 men and women that you know that work at
14 a bank work in PR, communications or
15 they're on the CRA side, right.

16 In capital investments, only 1
17 percent of all the capital investment in
18 wealth management in the United States
19 is invested in Black-owned capital
20 companies, right. So you know, you
21 might know -- I don't know if you
22 remember, I know you're a busy man --
23 but I have another venture called The
24 Collective, right. We have eight
25 members in The Collective, right. We're

1 attempting to raise \$100 million to
2 invest in Black and Brown communities.
3 We all went through a road show on
4 opportunity zones. Opportunity zones
5 are for rural and urban communities and
6 redline communities, but they are
7 capital product for the benefit of
8 capital gains tax.

9 How many Black and Brown people
10 who live in Philadelphia are making
11 capital gains tax or even understand a
12 capital gains tax financial product? So
13 we are undergirded in a system that has
14 yet to give us restitution to all of the
15 products and services and public policy
16 that have undergirded us in shackles of
17 White-structured inequality.

18 MR. MOBLEY: I think my answer
19 is a lot simpler than Tayyib's. We
20 haven't had the will to invest in these
21 programs.

22 Allan, you and I --
23 Councilmember Domb, you and I have had
24 quite a few conversations about why we
25 can't do it or the need for it. Those

1 programs require funding. We have to
2 recognize that we're at the point that
3 we're at because of intentional
4 disinvestment in Black and Brown
5 communities, systems that serve Black
6 and Brown people, programs that serve
7 Black and Brown people. You can't solve
8 disinvestment with more disinvestment.
9 There has to be the financial
10 commitment, the financial investment in
11 the programs.

12 And up to this point -- and you
13 and I have worked on raising money to
14 fund these programs. So you know as
15 well as anyone else it's tough to get
16 people to commit, it's tough to get
17 people to invest in it, and there's all
18 kinds of reasons, what about the School
19 District this or what about that. But
20 the reality is it all amounts to the
21 same thing, which is not investing in
22 these programs. We're refusing to fund.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Tayyib put
24 his hand up. Thank you, Sylvester.

25 MR. SMITH: So, Allan,

1 unless -- honestly, unless people look
2 at their capital stack, unless they look
3 at their partners, unless they think
4 about who they're going to sunset their
5 company to, who they're mentoring, who
6 their trustees are, if we're not looking
7 at exit strategies for institutions that
8 have been structurally racist but have
9 yet to ever pay restitution to the Black
10 and Brown people who undergird the
11 pension funds in this City, right.

12 So during COVID, there were
13 more billionaires created than in a
14 generation, right. And most of that
15 came from investments in real estate,
16 investment in technology. And if you
17 look at the people who were still
18 working throughout the pandemic in the
19 neighborhood that I live in, I'm
20 fortunate enough to live in, that
21 historically African-American community
22 where it's only 3 percent
23 African-American today, most of the
24 people who I saw keeping the City alive
25 were Black and Brown, in the gig

1 economy, in health care, in the labor
2 unions and those are the pension funds
3 that undergird the capital investments
4 of this whole economy, right.

5 So unless we change the public
6 policy and put guardrails on some type
7 of metrics that benefit the demography
8 of the people who undergird the pension
9 funds of the City, we are going to stay
10 in the situation that we are.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I want to go
12 to Councilmember Green, my colleague. I
13 know he had a question. Councilmember
14 Green.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
16 Mr. Chair.

17 I want to thank the panelists
18 for this panel and I'm going to ask the
19 question I asked earlier in reference to
20 the dollars coming to the City of
21 Philadelphia from the American Rescue
22 Plan, and you may have heard my question
23 but I'm going to restate it. And I
24 think it ties into the commentary that
25 was made by both Mr. Smith and

1 Mr. Mobley.

2 And my concern when we receive
3 these dollars that once again will
4 probably sprinkle dollars to a lot of
5 different initiatives, but will not make
6 transformational impact. And my concern
7 is that because of the challenges and
8 some of the things that have been spoken
9 about on this panel, specifically
10 dollars will be provided to say this
11 program, this program, this program,
12 that program, and I think this ties into
13 what Mr. Mobley was saying that we'll
14 keep putting money into the same
15 programs, but we don't have a real
16 impact. And so, we don't really
17 leverage the dollars like we could,
18 especially when it comes to economic
19 development.

20 And so, when we talk about
21 entrepreneurship or just wealth for
22 communities of color, that's something
23 that's not discussed. And I think part
24 of that is because the vast majority of
25 people in the public sector have really

1 no experience of background of
2 entrepreneurship. I've been beating my
3 head against the wall regarding the lack
4 of investment for businesses.

5 So what will happen is if I
6 talk about entrepreneurship and
7 businesses, especially businesses of
8 color and want to devote resources to
9 that, others will say, well, what about
10 this type of program or we should give
11 this person some money for this program
12 or even redirect income which, yes, that
13 from a policy perspective will circulate
14 dollars for a period of time and will
15 generate some economy and some resources
16 and have what I'll say a sugar rush, but
17 long-term does that really provide the
18 benefit.

19 So I'm curious from your
20 perspective in reference to, and I don't
21 want to make assumptions of what I think
22 the budget address will be on Thursday,
23 but considering how we've traditionally
24 done things, I will hold out hope. But
25 that hope is quite honestly fleeting

1 because I have a perspective on what
2 will end up happening and there will be
3 some dollars allocated for a lot of
4 different things to say we're doing
5 something but really we're having
6 transformational impact and then we'll
7 get to 2025 after all the dollars will
8 be spent by 2024 and we'll ask where are
9 we, and we will have some of the same
10 issues and challenges that we've had
11 before.

12 So I'm curious about the idea
13 of spending dollars either to redirect
14 income or financial benefit programs
15 versus making real investments in a
16 transformational way in reference to
17 just wealth for people who have
18 moderate to low income?

19 MR. MOBLEY: Yeah. I think
20 it's always a question of what are you
21 actually solving for, and this is
22 something I ask a lot because people
23 will say, well, we want to make
24 transformational change. But then they
25 direct dollars to the same types of

1 things we've always done. So then it's
2 like, well, are you really solving
3 transformational change or are you
4 solving for something else because
5 that's not where the money is going to.

6 If you think about the impact
7 that providing real investment
8 capital -- one of the reasons we're
9 currently raising a \$50 million pre-seed
10 seed stage venture capital fund is
11 because of the direct impact that that
12 has. If you think about the impact that
13 providing real investment capital would
14 have for Black and Brown people who are
15 starting scalable tech and tech-driven
16 companies in the City of Philadelphia,
17 if you look at the Bay Area, there's
18 companies that when they exit, the
19 companies create so many millionaires
20 because of those exits that it inflates
21 the real estate market. Imagine the
22 impact that that would have in the City
23 of Philadelphia with Black and Brown
24 people having major exits through
25 scalable companies. That's a huge

1 arrive on that investment capital. That
2 is on transformative change.

3 Imagine getting to a point
4 where Black kids are on a basketball
5 court talking about whose brother just
6 raised their series A or whose mom's
7 company had an exit. That is
8 transformative change right there, but
9 we have to be willing to think outside
10 of the normal context that we've
11 traditionally thought in. If I had to
12 advocate for where that money would go,
13 it would go to things like that. It
14 would drive that real truly
15 transformative change in the City of
16 Philadelphia.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And --

18 MR. SMITH: If I could just
19 interject for a second, Councilmember
20 Green.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Real quick,
22 Mr. Smith. Then I will let you jump in.

23 But I think that perspective is
24 so key in reference to transformational
25 because I remember in Palo Alto,

1 Stanford was okay, it's a nice school.
2 But Silicon Valley wasn't Silicon Valley
3 like we now know because all of those
4 exit dynamics and investments and other
5 type of other entrepreneur ventures,
6 which then attracted the same people and
7 reinvented the same types of businesses
8 over and over again and not different
9 types of business that come from people
10 who are Black and Brown.

11 MR. MOBLEY: Philadelphia has
12 an opportunity right now to become the
13 center of truly equitable innovation for
14 the country. People tend to come to
15 where they can raise capital. If we
16 very intentionally ensure that there is
17 investment capital for underrepresented
18 founders, for Black and Brown founders,
19 we then have the ability to attract
20 people throughout the country because
21 now they're coming here to raise capital
22 and build companies. Imagine what that
23 does for the City and what that turns
24 the City into.

25 MR. SMITH: Sylvester, if I can

1 jump in for a second.

2 Councilmember Green, Sylvester
3 brings up a very good point. In
4 business, people invest in teams more
5 than they invest in the idea. So
6 there's many startups that started out
7 with one MVP, minimum viable product,
8 but what they do today is not where they
9 started. You mentioned one of the
10 problems in talking about
11 entrepreneurship versus workforce
12 development in the Philadelphia region.
13 Honestly regardless of color or class,
14 we have a lot of people who are speaking
15 in regards to their relationships and
16 how they monetize the programs at the
17 municipal, federal and state level and
18 also they're speaking in terms of bullet
19 points of lobbying organizations and
20 think tanks that do not represent the
21 most marginalized or the parity of the
22 demography of the City, all right.

23 So when someone is looking at a
24 capital asset investment or they're
25 looking at a market, they're looking at

1 the team. They're looking at our
2 executive, they're looking at our
3 Council, they're looking at our region,
4 they're looking at how our region
5 communicates with our suburbs, right.
6 And if it's not a good investment
7 opportunity, capital is an international
8 product, they're going to invest in
9 another team.

10 And what you articulated was we
11 have an intergenerational relationship
12 with people who are exploiting poverty
13 through the programs of servicing the
14 poor, and we need to recenter and
15 refocus and think about our ecosystem
16 writ large and think about how to move
17 the paradigm in regards to the quality
18 of life of the people who lived in the
19 most marginalized communities versus
20 extractive capitalism models that are
21 just displacing to Chester, Montgomery
22 County to Bucks County.

23 If you look at the numbers from
24 Brookings Institution to Dr. Keeanga
25 Taylor who wrote Race for Profit at

1 Princeton University who I believe lives
2 in the region, there is data that shows
3 that poverty is rising in the suburbs,
4 right, and then those people still have
5 to commute into the City. And we're not
6 improving the quality of life, not just
7 of our urban cores, but of our regions
8 and of our nations. And if we do not
9 look holistically about how to improve
10 the quality of life of the most
11 marginalized, we are going to
12 continually see an uptick in violence.
13 And if you look around the world,
14 violence is directly related to being
15 dislocated from the 21st century
16 economy.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: All right.
18 Thank you, Tayyib.

19 Councilmember Green, any other
20 questions?

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: No. Thank
22 you very much.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I want to
24 thank you each witness for being here
25 today. Thank you all and thanks for

1 your insight, very informative and we
2 appreciate your testimony today and we
3 look forward to working with you in the
4 future.

5 And I'll ask the Clerk to call
6 our last panel of witnesses.

7 THE CLERK: Thank you. Our
8 last panel today is William Carter, Zach
9 Wilcha and Eric Diaz.

10 MR. CARTER: Good afternoon.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good
12 afternoon.

13 MR. CARTER: Good afternoon,
14 Councilman. First, let me say this
15 conversation has been incredible. And
16 I'm glad that you called this hearing
17 obviously to talk about the use of the
18 federal stimulus dollars, but we're
19 talking about inclusive growth here and
20 how we can as the City of Philadelphia
21 do that. And honestly, I wish this was
22 in prime time. More people need to hear
23 this on a prime network channel,
24 particularly here in Philadelphia. I'm
25 going to be joined by Paul Levy of the

1 Center City District, Steve Mullin of
2 Econsult and Stewart Weintraub of
3 Chamberlain Law and Drew VandenBrul of
4 Grant Thornton, who's a part of the
5 Chamber's State and Local Tax Committee.

6 But before I share my screen,
7 just hearing some of the commentary that
8 I've heard so far, just a little bit
9 about myself. I'm Vice-president of
10 Local Government Affairs at the Chamber
11 of Commerce. All of my grandfathers --
12 my great-grandfather was from North
13 Philadelphia. I grew up in Richmond,
14 Virginia. And when I was 14, I
15 benefited from an internship and summer
16 job and actually worked in politics at
17 the Virginia State Capital for Lawrence
18 Douglas Wilder who was the Lieutenant
19 Governor at the time, but became the
20 first Black African-American Governor in
21 the nation. So I fully endorse Sharmain
22 Matlock-Turner and UAC's Summer Job
23 Program.

24 That experience propelled me
25 throughout my career and I still work in

1 politics to this day. And I really
2 didn't want to do it. Actually, I cried
3 and told my mother I didn't want to do
4 it. She made me write the letter and
5 submit it, and they selected me and it
6 was the best experience of my life up to
7 that point. So it's so important
8 because kids don't dream about what
9 they've never seen and that helped me
10 out.

11 So I ended up majoring in
12 political science at Hampton University,
13 HBCU located in Hampton, Virginia. And
14 I moved to Philly full circle coming
15 back to Philadelphia for law school at
16 Temple, and I concentrated in
17 intellectual property and entertainment
18 law. Why? Because Philadelphia had a
19 more robust industry, entertainment
20 industry than Richmond, Virginia did,
21 and it was close to the North. So that
22 in itself talks about why people move to
23 certain areas. That's where the
24 industry is they want to be a part of
25 is. If it's more robust there, then

1 that's part of your decision-making
2 process.

3 So after law school, I started
4 a management company. I worked at a
5 couple of record labels in New York
6 during the time I was in law school. My
7 brother who's a music producer, I moved
8 him up here. And I will say it was
9 difficult to grow the business. And
10 without the supports -- and I wasn't as
11 involved in Philly upper politics as I
12 am now. And I just know that it was
13 difficult for us to grow that business
14 in the environment here at that time.

15 So I ended up a couple of years
16 doing that and ended up working back in
17 politics working for City Council
18 because I had that experience from the
19 jump. And also, my brother moved to Los
20 Angeles where the industry is more
21 cultivative of entertainers and
22 entertainment producers out there. And
23 he's doing very well out there. He's
24 been five times Grammy-nominated since
25 he's moved to Los Angeles five years

1 ago. But once again, that industry
2 attracts people to come there just like
3 we want to attract industry here to
4 attract more businesses to come and
5 work.

6 So worked in City Council 16
7 years for who is currently the City
8 Council President. A lot of
9 similarities. I say there's a lot of
10 politics in entertainment and certainly
11 a lot of entertainment in politics. So
12 I will say that there are similarities.

13 And so, ultimately I ended up
14 doing a lot in City Council and working.
15 We're talking about some of the things
16 we're using some of these funds for, we
17 sued the state government for local
18 control of guns. I co-authored the
19 legislation that requires EOPs on all
20 City contracts along with a City
21 attorney named Howard Roddin(ph), who
22 has since passed. I helped establish
23 the Philadelphia Energy Authority, which
24 has a very successful clean energy jobs
25 program in hiring a lot of City

1 residents and internships and full-time
2 jobs thereafter, and helped produce
3 events through the business that brought
4 the business of public sector together
5 to increase work opportunities in
6 entrepreneurship opportunities.

7 I would just say that I know
8 what we must do. I have a good idea of
9 what we must do, and that's work
10 together to make our City safer, to
11 offer more summer jobs, to train people
12 for the jobs of today like the gentlemen
13 were just expressing, to attract
14 industry and to fuel inclusive job and
15 business growth.

16 So with that, I'm going to move
17 to sharing my screen if I can do that.
18 Are you able to share your screen, Paul?

19 MR. LEVY: Yeah, I'll share it.

20 MR. CARTER: Yeah. It doesn't
21 seem to be coming up right now. I told
22 Paul that might happen, so he was right
23 on time.

24 So what we're talking about in
25 Philadelphia at the Chamber of Commerce

1 is an inclusive growth budget. I
2 indicated that I started working -- I
3 don't know if I indicated that, but I
4 started working with the Chamber of
5 Commerce in 2019 as Local Affairs
6 Director and also -- Vice-president I
7 should say, and also did a lot of work
8 with the Roadmap for Growth, which was
9 about being more intentional about going
10 into the neighborhoods and providing the
11 resources and supports for neighborhood
12 businesses.

13 And I will say since that time
14 even through the COVID-19, which is
15 obviously one of the craziest years to
16 join any company or organization or
17 nonprofit, I've seen a lot. And I've
18 been able to see a different perspective
19 than I had in my 16 years of work and at
20 City Council. But the most thing I saw
21 was there are a lot of good people on
22 both sides trying to make the City of
23 Philadelphia the best it can be. And if
24 we just work together, I can certainly
25 believe that can happen.

1 Next slide. So we're talking
2 about an inclusive growth budget.
3 Obviously, we want to use -- the \$1.9
4 trillion federal American Rescue Plan
5 creates a unique opportunity for
6 Philadelphia to reposition itself for
7 current and future inclusive growth. So
8 everyone on this call knows that we got
9 1.4 billion coming to the City, and this
10 temporary infusion can be used to do a
11 number of things. We can help reduce
12 gun violence. We can enhance
13 cleanliness and safety in all
14 neighborhoods. We can spur the
15 expansion of Black and Brown businesses
16 which is very important, revitalize
17 commercial corridors throughout our City
18 and create an atmosphere that will allow
19 companies from all demographics to grow
20 as well as attract new companies there
21 by putting more Philadelphians back to
22 work.

23 I'm going to pass it over to my
24 colleague Paul Levy. He will go through
25 the next part and then I will come back

1 on and talk about where we believe some
2 of the resources should go. So, Paul,
3 go ahead.

4 MR. LEVY: Thanks very much,
5 Will. I'm Paul Levy from the City
6 Center District.

7 I think the core point here is
8 that for decades we've had to use a
9 greater share of our locally generated
10 resources to deal with the unacceptably
11 high poverty rate in the City. And what
12 the American Rescue Plan does is provide
13 direct payments to millions of Americans
14 with reduced incomes. It provides job
15 benefits. Many people spoke about this,
16 but it also includes a significant
17 effort to reduce child poverty through
18 an expansion of tax credits and
19 broadening the Affordable Care Act, so
20 there will be more income directly in
21 people's pockets before we think about
22 spending the 1.4 billion.

23 But this 1.4 billion, as I
24 think many people said, can over the
25 next several years restore the severe

1 cuts that were made to the operating
2 budget last June, fund many new
3 initiatives that address racial income
4 disparities and gun violence at the same
5 time as we can make new quality-of-life
6 and economic development investments
7 that prompt more expansive and equitable
8 and inclusive growth.

9 Just to be clear you heard this
10 before, in 2020 those of you in City
11 Council had to make a painful decision
12 to cut 164 million out of the budget.
13 There was another 75 million that was
14 saved through refinancing. But you
15 also, as you heard Harvey Rice from PICA
16 talk about, had to draw down funds from
17 budget stabilization and had to really
18 draw on a lot of rainy day funds.

19 The core assumption of this
20 work which the Chamber has done, CCD has
21 done as well as the Philadelphia Equity
22 Alliance all coming together is that
23 number one is to restore those cuts. So
24 if you restore all those cuts, that's
25 about 398 million that will be spent on

1 that. But assuming you want to spend
2 half of this money in the next year,
3 that leaves 302 million to program. And
4 many people have asked how should those
5 expenditures be made.

6 This is just a visual summary
7 of the cuts that were made across
8 multiple departments plus the additional
9 commitment that was made from the City's
10 General Fund to public education. So
11 all of those to the right were cuts that
12 needed to be made. And here's the
13 history I think that we have a chance to
14 break away from. Prepandemic, the City
15 was spending 50 percent of its operating
16 budget on dealing with crime, public
17 safety, social services and poverty.
18 Half of the budget was spent there.
19 Another 23 percent was spent on pension
20 liabilities and employee benefits. That
21 left 10 percent of the City's budget to
22 go to economic development, quality of
23 life, parks, streets, sanitation. And
24 then there was a special 3 percent that
25 was put into education.

1 In the last 20 years what we
2 have seen is a steady decline in City
3 investment, in economic development, job
4 development, Black and Brown business
5 development, cultural and recreation
6 expenditures as we've had to spend more
7 and more on meeting basic needs and
8 reducing poverty.

9 From 1996 to 2010, the City
10 spent between .5 and 1 percent of
11 General Fund expenditures lowering the
12 wage and business tax. That contracted
13 to one-tenth of 1 percent for after the
14 recession. And most recently, last year
15 all of those were frozen and the wage
16 tax on suburban residents went up. And
17 the basic calculation is if just 15
18 percent of those suburban residents who
19 work in the City choose not to come
20 back, that's a loss of 120 million a
21 year. So we have a lot at risk at this
22 point. So together I think working the
23 Chamber, the Philadelphia Equity
24 Alliance and ourselves.

25 I'll turn it back to Will to

1 talk about the recommendation of how to
2 spend that available funds.

3 MR. CARTER: All right. Thank
4 you, Paul. Much appreciated. So the
5 Chamber along with outside business
6 interests are really pushing for an
7 equity and growth budget in usage of the
8 federal stimulus dollars for this
9 purpose to reduce gun violence through
10 programs such as summer youth jobs as I
11 discussed earlier, group violence
12 prevention, longer-term community safety
13 policing initiatives, \$50 million.

14 Spur minority business growth,
15 a lot of the comments that were made
16 earlier are very, very on point and we
17 must be inclusive in our efforts all
18 together if we're going to make our City
19 the City that we know it can be. So
20 spurring minority business growth;
21 growing Black and Brown businesses;
22 regenerating, revitalizing neighborhood
23 commercial corridors; and new supplier
24 diversity initiatives, 90 million; and
25 strengthening the Land Bank for

1 affordable housing, which is something I
2 know that Councilwoman Sanchez has been
3 very much about, \$10 million.

4 I cannot forget to mention
5 Councilwoman Parker in her efforts in
6 revitalizing commercial corridors
7 throughout the City with her Taking Care
8 of Business program. That is something
9 we would love to see further enhanced
10 and any further initiatives on top of
11 that to help out commercial corridors.

12 So next, we're talking about a
13 city-wide business and job growth.
14 Jumpstarting conventions and tourism
15 and restoring hotel jobs, that's very
16 important. The Chamber has been
17 involved in Ready Set Philadelphia
18 initiative or Ready Set Philly
19 initiative along with City Council and
20 the Mayor's Office. And we want to make
21 sure that people know that it's safe to
22 come back and the City's ready to come
23 back.

24 I heard Baltimore mentioned
25 earlier. I know Councilman Green talks

1 about this often, that they run radio
2 commercials and there are placards on
3 City buses that talk about come to
4 Baltimore right now, we're ready. So we
5 really need to jumpstart what we're
6 doing in the region in saying that our
7 City is safe to come back to.

8 Obviously, we must be safe as the
9 vaccine rolls out. But we also want to
10 make sure that we're being proactive and
11 promoting Philadelphia as if not the
12 safest, one of the safest cities
13 throughout with regards to COVID-19.

14 City-wide business retention
15 and attraction, very important. One of
16 the things that I have -- another thing
17 I should say that I've learned more
18 about after my 16 years of working in
19 City Council is that when people talk
20 about competitiveness, I used to hear
21 people say, listen, I have people
22 competing to put food on the plate, what
23 are we trying to fuel competitiveness.

24 And what we're really saying is
25 that we're trying to attract more jobs

1 in the City, and other cities are
2 kicking our butts in terms of attracting
3 more businesses and jobs to their city.
4 So we want to create industry. It
5 doesn't have to be the entertainment
6 industry like I talked about earlier.
7 It could be any number of industries,
8 including I know that cell and gene
9 therapy is a big growth industry that's
10 coming along.

11 We want to make sure that we
12 have plenty of industries here that are
13 attracting folks that are interested in
14 this and that are growing and hiring
15 more individuals. I used to visit
16 Austin, Texas a lot. Dell computers is
17 based down there. And to one of the
18 points earlier, they talked about how
19 that economy grew so much from Dell
20 computers being there because people who
21 moved up in the company jumped off and
22 started their own companies and they
23 were making enough money to start their
24 own ventures, and that grew the whole
25 atmosphere down there and the whole

1 landscape to where they'd have a pretty
2 robust economic industry in regards to
3 computer science.

4 And so, also we would like to
5 see an increase -- undo the increase of
6 the suburban wage tax and parking tax.
7 Right now we're trying to attract people
8 to the City. It's important that that
9 happens. We got to make sure that
10 people are not priced out of coming to
11 the City. The parking tax, I know that
12 there has been a deal on the table that
13 was brokered by a couple of
14 Councilmembers in making that happen, so
15 we would like to see that reduced.

16 And of course, wage and
17 business tax reductions. We talked
18 about 1 percent of the General Fund
19 revenues to annual schedule of wage and
20 BIRT reduction. 70 percent devoted to
21 wage tax reduction. 30 percent to
22 reducing net income portion of the BIRT,
23 and that really subtotals or totals to
24 302 million in investments that talk
25 about doing both equity investments and

1 growth investments.

2 Next slide, please. So in
3 conclusion, we have a rare opportunity
4 with the American Rescue Plan. We know
5 we're getting this one-time infusion
6 over the next couple of years. This is
7 not an either-or moment, but an
8 as-well-as moment. Not an either or.
9 And in the past, I've been a part of a
10 lot of either-or moments. But this
11 truly is an as-well-as moment.

12 Philadelphia can invest in
13 reducing the root causes of inequity as
14 well as promoting inclusive growth going
15 forward. Philadelphia can help retrain
16 people for the jobs of today as well as
17 ensure they have jobs to go to
18 thereafter, and Philadelphia can bolster
19 Black and Brown businesses while
20 ensuring as well as going to
21 consumer-based businesses and residents
22 with whom for them to do business with.

23 So we know that inclusive
24 growth is very important. Equity is
25 very important. And so, we want to make

1 sure that everybody is a part of taking
2 advantage of this one-time investment
3 moving forward for the City of
4 Philadelphia to grow. And with that,
5 I'll open it to questions and to either
6 myself or the experts of the committee
7 who are very versed in all of this.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Before we go
9 to questions, let me continue with the
10 panel, and then we can have questions
11 for everybody.

12 Let's go to Zach Wilcha from
13 the Independent Business Alliance.

14 MR. WILCHA: Hi, everyone.
15 Good afternoon, Councilpersons, and
16 thank you for having me today to testify
17 on behalf of the Independence Business
18 Alliance Greater Philadelphia's LGBTQ+
19 Chamber of Commerce. My name is Zach
20 Wilcha. My pronouns are he, him and his
21 and I'm Executive Director of the
22 organization.

23 The IBA is a membership-based
24 organization dedicated to providing
25 opportunities, access and resources to

1 LGBTQ+ businesses and employees. We
2 serve more than 850 professionals across
3 325 member businesses. As we talk about
4 the potential transformative power of
5 the American Rescue Plan Act, I want to
6 again thank the City of Philadelphia and
7 the Commerce Department especially for
8 so quickly responding to the crisis at
9 hand with a program of loans and grants
10 that benefited many of our small
11 business enterprises.

12 The fast-acting City officials
13 provided economic leadership that was
14 not coming at a federal level a year ago
15 and I'm grateful for their efforts.
16 When talking to my LGBTQ+ Chamber
17 leaders, peers and cities across the
18 country, many of them looked to
19 Philadelphia as a model in rapid
20 response. Though the program could not
21 possibly meet the great demand of the
22 business community that was needed, its
23 effect surely mitigated what could have
24 been a larger disaster.

25 So many people on this panel

1 today spoke passionately about their
2 communities and their opportunities and
3 challenges, especially in Panel 4. As
4 Executive Director of the IBA, I work on
5 the needs of our constituents at the
6 intersection of LGBTQ+ and business
7 communities. So today I'll filter my
8 contributions to today's conversation
9 through that lens.

10 But I want to stipulate and
11 stress that LGBTQ+ folks are a vertical
12 that run through every other community
13 and is applied to anything I talk about
14 today. Queer people who intersect with
15 other minor communities have had a much
16 harder time through this crisis than
17 their counterparts because of
18 intersectional oppression with classism,
19 racism, ablism, misogyny and sexism.
20 The LGBTQ+ community continues to endure
21 through this crisis. But of course,
22 LGBTQ+ folks and BIPOC and trans
23 communities have been adversely affected
24 in much worse ways, both quantitatively
25 and qualitatively.

1 The COVID-19 pandemic and
2 ensuing economic crisis have sent shock
3 waves through the country. And the
4 American Rescue Plan for cities
5 represents a lifeline of the largest
6 positive fiscal jolt to their budgets in
7 decades. The decisions made in the
8 coming weeks will determine whether
9 cities like Philadelphia merely enjoy a
10 brief stimulus or see a new trajectory
11 of inclusive economic growth.

12 We believe that elected
13 officials leveraging their networks of
14 civic business, philanthropic and
15 community stakeholders that surround
16 them should take an approach to use
17 their ARP funds in three different ways,
18 to stabilize, to strategize and to
19 organize.

20 First to stabilize: Local
21 governments like ours must use the
22 resources to stabilize their operating
23 budgets. Many governments like
24 Philadelphia incurred large deficits in
25 2020, as the economic slowdown hurt tax

1 revenues and local governments assumed
2 pandemic-related costs. To remedy this
3 imbalance, many cities pared back
4 essential services, which must again be
5 fortified, such as first responders,
6 sanitation workers, planning personnel
7 and other government employees who faced
8 hours were reduced and furloughed.

9 Through my organization's lens,
10 boost to the local economy could help
11 all LGBTQ+ people. To comprehensively
12 address the damaging economic effects of
13 the coronavirus pandemic, any response
14 must integrate the needs of LGBTQ+
15 people and ensure that these communities
16 are not left behind in recovery efforts.

17 Compared with the general
18 population, LGBTQ people are at greater
19 risk of experiencing economic
20 insecurities through disproportionate
21 economic hardships, such as higher rates
22 of poverty and unemployment, greater
23 food insecurity and vulnerability to
24 homelessness and workforce
25 discrimination based on sexual

1 orientation and gender identity. These
2 conditions and disparities predate the
3 pandemic, but they have also been
4 exacerbated by it.

5 A key driver of employment
6 instability and unemployment among
7 LGBTQ+ communities is the prevalence of
8 discrimination when attempting to enter
9 the workforce and maintain employment.
10 One-third of LGBTQ+ Americans reported
11 that discrimination moderately or
12 significantly affected their ability to
13 be hired. One-third of LGBTQ+ Americans
14 had their work hours reduced during the
15 coronavirus pandemic, and two-thirds of
16 LGBTQ+ households have experienced
17 financial problems during the
18 coronavirus pandemic.

19 The City should consider
20 explicitly including LGBTQ+ identity
21 into their definition of minority-owned
22 businesses in order to increase the
23 access to grants for LGBTQ+ owned small
24 businesses, which are among the many
25 that have struggled throughout this

1 pandemic. Supplier diversity literally
2 keeps businesses alive.

3 LGBTQ+ owned businesses are
4 often small, community-based and
5 privately owned. The ability to host
6 events and have people gather is a
7 hallmark of queer businesses. And this
8 is important both economically and
9 psychologically. Historically, LGBTQ+
10 bars have served as the safe space for
11 the often marginalized queer community.
12 LGBTQ+ folks, many of whom have been
13 estranged from their biological
14 families, gather in business
15 establishments of chosen family who
16 accept and understand them.

17 We need continued concentrated
18 support for all minority-owned and
19 disadvantaged-owned businesses which
20 often make all of our communities
21 exactly what they are. The City should
22 also take this historical moment to
23 strategize thinking of actions that will
24 be immediate, consistent and cognizant
25 of future prosperity. Businesses

1 continue to need capital to reopen doors
2 and keep those doors open, and people
3 need outreach and skills development to
4 match them to available jobs. While
5 it's important to consider investments
6 impact beyond immediate term, continuing
7 to provide such immediate help is a
8 necessary baseline for longer-term
9 recovery.

10 An important lesson from last
11 year's CARES Act is that moving
12 resources quickly through existing
13 systems can only exacerbate economic and
14 racial inequality. Many minority-owned
15 microbusinesses did not access loans
16 through the federal government's
17 Paycheck Protection Program due to lack
18 of awareness, lack of connectivity and
19 outright discrimination. We need guards
20 at the local level against this
21 happening again.

22 Local leaders have a chance to
23 invest in future growth and prosperity
24 over the next couple of years, the
25 impacts of which will extend beyond

1 near-term expenditure. To that end, we
2 should be thinking about many things
3 such as the next crisis. This will
4 clearly not be the last public health
5 crisis that the City faces. How are we
6 now strategizing for COVID-23, and we
7 also should be thinking about the
8 current public health crisis of the
9 opioid crisis.

10 We need to innovate for
11 businesses in our commercial corridors
12 which have been decimated and beyond,
13 thinking about ways to open streets and
14 eating outdoors and provide direct aid
15 to hospitality. We need to invest in
16 ending the epidemic of gun violence. We
17 need renewed commitment to hospitality
18 spaces, specifically so many LGBTQ+
19 owned businesses are in the hospitality
20 and event space. And in our own
21 gayborhood, they need gatherings to make
22 a living.

23 In the world of COVID-19
24 however, large gatherings have been
25 strictly but sensibly prohibited at

1 usually animated restaurants and bars
2 for more than a year as Philadelphia
3 digs its way out of a pandemic shutdown.
4 Even with the miracle of vaccines, we
5 anticipate the pandemic could change the
6 way that the LGBTQ+ community socializes
7 for quite some time. For some folks,
8 these are the only places where people
9 can authentically be who they are.

10 We need to continue to
11 reimagine ways to end housing
12 instability, homelessness and food
13 deserts, all while understanding the
14 historic inequities that made these
15 things happen. We applaud the new
16 innovative law around evictions which
17 keeps people in their homes as the City
18 mitigates landlord relations, and public
19 transportation is something we should be
20 concentrating on as well. What an
21 exciting moment this is to focus on how
22 we move people safely and effectively
23 throughout the City, including those who
24 don't have or don't want cars.

25 Finally, the City should take

1 this moment to organize by setting up
2 councils that are able to take the City
3 into an innovative, inclusive future
4 fueled by momentum by the ARP. These
5 councils should be public-private
6 partnerships that include small
7 businesses, neighborhood leaders, social
8 service agencies, philanthropic leaders,
9 corporate heads and specifically and
10 intentionally minority business chambers
11 like mine, along with the African-
12 American, Hispanic-American and Asian-
13 American Chambers of Commerce who have
14 been speaking with a unified voice
15 throughout the pandemic.

16 These groups will be tasked
17 with aggregating and supplementing
18 existing recovery plans, setting goals,
19 recommending investments and tracking
20 results from on the ground. They can
21 identify and pursue relevant
22 opportunities in many other parts of the
23 deployment of funds, such as for
24 education, transit, small business,
25 especially restaurants and affordable

1 housing.

2 In closing, in addition to the
3 public health crisis, the COVID-19
4 pandemic has further jeopardized the
5 ability of LGBTQ+ people and countless
6 other Philadelphians to secure the
7 resources they need to stay afloat,
8 exacerbating existing changes for these
9 individuals to achieve labor, economic
10 security as well as stable housing.

11 Indeed the pandemic has
12 amplified systemic inequalities,
13 particularly for LGBTQ+ folks who are
14 Black, Latinx, women, trans or low
15 income. Policymakers across all levels
16 of Philadelphia government have an
17 obligation to implement targeted
18 strategies that address the needs of
19 those who are most vulnerable, including
20 LGBTQ+ people, their families and their
21 communities. It is vital that these
22 individuals are not left behind.

23 I want to make clear that we
24 are committed to working with the City
25 of Philadelphia on solutions that will

1 steady Philadelphia on the road to
2 recovery and bring us back to a space of
3 innovation. We are happy to partner in
4 any way to aid your work in helping our
5 businesses survive. And I'm happy to
6 answer any questions about our community
7 that the City Council has today. Thank
8 you again for having us here.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
10 Zach. And thank you to the Independent
11 Business Alliance for your testimony
12 today.

13 And our last testimony but not
14 least is going to be Eric Diaz from the
15 Philadelphia Hispanic Chamber of
16 Commerce. Eric, please state your name
17 for the record and please proceed.

18 MR. DIAZ: Yes. Thank you very
19 much. Good afternoon. Thank you,
20 Chairman Domb, for calling this hearing,
21 Council, for listening and everyone here
22 for participating in what at the time
23 has been a very robust discussion about
24 certainly a crucial topic at an
25 incredible juncture in our City's

1 history.

2 As Chairman said, I'm Eric Diaz
3 and I'm testifying today as a Board
4 member of the Greater Philadelphia
5 Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. As
6 probably most of you know for the past
7 three decades, the Hispanic Chamber has
8 been the leading voice advocating for
9 Hispanic businesses in the Greater
10 Philadelphia region, promoting and
11 encouraging the development and
12 advancement of economic growth in the
13 Hispanic community. I'll hit on some of
14 the themes previously mentioned today
15 focusing on what our people need now.
16 The City's long-term prosperity
17 equitable impact have been hit hard
18 several times, effectiveness,
19 priorities, and I'll be echoing and
20 hopefully amplifying several comments
21 made with respect to Black and Brown
22 small businesses.

23 Including the excluded as we
24 build back Philadelphia's economy better
25 must become the top priority of both the

1 private and public sector. The Hispanic
2 community for one has long been a
3 community of have-nots, too far outside
4 the sphere of economic prosperity to
5 even look in. COVID's disproportionate
6 impact on communities of color in
7 general and the Hispanic community in
8 particular has made painfully obvious
9 the desperate need for equitable access
10 to information and capital.

11 At the Hispanic Chamber we see
12 firsthand how entrepreneurship can
13 strengthen and uplift families. How
14 small business owners and the businesses
15 they run provide pockets of prosperity
16 in neighborhoods plagued with poverty
17 and the small businesses supported with
18 information and capital grow and hire
19 and serve as the economic backbone of
20 our City.

21 Accordingly, we respectfully
22 but emphatically and urgently request
23 that you prioritize support for Hispanic
24 small business owners and entrepreneurs
25 as you plan the allocation of funds from

1 the American Rescue Act. We encourage
2 City Council and Mayor Kenney's
3 Administration to seize the opportunity
4 to both balance the budget and invest in
5 the growth of Philadelphia's economy by
6 supporting Hispanic businesses.

7 Investments deployed through
8 the existing local entrepreneurship
9 ecosystem with the goal of increasing
10 the size and number of Hispanic
11 businesses will catalyze new jobs, a
12 broader tax base and wealth creation to
13 achieve poverty elimination in
14 Philadelphia. Imagine that. Your
15 approach should be focused, we dare say.
16 For example, the City could invest in
17 scaling up Hispanic small businesses and
18 key industries where they concentrate
19 such as grocery, child care, retail and
20 restaurants. Supporting Hispanic
21 startups where they are underrepresented
22 on high wage and high growth industries
23 such as technology and construction
24 would open doors to new worlds of
25 opportunity for this community.

1 Investment focused on long
2 neglected commercial corridors would
3 signal a resolve to respect the human
4 dignity of residents, reinvigorate the
5 fight against blight, spark
6 revitalization and restore hope. Your
7 approach should be practical, of course.
8 Consumer-facing businesses in the
9 Hispanic community, for example, tend to
10 operate on thin margins and face fierce
11 competition in highly-regulated
12 environments with inadequate access to
13 information and capital. They are
14 precariously positioned economically.
15 And as such, they are more vulnerable to
16 disruptions.

17 The pandemic as we all know has
18 been devastating. We also know,
19 however, that with the appropriate
20 resources and tools, Hispanic small
21 businesses could build stronger
22 foundations, increasing stability and
23 resiliency. The City could invest in
24 the infrastructure of Hispanic small
25 businesses by providing the access to

1 information and capital needed to own
2 rather than rent, to invest in
3 technology that increases efficiency and
4 reach, to get finance-ready, expand and
5 achieve economies of scale.

6 Entrepreneurs as we all know
7 need access to affordable high-quality
8 professional services, flexible sources
9 of capital and curated education that
10 meet their specific needs. The City
11 could invest in programs and services
12 that meet our diverse community of
13 entrepreneurs where they are.

14 The Hispanic Chamber will of
15 course continue to support the Hispanic
16 community through the end of this
17 pandemic, which has decimated so many
18 Hispanic businesses and families, both
19 financially and personally. As our
20 society and economy recover from COVID,
21 we will position our business owners to
22 grab that rebound and rise up stronger
23 than before. They will require access
24 to information and capital to succeed.
25 This time the resources are available in

1 the form of American Rescue Act funds.

2 Understanding that you all have
3 many mouths to feed at City Council,
4 it's a big city and difficult choices to
5 make, we implore Council and this
6 Administration to embrace this moment
7 with vision. Hispanic small business
8 owners are the fastest growing group of
9 entrepreneurs in the entire country. We
10 start up businesses at an exponentially
11 faster rate than any other group and all
12 of this against the head wind of
13 longstanding systemic racism.

14 Imagine if we rewarded the work
15 ethic and the entrepreneurial drive of
16 the thousands of the Hispanic small
17 business owners in Philly with equal
18 access, just equal access to capital
19 information. Imagine what it would look
20 like if this City Council and this
21 Administration seized this opportunity
22 to extend a helping hand, not a handout,
23 a helping hand to lift up those
24 clamoring together in a hole that they
25 were pushed into.

1 It would look like new jobs.
2 It would like a broader tax base. It
3 would look like wealth creation to
4 achieve poverty elimination for a
5 greater Philadelphia. Thank you all for
6 listening. Thank you for today's
7 hearing about this crucial topic. I and
8 leaders, staff and members and board and
9 committee members of the Greater
10 Philadelphia Hispanic Chamber of
11 Commerce all stand ready, willing and
12 able, eager to work with you to build a
13 stronger and safer Philadelphia for
14 everybody. Thank you.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
16 Eric. Thank you for that testimony
17 also.

18 I have one question I'm going
19 to ask the Chamber or maybe it's Paul or
20 anyone else. And, that is, I think it
21 was Harold Epps who said to me a few
22 years ago, our former Commerce Director,
23 that he calculated that between 58 and
24 60 percent of the revenue of the City of
25 Philadelphia was generated in a 10-block

1 radius of 18th and Walnut. With that as
2 a backdrop, can someone give me a
3 perspective on the importance or maybe
4 the reliance that Philadelphia
5 government has on that Center City
6 economy and how has it fared through the
7 pandemic, and what will it take to bring
8 it back to prepandemic levels?

9 MR. LEVY: Allan, let me try to
10 address that in two ways. We can talk
11 about the great positive, which is that
12 between Center City and University City,
13 53 percent of all jobs in Philadelphia
14 are concentrated to center the transit
15 system. That's the system that brings
16 people in from across the entire City.

17 The flip side of that is what
18 everyone else has been talking about,
19 the absence of jobs so many other places
20 in this City. And so, our strength is a
21 reflection of the fact that we do not
22 have dynamic job growth elsewhere in the
23 City. I think quite simply it's at the
24 center of the transit system. 25
25 percent of the working residents of

1 every neighborhood in the City are
2 working downtown, they're working in
3 University City. It's those larger
4 firms that create the supply chains that
5 can then purchase from small and
6 emerging businesses across the City.

7 But I think as Will said in his
8 testimony, we're at this very unique
9 moment where we can invest in Black and
10 Brown businesses, we can invest in
11 disadvantaged businesses, but we can
12 grow the economy of the City as whole.
13 We don't get this moment too often.

14 And so, I think what clearly --
15 we work very closely with Bruce Katz on
16 his recommendations. As I said,
17 multiple groups came together here to
18 say let's invest in economic
19 development, let's invest in
20 neighborhood commercial corridors, let's
21 invest in reducing gun violence, but
22 also create a setting where businesses
23 of all kinds can grow. So it's a great
24 strength we have in Center City. It's
25 at risk if suburban residents choose not

1 to come back and other workers can't get
2 there, but we need a commitment for job
3 growth city-wide. That's what the
4 opportunity is at this moment.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Well,
6 thank you. I want to thank this panel
7 for all your testimony today. I really
8 appreciate it. In the spirit of time,
9 we are going to move to public
10 testimony. This is of course just the
11 start of the conversation. Again, I
12 thank you all for being here today and
13 hanging in there. It's almost four
14 hours --

15 MR. LEVY: Allan, aren't you
16 providing dinner to all of us? I was
17 expecting somebody to knock at my door
18 this moment, right.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Oh, that's a
20 shame

21 MR. LEVY: Thank you very much
22 for the opportunity.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you. I
24 understand we have witnesses from the
25 public today.

1 Before we begin to hear
2 testimony from the witnesses we have for
3 today, everyone who has been invited to
4 the meeting to testify or is providing
5 public comment should be aware that this
6 public hearing is being recorded.

7 Because the hearing is public,
8 participants and viewers have no
9 reasonable expectation of privacy. By
10 continuing to be in the meeting, you are
11 consenting to being recorded.

12 Additionally, prior to
13 recognizing Members for the questions or
14 comments they have for witnesses, I will
15 note for the record at this time that we
16 will use the chat feature available in
17 Microsoft Teams to allow Members to
18 signify that they wish to be recognized.
19 In order to comply with the Sunshine
20 Act, the chat feature must only be used
21 for this purpose.

22 I ask that public witnesses
23 begin their testimony now. And please
24 be sure to state your name for the
25 record before you proceed. And do we

1 have our first testifier from the
2 public?

3 MS. COLWELL-SMITH: Hello.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Please state
5 your name for the record.

6 MS. COLWELL-SMITH: My name is
7 Linda Colwell-Smith.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Please feel
9 free to give your testimony.

10 MS. COLWELL-SMITH: All right.

11 My name is Linda Colwell-Smith. I am
12 the interim Co-chair of the Friends of
13 the Free Library of Philadelphia.

14 Thanks for the opportunity to speak on
15 Resolution No. 210269. The Friends of
16 the Free Library is an independent
17 nonprofit organization composed of the
18 local groups of all of the Free
19 Library's 54 neighborhood branches.

20 We support and advocate for the
21 library system as a whole and for the
22 necessary programming, staffing and
23 materials at our branches. We work to
24 ensure that our communities have access
25 to the information and resources they

1 need and deserve through their local
2 libraries. We are our communities'
3 voice in the library system.

4 Now, I've heard a lot of really
5 good testimony and ideas today. Truly
6 the American Rescue Plan will allow City
7 Council and Mayor Kenney to engage in
8 some bold new thinking to address our
9 City's problems as the post-COVID
10 recovery continues. We have a real
11 opportunity to create positive changes
12 to address our City's high poverty rate,
13 joblessness and other issues.

14 But I would remind the
15 Committee that the Free Library of
16 Philadelphia could be a powerful agent
17 for this change because we're in every
18 neighborhood, but we need help. Due to
19 the pandemic, the Free Library lost over
20 200 jobs and almost \$15 million in City
21 funding. All branches were closed for
22 months and we're partially reopened now
23 and we have a robust digital program.
24 But it's time to get back to inperson
25 business.

1 Summer is coming.

2 Traditionally, this is our busiest time
3 with children and families looking for
4 safe, free literacy, activities and
5 programs. Now, my Friends groups are
6 preparing for this, but we need to have
7 all of our branches open with safe,
8 functional buildings, up-to-date working
9 equipment for staff and patrons, the
10 latest materials and we need to be fully
11 staffed.

12 I urge the Committee to keep
13 the Free Library of Philadelphia in the
14 forefront of its funding considerations.
15 Let's invest in our libraries and our
16 communities. The Friends of the Free
17 Library stand ready to assist in this
18 effort. Thank you for your
19 consideration.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you for
21 your testimony and thank you for hanging
22 in there. It's been a long hearing so
23 thank you very much and we understand
24 your request.

25 I think there's another person

1 from the public that wanted to testify
2 today.

3 MS. CUEVAS: Yes. Hi. My name
4 is Jeanette Cuevas.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Just
6 proceed with your testimony.

7 MS. CUEVAS: Good evening,
8 Councilmembers, buenos tardes. My name
9 is Jeanette Cuevas and I'm a co-op
10 developer with the Philadelphia Area
11 Cooperative Alliance, the PACA for
12 short. I understand we are talking
13 about how to use the \$1.4 billion that
14 Philadelphia is scheduled to receive as
15 part of the American Rescue Plan Act,
16 which is intended to help our City and
17 economy recover from a monumental year
18 in our collective history.

19 We have a unique opportunity,
20 as Councilmember Domb states in his
21 resolution, to make significant
22 investments in programs and policies
23 that put Philadelphia on a new
24 trajectory to grow family-sustaining
25 jobs at a faster rate, reduce and combat

1 in terms of systemic poverty and develop
2 new and innovative methods for
3 performing City services.

4 With this in mind, I am here
5 today to urge Philadelphia's elected
6 leaders to make such an investment
7 through our local cooperative economy.
8 Cooperatives or co-ops are
9 jointly-owned, democratically-controlled
10 enterprises that exist across sectors in
11 industry. By providing technical
12 assistance, PACA supports working-class
13 Black, indigenous and people of color
14 and immigrant communities that are using
15 cooperatives as a tool toward racial and
16 economic justice.

17 There are numerous reasons this
18 tool is so powerful. First, research
19 shows that worker cooperatives provide
20 higher quality jobs with better wages
21 and traditionally structured
22 counterparts. This is especially
23 important in industries characterized by
24 inconsistent worker wages such as child
25 care, media production, food service and

1 birth work.

2 Secondly, cooperative
3 structures can help preserve existing
4 businesses. As we face the Silver
5 Tsunami, an aging population of business
6 owners, one strategy for business
7 preservation is to support owners in
8 selling their businesses to their
9 workers.

10 Another business preservation
11 strategy is the creation of purchasing
12 and shared services co-ops, which help
13 member businesses lower their cost. For
14 example, I've worked at bodeguero, store
15 owner, corner store owner in exploring
16 purchasing a cooperative to improve the
17 sustainability of their individual
18 corner stores, which will help
19 immigrants businesses stay afloat and
20 build community and shared power among
21 folks who were previously isolated in
22 competing resources.

23 Finally, we know it is no
24 secret to anyone that Philly desperately
25 needs more affordable housing. We know

1 that building housing cooperatives on
2 community landscapes is a powerful way
3 to ensure permanent affordability, which
4 is why we are currently working with a
5 West Philadelphia housing co-op to
6 support their expansion.

7 We at PACA can speak to the
8 increased interest in cooperative
9 economics since the pandemic hit. More
10 people are seeing how co-ops are
11 necessary for Philadelphia to build a
12 resilient and equitable economy in which
13 people have agency, and wealth is built
14 and shared within the community.

15 What we need is a deep
16 investment and cooperative development
17 and technical assistance to match that
18 growing demand. I urge Philadelphia to
19 locate leaders to make that investment,
20 and thank you all so much for your time.

21 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you for
22 your testimony. Thank you very much.

23 And I believe this concludes
24 the hearing on Resolution 210269, and
25 the hearing is adjourned. I want to

1 thank everybody for their attendance. I
2 especially want to thank my Vice-Chair
3 Councilman Brian O'Neill. And we
4 appreciate everyone being here. So
5 thank you very much. Be safe out there.
6 Have a good evening. Thank you.

7 (Committee on Fiscal Stability
8 and Intergovernmental Cooperation
9 concluded at 5:50 p.m.)

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

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

TANEHA C. CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

(The foregoing certification of
this transcript does not apply to any
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