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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

2

PUBLIC HEARING

3

COMMITTEE ON STREETS AND SERVICES

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5

Room 696, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, February 5, 2003
10:20 a.m.

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BILLS 020437, 020762, 020763, 020815, 020822,
020825, 030011

(Titles of the Bills in entirety are
contained herein.)

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12

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PRESENT:

14

COUNCILMAN FRANK DICICCO, Chairman

COUNCILMAN DARRELL CLARKE

15

COUNCILMAN DAVID COHEN

COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE

16

COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED-MILLER

COUNCILMAN ANGEL ORTIZ

17

COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO

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1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - BILL 030011

2 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Good morning.

3 Welcome to the Committee on Streets and Services.

4 This is a public hearing. To my far right is

5 Councilman Rizzo, Councilman Clarke, Councilman

6 Ortiz, and myself, the Chair of the Committee,

7 Frank DiCicco. I think we have about seven Bills

8 this morning. We will be taking Bill No. 030011

9 out of order. Councilwoman Miller has another

10 appointment at 11 o'clock, so we want to get her

11 Bill heard first.

12 Clerk, read the title of the first

13 Bill.

14 THE CLERK: Bill 030011, authorizing

15 Lawrence A. Goldfarb and Gerda Paumgarten of 630

16 West Cliveden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19119,

17 owners of the property at 8605 Navajo Street,

18 a.k.a. 310 Rex Avenue, to construct and maintain

19 a privately-owned water main, storm water and

20 sanitary sewers, and an electrical service

21 conduit in the roadway of Rex Avenue and Navajo

22 Street adjacent to the property of 8605 Navajo

23 Street, a.k.a. 310 Rex Avenue; under certain

24 terms and conditions.

25 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Anyone to

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2 testify?

3 Please identify yourself for the
4 record.

5 MR. MAUTZ: Good morning, Chairman and
6 Members of the Committee. My name is William
7 Mautz and I'm a construction engineer with the
8 Streets Department. I'm here to offer the
9 following testimony for Bill No. 030011 on behalf
10 of the Streets Department.

11 This Bill authorizes Lawrence A.
12 Goldfarb and Gerda Paumgarten of 603 West
13 Cliveden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19119, owners
14 of the property 8605 Navajo, also known at 310
15 Rex Avenue, to construct and maintain a
16 privately-owned water main, storm water and
17 sanitary sewers and electrical service conduit in
18 the roadway of Rex Avenue and Navajo Street
19 adjacent to the property 8605 Navajo.

20 The privately-owned conduits run
21 beneath Rex Avenue to Navajo Street, then into
22 the property 8605 Navajo. The encroachment
23 description is as follows: An electrical service
24 four-inch diameter PVC conduit with electrical
25 service cable. The approximate length of the

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2 service line within the public right-of-way is 82
3 feet.

4 A water line, one and three-quarter
5 inch diameter copper service. The approximate
6 length of the water service in the public
7 right-of-way is 184 feet.

8 A sanitary sewer, five-inch diameter
9 cast iron pipe. The approximate length of the
10 sanitary sewer in the public right-of-way is 203
11 feet.

12 A storm water sewer, six-inch
13 diameter cast iron pipe. The approximate length
14 of the storm water sewer in the public
15 right-of-way is 208 feet.

16 The Streets Department has reviewed
17 the construction plans for this project and has
18 no objection to the passage of the Bill.

19 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you for
20 your testimony.

21 Any questions for this witness?
22 Councilwoman Miller.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Good morning. I
24 don't have any questions, actually; I just have a
25 few comments. And that is that my office, staff

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2 of my office, has been out to the property,
3 looked around, has been in constant discussion
4 with the Streets Department and the owners of the
5 property, and we strongly support this Bill.

6 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

7 Is there anyone else here who wishes
8 to testify for or against this Bill?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Do you have other
11 Bills to testify on?

12 MR. MAUTZ: Yes.

13 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Why don't we take
14 your Bills -- retract that statement. Have a seat
15 and we'll be with you shortly.

16 The Clerk will read the title of the
17 next Bill.

18 THE CLERK: Bill No. 020825, an
19 ordinance authorizing the revision of lines and
20 grades on a portion of City Plan No. 27-S by
21 striking from the City Plan and vacating Water
22 Street from Jackson Street southwardly to its
23 terminus; under certain terms and conditions.

24 MR. MAUTZ: Good morning, Mr. Chairman
25 and Members of the Committee. My name is William

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2 Mautz and I'm a construction engineer with the
3 Streets Department. I would like to offer the
4 following testimony on 020825:

5 This is not an Administrative
6 Ordinance, but an Ordinance requested by Mr.
7 Elias Stein, Stein and Silverman, P.C., 230 South
8 Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102. The purpose
9 of this Ordinance is to grant the legal authority
10 to close Water Street to secure the adjacent
11 property and to prevent loitering and short
12 dumping. This Ordinance is supported by the
13 Department of Streets and is recommended to your
14 Committee for favorable action.

15 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Good morning,
16 Marty.

17 MR. SOFFER: Good morning, Chairman,
18 Members of the Streets and Services Committee. My
19 name is Martin Soffer, City Planner, and I'm here
20 to testify on behalf of the City Planning
21 Commission.

22 The proposed ordinance authorizes the
23 striking from the City Plan and the vacating of a
24 minor stub-end street located in a South Delaware
25 waterfront section of South Philadelphia. This

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2 action will permit the Stein and Silverstein
3 family partnership to secure the property and
4 alleviate the street from becoming a short
5 dumping site, as well as a hang out for teenage
6 loitering.

7 The Planning Commission staff
8 reviewed and tentatively approved this action on
9 October 11, 2002. Thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Any questions for
11 these witnesses from the Committee?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Anyone else here
14 who wishes to testify for or against the Bill?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Seeing none, the
17 Clerk will read the title of the next Bill.

18 THE CLERK: Bill No. 020815, an
19 ordinance authorizing Tenet Health System,
20 Hahnemann, LLC, owner of the property known as
21 Hahnemann University Hospital, Broad and Vine
22 Streets, Philadelphia, PA 19102, to construct,
23 own and maintain 11 precast concrete planters
24 with trees on the west footway of Broad Street,
25 and 13 precast concrete planters with trees on

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2 the south footway of Vine Street adjacent to the
3 hospital property; all under certain terms and
4 conditions.

5 MR. MAUTZ: Good morning, Chairman and
6 Members of the Committee. My name is William
7 Mautz and I'm a construction engineer with the
8 Streets Department. I'm here to offer the
9 following testimony for Bill No. 020815 on behalf
10 of the Streets Department.

11 This Bill authorizes Tenet Health
12 System, Hahnemann, LLC, owner of the property
13 known as Hahnemann University Hospital, Broad and
14 Vine Streets, Philadelphia, PA 19102 to
15 construct, own and maintain 11 precast concrete
16 planters with trees on the west footway of Broad
17 Street, and 13 precast concrete planters with
18 trees on the south footway of Vine Street
19 adjacent to the hospital property.

20 The encroachment description is as
21 follows: 11 planters on Broad Street are 5 foot 6
22 square by 26 inches high. They are located 18
23 inches back from the west curb line of Broad
24 Street, leaving 15 feet of clear, unobstructed
25 footway.

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2 13 planters on Vine Street are 4 foot
3 6 inches square and 26 inches high. They are
4 located 18 inches back from the south curb line
5 of Vine Street, leaving eight feet clear of
6 unobstructed footway.

7 The Streets Department has reviewed
8 the construction plans for this project and has
9 no objection to the passage of the Bill.

10 MR. FAGERSTRUM (ph): Good morning,
11 Mr. Chairman and Committee Members. My name is
12 Joel Fagerstrum, and I'm the Chief Operating
13 Officer at Hahnemann University Hospital.

14 Just to explain the project briefly
15 to you, we've been planning for a number of
16 months to beautify our exterior campus. We
17 occupy an entire City block and this is part of
18 that project. We also have some other plans for
19 that, that will be coming later in another
20 ordinance.

21 We met with a number of people
22 involved with this; Paul Levy from the Center
23 City District, who is very supportive of this.
24 We work very closely with Councilman Clarke's
25 office. There will be a couple of street cart

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2 vendors and a couple of newsstand vendors that
3 will be affected by this and we've worked on
4 arrangements that are acceptable to them as well.

5 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

6 Any questions for these witnesses
7 from the Committee?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Anyone else here
10 who wishes to testify for or against this Bill?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Seeing none, the
13 Clerk will read the title of the next Bill.

14 THE CLERK: Bill No. 020822, an
15 Ordinance authorizing the Business Association of
16 West Parkside to construct, own, and maintain
17 various encroachments on, under and over the
18 footway portions of the public rights-of-way at
19 the southwest corner of the intersection between
20 Belmont Avenue and Parkside Avenue; all under
21 certain terms and conditions.

22 MR. MAUTZ: Good morning, Chairman
23 and Members of the Committee. My name is William
24 Mautz and I'm a construction engineer with the
25 Streets Department. I'm here to offer the

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2 following testimony for Bill 020822 on behalf of
3 the Streets Department.

4 This Bill authorizes the Business
5 Association of West Parkside to construct, own
6 and maintain various encroachments on and over
7 the footway portions of the public rights-of-way
8 at the southwest corner of the intersection
9 between Belmont Avenue and Parkside Avenue. The
10 existing traffic island at the southwest corner
11 of Belmont Avenue and Parkside Avenue will be
12 modified to create the Negro League Baseball
13 Memorial.

14 The encroachment description is as
15 follows: Statue with lighting. A seven-foot
16 high bronze statue sitting atop a granite
17 pedestal five feet square by four feet high. The
18 statue is illuminated by four directional flood
19 lights.

20 Wall with lighting. A radial granite
21 wall approximately 28 feet long by four feet high
22 by 18 inches wide bearing the inscribed names of
23 all of the league players. The wall is
24 illuminated by four ground lights.

25 Pedestrian light poles with conduit.

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2 Seven pedestrian light poles 12 feet high that
3 receive electrical service by a one-inch diameter
4 underground conduit.

5 Ground level lighting. Five ground
6 level lights illuminating trees within the
7 landscaped portion of the modified island.

8 Lighted bollards. 19 lighted
9 bollards located along the curb lines of Belmont
10 and Parkside Avenues.

11 The Streets Department has reviewed
12 the construction plans for this project and has
13 no objection to the passage of the Bill.

14 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

15 Any questions for this witness from
16 the Committee?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Anyone else here
19 who wishes to testify for or against the Bill?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Seeing none, the
22 Clerk will read the title of the next Bill.

23 THE CLERK: Bill No. 020762, an
24 Ordinance granting permission to Cogent
25 Communications, Inc., its successors and assigns

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2 to construct, maintain, operate, replace and
3 remove telecommunications service connections and
4 fiber cables in and under the public
5 rights-of-way and City streets from existing
6 legally constructed underground telecommunication
7 lines to specific properties and within new
8 conduit or within existing conduit of other
9 entities holding a grant pursuant to other City
10 Ordinance; all under certain terms and
11 conditions.

12 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Proceed with
13 your testimony, please.

14 MR. MAUTZ: Good morning, Chairman,
15 and Members of the Committee. My name is William
16 Mautz and I'm a construction engineer with the
17 Streets Department. I'm here to offer the
18 following testimony for Bill No. 020762 on behalf
19 of the Streets Department.

20 This Bill authorizes Cogent
21 Communications, Inc., to construct and maintain
22 telecommunications service connections and fiber
23 optic cables from existing legally constructed
24 underground telecommunication lines to specific
25 properties and within new conduit or existing

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2 conduit.

3 Cogent proposes to install
4 underground telecommunication laterals to 25
5 properties in the Center City and University City
6 area. The laterals will connect to existing legal
7 telecommunication backbones.

8 The Streets Department has reviewed
9 the proposed build-out routes for this project
10 and has no objection to the passage of the Bill.

11 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

12 Any questions or comments?

13 Councilman Clarke.

14 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Mr.
15 Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, this
16 particular Bill will require an Amendment at some
17 time. But in order to move the process along,
18 we're going to vote it out of Committee,
19 hopefully. And there is some issues with respect
20 to route descriptions for intended
21 telecommunications services and connections as it
22 relates to the Bill, but that amendment has not
23 been properly prepared yet. Also hopefully we
24 can just pass this out of the Committee and I'll
25 amend it on the second reading.

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2 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

3 Anyone else who wishes to testify for
4 or against this bill?

5 Good morning, please identify for the
6 record and proceed with your testimony.

7 MR. BOYLE: My name is Christopher W.
8 Boyle. I'm with the law firm of Drinker, Biddle
9 and Reed. I'm here on behalf of Cogent
10 Communications and I've been working for the last
11 several months with the Streets Department and
12 Councilpersons' offices regarding the Bill.

13 Today I'd just like to have two
14 witnesses present short testimony. The first
15 will be John Pruitt (ph), who is the fiber
16 employment manager for the East Coast for Cogent,
17 who will briefly describe the company and the
18 project in Philadelphia. And also Mr. Eric
19 Stonesipher (ph), who is a resident at 12th and
20 Spruce and Cogent's local representative and
21 responsible for the Philadelphia project.

22 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.
23 Gentlemen. I apologize for the accommodations,
24 or lack of accommodations.

25 MR PRUIT: Good morning, Mr. Chairman

5 Cogent Communications in the last
6 three years has installed 600 buildings with a
7 new high-speed fiber connection, equivalent to
8 one gigabit service. Here in Philly we're
9 proposing to do 25 additional buildings to bring
10 new service from existing metro rings through new
11 laterals in the 25 properties. Thank you very
12 much.

15 Point of information, Councilman
16 Rizzo.

19 MR. STONESIPHER (ph): Yes, it would.
20 It will make e-mail faster. My name is Eric
21 Stonesipher. I'm an account manager for
22 Philadelphia. I'd like to thank you for this
23 opportunity to testify as to why this service is
24 important for Philadelphia.

25 There's a technology that we offer in

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2 what we call NFL cities, which is the major
3 cities of the United States. Businesses, by
4 offering this service, are able to become more
5 technically viable in terms of how they
6 communicate between offices. For example, video
7 conferencing is enabled. Voice services become a
8 lot less expensive and allows businesses to
9 ultimately save money by a factor of four
10 compared to what -- if they wanted a similar
11 technology with existing services.

12 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

13 Did one of the previous witnesses
14 mention something about someone living at 12th
15 and Spruce?

16 MR. STONESIPHER: That's correct.

17 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: You're a
18 resident?

19 MR. STONESIPHER: Yes.

20 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: You're for this
21 Bill?

22 MR. STONESIPHER: Yes, I am.

23 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: I'm your
24 Councilman.

25 MR. STONESIPHER: Yes, I know.

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2 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: This is going to
3 pass today.

4 MR. STONESIPHER: I'd also like to
5 comment, it helps that I've seen your ad on
6 Comcast. It's very good.

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Don't forget about
8 e-mail.

9 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

10 Any other questions for any of these
11 witnesses from the Committee?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Anyone else here
14 who wishes to testify for or against this Bill?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Seeing none, the
17 Clerk will read the title of the next Bill.

18 Thank you for your testimony.

19 THE CLERK: Bill 020763, an Ordinance
20 amending Title 12 of the Philadelphia Code,
21 entitled "Traffic Code," to revise the penalties
22 for certain parking violations; revise the fees
23 for booting, towing and storage of certain
24 immobilized and impounded vehicles; prohibit a
25 vehicle owner from parking his or her vehicle on

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2 a public highway without a valid certificate of
3 inspection and provide the penalty for such a
4 violation; and make certain technical changes;
5 all under certain terms and conditions.

6 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Good morning.
7 Please identify yourself for the record and
8 proceed with your testimony .

9 MR. DICKSON: Good morning. I'm
10 Richard Dickson, Director of On-Street Parking
11 for the Philadelphia Parking Authority.

12 Mr. Chairman and Members of the
13 Committee, the City of Philadelphia last adjusted
14 parking violation fines in 1991. In the dozen
15 years that have passed since that time, economic
16 development and increased commercial activity
17 have increased the pressure and the demand for
18 parking facilities throughout the City. As a
19 result, we now have an imbalance between the cost
20 of parking on the street and the cost of parking
21 in a garage. You can park on the street and get
22 a ticket for \$15, which is normally much cheaper
23 than parking all day in a parking facility.

24 On-street parking is probably the
25 most valuable resource that the City provides for

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2 our businesses downtown. In order to effectively
3 manage that parking, we create regulations that
4 encourage turnover of those spaces. When someone
5 monopolizes one of those spaces all day, that
6 displaces four or five additional people that
7 would have the opportunity to patronize local
8 businesses. When you multiply that times 10 or
9 100 spaces a day, that's a significant impact on
10 the ability of people to find adequate,
11 convenient parking in the City.

12 We have received over the years a
13 number of requests to adjust particular parking
14 violations. For example, SEPTA has been
15 interested in increasing the fine for double
16 parking and for those people parking in bus
17 routes because it disrupts their service. We get
18 numerous requests from residential groups to
19 increase the fine for residential permit parking,
20 because as it is now, it is much cheaper to pay a
21 ticket, a \$15 ticket, to park in a permit parking
22 area in, say, Bella Vista or south of South
23 Street or Spring Garden and walk into town, than
24 it is to pay for parking in a garage.

25 We have attempted in this Bill to

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2 group the types of violations together and have
3 similar types of fines for those that are of the
4 same nature. For example, safety violations such
5 as parking too close to a corner, blocking a
6 crosswalk or no stopping regulations are adjusted
7 to \$35. Those for loading zone violations have
8 been recommended to be adjusted to \$25. And the
9 normal standard parking meter overtime limit
10 would be adjusted to \$20.

11 These adjustments are generally
12 around \$5 above where they are right now, but the
13 impact on parking availability could be
14 substantial. For every one of these spaces that
15 we put back into circulation, that is a number of
16 people who are then able to patronize our local
17 businesses.

18 Equally important, the incidents --
19 because people are displaced from legal parking
20 spaces, they often can only resort to parking in
21 safety violations. That increases travel time,
22 increases congestion and, most dramatically, it
23 could result in a loss of life when emergency
24 vehicles can't respond to their destination in a
25 reasonable amount of time.

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2 I also would like to point out that
3 there's no increase in this Bill for the cost of
4 parking legally in the City. The parking meter
5 rates, which also have not been adjusted since
6 1991, will remain the same. We do not want to do
7 anything that would increase the cost of those
8 people that abide by the law. This only adjusts
9 those penalties for those people who decide to
10 violate the law.

11 The two new violations that are
12 included in this Bill, they prescribe penalties
13 for those people who park on the streets with
14 expired registrations or inspection stickers.
15 This is an effort in cooperation with the other
16 City agencies that are attempting to reduce auto
17 insurance rates in the City.

18 The Live Stop Program, which began
19 back in July, has removed about 18,000 cars from
20 the streets. But they're only able to stop
21 vehicles that have engaged in some other
22 violation. Parking enforcement officers pass
23 vehicles every day who are in violation of their
24 registration or inspection requirements,
25 primarily because in order to get those things,

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2 they have to have their cars properly insured.

3 If we create yet another incentive for them to
4 abide by that law, in the long-term we believe we
5 will be able help reduce insurance rates in the
6 City as well.

7 In summary, I think this Bill
8 modestly increases parking violation fines, but
9 does significant -- goes a long way toward
10 increasing parking opportunities and supporting
11 economic development in the City. The Parking
12 Authority recommends favorable consideration of
13 the Bill.

14 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you, Mr.
15 Dickson.

16 Your Honor.

17 MR. CERMELE: Good morning, Mr.
18 Chairman and Members of the Committee. I'm
19 Dominic Cermele, Deputy Finance Director of
20 Philadelphia and Executive Director of the Office
21 of Administrative Review.

22 As Mr. Dickson pointed out, the last
23 time we took a comprehensive look at the fine
24 structure for parking violations was in 1991.
25 And at that time we made a strategic decision to

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2 align the fines so that the most egregious
3 violations received the highest fine. Quite
4 frankly, 12 years later, it is time once again to
5 review that decision and be sure that our fine
6 structure remains so aligned.

7 Thus, last year we undertook a review
8 of our existing fines and compared them both to
9 off-street parking costs and equally importantly
10 to the fine structure of other major cities
11 around the United States. Our survey showed that
12 the fine structure for parking violations in the
13 City of Philadelphia is consistently below the
14 national average. And since the time that we did
15 our survey a year ago, several of those cities
16 have increased -- made substantial increases in
17 their parking fines, so we are now substantially
18 below.

19 The Bill before you today seeks to
20 address both the imbalance between parking fines
21 and all-day garage parking rates, Mr. Dickson
22 pointed out, but also the imbalance of our fine
23 structure and the national average. We have
24 taken care to maintain the strategic graduated
25 fine structure that we put in place last time,

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2 and we've kept all of their increases at a level
3 that merely brings Philadelphia up to the
4 national average. You will note in most cases
5 the fines are proposed to increase by \$5 and, in
6 some cases, \$10. We believe that these increases
7 will deter violations and help improve parking in
8 congested shopping areas. The result will be a
9 more convenient, reasonable short-term parking
10 for visitors and shoppers alike.

11 This legislation also contains new
12 violations prohibiting the parking of vehicles on
13 the street that are not validly registered or
14 inspected. In most cases, these vehicles are
15 also uninsured and, many times, unsafe. So
16 enforcing these provisions will enhance the
17 City's very successful Live Stop Program.

18 The Bill before you does support the
19 aims of the City of Philadelphia. And on behalf
20 of the Director of Finance, I recommend its
21 favorable consideration.

22 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: A question for
23 either of you. The fines for the registration
24 and inspection will be how much? That's
25 consistent to what the Police Department would be

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2 issuing? Is it the same?

3 MR. DICKSON: This is a parking
4 violation, as opposed to a moving violation.
5 It's \$100 and I believe it is consistent with the
6 similar moving violation.

7 MR. CERMELE: It's actually just a
8 little under, about \$13 under.

9 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Does the Parking
10 Authority ever issue tickets for vehicles that
11 are left on the street with "for sale" signs on
12 them?

13 MR. DICKSON: Yes. That was a
14 parking violation that was added about two years
15 ago, I believe at your request. And in those
16 areas where we are requested by the community, we
17 do issue those violations.

18 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: So it's fair to
19 say that if they're issuing a ticket for the
20 violation of selling a car on the street, in most
21 cases that tag -- there's either no tag on that
22 vehicle or there's a tag that belongs to some
23 other car, so they would be getting more than one
24 ticket?

25 MR. DICKSON: That's correct.

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2 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: My other
3 question is, I still observe in many locations in
4 my district, in particular in Chinatown, even
5 some places on South Broad Street, where vendors
6 are selling their products from the van that is
7 parked all day. Apparently they're feeding the
8 meter. Many times I notice that the violation
9 flag is up, but if they see an enforcement
10 officer, then they proceed to feed the meter
11 again. What are we doing about that?

12 MR. DICKSON: That is a chronic
13 problem and it's a nightmare for parking
14 enforcement officers. What we have recommended
15 and what we have, in cooperation with the
16 Department of Licenses and Inspection, instituted
17 in a number of locations is that vendors must
18 apply and pay for a reserved vendor parking
19 space. At that location that the meter is
20 removed, they pay a \$3,000 per year fee to the
21 City in order to get a reserved space there. At
22 the same time, they are prohibited from parking
23 additional vehicles at or near their vendor
24 vehicle. For example, if there's a truck there
25 that they vend from, they often park their car

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2 next to it from which they restock supplies.

3 When that is implemented, they are prohibited

4 from doing that. And there's an additional

5 parking fine that would be given to the support

6 vehicle in order to open up that space as well.

7 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Is there a limit
8 on the number of these licenses that would be
9 granted on a particular block?

10 MR. DICKSON: That is determined by
11 the Department of Licenses and Inspections, and
12 they generally do that in cooperation with the
13 community in which the vendor located. For
14 example, the University of Pennsylvania, they
15 established a number of these vendor sites in
16 order to bring some semblance of order out of
17 what was a chaotic situation. I believe that
18 they try to work through the District
19 Councilperson's office when they get requests for
20 these in order to determine the number and the
21 location.

22 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

23 Any questions?

24 Councilman Ortiz.

25 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: How much money is

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2 going to be generated by the new fines?

3 MR. CERMELE: Our estimate is it will
4 be somewhere between 6 and \$8 million per year.

5 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: This will bring
6 your total up to what?

7 MR. CERMELE: Total collected by the
8 Authority?

9 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Yes.

10 MR. DICKSON: We expect this year
11 we'll collect about \$42 million in parking ticket
12 revenue. So this will add -- probably in the
13 first year, it will be an additional 6 million,
14 and when fully implemented, between 8 and 9
15 million.

16 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: What is the
17 current parking rate in garages in Center City?

18 MR. DICKSON: It varies depending on
19 how close you are to the core of Center City.
20 Most of the facilities in the area, for example
21 between Race and Locust, like 13th to 18th, are
22 well over \$20 for a full day. Many of them \$25
23 and above.

24 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Do the private
25 garages differ from the Parking Authority

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2 garages?

3 MR. DICKSON: Yes. The Authority's
4 garages try to structure their rates so that they
5 -- we attract short-term shoppers as opposed to
6 long-term parkers that the private facilities
7 tend to attract.

8 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: So what's the
9 average today in terms of Center City garage
10 parking?

11 MR. DICKSON: I don't want to give
12 you incorrect information, but I would estimate
13 that it probably ranges between \$17 and \$25 in
14 Center City. I can't tell you the average
15 because I haven't calculated it. In the last
16 couple days --

17 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: So, \$20 dollars,
18 something like that?

19 MR. DICKSON: Yes.

20 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: For full day
21 parking?

22 MR. DICKSON: Yes.

23 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Let the record
24 reflect that Councilman Cohen is in attendance
25 today as well.

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2 Councilman Clarke.

3 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Mr.

4 Chairman.

5 Mr. Chairman, I was actually going to
6 ask a couple questions along the lines of
7 Councilman Ortiz. Kind of the other side of the
8 coin, no pun intended, with respect to our
9 parking rates, particularly in Center City.

10 As you know, both Councilman DiCicco
11 and myself are District Councilpeople who
12 represent Center City. And one of the biggest
13 concerns that we hear raised at various forums,
14 both for those people who live in Center City and
15 people that visit Center City, is the high cost
16 of parking at facilities in Center City. And as
17 a result of that, at earlier community meetings,
18 we had asked for the individuals relating to
19 parking to look at the possibility of reducing
20 some of the fees or the cost of parking in Center
21 City.

22 While I personally encourage any
23 activities that will discourage illegal parking
24 and parking beyond the time allowed on the meter,
25 which this particular Bill will do, I don't want

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2 to do it to ensure that the parking facilities
3 and parking garages and lots are more competitive
4 with the parking meters, given the -- in some
5 instances, the extremely high cost of parking.
6 So I'm hoping we're not doing that to make them
7 more competitive with the parking meters, as was
8 kind of part of the earlier testimony, that it's
9 cheaper to park at a meter than it is to go in
10 the lot. That's factual, but that shouldn't be
11 the primary intent. I would hope that we're
12 looking seriously at figuring out a way to bring
13 down the cost of parking in these particular
14 parking facilities, to encourage people to use
15 them, as opposed to just simply increasing the
16 fees associated with parking at meters.

17 Are we doing anything as it relates
18 to that on a systematic basis? I know that's a
19 big concern for myself personally, if I ever have
20 to bring my private vehicle into Center City and
21 park.

22 MR. DICKSON: Parking -- private
23 parking facilities work like many other
24 businesses in the world. It works on supply and
25 demand. We are some -- particularly in Center

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2 City, this is a result of our own success.

3 Increased demand for parking has driven up
4 parking rates throughout Center City. I know
5 that there have been efforts by the Center City
6 District and others to try to make people aware
7 of where there are different parking rates at
8 different times of the day, to encourage people
9 to take advantage of different parking options,
10 because some of the facilities are full during
11 the day, but they're empty at night. I think if
12 you begin to get information out to try to let
13 people know that there are cheaper rates at night
14 and some of the -- they begin to build up some
15 revenue from them, that may have an impact on
16 their ability to drive down rates during the day.

17 So I think that there are a number of
18 people that are working on trying to at least get
19 information out to people so that they know what
20 their parking options are. And in that way, they
21 can make informed decisions about where they want
22 to park.

23 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Was the Parking
24 Authority a part of that discussion?

25 MR. DICKSON: We're a part of that

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2 discussion to the extent that our facilities also
3 -- the rates for our facilities also need to be
4 part of that equation. We think that the way we
5 structure rates helps to put pressure on private
6 facilities also to control the rates. Because if
7 ours are substantially lower than theirs, then
8 they are not inclined to increase them because
9 the competition then -- they're at a competitive
10 disadvantage. So we try to work with them in
11 trying to put some pressure on it to stabilize
12 rates through our own facilities, and at the same
13 time work with various parking groups in order to
14 let people know what their various parking option
15 are.

16 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: On average, what
17 did you say is the percentage terms of being
18 lower than the private facility? Is it
19 substantial or is it marginal?

20 MR. DICKSON: It depends on what the
21 facility is and what time of day and how much
22 time you're going to spend there. Our facilities
23 generally are substantially less expensive for
24 short-term parking. Our facilities are generally
25 located in those areas where shopping is the

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2 primary generator, for example, near the Gallery,
3 near Independence Mall and those areas. So it's
4 substantially less for short term parking. I
5 don't have the information here to compare the
6 all day rates. I know it's less, but I just
7 don't have that available. I can certainly
8 provide that to you.

9 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Well, if your
10 intention, particularly on a short-term basis, is
11 to encourage private operators to be competitive
12 with the Parking Authority, therefore, you're
13 lowering your rates, would it make sense to
14 possibly look at the possibility of having more
15 competitive rates on a longer-term basis to
16 hopefully encourage them to reduce the cost
17 associated with their long-term rates?

18 MR. DICKSON: We would be happy to
19 work with this Committee and Members of this
20 Committee to try to -- and people in the Center
21 City District to try to come up with a
22 comprehensive strategy of how to address that. I
23 think that we need to take all of those issues
24 together in order for it to be effective.

25 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you.

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2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

4 Councilman Rizzo.

5 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Mr.

6 Chairman. I'm glad there's an interest in this
7 issue of parking rates. And anticipating that
8 there might be a reaction from the private sector
9 in reference -- as a result of this legislation,
10 I'm working presently with the City Solicitor's
11 Office to see what's appropriate, what's not
12 appropriate in the area of regulation. We
13 regulate cab fares, am I right? I believe the
14 Parking Authority is going to take over some of
15 the responsibilities of the Public Utility
16 Commission relative to cabs. So being sensitive
17 to the fact that there is no -- I don't like to
18 use the word control or oversight of these
19 parking lots when it come to their rates. I plan
20 to introduce appropriate legislation in the very
21 near future to address this particular issue. So
22 I'm sure the Law Department will be meeting with
23 or suggesting meetings with the Parking Authority
24 to discuss this issue with the private sector to
25 see what exactly they can do, what they can't do.

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2 I know -- I believe it was Councilman
3 DiCicco or Kenney, correct me if I'm wrong, that
4 even had some input on stopping the gouging that
5 was occurring at sports events where it was kind
6 of like -- somebody mentioned it, and buyer
7 beware, that there were parking lots charging \$50
8 to park during the Super Bowl, if you have \$50 to
9 park. That's just an example of some of the --

10 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Is that San
11 Diego or here?

12 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I'm talking about
13 the play-off games. Well wishing, right? I
14 would have paid \$50 to park if there was a Super
15 Bowl here.

16 So the regulation -- to see exactly
17 what we can do and what we can't do is my first
18 step in the area of the prices that are charged
19 to park in some of these private lots. And I'm
20 sure that it will affect any legislation and
21 would also affect the Parking Authority at the
22 airport and other locations throughout the City.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

25 Any other questions for this witness?

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2 Councilman Cohen.

3 COUNCILMAN COHEN: I find the mystery
4 about parking rates and the Parking Authority
5 quite intriguing, because I've never understood
6 it. First, are you now a city agency or a state
7 agency?

8 MR. DICKSON: That's a good question.
9 We are a state agency in the minds of the state
10 legislature and the governing board of the
11 Parking Authority. I understand that the City
12 has pending legal action to challenge that. The
13 status of which, I don't know. As of now we're
14 operating as a state agency.

15 COUNCILMAN COHEN: And who -- let's
16 assume theoretically, because I know nobody's
17 interested in just earning a lot of money for the
18 Parking Authority, but who would benefit from an
19 increase, State or the City? And please tell me
20 why, whatever your answer may be, Mr. Cermele,
21 this is the biggest puzzle I've ever had to face.
22 We respect you very much, but I'm very concerned
23 about many things that I don't understand about
24 parking.

25 MR. CERMELE: It is the position of

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2 the City of Philadelphia that the Parking
3 Authority is an agent for the City of
4 Philadelphia, enforcing and collecting parking
5 violations that occur within our -- borders of
6 our municipal corporation, and they are our
7 agent, both pursuant to law and pursuant to an
8 inter-governmental cooperative agreement, which
9 is still existing. Therefore, it is the City's
10 position, that under that agreement, the net
11 revenues belong to the City of Philadelphia.

12 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, it's the
13 City position. Is the City getting the money
14 now?

15 MR. DICKSON: Yes. Yes, Councilman.
16 Until the litigation resolves -- clarifies the
17 issue, the City gets the net revenue. Should the
18 Authority prevail, the net revenue would go to
19 the School District of Philadelphia. Under no
20 scenario would it go to the State. It would
21 either go to the City's General Fund or to the
22 fund of the School District of Philadelphia.

23 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Why would it go to
24 the fund of the School District of Philadelphia,
25 if it did not go to the General Fund?

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2 MR. DICKSON: Because the way the
3 legislation creating the new governing structure
4 of the Authority was structured, that it mandated
5 that all net revenue go to the School District of
6 Philadelphia.

7 COUNCILMAN COHEN: But, of course, if
8 that legislation is effective, the legislature
9 could, at 11 o'clock on a Tuesday night, change
10 it and put the money somewhere else if the City
11 lost the case, right?

12 MR. DICKSON: They are legal
13 questions I'm not qualified to answer.

14 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Who initiated the
15 legislation that's before us?

16 MR. DICKSON: This is --

17 COUNCILMAN COHEN: On this Bill, is
18 it the City that's presenting it, or is it the
19 new Authority control that's presenting it?

20 MR. CERMELE: This is an
21 Administration Bill.

22 COUNCILMAN COHEN: This is an
23 Administration Bill from the City?

24 MR. CERMELE: Yes, sir.

25 COUNCILMAN COHEN: So the City is

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2 pretty confident then, that it's going to get the
3 money and win the case?

4 MR. CERMELE: Yes, sir. We want the
5 money.

6 COUNCILMAN COHEN: We want the money
7 and we want to win the case. Well, that's
8 refreshing to hear.

9 On general theory, do we want people
10 to come and park, or do we try to keep people out
11 of Center City with their cars? What is our aim?

12 MR. DICKSON: We want to people to
13 come and park. And we believe by enacting this
14 legislation, we're increasing parking
15 opportunities because we're preventing those
16 people that monopolize a space all day from
17 keeping it, and allowing four or five additional
18 people also to have access to our local
19 businesses.

20 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Do high parking
21 rates encourage people to come to the City, or do
22 they deter them?

23 MR. DICKSON: We are not doing
24 anything to increase parking rates here. There is
25 nothing in here that increases parking meter fees

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2 or any other fee for parking legally in the City.

3 This only increases the fine for those people who
4 violate the law.

5 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Would you say it's
6 neutral with respect to deterring people or
7 inviting them in?

8 MR. DICKSON: No. We think this is
9 positive, because if people come in and can't
10 find a parking space, they can only have a few
11 options. They circle the block forever and ever
12 until a space opens up on the street; they go
13 into a garage where the price is higher or they
14 park illegally in one of those safety zones,
15 which creates other kinds of issues, or they
16 leave and go out and park at the parking mall.
17 We think by opening up additional parking
18 opportunities in Center City we encourage -- we
19 make it friendlier for people to find a
20 convenient, reasonably priced space on the
21 street.

22 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Will the Parking
23 Authority control what happens to the additional
24 money that comes in, or will the money go into
25 the General Fund, assuming the City wins the

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2 case?

3 MR. DICKSON: We have no control over
4 that. That is determined -- right now, it will
5 continue to go in the General Fund, if the City
6 prevails.

7 MR. CERMELE: That's assuming, Mr.
8 Cohen, that the Parking Authority controls their
9 cost. They do have the ability to hand out their
10 expenses first.

11 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, of course.
12 But we don't know whether we're talking City or
13 State at this stage of the game when we talk
14 about Parking Authority. Parking Authority also
15 does other things than run garages. It invests
16 money. For example, 8th and Market, what we call
17 the hole. How much money has the Parking --

18 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's filled in
19 now. It's no longer a hole.

20 COUNCILMAN COHEN: What is it, now?

21 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's a surface
22 parking lot.

23 COUNCILMAN COHEN: How much money did
24 the Parking Authority invest in that?

25 MR. DICKSON: I'm not qualified to

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2 respond to that. That's not my area of
3 responsibility and I'm sorry --

4 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Is there any
5 anybody who knows?

6 MR. DICKSON: I would be happy to find
7 out for you.

8 COUNCILMAN COHEN: I would appreciate
9 that. And I would like to know, was it General
10 Fund money or was it Parking Authority money?
11 And is there such a thing as Parking Authority
12 money? Assume when the City had clear control,
13 did the Parking Authority have separate income,
14 separate from the General Fund, or did you get
15 all your money from the General Fund? How does
16 the money circulate? It goes from the customer
17 into, say, the Parking Authority meters. What
18 happens to the money at that point?

19 MR. CERMELE: There are essentially
20 three revenue streams that the Parking Authority
21 manages on behalf of the City. One is their core
22 business, their former core business, which is
23 Center City parking garages and lots. So that is
24 one revenue stream. The net from that would go
25 to the City, but there's generally not much of a

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2 net from that because there are bonds that need
3 to be paid off.

4 The other revenue stream is the
5 airport parking, but all of the funds from
6 airport parking, which are considerable, go to
7 the Aviation Fund under federal law.

8 And finally, there's an
9 intergovernmental cooperative agreement relative
10 to on-street parking. And all -- that is a
11 Municipal function, and all that net revenue
12 should come to the City of Philadelphia. We can
13 report to you through the Finance Director how
14 much revenue we have received this year and
15 compare it to prior years.

16 COUNCILMAN COHEN: But does the
17 Parking Authority as such have its own funding
18 arrangement? Or do you get funded?

19 MR. CERMELE: No, they do not get
20 funded by the City of Philadelphia. They operate
21 by collecting all the money, netting out their
22 expenses --

23 COUNCILMAN COHEN: From the
24 collections?

25 MR. CERMELE: -- and then paying the

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2 net revenue to the City.

3 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Recently there was
4 a newspaper article which dealt with an alleged
5 increase of employees in the Parking Authority
6 following the state alleged takeover. Assuming
7 that the State were to win the case, it would be
8 a takeover, whatever that might be mean. Now,
9 was that a false story or is it a true story?
10 Can you tell us what you know about those facts?
11 Has there been an increase in the number of
12 employees?

13 MR. DICKSON: Yes. That is directly
14 related to the Authority's assuming
15 responsibility at the request of the City to take
16 off Live Stop operations that began last July.
17 As a result of that, we've taken 18,000 illegal
18 cars off the street. We needed tow truck
19 operators, impoundment lots, lot officers to
20 secure the cars and those kinds of activities.
21 And that was the primary reason for increase in
22 the Authority's staff.

23 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Well, what do you
24 mean by primary increase? Was there an increase
25 for other reasons, too?

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2 MR. DICKSON: There were vacant
3 positions that had been filled and there were the
4 support functions that were needed for -- to work
5 to also support that operation.

6 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Look, I don't want
7 to embarrass anybody and I don't want to get
8 involved in the intricate political theories that
9 are rampant in the City around the takeover by
10 the State, but just tell me, was it at the City
11 initiative that all of these increases in
12 personnel took place?

13 MR. DICKSON: The City requested that
14 we run the live -- the impoundment portion of the
15 Live Stop Program.

16 COUNCILMAN COHEN: How many employees
17 would that have involved, additional employees?

18 MR. DICKSON: Probably 175, about.

19 COUNCILMAN COHEN: The newspaper
20 article said 200. That's pretty close in range.

21 MR. DICKSON: That's what I said.
22 The primary number of people was related to the
23 Live Stop operation.

24 MR. CERMELE: I will tell you that
25 the Finance Director has written to the Authority

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2 and has asked for an accounting in those areas.
3 And once we receive that, I'm sure that you will
4 be willing to share that information with
5 Council.

6 COUNCILMAN COHEN: It's always
7 suspicious, of course, whenever any Mayor says
8 the City needs more revenue, we're in trouble,
9 and suddenly increases in rates are requested by
10 various City agencies. We often think of those
11 as being potential hidden ways of increasing
12 either taxes or fees. And since parking rates
13 affect working people, often low-income working
14 people, as well as well-off working people or
15 median-income people, we're sensitive on that
16 score.

17 To what extent is this increase in
18 the fines aimed at merely securing additional
19 money to meet general needs of the City, since
20 the City itself will benefit from this increase?
21 Right?

22 MR. CERMELE: We presume.

23 COUNCILMAN COHEN: We presume. We
24 hope.

25 MR. CERMELE: And hope.

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2 COUNCILMAN COHEN: Does one impact on
3 the other?

4 MR. CERMELE: We've actually been
5 working on this a considerable period of time,
6 more than a year. I can tell you our initial
7 discussions between Mr. Dickson and myself were
8 along the lines of good parking management, and
9 not along the lines of revenue.

10 COUNCILMAN COHEN: But it's on that
11 basis that you're presenting this to us today?

12 MR. CERMELE: Yes, sir.

13 COUNCILMAN COHEN: All right. Thank
14 you.

15 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

16 Any other questions for these
17 witnesses from the Committee?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Anyone else here
20 who wishes to testify for or against this Bill?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you,
23 gentlemen.

24 Seeing none, the Clerk will read the
25 title of the next Bill.

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2 THE CLERK: Bill No. 020437, an
3 ordinance amending Chapter 12-400 of the
4 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Right-of-Way
5 Regulations and Penalties," by increasing the
6 penalty for violations of Section 12-407, which
7 prohibits the operator of a vehicle from entering
8 an intersection or crosswalk unless there is
9 sufficient space beyond the intersection or
10 crosswalk to accommodate the vehicle without
11 obstructing other vehicles or pedestrians, and by
12 requiring that certain signs and painted stripes
13 be installed at intersections designated by
14 Ordinance as "Don't Block The Box" intersections;
15 and by designating certain intersections in the
16 City, including but not limited to intersections
17 on South Street from Front Street to Broad
18 Street, as "Don't Block The Box" intersections;
19 all under certain terms and conditions.

20 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you. I
21 understand Ms. Verber (ph) has another
22 appointment, so, Chris, we will have Ms. Verber
23 testify first. Good morning. Please identify
24 yourself for the record.

25 MS. VERBER: Good morning, Mr.

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2 Chairman, and good morning, Members of the
3 Committee. My name is Ann Verber. I'm a board
4 member of the South Street Head House Special
5 Services District, and I Chair the District's
6 Planning Committee. I am very pleased to be able
7 to be here today on behalf of the District to
8 show our very, very strong support for this
9 proposed legislation.

10 Since our board did not meet prior to
11 this hearing this morning, I had the opportunity
12 to poll the board members and speak to every one
13 of them personally, and I am very pleased to
14 report that the response, the most frequent
15 response I heard from our board members was 110
16 percent in favor. Many of them said, "I can't
17 imagine why we didn't think of this years ago,"
18 since the area that is immediately at issue in
19 this proposed legislation is South Street between
20 Front and Broad streets, which is afflicted, as I
21 think everyone knows, periodically and regularly
22 with gridlock of substantial proportions that is
23 detrimental to the stores, the shops, the
24 commercial interests on the street, and has an
25 extremely negative impact on the residential

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2 communities that border on South Street and that
3 are affected by activities on South Street.

4 We believe that the effects of this
5 Bill will be both to have a deterrent effect on
6 our gridlock problem and begin to be assistance
7 to the police in their enforcement efforts to try
8 to keep traffic moving on the street. We hope
9 that we will be the first street that has
10 designated "Block the Box" intersections and we
11 look forward to this very much. Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: You see, Ann, I
13 got stuck on 6th and South a few times and that's
14 what brought this to my attention.

15 MS. VERBER: I understand. I live
16 near there.

17 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: I know. I said,
18 "What are we doing here?" Especially because of
19 the fire house situation --

20 MS VERBER: Absolutely.

21 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: -- raises the
22 height of interest -- concern, I should say, for
23 public safety. Thank you, Ann, and thank you for
24 your testimony.

25 Any questions for this witness?

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2 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I just wanted you
3 to be aware that we are also working, and our
4 Chairman will be conducting hearings very
5 shortly, in reference to the camera enforcement
6 that will even add additional enforcement to some
7 of the intersections. Eventually where without a
8 police officer being present, that if someone
9 would violate "Block the Box" or violate a red
10 light, that the photo enforcement is, I hope,
11 coming to Philadelphia very, very soon and we'll
12 make some of these intersections throughout our
13 City a safer place.

14 MS. VERBER: Councilman Rizzo, we are
15 in complete agreement with you. The Board of the
16 District has been as active as it can be in
17 encouraging the adoption of the camera
18 enforcement for those very purposes. And we look
19 forward to working with anyone with whom we would
20 be helpful to see if we can bring that to bear
21 and come to pass.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: We'll make sure
23 that you're aware through the Chairman when he
24 has convened this Committee for that purpose so
25 you can be here to give your input.

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2 MS. VERBER: Thank you. We certainly
3 will be looking forward to that. Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you, Mr.
5 Chairman.

6 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Good morning.
7 Please identify yourself for the record.

8 MR. DENNY: Mr. Chairman, Members of
9 the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to
10 appear before you today. My name is Charles
11 Denny, and I am the Assistant Chief Traffic
12 Engineer for the Department of Streets. I'm here
13 to offer testimony on Bill 020437.

14 It is the understanding that certain
15 amendments will be offered to this Bill. The
16 Department of Streets supports this amendment and
17 supports the amended Bill. I would like to note
18 that the issue of traffic congestion and gridlock
19 is a problem throughout the City, including the
20 intersections noted in Bill 020437. The Streets
21 Department supports the concept behind "Don't
22 Block the Box" program and believes that it could
23 potentially be one method of dealing with the
24 problems of traffic congestion at many critical
25 intersections throughout the City.

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2 I would suggest that the legislation
3 serve as a first step to examining the problems
4 of traffic congestion and gridlock citywide, and
5 we welcome any suggestions this Committee may
6 have regarding the same.

7 Thank you for the opportunity to
8 appear before you today. And I'll be happy to
9 answer any questions.

10 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you. I
11 know my legislative assistant, Mr. Fitz, and the
12 Streets Department had many discussions on this
13 matter. There are some amendments that will be
14 offered today to the Bill. I still have some
15 concern -- I want that to be for the record, that
16 at the discretion of the Streets Commission,
17 which I have a lot of respect for, I think it
18 may, in effect, water down our attempt to do what
19 I think we all set out to do is make as many of
20 the -- especially those high intersection
21 corridors where you have a lot of traffic and you
22 have the constant blocking of intersections,
23 South Street, Old City, just to name a few in my
24 district. What guarantees do we have -- and I
25 know you're not the Commissioner -- but what

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2 guarantees do we have that, if the District
3 Councilperson and the community and maybe even
4 with a letter from the local Police Department,
5 were to make a request that we will, in fact,
6 have the "Block the Box" implemented, will there
7 been any signage to that effect? I think signage
8 is very important. This is not a fining mill.
9 We're not concerned about just raising money on
10 this issue. We're more concerned with public
11 safety and awareness.

12 MR. DENNY: While we believe signing
13 and education of drivers is important, we don't
14 think signing should be required for enforcement
15 because signs get defaced, signs fall down or get
16 removed. So if we pass the legislation to for
17 "Don't Block the Box," the police should be even
18 able to enforce the regulation without the signs,
19 if something should happen to the signs. But
20 signs are important for educational purposes for
21 the drivers, as well as the general education
22 through the media of the program.

23 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Do you have any
24 knowledge of how the "Block the Box" is enforced
25 in New York City?

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2 I was in New York and then I came
3 back to Philadelphia, and I got stuck in that
4 traffic one day and I said, "Why don't we do
5 something similar to New York? Do they have a
6 special requirement? Is that the discretion of
7 their Streets Commission, or is it something
8 that's done legislatively?

9 MR. DENNY: I'm not sure how New York
10 actually does their program.

11 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

12 Councilman Rizzo.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I can't imagine
14 how we could enforce something without it being
15 posted. How do you deal with a visitor that
16 might not be aware of this particular zone? So I
17 don't think we could even begin -- I think it
18 would be challenged on every issuance of any
19 violation. So that's just my two cents. I'm
20 very involved in this issue. As a matter of
21 fact, when we first started this discussion about
22 cameras, "Block the Box" was the top discussion
23 Citywide to pick various intersections. I'm glad
24 that Councilman DiCicco has instituted this, or
25 considering this to be instituted on South

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2 Street. But I can't imagine how you could do
3 this without requiring signage, because I think
4 it would be challenged and dismissed on every
5 case.

6 MR. DENNY: The vehicle code has a
7 provision in there that you are not to block
8 intersections. And that's part of the vehicle
9 code and it's probably in most vehicle codes in
10 most states.

11 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Then you'd
12 probably have to issue the ticket based on that
13 violation and not blocking the box. You might
14 have to have two different enforcements. Because
15 if you have a visitor from out of town, I just
16 don't see that flying, or I would not be
17 supportive of that without that regulation in
18 there.

19 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: I just want to
20 follow-up on that statement again about the
21 signage. I understand -- I'm familiar wit the
22 Motor Vehicle Code, having spent about 16 years
23 in Philadelphia Traffic Court. I think the
24 signage is really going to be crucial to this
25 because again, in my opinion, this legislation

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2 isn't for the purpose of collecting fines. It's
3 for the purpose of providing reasonable access so
4 that vehicles can cross intersections, and
5 emergency vehicles, in particular, have a better
6 opportunity to get from one point to another.

7 I think if you don't do signage, once
8 the person is in the block, big deal. We write
9 the ticket. They get the fine. But it defeats
10 the purpose. I mean, why wait for the person to
11 block the intersection? I think the advance
12 notification as you're driving down the street or
13 as you're coming up to the intersection and you
14 look up at the sign -- and again, I'll draw from
15 my experience in New York. When you're
16 approaching an intersection and you look up at
17 the traffic signal, there's a sign there that
18 says, \$300 fine, or whatever the fine is, if you
19 block the box. And I think it gives most people
20 an opportunity to reflect on and say, I don't
21 want to get a ticket.

22 But if you don't give them the
23 warning -- most people don't understand the Motor
24 Vehicle Code. In the last two decades, or maybe
25 longer -- because I'm getting older by the minute

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2 -- people have a total disregard for traffic
3 laws. And in many cases, with no excuse for
4 them, they don't know what the laws are. Pass on
5 the right, pass on the left; they're oblivious to
6 that stuff.

7 We have to educate them, as we're
8 going to do with noise ordinance signs on South
9 Street in the not too distant future, as you
10 know. You've helped us with that. We haven't
11 installed those yet, but we will be shortly. We
12 want people to know that there is an ordinance,
13 that if you have your radio on too loud and it
14 could be heard within 25 feet, that you're
15 subject to a fine. I think it's reasonable for
16 us to at least give fair warning to motorists.
17 Because once they're in the box, we've basically
18 defeated the purpose, and that is to keep that
19 intersection open so that traffic can flow more
20 freely.

21 So I don't know if we need to do
22 anything with this legislation, but it's
23 certainly something I think we need to insist on.
24 And signs, Chris, come down and go up all the
25 time. And I don't think particularly that this

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2 sign on a traffic device will be any more
3 susceptible to being removed or coming down
4 because of the elements than any other signs, the
5 many thousands and tens of thousands of signs
6 that we have throughout the City today. As my
7 legislative assistant notes, we're talking about
8 specific intersections. And if we do have an
9 issue between the Department and our request, we
10 can deal with that on an intersection by
11 intersection basis. Thank you.

12 Mr. Bonnie (ph).

13 MR. BONNIE: Good morning, Mr.
14 Chairman, Members of the Committee. My name is
15 Paul Bonnie and I'm here representing the Society
16 Hill Civic Association. Our association has over
17 950 dues paying members. I am one of the vice
18 presidents and also the Chair of the Zoning and
19 Historical Preservation Committee. We support the
20 "Don't Block the Box" proposed legislation.

21 Probably the two biggest problems
22 facing Society Hill are parking and traffic. And
23 this legislation would address the latter.
24 Excessive traffic is a huge problem in our
25 neighborhood, both in terms of quality of life

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2 and safety.

3 Entirely residential, Society Hill is
4 increasingly being squeezed between the traffic,
5 congestion and noise of South Street on the
6 south, and Market Street and Old City on the
7 north. Running north, south through our
8 neighborhoods are the numbered streets, 3rd, 4th,
9 5th and 6th. South Street gridlock on the
10 weekends, beginning at about dinner time, backs
11 up on 4th and 6th streets past Lombard, sometimes
12 past Pine into our residential neighborhood.
13 Society Hill Civic Association supports the
14 proposed legislation. It would help prevent
15 South Street gridlock, which in turn would help
16 keep the numbered streets moving and this would
17 alleviate the traffic congestion in our
18 residential, usually quiet neighborhood.

19 We thank the proponents of this
20 legislation. Thank you.

21 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

22 Any questions for this witness?

23 Councilman Ortiz.

24 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: There's not a
25 great deal of garages around Society Hill

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2 neighborhoods, are there?

3 MR. BONNIE: That's correct.

4 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Do you visualize
5 at any one point that we may need to do something
6 about that?

7 MR. BONNIE: Well, I'm not sure where
8 there is any available space for any additional
9 parking garages. There are some -- there's a
10 garage on Front Street, I believe, and I think
11 the Bourse Garage, but that's on the other side
12 of Independence National Park.

13 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: The issue is that,
14 as all of that area keeps on getting developed,
15 and across the way, in terms of Penns Landing, if
16 that ever happens, and we all hope that it would,
17 then the congestion for that neighborhood for the
18 residents would even increase 10-fold probably.

19 MR. BONNIE: I agree, Councilman.
20 Because the two sort of weekend hot spots that I
21 mentioned are affecting us north, south. The
22 Penns Landing development would probably hit us
23 east, west.

24 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: I'm talking in
25 terms of an urban planning type of vision so that

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2 we can bring a perspective, that we're not
3 looking at the situation as it is now, but try to
4 look at the situation as it might be later and
5 try to get the Association and other neighborhood
6 groups together to begin trying to see how we can
7 look at some things 10 years down the road, and
8 bring your opinion into the mix as to how we can
9 begin finding solutions for those things before
10 they happen.

11 MR. BONNIE: Traffic and parking are
12 two of the biggest problems in Society Hill. I
13 can assure you that the Society Hill Civic
14 Association will be overjoyed to work with your
15 office or any Councilman's office or the
16 Administration to help take a longer view and
17 well thought out plan of attack.

18 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: I think that's
19 something we should begin looking at.

20 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Maybe I can just
21 add something. For about six years or so, we're
22 working with the Simon Group on the development
23 of Penns Landing, which never occurred. Parking
24 was always an issue, as well as traffic. I think
25 we were pretty much able to address some of those

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2 issues by providing additional off-site parking
3 from the proposed project.

4 In this case, what's driving this
5 legislation in my mind is, not so much the lack
6 of parking space, but South Street is a unique
7 situation where most of the traffic is really
8 just about traffic. These aren't people who are
9 looking for a parking space. It's cruising. And
10 the cruising is what probably is causing us the
11 most grief. I could be wrong, but I think if we
12 had additional parking on South Street, it really
13 wouldn't eliminate that much of the problem that
14 we have, because these aren't people that are
15 going there to spend the night at a restaurant.

16 You probably did it when you were a
17 teenager in New York. You're cruising around,
18 you're looking for some young lady and you want
19 to look cool and you got the radio blasting and
20 you keep going. And that's all well and good
21 when you're 18 years old, but when you get to be
22 my age, it becomes a nuisance. So I think that --
23 again, I appreciate your comments, Councilman
24 Ortiz, and your concern and, obviously, that's
25 something I would seek your help in supporting

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2 going forward. But this issue is more about the
3 cruising.

4 Conversely, I guess in Old City the
5 argument about the lack of parking may apply more
6 there than it would on South Street because most
7 of Old City deals with restaurants and nightclubs
8 where people want to get to. So there is a lot
9 of that congestion that's as a result of a lack
10 of ample parking in Old City.

11 So you have two different kind of
12 situations going on, both of them causing the
13 gridlock. But again, I think if we put another
14 500 spaces on South Street, I wonder if that
15 would really put that much of a dent in our
16 cruising problem. Thank you.

17 Ms. Puckett (ph).

18 MS. PUCKETT: Yes. Good morning,
19 everybody. My name is Colleen Puckett. I'm the
20 president of Queen Village Neighbors Association,
21 and we too support the "Don't Block the Box" Bill
22 that would help alleviate blocking of
23 intersections along South Street.

24 I have a personal experience I'd like
25 to share, where I experienced personally the

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2 problems with coming up to an intersection and
3 trying to get across and not being able to cross.

4 About seven-and-a-half years ago, it
5 was a stinking, hot August night, as we tend to
6 get here in Philadelphia, I went into labor with
7 my second child. And here it comes -- they said
8 the second child comes quickly, and I can attest
9 that that is absolutely the case. My husband and
10 I were in the car at the intersection of 7th and
11 South trying to go north to get to Pennsylvania
12 Hospital and had to actually sit through two or
13 three lights, change of lights, while I'm
14 plotting (ph), let's put it that way.

15 So anyway, I'd like to say that this
16 Bill is just really one part of a larger strategy
17 to try to improve the atmosphere and lessen the
18 negative impact of quality of life issues that
19 South Street brings to the neighborhoods. And
20 we've been working with Councilman DiCicco, as
21 have the other neighborhoods along the South
22 Street corridor, for several years now. We
23 really got kicked into gear fighting the Mardi
24 Gras situation a few years ago. We've worked
25 together to ensure that there's adequate staffing

And most importantly, Councilman DiCicco is instrumental in forming what we're calling the South Street Alliance, which is a working group of City agencies that have impact on South Street; the police, the PLCB, community groups, as well as the business districts, so we can actually start doing some of this long range planning that Councilman Ortiz is saying is so crucial.

So again, we're very supportive of this. We're talking about nothing less than a culture change on South Street. We still want people to have fun. South Street is never going to be Manayunk, to use one recent example. We do want people to have fun there, but what we want to get rid of is the "anything goes" kind of atmosphere that for too long has really typified activities on South Street. So for all these reasons, we fully support Bill 020437, "Don't Block the Box".

COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you. Thank

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2 you, Colleen. And thank you, Paul, for your
3 patience this morning and testifying.

4 Next witnesses. Good morning
5 gentlemen. Please identify yourself for the
6 record and proceed with your testimony.

7 MR. HEALEY: Good morning. My name
8 is Francis Healey. I'm Special Advisor to Police
9 Commissioner Johnson, and to my right is
10 Lieutenant Walker. He's a commanding officer of
11 the South Street unit.

12 First, let me apologize for
13 Commissioner Johnson's absence. However, the
14 purpose or the role of today's hearings are to
15 address your questions regarding the situations
16 as they exist on South Street, and Lieutenant
17 Walker, being the commanding officer of that
18 unit, is best served in that capacity. So based
19 upon that, I welcome any questions to the
20 Lieutenant regarding the traffic conditions on
21 South Street and the area.

22 MR. WALKER: Good morning, Members of
23 the Committee and Chairperson.

24 Basically South Street -- again, the
25 congestion on South Street is created basically

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2 by volume.

3 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Excuse me, sir.

4 You need to identify yourself for the record.

5 MR. WALLER: Lieutenant John Walker,

6 Philadelphia Police Department, Commanding

7 Officer of the South Street detail.

8 The volume on South Street of traffic
9 creates the problems moving eastbound. The
10 biggest complaints I get from the community are
11 the north and south numbered streets, which
12 become heavily congested due to vehicles
13 overtaking the intersection while they're moving
14 eastbound. The vehicle traffic starts Monday
15 through Thursday, from 12:00 noon up until about
16 6:00 p.m., from 2nd Street to 6th Street where
17 the heavy congestion begins. And on the
18 weekends, our congestion starts at 2nd and South
19 and moves all the way up to as far as 16th and
20 South moving eastbound. The problem continues to
21 be the intersections being blocked, especially
22 the 6th Street intersection, which is where the
23 fire house is. And the Fire Department
24 personnel, attempting to get through these
25 intersections when they're blocked with vehicles,

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2 has created some problems for us.

3 In addition, at 9th and South, you
4 have medical transportation trying to get to
5 Pennsylvania Hospital and to the emergency room,
6 which sometimes becomes blocked as a result of
7 people overtaking the intersections. These
8 intersection blockages have created sometimes
9 fights on the highway, assaults and, again,
10 numerous complaints, including those phone calls
11 from the Councilman being stuck in traffic. And
12 that's the general conditions down there on South
13 Street at this time.

14 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.
15 Lieutenant, I know that you're not -- either not
16 permitted or you're not here today just to speak
17 in reference to the legislation, but you're here
18 as an expert witness. A number of vehicles on
19 any given weekend, especially in the high, warm
20 weather months that travel up and down South
21 Street, do you have an approximate number of
22 those?

23 MR. WALKER: We'll see on a Friday
24 night, a busy night, anywhere from 5,000 to 8,000
25 vehicles coming through the street. And repeat

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2 people coming through the street cruising,
3 somewhere around 1,000.

4 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Do you think in
5 your experience, understanding that there is a
6 Motor Vehicle Code that does provide for the
7 issuance of a citation if you block an
8 intersection, that a "Block the Box" program
9 would be helpful? And do you think, in your
10 professional opinion -- and don't agree because
11 it's what I said earlier -- but I need your
12 professional opinion, that the signage would both
13 be helpful, not only to the motorist, but also to
14 the Department in its issuance and enforcement of
15 the code?

16 MR. HEALEY: Councilman, as I said,
17 we're not authorized to actually comment or opine
18 on the legislation itself. We can only testify
19 as to the conditions that are on South Street in
20 the area.

21 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Okay.
22 Councilman Ortiz.

23 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: New York City has
24 the gridlock law, which is what we're talking
25 about here. How is it working in Manhattan, for

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2 example? Do you have any information as to that?

3 MR. WALKER: I think it's been --
4 knowing people who work in the NYPD and speaking
5 to them, I think it's been very effective up
6 there in New York City.

7 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: And the
8 enforcement, in order to break up the gridlock,
9 how are the police going to organize themselves
10 to enforce the law and so on?

11 MR. WALKER: That will be a policy
12 decision that's made by the Commissioner.

13 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: If you're on 5th
14 and South and the light changes, but there's
15 traffic and you move right into the middle of the
16 intersection, are you going to have a police
17 officer there to write a ticket immediately on
18 that?

19 MR. WALKER: That would be an
20 assessment we would do depending on what the
21 impact is in that area. Fifth Street is highly
22 impacted, along with 6th Street, because of the
23 5th Street corridor into New Jersey.

24 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Because one thing
25 is, we can write the law. I'm trying to find out

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2 how is it that we're going to go forward in
3 terms --

4 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Generally -- if
5 I can interrupt for a minute. Generally the --
6 especially on the busy weekends, busy nights
7 which are weekends, you do have, at most
8 intersections, police personnel at those
9 intersections anyway, generally speaking.

10 MR. WALKER: Generally speaking, we
11 cover from 2nd up to 8th Street with police
12 officers actually doing traffic control.

13 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: So they're going
14 to keep the traffic away from the middle of the
15 intersection?

16 MR. WALKER: They control the
17 intersection. They can also do enforcement at
18 those posts that they're assigned to. We have
19 additional officers assigned to bike patrols and
20 foot patrols who also can assist with
21 enforcement.

22 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Do you have any
23 knowledge of your officers who, from time to
24 time, may issue a violation, motor vehicle
25 violation, for someone who is blocking the

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2 intersection? Any comments by the motorists
3 saying that they didn't know it was illegal or
4 anything like? Do people not normally know that
5 they shouldn't be blocking the intersection?

6 MR. WALKER: Most people have no idea
7 that they should not. And the other law that
8 we're all aware of is the loud music law. When
9 we stop people to write tickets, they say, we're
10 not aware of it. That's a big concern, that we
11 have signage to say that.

12 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: We're going to
13 be installing signs, as you know, on that.

14 Councilman Rizzo.

15 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Lieutenant, when I
16 first introduced "Don't Block the Box," we met
17 with the Police Department, and the Police
18 Department said that introducing Citywide "Don't
19 Block the Box" would be very difficult because of
20 the personnel issue associated with it. That's
21 why then Streets Commissioner Johnson offered the
22 suggestion to bring cameras into play to take
23 care of that situation. And that basically is my
24 question again. That without a commitment from
25 the Police Department, because the minute your

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2 officer that's got that intersection, pulls a car
3 over -- in other words, we have to develop
4 possibly a policy where -- I believe they call it
5 a "hard back," where the officer doesn't even
6 have to stop the vehicle. He could issue the
7 ticket to the owner of that vehicle just based on
8 writing the number down. Because I can't imagine
9 what congestion -- or how you would deal with
10 stopping a car that is creating a gridlock
11 situation at 5th and South. You lose the
12 officers for 10, 15 minutes, I assume, at the
13 best. I think you really -- the Police
14 Department's response to this legislation is
15 going to be critical.

16 Are we going to have the officers
17 committed? And once you do commit them, or you
18 use the existing officers that are patrolling
19 South Street? Because I believe an officer
20 probably could spend the entire tour of duty
21 enforcing "Don't Block the Box" at 5th and South.
22 So -- and then, what do you do with the vehicle?
23 Do you pull the vehicle over? Does it block the
24 middle of the intersection? So I think there's
25 some strategies which you discussed. It's a

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2 policy issue on how this program would be
3 enforced. Again, it sounds to me like if not
4 handled properly, the intent of the legislation
5 could create to the confusion.

6 MR. HEALEY: Councilman, I agree with
7 you. If this legislation does come to pass, the
8 Department would sit down and develop a policy on
9 how to enforce it the most effective way
10 possible.

11 The first step in developing a
12 policy, we would first go to New York and
13 identify how their police officers handle these
14 situations, as well. It's my understanding
15 peripherally that the officers up there actually
16 issue the citation by the time the light actually
17 changes. They're that quick. So that's my
18 understanding of how they actually enforce it up
19 there. They're prepared. The tickets are pretty
20 much all written except for the vehicle
21 information and driver's name and address. So
22 they actually get them done and off in the same
23 direction. The objective is not to add more
24 congestion by pulling them over to the side.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: It would be like

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2 filling out a survey.

3 MR. HEALEY: A little quicker.

4 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

5 Any other questions for these

6 witnesses?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you,

9 gentlemen. We appreciate your time.

10 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Mr. Levy, is

11 there a representative from Washington Square

12 West?

13 MR. LEVY: No.

14 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you,

15 Lieutenant.

16 Thank you for your patience, Mr.

17 Levy. You are a patient man, as we all know.

18 MR. LEVY: Good morning. My name is

19 Paul Levy. I'm the Executive Director of Central

20 Philadelphia Development Corporation, and I am

21 here to testify in favor of Bill No. 020437.

22 Let me first just preface my comments

23 by thanking City Councilmembers on this Committee

24 for taking on this issue and the parking issue.

25 These are not isolated issues. It is really part

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2 of how we manage parking and transportation and
3 traffic in Center City. And since they are part
4 of the system, I think they need to be addressed
5 as part of the system. I have copies of my
6 testimony here with maps attached, if people are
7 interested getting copies.

8 Let me say, as well, that for over a
9 year, through an organization we have formed
10 called the Central Philadelphia Transportation
11 Management Association, we have been having
12 SEPTA, Patco, the Philadelphia Police, the
13 Streets Department, private parking operators and
14 others meeting to address issues of traffic flow
15 in Center City, and they have put their finger on
16 traffic congestion as the number one issue that
17 is really restraining activity in Center City.

18 What I'd like to just say quickly in
19 my prepared remarks is that we've gotten very
20 good in this City at focusing on problems that
21 result from the loss of market share; when we're
22 dealing with abandoned houses, when we're dealing
23 with vacant lots. But I think if we wish to
24 retain and grow jobs, we also need to devote
25 equal attention to managing the problems that

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2 come with success. And chief among these
3 problems is traffic congestion.

4 If you look back on the last decade,
5 we had 169 percent growth in restaurants within
6 Center City. And we had a growth of the Center
7 City population of 9 percent. The Delaware
8 Valley Regional Planning Commission documents
9 that between 1995 and 2000, we had a 39 percent
10 increase in cars coming into Center City each
11 day. 300,000 cars each day now come into Center
12 City. This is a wonderful, good sign of the
13 vitality of Center City.

14 We're also very focused on trying to
15 get individuals to switch over, to the extent
16 possible, to public transportation, since public
17 transportation can help us minimize the
18 congestion that we're getting. But clearly one
19 strategy which we strongly endorse is this "Don't
20 Block the Box" legislation. It is one very
21 important tool in making sure the traffic can
22 move for both safety, as well as traffic
23 movement.

24 I can concur with many of the
25 questions that Councilmembers were raising. One,

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - BILL 020437

2 I think this legislation clearly needs to be
3 accompanied with good signage. In cities like
4 New York City, they literally paint a box at the
5 intersection so it's as clear as day that that is
6 special zone. I would urge that we do that in
7 Philadelphia.

8 Secondly, as several of the
9 Councilmembers have noted, enforcement of this is
10 essential. Clearly putting the law up will be a
11 deterrent, but we need enforcement.
12 Unfortunately, for budgetary reasons, we have far
13 fewer traffic officers in Philadelphia than we
14 had 10 or 15 years ago. I think there are two
15 alternatives that are really worth looking at,
16 and we would love to join with Council and others
17 in looking at these.

18 One is the obvious one, is simply
19 increasing the budget of the Philadelphia Police
20 Department so that there are more traffic
21 officers. I fully recognize the limits in the
22 City budget. But the New York City example,
23 which you have raised and I've attached to my
24 testimony on the third sheet summaries from both
25 New York City and Baltimore, both Baltimore,

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - BILL 020437
2 Maryland and New York City have "Don't Block the
3 Box" legislation, and they enforce it with
4 civilians who are managed by their police
5 departments. New York City has traffic
6 enforcement agents. Just to give you a sense of
7 that, I have here from their web site a posting
8 for their job. In a traffic enforcement agent,
9 starting salary range is \$23,000 to \$26,000,
10 which is significantly less expensive than,
11 obviously, a fully-equipped police officers.
12 These individuals are managed by the New York
13 City Police Department. So the issue of control
14 and management is central.

15 So I'm in favor of the legislation,
16 in favor of having signage and enforcement. I
17 have attached a map and it includes sites, not
18 only in Councilman's DiCicco's district, but in
19 Councilman Clarke's district of other sites.
20 Through conversations with SEPTA, parking
21 operators and others, that we think are key
22 points of congestion. There's a map designating
23 a variety of locations.

24 Let me just have one that many of you
25 who may come in from the northwest are fully

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - BILL 020437
2 familiar with, if you come in the Vine Street
3 expressway and get off at 15th and Vine. There
4 is a huge problem at morning rush hour with
5 traffic coming south on 15th by Hahnemann that
6 completely blocks the box there and creates major
7 traffic congestion backup onto the expressway.
8 There are evening rush hour problems. And I
9 think Councilman DiCicco is absolutely correct in
10 starting in the first location on South Street
11 where you already have police officers on the
12 street.

13 But I urge Council to look at this
14 issue more comprehensively and recognize the very
15 success we've enjoyed in Center City comes with a
16 price. That price is traffic congestion. And
17 quite simply, people who get frustrated with this
18 problem will simply cease to come. We have the
19 opportunity to really move traffic well and grow
20 business or the opportunity to frustrate people.
21 So again, I really compliment Council on looking
22 at the parking issue, at looking at the Block the
23 Box issue, and urge you to look at this in a
24 comprehensive fashion and urge the support of
25 this piece of legislation. Thank you.

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - BILL 020437

2 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you, Mr.
3 Levy.

4 Any questions for this witness from
5 the Committee?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Is there anyone
8 else here who wishes to testify for or against
9 this Bill?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: I believe that
12 was the last Bill.

13 Councilman Goode is also in
14 attendance today. He is a member of this
15 Committee as well.

16 This concludes the public hearing on
17 the Committee on Services.

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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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PUBLIC MEETING

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COMMITTEE ON STREETS AND SERVICES

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Wednesday, February 5, 2003

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Public Meeting conducted by the
Committee on Streets and Services, held in Room
696, City Hall, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on
the above date, to consider action on the
following:

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BILLS 020437, 020762, 020763, 020815,
020822, 020825, 030011.

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PRESENT:

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COUNCILMAN FRANK DICICCO, Chairman

COUNCILMAN DARRELL CLARKE

COUNCILMAN DAVID COHEN

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COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE

COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED-MILLER

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COUNCILMAN ANGEL ORTIZ

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1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - PUBLIC MEETING

2 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: We will now
3 begin with the public meeting on the Committee on
4 Streets and Services for purposes of voting out
5 Bills.

6 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
7 Ortiz for a motion on Bill 020825.

8 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Mr. Chairman, I
9 move that Bill 020825 be reported out of
10 Committee with a favorable recommendation and a
11 recommendation that the Rules of Council be
12 suspended so as to permit first reading at the
13 next session of City Council.

14 (Duly seconded.)

15 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's been
16 properly moved and seconded that Bill No. 020825
17 be reported out of this Committee with a
18 favorable recommendation and a further
19 recommendation that the Rules of Council be
20 suspended.

21 All those in favor, signify by saying
22 aye.

23 (Aye.)

24 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Those opposed?

25 (No response.)

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - PUBLIC MEETING

2 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The Bill is
3 approved.

4 Councilman Ortiz.

5 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Mr. Chairman, I
6 move that we report Bill 020815 out of Committee
7 with a favorable recommendation and a
8 recommendation that the Rules of Council be
9 suspended so as to permit first reading at the
10 next session of City Council.

11 (Duly seconded.)

12 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's been
13 properly moved and seconded that Bill No. 020815
14 be reported out of Committee with a favorable
15 recommendation and that the Rules of Council be
16 suspended.

17 All those in favor, signify by saying
18 aye.

19 (Aye.)

20 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Those opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The Bill is
23 approved.

24 Councilman Ortiz.

25 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Mr. Chairman, I

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - PUBLIC MEETING

2 move that Bill 020822 be reported out of
3 Committee with a favorable recommendation and a
4 recommendation that the Rules of Council be
5 suspended so as to permit first reading in the
6 next session of City Council.

7 (Duly seconded.)

8 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's been
9 properly moved and seconded that Bill No. 020822
10 be reported out of this Committee with a
11 favorable recommendation and that the Rules of
12 Council be suspended.

13 All those in favor, signify by saying
14 aye.

15 (Aye.)

16 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Those opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The Bill is
19 approved.

20 Councilman Ortiz.

21 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Mr. Chairman, I
22 move that Bill 030011 be reported out of
23 Committee with a favorable recommendation and a
24 recommendation that the Rules of Council be
25 suspended so as to permit first reading at the

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - PUBLIC MEETING

2 next session of City Council.

3 (Duly seconded.)

4 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's been
5 properly moved and seconded that Bill No. 030011
6 be reported out of this Committee with a
7 favorable recommendation and that the Rules of
8 Council be suspended.

9 All those in favor, signify by saying
10 aye.

11 (Aye.)

12 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Those opposed?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The Bill is
15 approved.

16 I'm going to offer an amendment to
17 Bill No. -- make a motion that the amendment to
18 Bill No. 020437 be approved. I remember this
19 Committee has had a copy.

20 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Mr. Chairman, I
21 move that Bill 020437 be reported out of
22 Committee, as amended, and that the Rules of
23 Council be suspended so as to permit first
24 reading in the next session of City Council.

25 (Duly seconded.)

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - PUBLIC MEETING

2 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's been
3 properly moved and seconded that Bill No. 020437
4 be reported out of this Committee as amended with
5 a favorable recommendation and that the Rules of
6 Council be suspended.

7 All those in favor, signify by saying
8 aye.

9 (Aye.)

10 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Those opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The Bill is
13 approved.

14 Councilmember Clarke, do you have an
15 amendment to Bill No. 762?

16 COUNCILMAN CLARKE: Thank you, Mr.
17 Chairman.

18 Mr. Chairman, we're going to amend
19 this on the Calendar because the amendment is not
20 prepared yet. I just want to, for the record,
21 note that it will be amended on the second
22 reading.

23 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Mr. Chairman, I
25 move that Bill 020762 be reported out of

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - PUBLIC MEETING

2 Committee with a favorable recommendation and a
3 recommendation that the Rules of Council be
4 suspended so as to permit first reading in the
5 next session of City Council.

6 (Duly seconded.)

7 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's been
8 properly moved and seconded that Bill No. 020762
9 be reported out of this Committee with a
10 favorable recommendation and that the Rules of
11 Council be suspended.

12 All those in favor, signify by saying
13 aye.

14 (Aye.)

15 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Those opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The Bill is
18 approved.

19 At the request of Mr. Dickson of the
20 Philadelphia Parking Authority, I offer an
21 amendment to Bill No. 020763, that the effective
22 date would be changed to April 1, 2003.

23 (Duly seconded.)

24 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's properly
25 moved and seconded that the amendment to Bill No.

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - PUBLIC MEETING

2 020763 be reported favorably.

3 All those in favor, signify by saying
4 aye.

5 (Aye.)

6 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Those opposed?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: The amendment is
9 approved.

10 The Chair recognizes Councilman
11 Ortiz.

12 COUNCILMAN ORTIZ: Mr. Chairman, I
13 move that Bill 020763 be reported out of
14 Committee, as amended, with a favorable
15 recommendation and a recommendation that the
16 Rules of Council be suspended so as to permit
17 first reading in the next session of City
18 Council.

19 (Duly seconded.)

20 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: It's been
21 properly moved and seconded that Bill No. 020763
22 as amended be reported out of this Committee with
23 a favorable recommendation and that the Rules of
24 Council be suspended.

25 All those in favor, signify by saying

1 2/5/03 - STREETS AND SERVICES - PUBLIC MEETING

2 aye.

3 (Aye.)

4 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: Those opposed?

5 I am voting no on this.

6 Majority rules the Bill is reported
7 out favorably.

8 This concludes the public meeting of
9 the Committee on Streets and Services. Thank
10 you.

11 (Council adjourned at 11:55 a.m.)

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

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing
proceedings of the Council of the City of
Philadelphia of February 5, 2003, were reported
fully and accurately by me, and that this is a
correct transcript of the same.

RE: COMMITTEE ON STREETS AND SERVICES

Lisa C. Bradley, RPR
and Notary Public