

Special Committee on Gun Violence
March 30, 2021

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Tuesday, March 30, 2021
10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

RESOLUTION: 170609

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2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good
3 morning, everyone.

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

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

21 Will the Clerk call the roll to
22 take attendance. Members that are in
23 attendance will please indicate that
24 they are present when their names are
25 called. Also, please say a few brief

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1 words when responding so that your image
2 will be displayed on screen when you
3 speak.

4 THE CLERK: Curtis Jones, Jr.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good

6 morning, everyone. Present.

7 THE CLERK: Jamie Gauthier.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

9 Present. Good morning, Mr. Chair. Good
10 morning, colleagues. Good morning to
11 the public.

12 THE CLERK: Isaiah Thomas.

13 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good

14 morning, Mr. Chair. Good morning,
15 colleagues. Good morning to the
16 listening public. I'm present.

17 THE CLERK: Allan Domb.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good morning,
19 Mr. Chair and colleagues. Good morning
20 to Philadelphia.

21 THE CLERK: Katherine Gilmore
22 Richardson.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Good morning, Mr. Chair.

25 Good morning, colleagues. And good

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1 morning, Philadelphia.

2 THE CLERK: Helen Gym.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Good

4 morning, Mr. Chair. And good morning,
5 colleagues. I'm present.

6 THE CLERK: And Mark Squilla.

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good

8 morning, Mr. Chair and colleagues.
9 Present.

10 THE CLERK: Derek Green.

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good

12 morning, Mr. Chair. Good morning,
13 colleagues. Looking forward to another
14 conversation regarding this critical
15 issue.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
17 very much. A quorum of the Committee is
18 present and this hearing is now called
19 to order. This is the public hearing of
20 the Special Committee on Gun Violence
21 regarding Resolution 170609.

22 Will the Clerk please read the
23 title of the resolution.

24 THE CLERK: Resolution 170609,
25 a resolution authorizing the creation of

1 the Special Committee on Gun Violence
2 Prevention to address Philadelphia's
3 enduring plague of gun violence by
4 facilitating coordination among
5 stakeholders in formulating a
6 comprehensive gun violence prevention
7 strategy.

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
9 very much, Brett.

10 This meeting is now called to
11 order. And the purpose of this Special
12 Committee on Gun Violence Prevention
13 hearing is to examine the City's
14 strategic plan to address gun violence,
15 save our youth and reduce the murder
16 rate here in the City of Philadelphia.

17 The goal of this hearing is to
18 help inform recommendations for 2021
19 that we can use to help end this
20 senseless violence. We are here today
21 to talk publicly about what we are doing
22 and the solutions that we are going to
23 work on to reduce the senseless gun
24 violence that we have seen here in the
25 City of Philadelphia.

1 Today, at least 119 people have
2 been murdered in our City, over a 30
3 percent increase over the same time of
4 2020. As of March of 2021, more than
5 463 people have been shot fatally or
6 nonfatally, and that's including over 60
7 children between the ages of 0 to 18
8 years old. As an elected official and
9 as a father of two African-American
10 young men, this is totally unacceptable.
11 And the purpose of our hearing is for us
12 to continue to re-examine our strategy
13 in working forward toward and working
14 together as it relates to addressing the
15 senseless gun violence that we are
16 seeing plaguing our streets here in the
17 City of Philadelphia.

18 I do like to note for the
19 record the hard work that myself and my
20 colleagues have been working on to
21 address this issue, rather it's banning
22 ghost guns here in the City of
23 Philadelphia, rather it's creating a
24 violence prevention resource network to
25 address the issue of senseless gun

1 violence, rather it's calling on our
2 Mayor to declare gun violence as a state
3 of emergency here in the City of
4 Philadelphia, rather it's taking a deep
5 dive in reviewing the last 1,000
6 shootings here in the City of
7 Philadelphia so we can get a critical
8 understanding on why individuals
9 continue to keep shooting and murdering
10 individuals here in the City of
11 Philadelphia or calling on and looking
12 at strategies around creating curfew
13 centers and safe zones for our young
14 people.

15 We have worked collectively in
16 this body to get to the root causes of
17 why our young people continue to pick up
18 guns and shoot one another and we will
19 continue to have these hearings and also
20 work behind the scenes to get to the
21 bottom of this very critical and
22 important issue.

23 I would like to also
24 acknowledge that there will also be
25 hearings around the issue around trauma

1 and the impact that gun violence is
2 having on our young people later on in
3 the week with the Children and Youth
4 Committee with Councilwoman Helen Gym
5 and myself as well as the issue of
6 institutional racism and how
7 institutional racism has an overall
8 impact on why young people pick up guns,
9 and we see this senseless gun violence
10 particularly in urban areas sponsored by
11 Councilman Derek Green, so we're working
12 very hard collectively in City Council.

13 So with that being said as it
14 relates to my opening remarks, I want to
15 take a moment to have my colleague
16 Councilman Curtis Jones, who chairs the
17 Public Safety Committee, to give a brief
18 update on the Subcommittee of the 1,000
19 Shootings Review Committee that he has
20 been working on.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
22 Mr. Chairman. And thank you for keeping
23 us focused and raising the discussion to
24 the level of priority within City
25 government. Thank you again, and to my

1 colleagues who have also joined this
2 cause.

3 Two things, Mr. Chairman
4 briefly: One, I submitted for the
5 record to you a 12-point bullet-point
6 outline of things that we should be
7 examining over the next budget period to
8 look at reducing the horrific impacts of
9 gun violence. And we put that on the
10 record so that during the budget process
11 we examine how each of these
12 recommendations, whether it's group
13 homes or use of cameras or a number of
14 other options, be focused and put into
15 budget priority. So we've submitted
16 that for the record.

17 What you've asked me to do
18 today, however, is to drill down on 100
19 shooters. That's the original
20 resolution that was submitted by you and
21 myself from the Public Safety Committee
22 and Committee on Gun Violence, which
23 turned quickly into a review of 2,000
24 shooters. As a result of that
25 resolution, Mr. Chair, we put together a

1 team that represents the District
2 Attorney, both of our Committees, the
3 Mayor's Office of Violence Prevention,
4 the Public Defender's Office, the
5 District Attorney's Office and the
6 representatives of the state's John
7 Shapiro's Office, First District Court
8 to look at this process. And it was
9 three basic things that we wanted to
10 establish:

11 First and foremost, how did the
12 shooter wind up pulling that trigger at
13 whatever gun incident that happened.
14 The second was how did the gun wind up
15 being a part of that crime scene,
16 whether it was a ghost gun, whether it
17 was a straw purchase, whether it was
18 stolen. And the third part of it is if
19 this is a recurring theme of an actor or
20 person who pulled that trigger, how did
21 they get there not once, not twice, but
22 three times.

23 And as a result of this
24 partnership, which was amazing to me
25 because none of the individuals started

1 pointing fingers at each other, but all
2 of the individuals started pointing
3 towards solutions, we came up with some
4 preliminary findings:

5 One, 80 percent of the
6 individuals that were a part of gun
7 violence had a prior gun charge, drug
8 case or violent incident, 80 percent of
9 the shooters.

10 72 percent of the shooters had
11 a prior drug possession arrest, which
12 means something, but we don't know what
13 that data will mean in the long run on
14 how to emphasize the solutions to this
15 problem.

16 The other thing that we did was
17 we shifted focus, Mr. Chairman and
18 members of the Committee. What we want
19 to do and what we discovered during this
20 process was one of the issues was that
21 we were taking guns off the streets, the
22 police were getting guns out of the
23 hands of shooters, but for some reason
24 many of those individuals wound up back
25 in population and still not off of the

1 streets because of that gun case. So we
2 are looking to look at why that is, not
3 pointing fingers but pointing toward
4 solutions.

5 The second thing that was found
6 out by the research committee was that
7 we have a problem in the City of
8 Philadelphia bringing witnesses forward
9 and for good reason. Many of them do
10 not feel safe and we have to do a better
11 job in protecting them and making sure
12 that they feel safe when they come
13 forward with testimony.

14 And so, these are some of the
15 preliminary findings that we're going to
16 take into the budget process. So what
17 that might mean is also an improvement
18 of technology. One of the things that
19 was shared by the Police Commissioner is
20 that -- and you mentioned this in one of
21 the prior hearings. Many of the
22 homicide detectives did not have
23 City-issued cell phones.

24 Now, I don't have to be Dick
25 Tracy to know that we are being

1 outperformed in technology. Our
2 offenders know how to use technology
3 better than some of our departments and
4 are using social media to incite
5 violence in our City, so we have to
6 fight fire with fire. Yes, we need to
7 deal with the poverty issue, I get all
8 of that.

9 But what I also know,
10 Mr. Chairman, is that there's a silent
11 majority of people who are sick and
12 tired of being sick and tired of the
13 violence on our streets, that we have to
14 address that issue as well. And I'm
15 thinking that by this Committee, we will
16 point not fingers at each other, but to
17 solutions. And I'm excited about the
18 prospect of this work, Mr. Chairman.

19 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Mr. Chair.

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes,
21 Mr. Green.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I wasn't
23 sure if Councilman Jones was finished
24 his point because I wanted to make
25 another point as follow-up information.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Sure.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: I yield the
3 mic.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
5 Councilmember Jones and Chair Johnson,
6 for that information, that research.

7 I think that information and
8 the point you raised identifies some
9 things that we have known for some
10 period of time, that we as a body and I
11 think in this upcoming budget process
12 after the Mayor's budget address on
13 April 15th need to put more dollars into
14 crime prevention activities, especially
15 at the grassroots level.

16 I know, Councilmember Jones,
17 you talked about House of Umoja. We've
18 been in situations in the past, as you
19 know, back in the mid '70s when we said
20 No Gang War in '74, and we provided
21 resources to those grassroots community
22 organizations, and we have really not
23 done that for a number of years, so
24 that's one area that we as a body need
25 to step up from a budget perspective and

1 be held accountable.

2 Also, providing additional
3 resources to the Police Department for
4 technology as you stated and also for
5 some of the forensics that District
6 Attorney Krasner also talked about, so
7 we need to step up and we need to be
8 held accountable if we fail to do that.
9 But other parts of this issue also need
10 to be held accountable, from the fact
11 our Police Department needs to do a
12 better job on clearance of crime
13 activity. As Stanley Crawford has often
14 talked about, the issue that we're not
15 clearing cases at the level that we
16 should, so we need to hold our Police
17 Department accountable for the fact that
18 are we getting the best return of our
19 investment in the Police Department in
20 reference to the clearance of crimes.
21 But then also, we also need to hold the
22 District Attorney accountable in
23 reference to the conviction rate. So we
24 all have a level of accountability that
25 we need to play a role in this issue.

1 The issue of witnesses
2 testifying has been an issue for a long
3 time. That's not a new issue. It's a
4 hard challenge to address the issue. We
5 don't have the resources like the
6 federal government to really invest in a
7 true witness protection program, but we
8 still need to make the convictions
9 occur. So we have a level of
10 accountability. And we have to call,
11 for lack of a better word, a spade a
12 spade where we all have to take
13 ownership of this issue, from the
14 perspective of Councilmember Jamie
15 Gauthier saying that we should be
16 having, and as you and all members of
17 Council supported her resolution, of
18 making sure that we are taking the steps
19 as a City to really call this as an
20 epidemic that it is, and all of these
21 issues. So we all have a role to play
22 in addressing this issue and we also
23 have to be held accountable to what
24 needs to be done going forward.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES:

1 Mr. Chairman, he is absolutely right --

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I would
3 like to do this if it's okay. Go ahead.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: If I could,
5 I need to finish one point, that there
6 are many causes to this and, therefore,
7 there's no one single solution to this.
8 And so, he's right, that we all need to
9 be accountable for every aspect of
10 solving this problem.

11 One thing, that if we can
12 figure out how to -- and I mentioned the
13 12 points which I've submitted in
14 writing so I won't go into a great deal
15 of detail. But many of those points
16 that he mentioned are in those points,
17 and there are a lot of good things
18 happening. But we have to pay to bring
19 them to scale. Like when we talk about
20 House of Umoja, we have Girard College
21 which is producing great outcomes. But
22 we need 12 of them in different parts of
23 the City to deal with at-risk young
24 people.

25 So if we look at these things,

1 divide them equally and put the emphasis
2 like Member Gauthier has talked about to
3 a pandemic priority, I think we can
4 solve because the solutions are there.
5 They're just not brought up to scale.

6 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: No, thank
8 you for your opening remarks. And I
9 want to give everybody an opportunity to
10 chime in. So let me move on and let the
11 Clerk call the first panel and then we
12 can do a deeper dive as it relates to
13 questioning the process, how the process
14 is moving forward with the various
15 agencies as well as how we're going to
16 address this issue comprehensively.

17 And I was also asked to mention
18 the importance around our resolution
19 focusing on the issue of social media.
20 And I don't know if people have been
21 paying attention as of lately. Again,
22 if you talk about some of the history of
23 the social media beefs and the carrying
24 of guns and promoting of gun life and
25 street life on social media, it plays a

1 major role in some of the conflicts that
2 we're seeing.

3 So with that, I'm going to ask
4 the Clerk to please call the first
5 panel.

6 THE CLERK: Police Commissioner
7 Danielle Outlaw.

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good
9 morning, Commissioner Outlaw. How are
10 you this morning?

11 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Good
12 morning. I'm fine. Thank you.

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good. You
14 can just state your name for the record
15 and you can begin your testimony.

16 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW:
17 Certainly. If I can get Director Thomas
18 to get my slide deck up. Awesome.
19 Thank you.

20 All right. Good morning,
21 Mr. Chair, Chairman Johnson, and other
22 members of the Committee and to the City
23 of Philadelphia. It's my pleasure to be
24 here this morning along with other
25 members of my executive team to provide

1 you with an update.

2 We haven't presented since I
3 believe last year on this topic, so
4 we're pretty much here to give you not
5 only a high-level overview of where we
6 stand, I think some of it has been
7 already covered, but to provide you with
8 an update on just where we are in
9 general, some things that we
10 accomplished over 2020, some themes and
11 patterns that we saw over 2020 and what
12 we'll be focusing on in 2021. And then
13 there was a lot of conversation around
14 forensics and I want to be able to touch
15 on forensics as well.

16 So with that, I'd like to move
17 to the first slide. This is the slide
18 that we tend to use to establish our
19 framework and to start the conversation.
20 We all know that there's been an
21 increasing trend with our homicides and
22 our shooting victims.

23 Mr. Chair, you stated how we've
24 seen an increase. Our homicides are up
25 29 percent and our nonfatal shootings

1 are up 51 percent, respectively. But
2 what we also know here is that our VUFA
3 arrests are also coinciding and trending
4 upward along with our shootings and
5 homicides. And what this is telling us
6 is that there's more guns on the street,
7 which means that there's more victims.

8 Next slide. Last year we
9 recovered just under 5,000 crime guns.
10 And again, a crime gun is any gun
11 recovered by us as part of a criminal
12 investigation. It doesn't mean that
13 these are guns that we include from
14 buybacks or guns surrendered to us for
15 safekeeping. These are a record number
16 of guns. And thus far as of March 29th
17 of this year, we've recovered 1,478
18 guns. So if we keep up at this pace,
19 we're on track to get over 6,100 guns by
20 the end of this year if we continue at
21 this pace.

22 Next slide. This is an updated
23 slide. And I can continue to throw this
24 out here for a few reasons. While this
25 is an updated slide with 2021 data, I

1 want to just throw the caveat out there
2 that it's really still early to
3 interpret what 2021 means. But the
4 trend lines are still going in the same
5 direction.

6 It's showing that although our
7 VUFA arrests, our Violation of Uniform
8 Firearm arrests, are continuing to
9 increase over the years. It's still
10 showing that the percent of our VUFA
11 convictions are steadily decreasing and
12 this goes all the way back to 2015. And
13 that simultaneously, the percent of the
14 cases that are withdrawn or dismissed
15 are steadily increasing. So the trend
16 lines are going in the opposite
17 direction that we want them to go in.

18 We share this not because we
19 want to -- and maybe it is, I don't
20 know. We're not starting a new war on
21 guns or whatever it is. We're not
22 focusing on folks who might have let
23 their gun permit lapse or who are
24 legally carrying a firearm and, you
25 know.

1 We know that folks are turning
2 to guns more readily. They're not
3 carrying them legally. They're using
4 them illegally and they're turning to
5 guns when they are caught up in an
6 altercation. Social media beefs were
7 referenced earlier. They shoot people
8 when they believe that they're
9 disrespected. Feuds over altercations
10 around money, you name it. Folks used
11 to say, as cheesy as it sounds, use your
12 words. They're not using their words.
13 They're immediately going to guns. And
14 because there's more guns readily
15 available, they're easy to get, people
16 are turning to guns. They're shooting
17 folks left and right, and that's why
18 we're seeing the number of shootings
19 that we're seeing here.

20 So we're focusing on guns the
21 way that we are because we want people
22 to leave the guns at home because we
23 believe that that will lessen the amount
24 of shootings that we're seeing. So,
25 yes, we are focusing on the illegal

1 crime guns because we believe if we do
2 and if there are proper consequences
3 down the road, we believe that it will
4 put a dent in some of these shootings
5 and homicides that we're seeing. That's
6 why we continue to focus on these VUFA
7 arrests that we're making, and we'll
8 continue to highlight these every
9 opportunity that we can.

10 Next slide, please. Just a
11 reminder that this plan, the action
12 plan, has been in place since June 2020.
13 It's entitled, the Crime Prevention
14 Violence Reduction and Action Plan, but
15 it's a holistic approach. It focuses
16 again on our three pillars:
17 Organizational excellence, crime
18 prevention and reduction, and community
19 engagement and inclusion. These pillars
20 are important because they're
21 interrelated. We can't have one without
22 the other.

23 And if we recall during the
24 civil unrest last summer, the plan was
25 already rolled out. But we also

1 committed to a plethora of reforms,
2 which also are related to our violence
3 prevention and reduction efforts. So I
4 don't want to talk about what we're
5 doing around gun violence without
6 reminding folks that we are also
7 internally focused not only on policy
8 efforts and reform work, but they all
9 work hand in hand and we have to
10 continue to engage and include community
11 as we do this.

12 Next slide, please. I won't go
13 through all of these. But despite
14 everything that we all experienced
15 during 2020, we were able to accomplish
16 a lot, a whole heck of a lot. We hired
17 additional analysts to help us with a
18 lot of our ability to focus on where I
19 talk around the social media beefs, to
20 really bolster our efforts in our DVIC
21 or our realtime crime center. We
22 modified our Uses of Force policies. We
23 implemented a lot of policies and
24 procedures in our reform efforts.

25 But we also, when you focus on

1 that middle column and I'll talk about
2 this slide I think after this one, we
3 laid out seven goals as it related
4 specifically to crime prevention and
5 reduction. And one of those goals was
6 to establish an operating model, so we
7 really were operating from the same
8 playing field. We all know what we were
9 supposed to be doing. That incorporated
10 weekly priorities, bi-weekly CompStat,
11 quarterly district strategies, those
12 weekly shooting reviews that brought
13 everyone together that I talked about.
14 We operationalized, we actually did, and
15 we hit the ground running.

16 We re-aligned and expanded our
17 Pinpoint areas to 40 districts or 40
18 grids to focus on the most at-risk.
19 That's important. And the reason why I
20 mentioned the hiring of those analysts
21 is because we had to have more analysts
22 enable to do that, which at first was a
23 sticking point because there was a
24 hiring freeze because of a pandemic, so
25 through it all we were still able to do

1 that. There was just a lot that we were
2 able to accomplish.

3 Again, I won't go through all
4 of these. But we kept it moving. We
5 withstood. We didn't let the world move
6 around us. We continued to go with the
7 flow and continued our outreach efforts
8 even though we had to move virtual, and
9 we really had to adapt virtually in the
10 best way that we could to make sure that
11 we stayed engaged not only with our
12 PDACs and our clergy, but to find some
13 really creative ways to try to stay
14 engaged through our PAL programming and
15 just with community at large.

16 Next slide, please. So when I
17 talked about themes and patterns of
18 2020, the themes that really stuck out
19 as it related to crime and violence in
20 addition to what Councilmember Jones
21 talked about from our 100 shooter review
22 meetings was that we found that there
23 were patterns around social media,
24 through the use of social media,
25 domestic violence, open-air drug markets

1 and quite frankly just narcotics,
2 specifically in the East Division that
3 was driving a lot of our crimes city-
4 wide, and then obviously the VUFA or the
5 illegal crime gun carrying in the City
6 was driving a lot of our city-wide
7 violence in the City.

8 And so, with the renewed focus
9 for 2021 we made sure that our efforts
10 were centered around these things,
11 making sure that not only we
12 operationalized any vision as it related
13 to these things, but we made sure that
14 we continue to engage community and
15 include community in this new way that
16 we had to do it in 2021, whether it was
17 virtually or in social distancing. And
18 then hopefully, all of this is going to
19 change now that the vaccinations have
20 rolled out. But this is the new normal
21 in finding new strategies and new ways
22 to do this, but these were the things
23 that stuck out.

24 So when we talk about domestic
25 violence, we rolled out domestic

1 violence seminars in partnership with
2 other community groups and City
3 stakeholders. Again, we bolstered our
4 social media efforts by ensuring that
5 our detectives were not only receiving
6 additional training around social media,
7 but that they included social media in
8 their case package when they present
9 over for charging to the DA's Office,
10 same thing with assigning very specific
11 analysts that are keeping an eye on
12 those individuals or groups that are
13 brought to our attention over in the
14 DVIC as it relates to social media. We
15 created a Kensington Police District,
16 which I'll talk about very soon and then
17 we also bolstered our narcotic
18 enforcement through our narcotics
19 initiative, which I'll also talk about
20 in the East Division.

21 Next slide, please. Pinpoint
22 again is our meat and potatoes. These
23 are the seven goals that I talked about.
24 This provides our long-term place-based
25 operational framework. This gives us

1 our matching orders. This is our how.
2 Again, it's comprehensive. It's our
3 unity of effort in our neighborhoods,
4 but pretty much tell us where to go and
5 how to do it through the use of data.

6 The seven goals were very
7 clear. We accomplished three. The
8 remaining four really have to do with
9 the most difficult ones and those have
10 to do with reduction of homicides, and
11 they are our clearance rates, right:
12 Reduction of homicides in our Pinpoint
13 areas by 25 percent by the end of this
14 year. Reduction of our shooting victims
15 in our Pinpoint areas by 25 percent by
16 the end of this year. And then
17 increasing our clearance rates to 65
18 percent, the homicide clearance rates,
19 by the end of this year. And then
20 increasing our nonfatal victim clearance
21 rates to 30 percent by the end of this
22 year.

23 And in looking at these
24 numbers, they look ambitious, but I
25 think we can do it. We have to raise

1 the bar so we have something to work
2 toward, and there's a lot of factors
3 that contribute to this but we have to
4 have some form of metrics. The
5 remaining goals, we're making sure that
6 we have the metrics in place to ensure
7 that we were referring individuals over
8 to GVI or to the Office of Violence
9 Prevention, because again prevention is
10 key. I think we all know that
11 disruption and interruption is highly
12 critical in our efforts. And again, I
13 talked about making sure that we were
14 working from a new operating model to
15 ensure that we all knew what we were
16 supposed to be doing.

17 Next slide, please. We rolled
18 out the Kensington Police District in
19 the beginning of this year. It's based
20 out of the Impact Services building.
21 The boundaries are from D to Frankford,
22 Somerset to Allegheny. It's manned or
23 it's staffed by one lieutenant, two
24 sergeants and 38 officers. We have day
25 shift and night shift. So the hours are

1 from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30. And the early
2 results are showing that since the
3 beginning of this year, we've only had,
4 knock on wood -- I'm knocking on my
5 forehead, you guys can't see me doing
6 it -- but we've only had two homicides
7 since, and it's two less than the same
8 time period in 2020. Unfortunately, the
9 shooting victims are up when comparing
10 year-to-date. However, this comparison
11 period is pre-COVID. But most
12 importantly when you're comparing the
13 consecutive time periods prior to
14 opening, the shooting victims are down
15 36 percent.

16 Next slide, please. This is
17 the other new initiative that we rolled
18 out, and this is the Narcotics
19 Enforcement Initiative out in the East
20 Division. We chose the East Division
21 because we knew that again the narcotics
22 operations are just narcotics. In
23 general, the issue with narcotics were
24 driving a lot of our city-wide crime.

25 And so, we have not only

1 bolstered our efforts, but this is what
2 it yielded: When you look at
3 month-to-month, when you look at when we
4 first rolled it out, we started with 190
5 arrests, 8 firearms and narcotics
6 recoveries of the street value are a
7 little under \$150,000. And when you
8 fast-forward to most recently, we've had
9 just in March alone, 186 arrests, 5
10 firearms recovered and then close to
11 \$180,000 of narcotics recovered. So
12 we're certainly getting a lot of bang
13 for our buck. We're certainly putting a
14 dent in things and I think it's
15 (inaudible).

16 Next slide. When we talk about
17 clearance rates, we don't shy away from
18 this. We track over time because we
19 want folks to know what our progress has
20 been. The numbers have been kind of low
21 for quite some time and there's a lot of
22 work to be done here. Currently, we're
23 about at 50 percent for homicides and
24 this number is fairly low again for
25 nonfatal shootings. It's better than

1 where it was at this time last year, but
2 it's still not good. It's about 18
3 percent. It has steadily decreased from
4 2015 to now even though they appear to
5 be recovering, but it's still low. And
6 except for a dip to 42 percent during
7 2020, they remain steadily at around 50
8 percent.

9 We talked about this before.
10 The increased volume of the shooting
11 victims and homicides make it more
12 challenging. Basically, the case loads
13 with the same amount of homicide
14 detectives make it more challenging. We
15 also talked about witnesses coming
16 forward and resources for our detectives
17 also having some challenges or being
18 challenges as well. But we all
19 recognize that we got to do our part and
20 we're doing everything that we can to
21 make sure that we focus on this. But we
22 track these numbers on a weekly basis to
23 ensure that we're paying attention to
24 this and to ensure that if we need to
25 make adjustments to our investigative

1 strategies, that we do that.

2 Next slide, please. I won't
3 read all of this, but I put this up
4 here. We have this up here to remind
5 folks how important this is. We'll
6 probably be announcing something in the
7 next week or so with our state and
8 federal partners. State and federal
9 coordination is really critical. I
10 can't stress this enough. Over the last
11 couple of years, it's been an enhanced
12 relationship with our state and federal
13 investigative agencies, whether it's the
14 AG through the Gun Violence Task Force,
15 the ATF, FBI, the U.S. Marshals Service,
16 Secret Service, HSI and in some cases,
17 the DEA through the TFOs, who
18 investigate state and federal offenses
19 within the City of Philadelphia.

20 I can't stress enough how
21 helpful it is we can get cases
22 prosecuted either federally or just in
23 addition to what's being done through
24 the District Attorney's Office, because
25 again it just helps for folks to know

1 that there will be consequences when we
2 make arrests for these cases or for
3 folks to know that there will be
4 stringent consequences in addition to
5 that to help deter. Because again, some
6 folks need to go to jail and some folks
7 need to stay in jail or the folks need
8 social services. So through our
9 partnerships, I think the messaging gets
10 relayed and those consequences stick.

11 Next slide, please. So I
12 wanted to put out here -- this is a
13 quick conversation that I wanted to
14 throw out here about forensics. I heard
15 the DA mention and there were some
16 questions by some Councilmembers about
17 forensics, well, why doesn't the lab do
18 more around DNA analysis. I heard the
19 DA throughout a couple of times, well,
20 if we do more, it's possible that we can
21 reduce homicides by maybe 10 percent.

22 I can't confirm or deny that.
23 I don't know that there is any evidence
24 out there that would be able to verify.
25 But what I can tell you is here's what

1 our lab does right now today and it's
2 actually quite a bit: In terms of gun
3 violence, our office or forensic science
4 was one of the first forensic labs in
5 the nation to establish a crime gun
6 intelligence program, which provides
7 timely results to intelligence analysts
8 and investigators to drive
9 investigations to help close cases and
10 to increase our public safety. And the
11 faster that the PPD can identify
12 patterns of crime gun violence and
13 identify those associated with such
14 activity, the faster we can stop the
15 shooting cycle.

16 So last year, the OFS examined
17 almost 5,000 crime guns, those are the
18 crime guns that I talked about earlier,
19 and then over 100,000 items of ballistic
20 evidence. So when we're talking about
21 ballistic evidence, we're talking about
22 fired cartridge casings and projectiles.
23 Every crime gun is test-fired and then
24 all suitable fired cartridge casings,
25 FCCs from scenes, are uploaded to the

1 National Integrated Ballistic
2 Information Network or NIBIN to
3 determine if the same crime gun has been
4 used in multiple events or to link a
5 specific gun to a shooting. And then
6 from there, every crime gun is swabbed
7 for possible DNA analysis.

8 DNA and then latent prints when
9 appropriate are used to identify those
10 who handled the firearm. For example,
11 there may be no need to process a crime
12 gun for DNA when it's taken directly
13 from an individual, so that's just kind
14 of again a high-level overview of what
15 we currently do with guns. But in
16 addition to that, they collect the DNA
17 from blood and other physical evidence
18 associated with scenes. We talked about
19 NIBIN screening and then latent print
20 evidence and gunshot residue analysis
21 when needed.

22 Next slide. So when we hear
23 that maybe the lab could be doing more,
24 that recent discussion has focused on
25 expanding the capabilities of the OFS,

1 specifically as it relates to gun
2 violence through increases to DNA
3 analysis. This expanded request would
4 involve the potential DNA analysis of
5 over 100,000 additional items of
6 ballistic evidence that aren't routinely
7 processed today.

8 It's estimated that
9 approximately half of those items may be
10 suitable for testing, about 50,000. And
11 it wasn't until recently that none of
12 these items were even suitable for DNA
13 examinations, but advances in technology
14 allow these types of items to be tested.
15 But the success rate is only about 20 to
16 25 percent, which means about 37,000 or
17 37,500 to 40,000 of the tested items
18 would not even yield suitable results.
19 The remaining items may produce DNA
20 profiles to assist investigators in
21 identifying those who handled the
22 evidence.

23 Unfortunately, the OFS doesn't
24 have the facility, staffing or equipment
25 to handle such an increase. It's

1 estimated that the equipment, staff and
2 reagents to process these items would
3 cost approximately \$4 million to \$5
4 million in the first year and 2.5
5 million in the subsequent years. And
6 what we really don't know, the larger
7 unknown, is the facility costs. We
8 don't know what the facility costs would
9 be. Additional lab space would have to
10 be built, purchased or leased for this
11 expanded section and that hasn't been
12 costed out. At this time, the OFS has
13 to prioritize maintaining its current
14 analytical capability until significant
15 resources are identified for such an
16 expansion.

17 Next slide, please. Moving on
18 from the forensics piece, I just want to
19 share with you very briefly about
20 technology and what we rolled out
21 earlier this year in an effort to not
22 only try to move away from paper and the
23 dinosaur ages, but what we're trying to
24 do to set our line-level officers up for
25 success.

1 We received a grant some time
2 ago and we just started to roll out with
3 these phones, I think, in February of
4 2021. The University of Penn will
5 provide the evaluation for us, but we
6 created -- it's called the Mobility
7 Pilot Project. We created two crime
8 information centers in the East and
9 Central Division staffed by civilian
10 analysts and officers. And what this
11 pilot project involves is 1,000 mobile
12 phones for one year for officers and
13 detectives and through Districts,
14 Homicide and two special units, with 300
15 currently deployed.

16 The objective here is to target
17 gun violence, alert officers by alerting
18 officers target locations, sending
19 officers realtime information based on
20 their locations, focus on quality-
21 of-life issues and community support and
22 improve effectiveness and
23 accountability.

24 What this does is put
25 everything at the officers' fingertips.

1 It allows analysts to send information
2 to officers right there in the street
3 realtime. It gets rid of money. It
4 saves money. It allows officers to
5 focus on quality-of-life issues right
6 there on the ground and communicate and
7 connect with those folks right there
8 without having to go back into the
9 office, look up information, pick up a
10 phone and call who they need to call for
11 a blighted property and so on and so
12 forth. They're getting realtime
13 information right then.

14 And hopefully, not only will
15 this make us more efficient, but it
16 allows them again in realtime to address
17 gun violence, give them the information
18 that they need and pull up whatever,
19 whether it's a photo, again
20 intelligence, everything that they need
21 in realtime so they can deal with it in
22 a timely manner without delay. This
23 also again includes rollout of the cell
24 phones for our homicide detectives as
25 well. And the pilot project is

1 currently in the 25th and 24th and 22nd
2 Districts.

3 I'll end with this slide.

4 We're often asked, well, what do you
5 guys need as it relates -- what are your
6 technology requests as you need
7 specifically to focus on crime. We had
8 put in a lot of justifications. But as
9 it specifically relates to OIT, here are
10 some of our priorities. I won't go
11 through them line by line. We have our
12 executive team on the call if you guys
13 have any specific questions about them.

14 But here's what they are: To
15 sum them up, they total about 1.6
16 million. But they range again from
17 equipment for the lab, for the Office of
18 Forensic Science for some basic things
19 that our detectives need and again, to
20 keep some items that we need to keep the
21 Mobility Project going.

22 So at this point if there are
23 any questions that you all may have
24 either for myself or the executive team,
25 we will be more than happy to answer

1 them for you.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
3 very much, Commissioner. One, I want to
4 circle back in terms of the questions
5 and start with -- because I overlooked
6 them requesting comment, but I'm quite
7 sure it's regarding this actual
8 presentation.

9 So I'm going to start with
10 Katherine Gilmore Richardson, Helen Gym,
11 Maria Quinones-Sanchez and then
12 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
14 RICHARDSON: Good morning. Thank you so
15 much, Mr. Chair. Going back to the
16 information that Councilmember Jones
17 presented, I'm appreciative of all the
18 work that you all continue to do on this
19 issue and I look forward to continuing
20 to work with you on this issue so that
21 we can ensure gun violence is decreasing
22 in the City of Philadelphia.

23 And, Commissioner, I wanted to
24 thank you for the robust presentation
25 and data points. I wanted to circle

1 back specifically around the amount of
2 young people who have been shot or have
3 died this year so we can put those
4 numbers on the record for this hearing.
5 So when I say young people, I'll do 18
6 and under.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NASH:

8 Commissioner, I can take that.

9 Hi. Good afternoon,
10 Councilmember Richardson. I'm Ben Nash,
11 Deputy Commissioner for Investigations.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Okay.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NASH: And
15 regarding the question about young
16 people, for this year we are at 15
17 juveniles who have been -- we have as
18 homicide victims and that is up from
19 last year from 4. So we have seen a
20 significant increase in the number of
21 the juvenile victims of homicides.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Okay. And that would be
24 under the age of 18 or 18 and under?

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NASH:

1 Under the age of 18.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Okay. And do we know how
4 many shooting victims have been under
5 the age of 18?

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NASH: At
7 this moment, I don't have the shooting
8 victim number. I will get that shortly
9 and have that information available
10 shortly.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Sure. That will be most
13 helpful to us because I wanted to zero
14 in, and I know that this is a word that
15 not a lot of young people like and I
16 think we can think about how we look at
17 this, but I do remember working on a
18 curfew bill years ago, but as an aside
19 from that, the curfew centers.

20 I think the curfew centers were
21 really helpful in decreasing the amount
22 of young people involved in criminal
23 activity or in gun violence incidents
24 years ago. And I remember that
25 happening under the Street

1 Administration. I was a very young
2 intern at that time so I don't remember
3 all the semantics of the program, but I
4 do remember it being very, very
5 successful. So if you could talk about
6 what you all are doing around any curfew
7 violations currently for the record.

8 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW:

9 Commissioner Dales, do you want to talk
10 about that?

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:

12 Yes. So as of right now we have
13 District commanders focusing on their
14 hot zones where juveniles tend to
15 frequent and they are enforcing the
16 curfew laws that are currently in place.
17 We have had conversations with Parks &
18 Rec and other City officials talking
19 about curfew centers in the future. So
20 that's something that we're looking at
21 in the summer moving forward.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Sure. And I'll say this
24 for the record, that's something that we
25 are working towards and I know planning

1 and meeting with some of the members of
2 the Admin as we speak. But for me, I
3 was speaking of a model where instead of
4 taking the children to the police
5 districts, officers would take them to
6 community-based centers that would be
7 staffed with volunteers and social
8 service providers who could address some
9 of the underlying issues and help
10 connect the families and the young
11 people with any relevant services so
12 that we can get them off the street and
13 get them home. Because as a mother of
14 three little people, I can't explain to
15 you why a 13-year-old would be out on
16 the street by themselves at midnight.
17 As a mother, that just doesn't cut it
18 for me. So we definitely want to work
19 on that issue.

20 So I wanted to know if you all
21 believe that the community-based center
22 model could have a positive impact on
23 saving lives of children in
24 Philadelphia?

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:

1 That was part of the conversation. We
2 do not want to bring them to a police
3 facility, so we were talking about a
4 community-based location. And you
5 pretty much laid it out, so that's what
6 we're looking at. And I do believe it
7 could be effective. We want to make
8 sure these kids are safe.

9 If you're out there 2 o'clock
10 in the morning, no, you need to be
11 removed from the streets and have a
12 conversation with resources that we can
13 provide for you -- well, folks who can
14 provide resources for you and your
15 family.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Sure. Thank you so much,
18 Commissioner Dales.

19 And I wanted to go back to
20 another issue around social media
21 because I'm very concerned about this.
22 As I stated, I have a teenager and they
23 know how to work social media better
24 than I can and they have all the
25 multiple outlets.

1 And Facebook is not their
2 preferred method of communication.
3 We're talking about Snapchat and TikTok
4 and social media networks where the
5 information typically disappears within
6 a certain amount of time or after you
7 view the information, you can no longer
8 view it again. In fact, my 6-year-old,
9 she knows how to use TikTok. She's 6.
10 She uses it better than I can.

11 So I say all that to say if you
12 could drill down on how you all are
13 monitoring without sharing anything that
14 would be compromising of the work that
15 you do and of your investigatory skills,
16 but how you all are focusing on social
17 media because I'm very concerned that my
18 6-year-old was able to pull up
19 yesterday -- and my colleagues sent me
20 the article as well -- but my 6-year-old
21 was able to pull up the shooting at
22 Franklin Mills on TikTok. And she told
23 me later last night that, Mommy, that's
24 a shame, somebody got shot at one of our
25 favorite malls. So she was able to see

1 it on TikTok.

2 So how are we monitoring social
3 media and what type of resources are we
4 putting into monitoring social media?
5 Even when I look at it, I can see
6 individuals who have either been shot or
7 killed and you see the video on these
8 platforms.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: So
10 we have several investigators who are
11 monitoring social media without going
12 into details. We have investigators in
13 the Detective Division, our Community
14 Investigations Unit -- I'm sorry, our
15 Criminal Intelligence Unit, sorry about
16 that, and also analysts who are assigned
17 to Districts throughout the City, so we
18 are on top of that. I do not wish to go
19 into details as to what we do and how we
20 do it.

21 But I encourage the community,
22 if you are aware of any upcoming issues
23 that you believe can escalate into a
24 shooting, please contact the police and
25 pass that information on. You can go to

1 our website, phillypolice.com, and you
2 can submit a tip anonymously to the
3 Police Department. You can take a still
4 shot of that social media posting. If
5 they're going to erase it, take a shot
6 and send it to us. And then we'll work
7 off of what you send us at that point.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Okay. And last thing and
10 I'll wait for the next round, out of the
11 8500 shootings since 2015, can you
12 confirm that only 21 percent of them
13 have resulted in an arrest or
14 conviction? And can you talk about or
15 explain what the difficulties and
16 challenges are resulting in the very low
17 conviction rate? Because I do think
18 that is part of some of the challenges
19 that we're seeing. There's really no
20 fear.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NASH:

22 Councilmember, I'll be glad to touch on
23 some of that. Let me start by going
24 back to your original question about the
25 number of juvenile victims so far this

1 year. We're at 46 juvenile victims who
2 have been shot in the City. I cannot
3 tell you at this time what the number is
4 that would have been affected by a
5 curfew or not, but that's the number
6 that we stand at under 18 years old.

7 To your question about the
8 challenges and why it seems like there's
9 such a low-level percentage of
10 clearances when it comes to the nonfatal
11 shootings, the challenges that are
12 presented by our nonfatal shootings in
13 some ways are overwhelming. And
14 frankly, I'm going to say they start
15 with something -- we don't use it as an
16 excuse, but it's a lack of cooperation
17 that we also are confronted with by
18 victims that amounts to a fair number of
19 these.

20 And I'm not in any way saying
21 that there aren't people who get shot
22 and they are completely walking down the
23 street and they tell us exactly what
24 happened and they don't know anything
25 further, but we also know from the

1 experience and from Councilman Jones'
2 experience of analyzing a number of our
3 shooting cases that have resulted in
4 arrests, the people that are involved
5 too often are people that have other
6 associations with some other criminal
7 activity. And I don't want anybody to
8 understand that I'm blaming any victims.
9 But often times what we get is a
10 challenge in trying to uncover who's
11 responsible for the shooting.

12 And I'll just compare it and
13 contrast it in a way with the homicide
14 investigations. In the homicide
15 investigations, often times we are
16 called right away because the victim is
17 not able to leave the scene. The victim
18 is found at the location and we're able
19 to gather witnesses. And as it is in
20 the criminal court proceedings, the
21 complaining witness on a homicide case
22 is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. We
23 don't need any -- we need to develop our
24 evidence as best as we can, but it
25 doesn't matter. We're not trying to get

1 cooperation from obviously a person who
2 can't give us anything, but we have a
3 better likelihood of obtaining
4 cooperation from witnesses, because the
5 person who has his or her life taken is
6 no longer able to speak to the crime.

7 So when we have a nonfatal
8 shooting and it involves somebody that's
9 involved in activity, there may be
10 witnesses that see it but they're not
11 inclined to come forward if they know
12 that the victim of the crime themselves
13 may not want to be participating and
14 that's a part of why they may be scared.
15 So amongst all the challenges that we
16 face in confronting a lower level of
17 clearance rates for nonfatal shootings,
18 that's a big part of it. And that's
19 something that's consistent with cities
20 around the country.

21 I'm not trying to deflect or
22 indicate that our lowest level of
23 clearances is excusable. It's
24 unacceptable and we're doing what we can
25 to bring it up. But it's consistent

1 with what happens throughout the country
2 because of a number of the factors that
3 I've touched on. So I know that may be
4 a challenge to hear and I'm not --
5 again, when we have complainants that
6 will cooperate with us, we're doing
7 everything possible to clear that case
8 and arrest somebody for that incident.
9 I hope that answers your question as
10 best as I can.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
12 I want to call on next Councilwoman Gym
13 and then Maria Quinones-Sanchez and then
14 also Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.

15 I do want to say, Mr. Nash,
16 that just from being around and just
17 being real and transparent, there's
18 truth in the obstacles that you are
19 facing. Everybody in the streets know
20 that if you get shot, 9 times out of 10
21 you're not talking to the cop for a
22 variety of reasons, no-snitch culture,
23 returning gunfire against the people
24 perpetrated.

25 Not saying it's right, but I

1 would be less than being transparent if
2 I didn't say I understand some of those
3 challenges just from -- I understand the
4 environment and I navigate and
5 understand how people operate in the
6 street life. And so, it could be
7 challenging.

8 Nevertheless, we got to figure
9 out a way still to address it. But I do
10 want to acknowledge from understanding
11 the street life, 9 times out of 10 folks
12 won't cooperate for a variety of
13 different reasons. So --

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NASH:
15 Councilmember Johnson, I appreciate that
16 sentiment and the thoughts you expressed
17 from a perspective that you have. I
18 also want to emphasize in light of what
19 you're talking about, our best friend in
20 investigations is so often recovery of
21 video. And the ability to capture an
22 incident on video can transcend the
23 ability or the lack of a victim from
24 cooperating.

25 We can bring a case forward if

1 we can recover the video. And that's
2 why it's so important, and I always
3 emphasize how important everybody in
4 this community, putting a video camera
5 up where they can on their residence.
6 It helps us out. We will clear more
7 cases that way. But thank you,
8 Councilmember Johnson.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And thank
10 you for doing the follow-up saying,
11 here's how we can address it when people
12 don't want to come forward.

13 Councilwoman Gym, then Maria
14 Quinones-Sanchez and Jamie Gauthier.
15 And I'm just going to ask also for my
16 colleagues, be straightforward with your
17 questions but brief at the same time and
18 still get your point across, just so we
19 can continue to push this so we can get
20 on to our next panel.

21 Councilwoman Gym.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
23 very much, Chair Johnson.

24 I guess I'll have a brief
25 comment and then a set of questions.

1 Per the earlier conversation, at the end
2 of the day surveillance tools,
3 technology and equipment are a secondary
4 substitute to the strength of
5 relationships, public trust that is
6 necessary for people to have an overall
7 sense of public safety.

8 And what I mean by that is we
9 are relying on surveillance cameras, on
10 technology and other things in the
11 absence of the public trust. And so,
12 one of the things that's important from
13 our end is to strengthen the
14 Department's ability to develop the
15 trust that's needed. There's not a
16 single person who walks the streets of
17 Philadelphia in any neighborhood for any
18 family whether or not, Mr. Nash, you
19 consider them to be a part of an
20 enterprise or not that doesn't want
21 themselves to stay alive, to stay safe,
22 for their family members to stay safe as
23 well. And so, a few of my questions are
24 going to touch on that. I did feel it
25 was important to put that out there

1 though.

2 And the question that I think
3 we are grappling with in a budgetary
4 environment where we're trying to
5 establish priorities is that there is a
6 limited process forward on the tools of
7 technology, and I think that many of us
8 on City Council want to deepen the areas
9 in which we are actually going to expand
10 on the public trust, because the eyes
11 and ears of people will always exceed
12 the scope range of any particular camera
13 on any given corner at any given time.

14 So a couple of things: One, to
15 the Commissioner, I appreciate hearing
16 about the cell phones, the departmental
17 phones for homicide detectives. This is
18 an important issue. Not in terms just
19 of communication, but in terms in
20 particular of the victims' families, of
21 individuals who felt like they could not
22 pick up the phone and reach out to the
23 particular individual who is caring for
24 their case.

25 I wanted to just be clear about

1 the budget. Did you say that that was
2 going to be fully covered by the grant
3 or that you would need additional money?

4 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: So as it
5 relates to the Mobility Project, there
6 is a bridge funding justification that
7 we'll be putting for it around \$333,000
8 as it relates to that.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Out of the
10 Department's budget?

11 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: What's
12 that?

13 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Out of the
14 Department's budget; is that the
15 understanding? The bridge funding comes
16 from an external source or?

17 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Well, it
18 would, yes. Originally, the seed money
19 came through a donor through the Police
20 Foundation.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. Thank
22 you very much.

23 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: You're
24 welcome.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: You

1 estimated that cost would be about 1.8
2 million. So 1.5 million through the
3 seed donor and another 300,000 from the
4 Department; is that accurate?

5 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Yes.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Is that for
7 one year? Is that for multiple years?

8 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Kevin,
9 are you on? You want to answer that.

10 MR. THOMAS: Sure. That's for
11 one year. We would be supplying a
12 justification and an ongoing annual
13 budget to not only expand that
14 department-wide, but also maintain it on
15 an annual basis.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: 1.8 million
17 covers homicide or 1.8 covers the entire
18 Department?

19 MR. THOMAS: 1.8 covers 1,000
20 phones and the technology for two crime
21 information centers in two divisions.
22 So that really covers three Districts,
23 Homicide and a couple of Special Units
24 for the purpose of the pilot. Once we
25 prove that out, we get the evaluation

1 from UPenn, we do some business analysis
2 around the administrative efficiency
3 savings, we would then supply the
4 justification for a full city-wide
5 rollout.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. We
7 may just ask you for a little more
8 detail on that funding amount. The
9 second question I had is how much of the
10 Department's budget is in regrants or
11 partnerships with community agencies to
12 develop or strengthen some of the
13 relationships? What percent of the
14 Department's budget goes towards items
15 like that and could you give some
16 examples of that?

17 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Sure.
18 Deputy Commissioner Coulter.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Good
20 morning, Deputy Commissioner.

21 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: I see
22 her. I know she's here. Commissioner
23 Coulter?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER COULTER:
25 Yes. Good morning (inaudible). Can you

1 hear me?

2 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Yes, we
3 can hear you.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER COULTER:
5 Okay. Are you looking for individual
6 grants or the --

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
8 breaking up right now.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER COULTER:
10 Can you hear me now?

11 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I think
12 you're in and out. But good morning,
13 Commissioner --

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER COULTER:
15 I'm going to get closer to the window
16 and see if that makes it a little
17 better.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: We'll put
19 Wi-Fi on the list, Councilman Johnson.
20 That's another need for the Police
21 Department.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER COULTER:
23 Councilwoman, we worked forever and ever
24 at our training to get better
25 connected --

1 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Your
2 Department should be guaranteed this by
3 Comcast because it funds all of our City
4 facilities. We would absolutely be on
5 that for you if that is a problem.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER COULTER:
7 Wonderful, how sweet. We had to do a
8 lot just to be able to deliver Dr. Marks
9 on implicit bias up here to be able to
10 get the kind of connectivity we need,
11 but it's still not 100 percent. But
12 hopefully, you can hear me better now.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Absolutely.
14 And I am actually going to mark that
15 down as something to follow up on but
16 thank you, Commissioner.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER COULTER:
18 Thank you. You'll be Chief Waters' hero
19 if you can make it happen here on a
20 full-time basis.

21 To answer your question, are
22 you looking for specific grants
23 earmarked for that or the money that the
24 Police Department invests in, our folks
25 in community relations doing that

1 outreach working with different
2 communities groups and are you looking
3 at people who make donations through the
4 Police Foundation or some other source
5 as a result of community outreach? Like
6 the Mobile Project, for instance, that
7 was clearly designed as a community-
8 based project. It was designed to
9 ensure that our officers had the
10 connectivity, had the ability to work
11 with community members and then with the
12 officers or are you looking at
13 individual grants that are outside of
14 that scope?

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I think I'm
16 looking for grants that are outside that
17 scope. I have no doubt that you have a
18 a community relations office that does
19 outreach. I think what we're trying to
20 figure out is the Department needs
21 assistance on its community relations,
22 right. And I think the clearance rates
23 indicates this, there needs to be
24 stronger relationships, even
25 Commissioner Outlaw in the incidences

1 regarding West Philadelphia a couple of
2 weeks ago where we knew that there was a
3 situation going on that was relatively
4 confined.

5 The question is does the
6 Department have a means to support what
7 we traditionally call gun violence
8 interrupters who could -- this is just a
9 reality that we are facing, right, that
10 especially young people are not in
11 strong communication with police
12 officers at this time.

13 We at some point, maybe that
14 will change, and we should certainly
15 work and see that change. But in the
16 absence of that at this moment, the
17 question that I had was who were the
18 Department's go-to people in a situation
19 where you know that there is stuff that
20 has not only been in existence for a
21 while but was dramatically escalating
22 within a particular area? And were you
23 able to deploy some resources out to
24 those groups who could be the gun
25 violence interrupters beyond just

1 community relations personnel? And if
2 it's not you, then who does that?
3 Because that to me -- we need to take
4 our approach to this that is in
5 identifiable sections. We want a master
6 plan. Of course, everybody wants a
7 master plan.

8 But at the end of the day in
9 this situation where we executed and
10 needed to execute on something in a
11 crisis response way, have you reviewed
12 what was deployed at that time and what
13 needed to be rethought, especially as we
14 head into the spring and summer months
15 when the weather gets warmer and we can
16 just see things escalate as more people
17 flood out onto the streets and as people
18 were outside of most normal social
19 relationships for a very long time?

20 So I'm trying to understand how
21 does the PPD see its focus on a
22 community-base level, not so much on the
23 internal units, but externalized?

24 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: I think
25 we can pivot that question -- I can

1 answer that a little bit. I think we
2 can pivot that to Commissioner Dales
3 because I think that's more for his
4 shop.

5 So we rely heavily on -- to
6 your point, I don't think a lot of what
7 we're talking about as far as the
8 disruption piece, obviously we have a
9 huge piece of it, whether it's through
10 community relations or through our
11 officers who are on the ground who have
12 established a lot of the relationships,
13 but a lot of what we're talking about I
14 think is most effective by the folks who
15 have the lived experience and not from
16 people in uniform. And so, we rely
17 heavily on those folks who are already
18 out there doing the work through our
19 connections, through our faith-based
20 institutions, through our PDACs but
21 through the Office of Violence
22 Prevention and the work that they do.

23 So whether it's out there in
24 West Philadelphia, we pick up a phone,
25 we call them and we tell them, look,

1 here's what we have going on. We need
2 boots on the ground right now today,
3 whether it's through the weekend or
4 whatever hitting these areas, knocking
5 on doors, letting them know what's going
6 on, providing them with information,
7 hopefully getting information in turn
8 and then relaying that information back
9 to us.

10 Commissioner Dales, you want to
11 step in here on this one.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: You
13 pretty much covered it all,
14 Commissioner. And just to add to it, I
15 will say that including myself, we do
16 have connections with members in the
17 community who will give us a call and
18 give us an update in reference to what's
19 happening in the community and that we
20 know exactly how to deploy and how to
21 respond and what resources we may need
22 to deploy in those communities, so the
23 community is a big help.

24 I know you mentioned how we
25 need to bridge the gap between us and

1 the youth. But believe it or not, we do
2 have pretty much strong relationships in
3 certain parts of the City, I will say
4 that. But we still have a lot of work
5 to do moving forward. But you pretty
6 much covered it all, Commissioner, in
7 reference to the Office of Violence
8 Prevention. Those are our main go-to
9 agencies when it comes to providing
10 resources in the community because they
11 work with PAAN as well.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So I want it
13 just to be clear that I have no doubt
14 that you have relationships within the
15 community, I have no doubt that people
16 call you, I have no doubt of any of
17 that. I think what we were trying to
18 unpack out in West Philadelphia was that
19 the number of people that weren't kind
20 of pulled together in a bigger fashion
21 around a need for a serious gun violence
22 interruption effort in that particular
23 area, that included questions of was the
24 community broadly informed about what
25 was happening.

1 I don't know why honestly why
2 we have these curfew laws on the books.
3 I personally do not believe in a city-
4 wide curfew because, one, I guarantee
5 you it's absolutely not enforced. Two,
6 people don't understand it. And three,
7 something that lingers from 2015 isn't
8 largely useful. It's just going to be
9 always randomly enforced.

10 I do, however, believe that had
11 the Department said that there is an
12 urgent situation in a very specific
13 area, we are informing the residents of
14 that area, you know, you have the right
15 to do X, Y and Z, but we recommend that
16 you keep young people at home for this
17 X, Y and Z period of time. Limited
18 boundary-driven curfews that are widely
19 communicated to an area could, one,
20 trigger some information that can go
21 back and forth, at the least that means
22 some people thought about whether they
23 would send their child out to run to the
24 grocery store late at night with their
25 older brother or whether they should go

1 hit the basketball courts after dark.

2 There was not -- I am not clear

3 and, look, you see things from a

4 different world. I see things from the

5 outside and then the residents of that

6 area experience it totally differently.

7 I guess what I'm wondering is can you

8 say that there's a type of process where

9 people were clearly communicated with in

10 a boundary-driven area, that teachers,

11 educators, school principals, charter

12 schools which are separate from the

13 School District of Philadelphia, were

14 activated and made aware that the CUAs

15 that serve that area were made aware,

16 social workers normally deploy out to

17 families were made aware and that the

18 Department was one piece of that, you

19 don't have to drive it, but that you're

20 one piece of it? And part of what we're

21 saying is that the eyes and ears of the

22 community are going to be the safest bet

23 that we've got.

24 And again, I'm struggling with

25 this a little bit and I don't expect

1 this to be answered right now. It was
2 not my sense at the time that people
3 felt that they were in an activation
4 front, that it was this urgent crisis.
5 It's something that so often is
6 delivered as handled by police, it's
7 random here and there, but it wasn't
8 clarity that people were pulled in. But
9 if you talk to officers from your
10 Department, you were very clear that
11 this was a neighborhood group-oriented
12 young people kind of area, but that was
13 not widely communicated. Thus, the
14 networks that could have involved those
15 young people may not have been actively
16 aware and pulled you in to de-escalate.

17 This is only an outside
18 perspective. And I guess I'm asking
19 have you reflected on that? Was there a
20 counter to that? Is there a way that
21 you're going to do anything differently
22 as the summer months heat up?

23 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: So --

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:

25 Yes -- oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead,

1 Commissioner.

2 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Just
3 really quick, Councilwoman Gym, I think
4 as far as management of expectations, I
5 hear very clearly what you're saying. I
6 think from our role, I think our
7 question back would be whose role is it
8 to do that? Is that larger messaging to
9 come from the City as a whole or is that
10 to come from us, right? Because
11 operationally we are, to your point, a
12 piece of that larger communication.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Absolutely.

14 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Right.

15 So --

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I think the
17 question was as soon as it was known
18 that this was a localized issue as
19 opposed to random, when it seems like
20 whoever knows that to be the case needs
21 to be the one to activate, and I guess
22 do you feel like you have the means to
23 do that? And that will be my last
24 question and then I can step back.

25 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Okay.

1 There's always room for improvement. I
2 thought we did that. I thought we said
3 that. But again, if there's a better
4 way to communicate that, we're certainly
5 open for suggestions.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Understood.
7 Thank you very much, Commissioner.
8 Thank you.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
10 Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez.
11 Then Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier. Then
12 Councilman Derek Green.

13 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 And thank you to the
16 Commissioner. Thank you for your
17 presentation. I just want to talk a
18 little bit about the darkness that we
19 see in Kensington right now. I know
20 that the new Police District has been
21 extremely helpful. But now we're in a
22 situation where people are getting some
23 of the stimulus checks, unemployment
24 which means less and less people willing
25 to come in.

1 Can you speak to the
2 commitments you've gotten from the human
3 services component about what they're
4 going to be willing to do different as
5 opposed to just letting the police be
6 the front line? How do we tell folks
7 this is going to be different if the
8 only two folks responding right now are
9 the Police Department and the Streets
10 Department?

11 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW:
12 Commissioner Dales.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: So
14 we do work with other agencies which are
15 the ones you pretty much mentioned and
16 we are working together as a team. I
17 can't speak to them, but I know they
18 have been very helpful with numerous
19 situations in the K&A area. I do attend
20 many meetings and I do hear good things
21 about what a majority of these agencies
22 are doing in the K&A section. We just
23 have a long road ahead of us. But
24 again, I'll leave that question for the
25 other agencies. But just to be

1 positive, they have been very helpful
2 with working with us. I will say that.

3 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

4 How are we coordinating -- the School
5 District of Philadelphia has gotten a
6 significant amount of funding to do some
7 of the summer schools and opening of
8 buildings. The goal is to open up 100
9 buildings. Again, what is the
10 coordination around the ability to
11 create those safe spaces for young
12 people in the summer? And what has been
13 the interface with the Police Department
14 in terms of what you have identified are
15 hotspots and places where we need to
16 allow young people to be young people?
17 What's the conversation?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: So
19 every Friday we do meet with the
20 (inaudible) response unit, which we are
21 a part of. There's a strategy group,
22 the public safety group. We meet Friday
23 and we talk about safe corridors moving
24 forward. The School Board keeps us
25 updated when the schools are going to be

1 opening, what are their areas of
2 concerns.

3 I have continuous conversations
4 with Bethel with the School District.
5 And we are pushing and pushing to make
6 sure that we can continue to have our
7 monthly meetings with the school staff,
8 especially the principals and the deans
9 to talk about issues they are seeing in
10 and outside the schools. And we're
11 going to pretty much have -- the
12 inspectors will be the ones who will be
13 facilitating those meetings within their
14 respective divisions.

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
16 But how are they using police data and
17 incident data to inform or influence
18 what schools will be open? For me, the
19 idea of academic enrichment is hugely
20 important, but also the extra-curricular
21 activities. So how is police data, some
22 of the violence that we're seeing with
23 the young people, how is your data being
24 used to influence which schools should
25 be open in which neighborhoods?

1 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: So
2 as you just mentioned, we pretty much
3 share data with the School District and
4 they center around their strategies in
5 reference to what areas they are
6 concerned about and we also share our
7 concerns as well, so we do share data.
8 But I will have to let them answer that
9 question, the School District answer
10 that question.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
12 I'd like to see from the Police
13 Department, particularly for my
14 District, I'm sure as other
15 Councilpeople, what are the hotspots
16 that you're seeing as it relates to some
17 of the youth violence situation so that
18 we make sure that people are not
19 checking off boxes, but connecting the
20 dots related to that.

21 I want to see that summer
22 programming really reflect what's on the
23 ground so it's more than just talking
24 about it. It's sort of like if you had
25 your brothers, if my Captain in the 24th

1 said, these are three places where I
2 have young people always on the cusp of
3 danger, if I can get this building open,
4 that will be helpful, I think those
5 conversations really need to be that
6 granular if we're going to make this
7 summer a better summer given the fact
8 that people will have additional money,
9 that people are coming out of COVID and
10 then just going to want to be out.

11 And I think we have a
12 potential -- you see some of the
13 violence already happening in our Parks
14 & Rec. Opening school buildings I think
15 has to be one of the responses to it and
16 I'd like to see the Police Department
17 feel that that is a lane that they
18 actively need to be pursuing and can
19 pursue and that people are listening to
20 them.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:

22 Yes.

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Can I --

24 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

25 Thank you, Council -- yes?

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- meet
2 with you, Councilwoman Sanchez, after
3 this conversation, a side bar with Jones
4 as well and other members who have an
5 interest in this, and maybe we can get
6 Hite in on this conversation. You're
7 talking about a model we used to have,
8 not during the summer but the Beacon
9 model. We actually opened up schools.

10 I know Camden has a model.
11 They opened up schools during the
12 weekend. And so, I'm all in favor of
13 really pushing the District to think
14 outside of the box also in partnership
15 with our officers to make sure that our
16 young people have safe places.

17 Again, I think it's a very
18 small percentage of shooters. It's just
19 the rest don't have anything to do
20 that's just hanging out there as well
21 being in the mix. And then sometimes
22 you have leaders and sometimes you have
23 followers who follow the leaders that
24 become the guys carrying the guns in the
25 long-term. And so, I'm willing to have

1 that conversation, Councilwoman

2 Sanchez --

3 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

4 Yeah, I think --

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Go ahead.

6 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

7 Again, we have to do -- there's a
8 combination of some of the things that
9 work in 21st Century Community Learning
10 Centers, Beacon and in the curfew
11 centers. There's a combination of
12 those. I just believe that school
13 facilities, whether it's their field or
14 their indoor courts and stuff, we have a
15 lot of community-based partnerships who
16 run these leagues who traditionally have
17 that access to these buildings and this
18 is the time to utilize the work that
19 they're doing in a way that's more
20 meaningful than they've done in the
21 past. So this aligns with just not only
22 access to the school building, but who
23 are we going to fund in the summer to
24 keep our young people engaged and safe.

25 And again, I trust that people

1 are having conversations. I want it to
2 be driven by some of the data where
3 we've seen the youth violence. I want
4 those communities to feel like we've
5 heard them and that we are creating
6 those safe places. And the PlayStreets
7 are a part of that. All of those things
8 are a part of it. But as it relates to
9 those teenagers in particular who are
10 going to be hanging out all summer
11 because they've been locked up all year,
12 that they have really good alternative
13 opportunities.

14 So thank you, Mr. Chair. I
15 look forward to that conversation.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
17 very much.

18 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier and
19 then Councilman Derek Green.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
21 you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for holding
22 this hearing and for all of the light
23 that you've shown on gun violence in our
24 City through the work of this Committee.

25 Good morning, Commissioner.

1 Thank you so much for your testimony. I
2 wanted to talk a little bit more about
3 rec centers. Historically and recently,
4 rec centers have been the scene of
5 tragic shootings of young people.
6 Understandably, we're hearing from
7 parents that they're afraid to send
8 their kids to some of the rec centers in
9 my District, and I'm sure that might be
10 going on across the City.

11 What are short- and long-term
12 strategies that keep our rec centers
13 safe for our kids?

14 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Thank you
15 for that question, Councilwoman
16 Gauthier. Long of the short, before I
17 turn it over to DC Dales, we have to
18 ensure that we are in constant
19 communication with the rec centers. Not
20 just when they open in the summer, but
21 if there are any events that are taking
22 place at the rec centers, that we know
23 that they're taking place and we have a
24 presence there.

25 Commissioner Dales, you want to

1 talk about the meetings you've been
2 having and what the plan is moving
3 forward for the summer.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:

5 Yes. So we had a meeting last week with
6 Parks & Rec and other City agencies.
7 And we are working on a summer plan to
8 partner with Parks & Rec to make sure
9 that we keep our kids safe in the rec
10 centers as well as the pools. I believe
11 the pools may be opening. Even though
12 due to the pandemic, I believe we're
13 going to try to open the pools and we're
14 going to be prepared for that.

15 So one of the strategies
16 without going into details, we're going
17 to pretty much utilize officers outside
18 of patrol to assist with covering these
19 rec centers and pools, but also too we
20 will be utilizing officers from within
21 patrol as well to supplement because we
22 still need police officers to focus on
23 crime fighting and responding to 911
24 calls, but we're trying to get as many
25 officers as possible to help cover down

1 on these rec centers and pools and
2 basketball courts.

3 It's important to have the
4 community involved. Because if we get
5 people involved, men, women, teenagers,
6 come on out and work with the Police
7 Department to keep the rec centers and
8 pool safe together as a team because a
9 lot of the people in the community if
10 you're a positive influence in the
11 community, they will respect you.

12 If some of these kids get out
13 of hand, guess what, Bob will say,
14 listen, get yourself together, stop it,
15 stop it, calm down. I literally watched
16 this happen and they listen to them
17 before they listen to the police. So
18 this is what I'm encouraging folks in
19 the community to get involved in as
20 well, to work with us when we police
21 these rec centers and pools and
22 basketball courts.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Can you
24 talk more about that piece? Along the
25 lines of what Councilmember Gym was

1 saying, I understand why we're building
2 up the police presence around rec
3 centers. To be honest, I've heard that
4 request from many community members
5 because they are scared.

6 Is there also an effort that
7 focuses on violence interruption where
8 we can have people from the community to
9 help with conflict resolution, to help
10 with maybe calming down some of the
11 conflicts that arise on basketball
12 courts or around rec centers? Is there
13 a strategy beyond asking the community
14 to come out and is there a deliberate
15 strategy that connects violence
16 interruption to rec centers?

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: And
18 again, I know the Police Commissioner
19 keeps stressing we can't do this alone.
20 We need help from all of the entities,
21 the community, agencies, you know name
22 it. They need to come out and
23 definitely help out. Not to say that
24 this is not happening, but we need
25 everybody to stay consistent.

1 I do know the area that you
2 cover in West Philadelphia, I do know
3 the Captain. I believe he was working
4 with you prior to the shooting
5 incident --

6 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Yes.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: --
8 and he was very, very involved as far as
9 trying to establish programs in these
10 rec centers as a team, and that's what I
11 want to see city-wide. As far as the
12 issues that may escalate in reference to
13 ongoing beefs, this is why it's
14 important for the community to come
15 forward and give us some information as
16 to what's happening so we can intervene
17 and prevent a shooting from occurring.

18 By the time -- I'm tired of
19 seeing shootings where I hear from
20 witnesses or even the victim, yeah, I
21 had a fight two days ago and they
22 threatened to shoot me. Okay, why
23 didn't you tell us. So these are some
24 of the things that I would want folks to
25 come forward and let us know. If we

1 want to prevent gun violence, they got
2 to come forward. And I know we talk
3 about how people don't trust the police.
4 But at some point, we got to say,
5 listen, I want to protect my neighbor, I
6 want to protect my child, my kid, my
7 mother, my father. I have to come
8 forward to give this information to the
9 police to assist.

10 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: And if I
11 can hop in just really quick, just to be
12 blunt -- not to be trite, but to be
13 blunt and direct, we're finding
14 ourselves spending so much of our time
15 and efforts on presence and enforcement,
16 that we are partnering with those who
17 are focusing on those efforts. And we
18 know that there are some grassroots
19 organizations out there. I can think of
20 one person in mind that they are
21 spending their efforts on training folks
22 on mediation and conflict.

23 And I've been telling folks,
24 hey, if you got a program, we will be
25 more than happy to do what we can to

1 partner with you. But then we also rely
2 again on the Office of Violence
3 Prevention to do those efforts to focus
4 on the disruption and all the prevention
5 pieces. And then hopefully as time
6 progresses, we'll be able to utilize and
7 have more discretionary time so we can
8 focus more on the prevention pieces.
9 Because right now, we're just doing what
10 we can with the resources that we have
11 to increase our visibility.

12 So to answer your question very
13 truthfully, we've just been focusing our
14 efforts on the enforcement pieces and on
15 the visibility piece. So we do not
16 have -- outside of partnering with those
17 who do, we don't have a solid strategy
18 around interruption because we are doing
19 what we can to make sure that we're
20 visible in places that we need to be
21 present.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: And
23 speaking of visibility too, this summer
24 is going to require overtime. I will
25 have to put that out there, because

1 we're going to have to hire police
2 officers to cover -- it's a lot of rec
3 centers and basketball courts. I'm just
4 going to be candid with you. It's going
5 to be important.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: We have
7 (inaudible). So thank you.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:
9 And, Councilwoman, can I add one thing
10 to your question?

11 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Yes.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:
13 Councilman Johnson, I'm not going to
14 mention the name, but you know some of
15 these individuals. And these two guys,
16 they are doing outstanding work as far
17 as keeping certain groups quiet. I'm
18 not going to put their names out there,
19 but this is what it takes where you got
20 positive influencers in the neighborhood
21 who are keeping these kids from fighting
22 one another and pulling out guns. And
23 so far, knock on wood, it's been
24 effective for several months. I won't
25 say who they are, but these are some of

1 the things that we're trying to
2 implement city-wide. But it's going to
3 be a long road ahead of us. I'll leave
4 it at that, but go ahead.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: A
6 couple of things I wanted to offer you:
7 First, you're right, my office and I
8 have been working very closely with
9 Captain Gillespie on the efforts at
10 Christy before the tragic shooting even
11 happened, but even more intensely now.

12 And I want to commend the
13 Captain for stepping up in that way and
14 realizing that we have to have the rec
15 center as an asset to calm down some of
16 the youth violence. But even in that
17 effort, we're coming together. We just
18 had a great meeting last night. We
19 brought together principals and people
20 from the community and folks who want to
21 bring programming at the rec center and
22 Parks & Rec has been amazing, but we're
23 piecing together whatever we can.

24 And I want to make Christy a
25 model rec center in that neighborhood

1 that hopefully can quell some of the
2 violence that we're seeing. But I just
3 think we have to have a significant
4 strategy around violence prevention and
5 interruption as we do around the
6 enforcement piece. And I hope you all
7 don't think -- we're not knocking the
8 work that you're doing and the fact that
9 you're focusing on it. But the fact
10 that Council keeps asking you questions
11 about the prevention and intervention
12 means that we want to see a tight
13 strategy where all of these efforts are
14 equally as important, right.

15 We don't want to see a strategy
16 where we're investing tons in the
17 enforcement part and we're just piecing
18 together the violence prevention part.
19 In my mind, they're equally as
20 important. So thank you so much.

21 I have a couple of other
22 questions: What do you think accounts
23 for the increased flow of guns in our
24 City at this time?

25 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Pick one,

1 right. They're readily easy to
2 purchase. Straw purchasing is a
3 problem. People go in and they purchase
4 them legally and then they're back out
5 on the street through illegal means.
6 We've discussed the ability to purchase
7 ghost guns. We're seeing an increase of
8 those on the street because of legal
9 loopholes. They're just really easy to
10 get quite frankly. Unless there's some
11 legislation around making it a little
12 more difficult to get them, we're going
13 to continue to be in the predicament
14 that we see ourselves in.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: And
16 something as small as this, the
17 community can get involved as far as
18 helping get guns off the street by,
19 number one, don't leave a gun in the
20 car. Number two, if you're going to
21 keep a gun in a home, safeguard it, lock
22 it up, hide it, secure it. Don't make
23 it easy for someone to take that gun.
24 Then guess what, then the gun will wind
25 up right out on the streets, so please

1 focus on that as well. Because I see a
2 lot of incidents where people break into
3 cars taking guns because people are
4 leaving guns in their car.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Okay.
6 How does over a year comparison of the
7 number of shootings in Pinpoint areas
8 compare to the number of shootings
9 across the City as a whole?

10 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Deputy
11 Commissioner, I'll let you have that
12 one. We look at that number constantly.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:
14 Yeah. So we are doing pretty good I
15 would say within our Pinpoint zones.
16 We're actually down by double digits
17 when you talk about homicides opposed to
18 the City. The shootings are slightly
19 up. I believe we were at 7 percent in
20 shooting victims in our Pinpoint zones,
21 and I believe it's 51 percent city-wide
22 as far as shootings as a whole.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Okay.
24 Thank you. And lastly, for the past
25 five years would you be able to provide

1 the ratio of detectives to the number of
2 nonfatal shootings? And even if you
3 don't have this data off the top of your
4 head, is this something that your team
5 can provide to the Chair after this
6 hearing?

7 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW:

8 Certainly, we can get that information.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
10 you so much. Those are all my questions
11 for now.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
13 And, Councilman Derek Green.

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

16 Thank you, Commissioner Outlaw
17 and Deputy Commissioner Dales and other
18 members of the Police Department for
19 being here this morning. I just wanted
20 to ask some overall questions. And this
21 goes to some of the points that were
22 made in reference to resources, and I
23 think the concern and I saw your quite
24 candid slide and I'm glad you were
25 candid upfront in reference to the need

1 to do better from a clearance
2 perspective for both shootings and
3 homicides.

4 What I've been hearing from
5 constituents from around the City is are
6 we getting the return on investment
7 in the dollars we put into the Police
8 Department. We spend a significant
9 amount of money. There was a statement
10 earlier about additional overtime. I
11 think the Police Department's number one
12 responsibility is to provide safety.

13 I think from the issues of
14 violence interruption and other
15 perspectives, that's things I think that
16 should be funded in our City budget but
17 not necessarily through the Police
18 Department, but through those
19 organizations and individuals at the
20 grassroots level that have that type of
21 relationship with the community.

22 I think the Police Department
23 can work in conjunction with them. But
24 from the perspective as we go through
25 this budget process after the Mayor's

1 budget process, how would you respond to
2 constituents who say that we're at an
3 epidemic level of homicides in our City
4 and spending more money in overtime does
5 not demonstrate the ability to get the
6 job done when people are afraid to be on
7 the streets of Philadelphia?

8 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Thank you
9 for your question, Councilman Green. I
10 think it's a complex matter. It's not
11 either this or that. On the one hand,
12 we're being asked to be more present.
13 Folks want to see us on every corner,
14 and we say it's not so simple because it
15 costs money.

16 And then on the other hand,
17 they say, well, we're not getting the
18 bang for our buck because the clearance
19 rates are low. One doesn't necessarily
20 have to do with the other. Seeing more
21 officers on every corner doesn't
22 necessarily mean an increase in
23 clearance rate. We also know that the
24 police or investigators or detectives
25 aren't the sole ones. Obviously, we

1 have a lot to do with our clearance
2 rates here, right, whether or not we
3 make an arrest or ultimately with a
4 shooting case we have an arrest warrant
5 for someone.

6 We talked about the factors
7 about getting witnesses to come forward.
8 But ultimately, it's us working with the
9 DA's Office and the DA ultimately
10 saying, yes, you have enough evidence in
11 this case to say here's a warrant, not
12 just you've identified someone who you
13 think is responsible for this case. So
14 there's a lot of factors in saying this
15 case has been cleared. And I want to
16 make clear it's not just us.

17 But with that said, you're
18 asking for increased visibility which
19 costs money. We cannot discount the
20 fact that there's civil unrest. We have
21 to be visible and out and about to
22 ensure that not only our corridors are
23 safe but we're present, rolling out
24 these mobile looting teams, all of the
25 stuff that we've seen, to prevent over

1 the summer and we're going to have to
2 prepare again with the verdict as this
3 comes out again over the George Floyd
4 case. That costs money. That costs
5 overtime. So public safety isn't just
6 as it relates to clearance rates.

7 I hope I'm not rambling, but
8 it's more than just that one number. I
9 guess my answer to that would be what
10 are the expectations. When we see bang
11 for our buck, what are we looking for or
12 our money's worth. Are we measuring our
13 worth or our value by a clearance rate.
14 Are we measuring our worth or our value
15 by visibility. Are we measuring --
16 ultimately, I would say the answer is
17 yes to this. Are we measuring our worth
18 or our value by people's perception of
19 how safe they feel. There's a lot of
20 factors that go into the overtime money
21 that's spent here.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I just want
23 to kind of push back a little bit. The
24 issue of witnesses, which I know you've
25 raised, the District Attorney has also

1 raised the issue of witnesses. Witness
2 attendance is not a new phenomenon.
3 This has been an issue that's been going
4 on for decades.

5 But what has been new has been
6 the increase in homicides in the City of
7 Philadelphia at a level that we have not
8 seen in decades. And so, if there were
9 no police officers on the street and we
10 had 0 homicides and everyone was working
11 just on investigations, from my
12 perspective I would be okay with that.
13 I think the concern is that the fact
14 that we've had a high level of homicides
15 and we've increased the percentage of
16 shootings and homicides this year and
17 those are the facts that people from my
18 perspective feel unsafe, because they
19 are seeing this information and they
20 have the knowledge that people are being
21 shot and people are dying at a level
22 that has not been seen in decades even
23 though we've had the same issue of
24 witnesses in the past.

25 So outside of the issues of

1 those other factors, I'm saying directly
2 from your perspective on public safety,
3 from the perspective that you control or
4 the dollars that are allocated in the
5 Police Department's budget, what new
6 perspective going forward is going to be
7 communicated to citizens coming forward
8 to let people feel more safe because
9 actions are being done? And I think
10 that's also part of the perspective that
11 people are not hearing from a
12 perspective of, okay, we're taking some
13 new track within the resources that we
14 have to address this issue.

15 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Okay. I
16 think I understand your question better.
17 So I think by laying out -- and correct
18 me if I'm wrong, by laying out what we
19 saw in 2020, by being very intentional
20 with our vision in 2021. Again, the
21 themes and patterns were very clear,
22 focusing and prioritizing our efforts
23 around those themes and patterns in
24 2021.

25 I thought we had a slide. We

1 must have taken it out. We've been very
2 successful in our Pinpoint areas, so
3 we've seen some drastic decreases. It's
4 51 percent with our homicides and it's
5 actually 8 percent increase in our
6 nonfatal shootings in our Pinpoint
7 areas. But even that is a decrease from
8 the previous week. We've seen some
9 gains in our Pinpoint areas, so what
10 we've been doing is working.

11 Now, the problem I'm going to
12 have later on down the road is what
13 happens when we're so successful that we
14 displace the crime and it pushes it in
15 other parts of the City. So we are
16 seeing some movement. We're not going
17 to see it right away. And I'm hoping
18 that as we continue to report out our
19 efforts every other week, people are
20 saying that we are making an arrest.

21 We have a presser tomorrow
22 where we are announcing some stuff.
23 Tomorrow, the same way we did two weeks
24 ago, we are putting some dents in this.
25 Some stuff is going to be short-term.

1 Some stuff is going to be longer-term.
2 We don't have the answer overnight.
3 That's all we can do. All we can
4 continue to do is that we're
5 prioritizing what we're seeing.

6 Again, the clearance rate issue
7 is going to be longer-term, but we are
8 putting some dents in this. And the
9 best we can do is be transparent with
10 the work that we're doing. But it's not
11 like we're running around chasing our
12 tail. We're using the data to tell us
13 where we need to be. And if we need to
14 adapt and make adjustments which is what
15 we did -- like I said, social media was
16 driving a lot of this. Domestic
17 violence was driving a lot of this.
18 Narcotics was driving a lot of this.
19 And it was all focused and centered in
20 the East Division that was driving a lot
21 of this stuff city-wide.

22 So as such, we readjusted our
23 strategies and we made sure that we
24 focused in those four key areas so we
25 can make sure that we were putting our

1 resources where we needed to be in those
2 four key areas, and we're seeing some
3 gains as reported in our previous
4 slides.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:
6 Commissioner, I have the exact
7 percentages now. It's 51 percent city-
8 wide in reference to shooting victims.
9 And as far as the Pinpoint, 5 percent.
10 As far as homicides, city-wide 29
11 percent. And in reference to the
12 Pinpoint grids, we're down by 32
13 percent.

14 COMMISSIONER OUTLAW: Oh, I
15 messed those numbers up big time. I
16 know it was down somewhere, but I knew
17 we had some gains in our Pinpoint areas.
18 All of that to say we're tracking the
19 stuff regularly. And I think the more
20 we report this out, hopefully people
21 will see over time that we are putting
22 in a dent in this and we are paying
23 attention to it. We're measuring it and
24 we have to make proper adjustments.

25 The other piece of this is too

1 we're focusing obviously for the
2 purposes of this meeting, we're talking
3 about shootings and homicides. And if
4 those go away, that's great. I hope
5 they go away. But we still have people
6 that want us there for lower
7 quality-of-life issues, right. So there
8 are people that want us present for
9 other lower-level crime and disorder
10 issues to feel safe. So we're talking
11 about this today. But overall when
12 we're talking about public safety, I
13 think the conversations are going to
14 need to be had about our role, our
15 visibility, our presence, how we're used
16 and what that looks like moving forward.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And I know
18 other people have questions so I'll
19 close with this: The Police Department
20 cannot do the job all by themselves.
21 It's a total City commitment. And so,
22 to the extent that you're targeting
23 resources in those Pinpoint areas and
24 you talked about how you've been
25 successful, the question is how can that

1 be maintained by partnering with the
2 community and others so that way people
3 can say, listen, we've made this
4 investment here, this is how we've been
5 able to reduce issues by stepping up
6 enforcement, but we also need your
7 partnership in order to maintain what
8 we've accomplished so that way we can
9 also continue to do that in other parts
10 of the City.

11 And I think from my perspective
12 that's where there needs to be more
13 communication on a regular basis city-
14 wide, and that's by all of us. Those
15 from City Council, the Mayor's Office,
16 the Police Department, the District
17 Attorney's Office, that we're going to
18 try to focus on these issues where we
19 see the biggest issues, the information
20 about domestic violence. Narcotics and
21 other issues are good to have that
22 information, what you learned from 2020
23 and getting that information out, but
24 also partnering with the community and
25 the City as a whole to address that

1 issue going forward. And I think that's
2 where the disconnect is happening. I
3 know that now because of the information
4 as a member of Council, but I don't
5 think the public as a whole and even
6 those in the communities.

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

9 Mr. Chair.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

11 Sure. Point of information. Go ahead,
12 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
14 you.

15 Deputy Commissioner Dales, can
16 you say the shooting figures again for
17 the Pinpoint areas? I thought I heard
18 the number of homicide and victims, but
19 (inaudible).

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:

21 Sure. So we're looking at the
22 city-wides. In reference to homicide,
23 city-wide we're up by 29 percent. In
24 our Pinpoint grids in reference to
25 homicides, we're down by 32 percent. In

1 reference to shooting victims, as a
2 whole which includes homicides and
3 nonfatals we're up by 51 percent
4 city-wide. As far as the Pinpoint grids
5 is concerned, we're up by 5 percent. I
6 believe last week we were up by either 7
7 or 8 percent. So it looks like we are
8 making progress. It's still early, but
9 I'll take a win any time.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: And
11 does that encompass the total number of
12 shootings in the Pinpoint areas?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES: I'm
14 sorry? One more time, ma'am.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Is
16 there a figure for total number of
17 shootings in the Pinpoint areas? Did
18 you already give that?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DALES:
20 Yes, I gave that.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
22 you.

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
24 So we're about to wrap up. I have one
25 last question from Councilman Allan

1 Domb, but we need to bring up our next
2 panel. I'm running severely behind, but
3 I think that's a good thing based on
4 everybody being laser-like focused on
5 this critical issue.

6 So, Councilman Domb, if you
7 could give your brief questions and,
8 Commissioner, for your team to respond
9 briefly because I need to bring on this
10 next panel at 12:00 because we have a
11 hard stop at 12:30. Councilman Domb.

12 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
13 Mr. Chairman. I'll be very brief.

14 And thank you, Commissioner and
15 your team. My question is really around
16 what I heard earlier from I think
17 Commissioner Nash about video being very
18 positive help in the crime situation.

19 I think it was last week,
20 Mr. Chair, you and I think Chairman
21 Jones of the Public Safety Committee had
22 a hearing where we heard that eight zip
23 codes in Philadelphia has the highest
24 number of homicides in the City. And my
25 question is simply this: Would it make

1 any kind of sense for us to consider
2 with today's technology some sort of
3 television or camera systems, I should
4 say, camera systems in those eight zip
5 codes respecting the privacy of our
6 residents, but figuring out a way that
7 we could invest in those eight zip codes
8 that have the highest homicides? And if
9 we could, maybe you can let us know what
10 that cost might be.

11 I know in Chicago the
12 statistics are pretty compelling to
13 Philadelphia. 80 percent of the gun
14 violence in Chicago takes place in 15 of
15 their 77 neighborhoods, and most of the
16 victims similar to Philadelphia I think
17 are between 16 and 32. And they've
18 estimated that each homicide cost the
19 City 1.5 million, reputation, loss of
20 people, in taxes, et cetera. So not
21 only are we going to try to save lives,
22 but economically it's smart for us to
23 make this huge investment in getting
24 this under control. What do you think
25 of that idea?

1 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER NASH: If I
2 may, Commissioner. From the
3 investigative perspective, Councilmember
4 Domb, I love that. I couldn't ask for
5 more. It's what I've been promoting for
6 most of my career. We have
7 infrastructure problems with it. We
8 have some challenges to achieve that
9 goal, and a lot of that really does come
10 down to money.

11 And it's not just the cost of
12 putting up the cameras on the City
13 corners. It's the cost of running the
14 line so that those cameras can be
15 operational. Those are challenges that
16 can be overcome and they are challenges
17 that -- and I know Councilmember
18 Johnson, I believe he's been a proponent
19 of our success with our cameras in the
20 past, but we can't do that as the Police
21 Department.

22 Councilmember Green talked
23 about the partnerships that we have to
24 have in order to prevent the violence
25 instead of just react to it. And I

1 think the value of the cameras from a
2 City perspective is phenomenal. You
3 heard me probably before talk about the
4 community members getting cameras on
5 their residential streets. And I say
6 that because while the City cameras can
7 be incredibly helpful, there's just not
8 enough of them.

9 But with the recent advent of
10 all the cameras from Ring Doorbell to
11 all of the different competition that
12 goes along with it, at a reasonable cost
13 I would propose this: How about if the
14 City instead of trying to put up all the
15 cameras of their own, would promote and
16 help to fund or subsidize cameras
17 throughout many of the neighborhoods
18 that are challenged so that we can
19 increase the level of cameras.

20 And I respect Councilmember
21 Gym's comment about it's not just about
22 technology. And she's right, it's not
23 just about technology. But the cameras
24 are a critical element of solving crime
25 for us, and solving crime goes towards

1 building trust in the community. So to
2 all of your points which is technology,
3 utilize it and engage the community, I'm
4 all in favor of it and I just think it
5 could be a help in reducing crime and
6 ultimately preventing it, which is the
7 goal that each and every one of the
8 Councilmembers so eloquently expressed.
9 So thank you for the question,
10 Councilmember Domb.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Councilman
12 Domb, I want to also give you some
13 additional information. I think prior
14 to you coming into City Council, Council
15 President Clarke and Councilman Jones
16 were working on an initiative around, I
17 think we do tax credits right now for
18 small businesses that want to put up a
19 surveillance system. And so, you may
20 want to take that further and say maybe
21 we do a tax credit for residents up to a
22 certain, you know, that we put aside for
23 tax credits for residents year after
24 year who may sign up for surveillance
25 camera as a way to actually address this

1 issue. And so, just wanted to give you
2 that additional information if you
3 decide to pursue it further.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.
5 Thank you, Councilmember Johnson.
6 That's a good idea.

7 Thank you very much for your
8 testimony today.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
10 I thank everybody for sticking around.
11 I think you, Commissioner and your team
12 as well. Everyone knows that you have a
13 briefing as well tomorrow to talk about
14 the things that you are working on. And
15 so, if anyone else who may want to
16 follow up or listen to that presentation
17 and participate, they can feel free to
18 tune in tomorrow. So, Commissioner,
19 again thank you for you and your team
20 and let's continue to keep fighting a
21 good fight.

22 Will the Clerk please call the
23 next panel.

24 THE CLERK: District Attorney
25 Larry Krasner.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good
2 afternoon.

3 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
4 Good afternoon, Councilmember. How are
5 you, sir?

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I'm doing
7 pretty good. We are extremely,
8 extremely running behind. Excuse us
9 for, I guess I want to say, lateness but
10 running behind just based upon the level
11 of input from Councilmembers and their
12 presentations today.

13 And so, you can please proceed
14 with your presentation. I know you have
15 your whole team that will be presenting.
16 So for the sake of time how you do your
17 presentation, I guess you can do a
18 combination of summarizing and at the
19 same time getting into the points with
20 your team and just thank you for
21 understanding our running behind. But
22 go ahead, District Attorney Larry
23 Krasner, and begin your testimony.

24 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
25 Yes, and thank you. And I hope

1 Councilmember Jones, Councilmember Green
2 and everybody else who has asked these
3 really important questions as well as
4 the Police Commissioner, Deputy
5 Commissioner Nash and Dales who
6 understand that I know why it takes a
7 long time because you're asking a lot of
8 important detailed questions, but I'm
9 happy to rearrange my schedule to be
10 available after the break.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

12 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

13 What we'll try to do is we'll try to
14 respect everybody's time and move as
15 quickly as we can with some of the
16 important information we have to reveal.
17 It is my expectation we won't quite
18 complete our presentation by your hard
19 stop at 12:30, but we will complete it
20 shortly after beginning again I believe
21 at 2:30, and then we will be available
22 for questions at this time.

23 Let me move, if I may, as
24 quickly as I can through what will
25 address a lot of the details on

1 questioning. My understanding was that
2 a large part of the purpose of this
3 hearing was to go to issues of
4 partnerships, conviction rate and
5 engagement. That is much of what our
6 presentation will address.

7 Next slide, please. So our
8 partnerships are good and growing. And
9 I would say that they are getting even
10 better in my many ways. Next slide.

11 Our primary partnership of course is
12 with the Philadelphia Police. The Gun
13 Crime Strategies and Prevention
14 Collaborative has been an essential part
15 of this.

16 This is a collaboration between
17 the PPD and DA's Office where we have
18 Assistant District Attorneys at the six
19 different Detective Divisions around the
20 City. They work alongside the police
21 detectives to investigate and prosecute
22 drivers of violent crime. This is a
23 collaborative that was launched with
24 input from the Cook County prosecutor's
25 office, that's Chicago, its Gun Crimes

1 Strategies Unit. And it's used in
2 Chicago coincided with a period of time
3 and other programs when there was a 35
4 percent reduction in shootings within
5 two years after the program launch.

6 Yes, there were some other
7 things going on, including something
8 that many Councilmembers, community
9 organizations and I have been calling
10 for. It's a big fund aimed at
11 prevention. It was a \$70 million fund
12 put together to invest in grassroots
13 organizations, community-based
14 organizations which also played a big
15 part, but this was a part of it as well.

16 Has it worked well in my
17 opinion? Yes, the trust is growing.
18 The biggest impediment has been COVID
19 and has been the ability of these
20 attorneys to simultaneously be in the
21 police divisions, but also do their work
22 in court. We feel like it will get
23 better and better as we come out of
24 COVID.

25 Next slide, please. Gun

1 Violence Task Force of course is a
2 longstanding collaboration between the
3 Attorney General's Office which provides
4 agents, and the DA's Office which
5 provides attorneys were in the probably
6 13th or 14th year, something like that.
7 In my opinion, it's getting better and
8 better. We've gotten better funding.

9 So last year that funding has
10 allowed us to get on a very limited
11 basis some crucial forensics. Yes, I
12 said it, forensics. I say it now and
13 I'm going to say it again. We got some
14 forensics that enable us to do certain
15 things with phones that are very, very
16 important to do, and it has helped these
17 investigations.

18 Next slide, please. We had a
19 recent press conference in which we talk
20 about four people being arrested for a
21 whole series of shootings, including the
22 shooting of an 8-year-old, another
23 person in their 50s, many shootings, a
24 few people and it was the work of the
25 Gun Violence Task Force, and that depict

1 the years and other recent press
2 conferences with Attorney General
3 Shapiro which involve a mutual effort at
4 getting ghost guns. Many of you know
5 about ghost guns, but that was a recent
6 collaboration. And frankly, a united
7 front in terms of how serious that issue
8 is. This Office has drafted legislation
9 and provided it to State Senator Sharif
10 Street and we're happy to work with all
11 of our legislative partners on something
12 to get our arms around ghost guns, which
13 are atrocious.

14 Next, please. This in many
15 ways I think is the most exciting good
16 news that we have, and I will spend a
17 minute or two talking about the nuts and
18 bolts. I am an old car mechanic trying
19 to fix something, so I think it's
20 important to talk about some of these
21 nuts and bolts because it sheds a light
22 on what's going on.

23 What has happened is at the
24 Police Commissioner's suggestion, it was
25 her suggestion, they got some of their

1 most experienced and vested people, we
2 got some of our most experienced and
3 vested people and every single week, I
4 believe I just saw a notice for this
5 Wednesday, they get together and they
6 look at a lot of the recent gun violence
7 cases to figure out whether there are
8 patterns, things that we can do better
9 in a collaborative way. That has been
10 coupled with the DA's Office initiating
11 an Intelligence Unit. A lot of the
12 smart stuff that comes out of that is
13 used by us and also is used to dovetail
14 with the work of our ADAs who are out in
15 the field.

16 Let me give you a sense of what
17 they do. So homicides are handled
18 separately. They've always been handled
19 with a high level of intensity and
20 investigative expertise, as I think the
21 Commissioner indicated. I agree with
22 that. But this group looks at all
23 nonfatal shootings, except homicides.
24 It looks at gunpoint robberies. It
25 looks at 6105s, which is felon in

1 possession of a firearm and it looks at
2 targeted gun crimes of other types and
3 the police have set guidelines for that.
4 We accept those guidelines. It has
5 expanded its scope. And we hope it will
6 expand some more. There's about another
7 30 or 40 cases a week. We would like to
8 get into it if we can have adequate
9 support and adequate funding from the
10 budget.

11 Let me give you an example of
12 how it has worked and why it's making
13 things better. And I'm not just saying
14 that in an aspirational way. We have
15 the data to support what's making it
16 better. So number one, something I may
17 have mentioned before, there's been a
18 big improvement in the use of DNA in the
19 sense that both sides found out early
20 that police were doing a very good job
21 of taking DNA off the gun, but there was
22 not as tight a process as there could be
23 of taking DNA from the defendant. And
24 because it takes so long to get these
25 results back, it was essential to do it

1 at the very beginning. That's cleared
2 up. That is cleaned up. The first day
3 we sat down, there were 19 cases where
4 DNA was taken off the gun and no DNA was
5 taken from the defendant. That is
6 cleaned up, and I think that's a tribute
7 to why this is such a good idea.

8 A second issue is that we are
9 seeing better police paperwork. It has
10 been common with some police officers,
11 and again this is a credit to the PPD
12 for fixing it, but it's been common that
13 they would write an explanation of an
14 incident where they said conclusory
15 things, right. Instead of saying what
16 happened, they would say I made an
17 investigative stop. Well, that's not
18 the best way to do this. The best way
19 to do this is to say, I saw a man
20 walking down the street. I saw a bulge
21 on his hip. I noticed that the edge of
22 the bulge seemed to have a curve like a
23 gun so I approached him, and I said this
24 and he said that. That kind of detail,
25 getting away from I made an

1 investigative stop, and getting into the
2 detail really strengthen these cases.
3 And so, we're seeing that improvement
4 which is again a tribute to that
5 collaboration and to the fact that the
6 PPD is trying to address issues like
7 that. I don't know exactly how. I
8 assume it's at their level of training.
9 But whatever it is, it's good.

10 We have raised the issue of
11 investigations of social media. Because
12 so many of these are cases where the gun
13 is not on a person, the gun is in a car
14 somewhere and we got to prove whose gun
15 it is because there's a few people in
16 the car, we are continuing in that
17 collaboration to talk about how we can
18 go after social media for someone who is
19 under arrest immediately before it's
20 cleaned up because that social media
21 itself may show the person holding the
22 gun or the person engaging in conduct
23 that gives us additional evidence and
24 strengthens those cases. That
25 discussion is a work in progress. We

1 know that there's a lot of other good
2 work going on within the PPD on some
3 kinds of social media, but we hope to
4 make more progress on this one. We feel
5 like there's more to do.

6 There's some Live Stop issues
7 having to do with cars. I won't get
8 into the details. But they're important
9 because it's just important that we do
10 things according to a process that's not
11 going to endanger conviction later if
12 there is a gun found. And so, we are
13 working collaboratively with the PPD on
14 fixing that.

15 I've seen some improvement in
16 the ability to get witnesses in. And
17 once again, I'm not speaking
18 aspirationally. There's some data on
19 that. We're seeing it partly because
20 the Commissioner has, and I thank her
21 for that, she has been willing to
22 provide additional DA detectives to our
23 office who were needed and has made a
24 commitment to provide more. That helps
25 us. But also, what's happened in this

1 collaboration is we're asking PPD to do
2 certain things that will encourage those
3 witnesses to come out and testify that
4 will get them out to testify in various
5 different ways, and the data does
6 indicate we're getting more people in
7 which is very, very important.

8 I know that there has, at least
9 at the level of memo writing, been some
10 additional work by the PPD on informing
11 the brass and hopefully the officers who
12 are making the arrests on constructive
13 possession law, something they need to
14 know, helps them do their work and we
15 appreciate that. We stand ready and
16 made this offer several times. We stand
17 ready to assist in any capacity, with
18 training, whether it's writing materials
19 or even having some of our attorneys
20 meet with police personnel. We stand
21 ready to do that if we can.

22 And we are also seeing other
23 things with this collaboration, which is
24 very important, which is that we are
25 seeing there has been attention on

1 individual cases where there's something
2 that is determined that could be done
3 better from an investigative
4 perspective. We are coming to
5 understand that there's follow-up with
6 those particular officers who were
7 involved in that case so that whatever
8 wasn't as good as it could have been
9 could be better next time. To me, that
10 is very, very important.

11 Next slide, please. In terms
12 of our partnership with law enforcement,
13 it is my opinion that our regular
14 meetings with the Police Commissioner,
15 her availability by cell phone to deal
16 with specific issues, our meeting with
17 Divisional and District commanders on a
18 regular basis and these various other
19 things in which we have been engaged
20 have been positive.

21 I think the most difficult
22 partnership we've had and the one that
23 has been the most concerning is a
24 problem that is largely solved. Here's
25 the truth: Mr. McSwain when he was the

1 United States Attorney received a
2 package of 35 gun cases from me with my
3 request to be prosecutor. He only took
4 5. He sent back 30. His time was
5 dedicated to other things. And I think
6 we all know what that time was dedicated
7 to now. But we are very much looking
8 forward to having a U.S. Attorney
9 appointed by this Administration. We
10 know there's some great candidates out
11 there. One who I know very, very well
12 from his work in the City and we are
13 very encouraged by what we anticipate
14 will not only be a good cooperation at
15 the level of the line of U.S. Attorneys
16 which we have always had, but a good
17 cooperation at the level of Chief U.S.
18 Attorney.

19 All right. I believe at this
20 time I'm going to ask Bob Listenbee to
21 be on standby to take a couple of these
22 slides. Next slide, please.

23 ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY
24 LISTENBEE: Okay. The DA's role in
25 prosecution starts with charging. You

1 can see prior to that the incident and
2 the arrest, bail set and then outcomes.
3 We look at a new data point, future
4 years of supervision and future years of
5 incarceration. Both of those are down
6 substantially under this District
7 Attorney.

8 Next slide, please. We have
9 here fatal shootings, incidents, arrests
10 and charges. We've gone back to the
11 year 2015 because you have a lot of
12 cases that carry from one year to the
13 next. I'd like to start in the year
14 2018. I'd like to focus on two
15 data points there, the number of arrests
16 and the number of cases charged. The
17 number of arrests, 87. Number of cases
18 charged, 87. Again, going back to 2019,
19 incidents to 199; arrests 109; number of
20 cases charged, 108. 2020, same pattern,
21 104 arrests; 104 charges.

22 Next slide, please. In
23 nonfatal shootings we see a similar
24 pattern. I won't go back to 2015
25 because you know the reason for starting

1 there. But if you look at the incidents
2 in 2018, 1109 incidents; 1097 arrests;
3 193 charges.

4 2019, 1143 incidents; 237
5 arrests; 233 charged. Again, in 2020,
6 1855 incidents; 273 arrests; 270
7 charged. So the District Attorney's
8 Office is charging overwhelmingly almost
9 all the cases where there are arrests.

10 Next slide, please. If you go
11 to fatal shootings, you see case
12 progression, 1706 fatal shootings during
13 this time period from 2015 through 2020.
14 Fatal shooting arrests, 548. Fatal
15 shootings charged, 747. If you look at
16 the conviction rates down below versus
17 the cases pending, 86 percent conviction
18 rate.

19 Next slide, please. Again,
20 nonfatal shootings, 7027 between the
21 same period of 2015 to 2020. Nonfatal
22 shootings with arrests, 1299. And
23 nonfatal shootings charged, 1279. We're
24 charging almost every single case where
25 there's an arrest.

1 Convictions are at a lower rate
2 with nonfatal shootings than with fatal
3 shootings. Conviction rate is at 67.
4 Dismissals, 195. There were some
5 discussion earlier about the difficulty
6 and challenges getting witnesses. We
7 think there's been some improvement. We
8 certainly appreciate the funding
9 provided by City Council for
10 relocations. There are only a few of
11 them that happened, but they are
12 critical to a lot of these cases and we
13 are going to continue to use that
14 funding along with funding provided by
15 the Attorney General's Office for that
16 purpose.

17 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

18 Excuse me, Bob. I just want to
19 interject one point.

20 This average of 67 percent for
21 convictions is a five-year average. The
22 actual average right before the pandemic
23 was nearly 85 percent for convictions.

24 Go ahead, sir.

25 ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

1 LISTENBEE: Robbery cases with guns,
2 there were 8340 robbery with gun
3 arrests. 7911 robbery with gun charges.
4 The convictions here over that same
5 five-year period is 48 percent. A lot
6 of dismissals and withdrawals, 3383. We
7 know that again one of the challenges is
8 getting witnesses in and making sure
9 that they're not threatened or
10 intimidated. We have some means using
11 one of our grand jury approaches and
12 other means, and we've been going
13 forward with that, but that remains a
14 big challenge.

15 Next slide, please. VUFA
16 arrests: Illegal gun possession cases
17 is 7817 during the same period 2015 to
18 2020. Convictions is 63 percent, 3331.
19 Obviously, a number of cases pending.
20 Dismissals is 1774. Again, this working
21 group that the DA described earlier is
22 working with us to try and improve the
23 percentage of cases where there are
24 convictions. We think that the help
25 there is going to make a really big

1 difference going forward. I don't know
2 the specific rates over the last year or
3 two, but I think they're probably
4 higher, but I don't have the data to
5 support that at this point in time.

6 Prosecutions of juveniles:
7 We're committed to treating juveniles
8 involved with the system as kids and not
9 as adults and further reforming the
10 juvenile justice system. We're looking
11 for a fair and more rehabilitative
12 system, less punitive. We know that
13 there's been a substantial decrease in
14 the number of youth who are in out-of-
15 home placement with the number starting
16 in December of 2017, slightly a month
17 before this Administration took office.
18 There were about 600 youth in out-of-
19 home placement. In December 2020, there
20 were about 109 youth in out-of-home
21 placement. So you had about an 89
22 percent reduction.

23 I just want to stress that
24 youth who come out of out-of-home
25 placement are not simply returned to

1 their homes. There's a focus on
2 education, making sure they get
3 transitioned back into the appropriate
4 educational program. There's a focus on
5 jobs. There's a focus on other kinds of
6 rehabilitative supports for them when
7 they come back to the community.

8 I want to also stress something
9 with the Department of Human Services
10 and with Family Court. The District
11 Attorney's Office has consistently
12 requested further support from those two
13 organizations and from City Council for
14 the kinds of facilities that we can send
15 children to where we can place them,
16 kids who have significant problems with
17 violence, kids who have been arrested,
18 charged, convicted or adjudicated
19 delinquent of serious violent offenses.
20 We would like to send them to facilities
21 where they can be rehabilitated but not
22 warehoused, where they can receive the
23 appropriate treatment but not be abused.
24 We need some help with this kind of
25 effort. We'd like to have these

1 facilities close to home.

2 In summary, I would like to say
3 this, the DA's Office and the DA has
4 ordered me to do seven major things
5 since the beginning of this pandemic to
6 address the gun violence going on in our
7 City. He's talked about the Gun Crime
8 Strategies and Prevention Collaborative
9 where we've assigned 12 ADA or Assistant
10 District Attorneys. He's talked about
11 the Intelligence Unit where we've
12 assigned 2 ADAs.

13 He's demanded that I expand the
14 Gun Violence Task Force. We've provided
15 additional staff along with equipment
16 that we purchased which has helped us
17 with the forensics. The court has set
18 up a gun preliminary hearing where we've
19 assigned senior staff. We've been very
20 successful with the first 152
21 preliminary hearings. 107 of them were
22 held for court. 48 were continued but
23 only 7 were dismissed, and that just
24 started about three weeks ago.

25 There's also a gun

1 preliminary hearing -- not gun
2 preliminary, but preliminary hearings
3 that are going on up at the County jail.
4 That just started yesterday. This was
5 set up by the courts and the DA ordered
6 us to be ready to go with that and we
7 were ready to go with that, and we had
8 our staff up there. We've had success
9 with that program as well. He has also
10 ordered an expansion of the Homicide
11 Nonfatal Shootings Unit and we put some
12 of our best Assistant District Attorneys
13 in that unit and we've been going
14 forward with that as well.

15 In addition, he ordered that we
16 keep our juvenile courts open throughout
17 the pandemic and we've done exactly what
18 he ordered. Our staff was there every
19 day working throughout the pandemic,
20 making sure that our children were taken
21 care of, reducing the number of kids
22 held at our juvenile detention facility
23 and making sure that those who were in
24 places all across the state could be
25 brought back home safely and coordinated

1 and left with their families so they
2 could avoid any problems that you might
3 encounter in juvenile facilities. We
4 were encouraged by the state to do that.
5 We were encouraged by the City and
6 Family Court to do that and responded as
7 best we could.

8 And I'll turn this over back to
9 the DA who will say who else is coming
10 up next.

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER: So
12 thank you, Mr. Listenbee. We're going
13 to change our sequence just a little bit
14 because we have two students, and we
15 will shift to G. Lamar Stewart to please
16 introduce them so that we can end by
17 12:30.

18 MR. STEWART: Thank you, DA
19 Krasner. I'll be talking about
20 prevention, more about it after the
21 break. One of the things that our
22 Office has every month, we participate
23 in listening sessions with young people
24 at 14 schools throughout the City of
25 Philadelphia: Mathematics, Civics and

1 Sciences, Dobbins High School, Mastbaum,
2 Martin Luther King, Lankenau. There's a
3 list of schools. And we are talking to
4 them around gun violence, around trauma
5 and also around just making wise
6 choices.

7 We have two young people that's
8 on with us today who will participate in
9 our sessions every month at Mathematics,
10 Civics and Sciences, so I just want to
11 introduce them because they won't be
12 able to come back after the break.

13 Mr. Ryan Smith is a teacher and we have
14 with us 11th grader Aja Moore and Cayla
15 Waddington who's a 9th grader at
16 Mathematics.

17 You guys can come on screen
18 now.

19 MR. SMITH: Good morning,
20 everyone, members of City Council,
21 District Attorney, Police Commissioner
22 Outlaw and everyone from the District
23 Attorney's Office. My name is Ryan
24 Smith and I'm joined by two of my
25 students Cayla Waddington and Aja Moore.

1 First and foremost, I know
2 we're a little short on time so I'm
3 going to try to keep it brief. On
4 behalf of Veronica J. Joyner, the
5 Founder and CEO of Mathematics, Civics
6 and Sciences Charter School, I'd first
7 like to thank the District Attorney's
8 Office for everything they've done for
9 my school and the students who attend
10 it.

11 On five separate occasions in
12 the last two years, my school has
13 tragically lost someone due to gun
14 violence. The five students we lost
15 were individuals who had incredible
16 futures ahead of them, but their lives
17 were cut short tragically due to gun
18 violence. With each and every loss
19 without hesitation, the District
20 Attorney's Office sent counselors and
21 trauma specialists to our school to help
22 with grieving students.

23 I can't overstate how
24 beneficial the DAO has been in helping
25 to alleviate some of the trauma that my

1 students have felt. And I actually
2 would like to turn the floor over to my
3 two students who can speak more on that.
4 So I'm going to turn the floor over to
5 my student first, Cayla Waddington.

6 MS. WADDINGTON: Good
7 afternoon, everyone. My name is Cayla
8 Waddington and I am a 9th grade student
9 at the Mathematics, Civics and Sciences
10 Charter School of Philadelphia. This
11 past year I have been one of the
12 students fortunate enough to take part
13 in the monthly listening sessions with
14 the District Attorney's Office. These
15 sessions have made an incredible impact.
16 It's great to know that the District
17 Attorney's Office cares about what we
18 students have to say.

19 When I first was invited to
20 partake in the conversation, I was
21 expecting a pessimistic lecture where
22 City officials talk to us as we listen
23 about how much of an epidemic gun
24 violence really is. That couldn't be
25 further from reality. The sessions with

1 the DA's Office truly have been
2 listening sessions. Members of the DAO
3 sincerely have listened to what we have
4 to say and are completely engaged for
5 the 90 minutes that they're with us.

6 As high schoolers, many people
7 are quick to just write us off as just
8 kids. However, not once did anyone from
9 the District's Office make us feel this
10 way. They were empowering and they told
11 us to think deeper and about many
12 difficult topics and issues. I know
13 that my fellow students and I have
14 substantial ideas to offer to the
15 conversations.

16 Gun violence is certainly an
17 issue that affects my peers and I. And
18 knowing that we have a platform to share
19 our voices and opinions is comforting.
20 I look forward to the monthly sessions,
21 as it is one of the few times where I
22 feel my voice is really being heard.
23 These sessions also give us an
24 optimistic view of our future. Gun
25 violence is without a doubt a monumental

1 topic to tackle. However, because of
2 these monthly listening sessions, we now
3 have the opportunity to discuss
4 solutions to help stop and further
5 prevent gun violence.

6 I am grateful that my voice is
7 considered, as I know I will be
8 inheriting a world where I'm confident,
9 people sought and implemented solutions
10 to problems that plague it. These
11 sessions have empowered my fellow
12 students and myself to be a part of the
13 solution and we take that role very
14 seriously. I'll now hand the floor to
15 my peer Aja Moore.

16 MS. MOORE: Good afternoon,
17 everybody. My name is Aja Moore and I'm
18 an 11th grade student at the
19 Mathematics, Civics and Sciences Charter
20 School of Philadelphia. I'd like to
21 preface by saying that the efforts made
22 by the DA's Office are greatly
23 appreciated. My classmates and I also
24 appreciate that the District Attorney's
25 Office has taken the initiative to be in

1 contact with students who are growing up
2 in the communities that they wish to
3 help.

4 Through the course of the past
5 year during our sessions with the
6 District Attorney's Office, we have
7 developed so many ideas in regards to
8 solutions for what can best help the
9 people in our City. The most important
10 one which we considered was that the
11 City of Philadelphia could allocate
12 funds into recreational and
13 extra-curricular activities for youth.

14 Often times people in
15 impoverished communities feel that they
16 can never be anything better than their
17 current position, but affording students
18 the opportunity to see things beyond
19 their neighborhoods will give them the
20 boost of ambition that they aren't
21 getting at home. And rec centers and
22 extra-curriculum activities will also
23 serve as a deterrent for students
24 engaging in delinquency.

25 As far as people who have

1 already engaged in delinquency or are
2 even facing criminal charges, instead of
3 sending them to overcrowded prisons and
4 youth detention centers which only
5 causes even more trauma, we hope that
6 the City will make a stronger effort to
7 push court-mandated therapy and
8 counseling. Though I am aware that
9 there already are programs like this,
10 they are massively underfunded. This
11 will be a huge step to address the
12 already too-high recidivism rate.

13 Therapy really is a valuable
14 resource that should absolutely be
15 encouraged more in impoverished
16 communities, as it would magnanimously
17 reduce gun violence. As it stands now,
18 gun violence continues to be a huge
19 issue that plagues the City of
20 Philadelphia and we continue to treat
21 the symptoms, but we are doing nothing
22 to treat the cause. To close, I would
23 once again like to thank the DA's Office
24 for the incredible program that they
25 have extended to our school. We are

1 grateful for their outreach and I
2 sincerely hope that our suggestions are
3 taken into considerations in the DA's
4 Office. Thank you.

5 MR. STEWART: Thank you both,
6 Aja and Cayla. I appreciate all that
7 you do and made your school for a job
8 well done. DA Krasner, I'll turn it
9 back over to you and we'll continue the
10 prevention after the break.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So before
12 we go for the recess, again I want to
13 personally thank Mr. Ryan. I want to
14 also thank Aja Moore and Cayla
15 Waddington for stepping up to the plate
16 and providing their testimony as we look
17 at addressing this conversation. And
18 it's also refreshing to hear our voices
19 as to why we're at the table, all of us,
20 all of us who are elected, why we're
21 doing the work that we're supposed to be
22 doing irregardless of our positions. At
23 the end of the day, it's all about the
24 children and making sure that they are
25 safe and that they have a brighter

1 future here in the City of Philadelphia.

2 With that being said, we're
3 going to take a recess until 2:30 and
4 then we'll come back and do the
5 question-and-answer session and also
6 finish the presentation. I know we have
7 your CARES program that's going to
8 finish up their presentation as well as
9 we have several other panels. And so, I
10 will see everyone at 2:30. Thank you
11 very much.

12 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

13 Thank you.

14 (Afternoon recess.)

15 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So this
16 meeting is now called to order. Before
17 we start with the continuation of the
18 formal presentations from our District
19 Attorney and his team, I would like for
20 the Clerk to just call the roll for
21 Members who are participating in the
22 hearing.

23 THE CLERK: Isaiah Thomas.

24 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Present.

25 THE CLERK: Katherine Gilmore

1 Richardson.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair
4 and colleagues. I'm present.

5 THE CLERK: Jamie Gauthier.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good
7 afternoon, Mr. Chair. Present.

8 THE CLERK: Derek Green.

9 (No response.)

10 THE CLERK: And that's it,
11 Mr. Chair.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
13 I think I also see -- oh, that's Tamala.
14 Okay. I thought I saw Maria Quinones-
15 Sanchez.

16 Thank you, Mr. DA. Thank you,
17 Larry Krasner, for following up on this
18 presentation and sticking around. So
19 you can finish your presentation, sir.

20 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
21 Yes, sir. Thank you very much. Happy
22 to be here on this very important issue.
23 At this time I'm going to ask -- we have
24 a few more topics, although we've
25 covered most of the presentation.

1 At this time, I'm going to ask
2 Reverend Myra Maxwell to address our
3 peer crisis response followed by G.
4 Lamar Stewart and then Mike Lee.

5 REVEREND MAXWELL: Good
6 afternoon and thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 Thank you, Mr. Krasner as well and thank
8 you all, City Councilmembers. My name
9 is Myra Maxwell and I (inaudible)
10 Philadelphia CARES. It feels like my
11 (inaudible). I may be going in and out.
12 Can you all hear me?

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, I
14 hear you.

15 REVEREND MAXWELL: Okay. Thank
16 you. All right. Philadelphia CARES
17 program, Philadelphia CARES is the
18 Crisis Assistance Response and
19 Engagement for Survivors of homicide.
20 This is one of the newer programs of the
21 District Attorney's Office. We had
22 started our program in 2018, but we
23 actually started our deployment going
24 out to crime scenes to provide services
25 on the scenes, at the hospitals as well

1 as at the medical examiner's office for
2 surviving family members of homicide.

3 In 2019, we started this
4 program with about 10 peer crisis
5 responders. And peer crisis responders
6 had lived experience and that's a
7 requirement of this program, so we're
8 very excited about the work that they
9 are doing and how they are giving back
10 in their own ways. In the immediate
11 aftermath of a homicide loss here in
12 Philadelphia, we are deploying peer
13 crisis responders out to service the
14 families.

15 Now, I'm speaking a little bit
16 post-COVID. We deploy out two peer
17 crisis responders. They will go out to
18 the scene and they will actually meet
19 with the families there on scene to
20 provide immediate emotional support for
21 the family. Since the COVID pandemic,
22 we had been doing -- primarily most of
23 our work has been through virtual means,
24 through telephone. So we are really
25 providing immediate support in the

1 immediate aftermath to every family
2 who's touched by homicide in the City.
3 So we provide outreach to those families
4 and we make certain that we are
5 addressing all of their needs. So we do
6 a complete assessment for those families
7 and we're making sure that they know all
8 of the supports that are available here
9 in the City of Philadelphia.

10 Next slide, please. Thank you.
11 So our work in providing immediate peer
12 response, which means that we're
13 providing support of counseling to the
14 family, which means that, one,
15 information is important but certainly
16 our presence. Presence is very
17 important in the immediate aftermath of
18 any traumatic event, but of course
19 homicide is one that we have many family
20 members that rally at that time and they
21 are in need of information. They need
22 support. They want to know what the
23 next steps are, so we work very closely
24 with our partners in the medical
25 examiner's office.

1 We also work with our
2 community-based partners because we have
3 community-based agencies that we support
4 and support the work of CARES, as well
5 as our survivor-led agencies. Because
6 in the City of Philadelphia, many of our
7 homicide survivor groups that have
8 evolved, started because they had lost a
9 loved one to homicide death here in the
10 City. So we're able to work with them.
11 And if we have language barriers, of
12 course we provide translation services
13 and we try to make sure that we are
14 providing every particular need that
15 they may have, so we do a full
16 assessment. A full assessment, not on
17 the scene, not at the site, but we make
18 sure that we provide follow-up to assess
19 every part of their needs.

20 We also want to identify the
21 additional family members or extended
22 family, so we're talking immediate and
23 extended family because extended family
24 can be someone who knows the person
25 who's lost their life to homicide. It

1 can be a family member, a friend. It
2 can be a neighbor. It can be a teacher
3 from 10 years ago. But they are all
4 affected by this homicide loss so we are
5 there to support every one of our
6 families. And of course, all of our
7 services are free of charge.

8 The great part about this is
9 when we're working with these families,
10 we're able to plug them into the
11 resources that the community offers as
12 well as the system-based agencies offer
13 as well. So it's a wonderful
14 opportunity for families to be serviced,
15 also to get service in the short-term as
16 far as CARES being a crisis response
17 unit, but it also extends out to our
18 community-based partners for the longer
19 term.

20 Next slide. Since we started
21 the CARES program, and I really want to
22 talk about the numbers from 2020 to
23 yesterday, actually when I gave the
24 numbers. So we supported over 1,043
25 co-victims of homicide, and that's

1 families that have been served from
2 January 1, 2020 to March 28, 2021. And
3 so, we've provided approximately 4,854
4 different services within working with
5 our community-based partners, plugging
6 families into counseling. And when I
7 think of counseling, we have to consider
8 that there are different types of
9 counseling, individual counseling, group
10 counseling and alternative therapies
11 that are available for families.

12 We also walk them through the
13 criminal justice process. And that way,
14 if there's an arrest in the case, then
15 we are able to work well with our sister
16 unit, which is our Victim Service Unit
17 led by Keziah Cameron, so we work with
18 that unit very closely to make sure if
19 there's an arrest in the case, the
20 families are notified, that they have
21 the information, so we service them in
22 that way through our sister unit.

23 Also with CARES, it's unique
24 because that does not have to be an
25 arrest in a case in order to receive

1 services, so we provide services and
2 support to any family members or any
3 neighbor or any community person that's
4 affected by this homicide loss. Many
5 people think that you're only working
6 with the co-victim, specifically meaning
7 the immediate family or next of kin.
8 That is not true. We actually work with
9 anyone who's affected by the homicide
10 loss. We make sure that they are also
11 receiving services. It can be a
12 witness. It can be a neighbor. Again,
13 I mentioned earlier it can be a teacher
14 from 3rd grade. If that person is
15 impacted by this homicide loss, we're
16 making sure that we are working with
17 them and we are providing support and
18 services to them.

19 Now, throughout the traumatic
20 experience, of course as you know with
21 trauma, people may not remember the
22 number of people that they spoke with.
23 But with us, we're making sure that
24 we're giving them a personal touch. And
25 of course, we try to make sure that we

1 contact the families more often, more
2 frequently based on their needs or their
3 particular time limit or time span. We
4 have 45 days to provide these services.
5 And once we provide these services, we
6 do another assessment to make sure that
7 all of the families are taken care of,
8 all of the needs that they had at the
9 time and then we make sure they are
10 referred out to one of our community-
11 based or survivor-led organizations and
12 many, many other social service agencies
13 so it's not limited.

14 We work with Register of Wills.
15 We refer seniors for other types of
16 services, food banks, medical, emergency
17 things and items such in that nature so
18 our office is really doing an enormous
19 amount of work around homicides and
20 we're very happy to have the peer crisis
21 response team working in this capacity.
22 Again, they bring such humility and
23 experience unfortunately to this work,
24 but they are there. When it was named
25 CARES, that is absolutely what we do.

1 We care about our community and we
2 certainly want to make sure that our
3 community members are aware that we are
4 not just servicing the next of kin, that
5 if they need support or if they need
6 assistance or if they need any
7 referrals, that they can reach out to
8 our office. We are available. We have
9 a 24-hour hotline that we will be
10 getting. We'll start probably in the
11 next couple of weeks, so we are
12 preparing now to have everyone trained.

13 And speaking of training,
14 training is actually the key. So all of
15 our staff are trauma-informed. They
16 have training. They're required to have
17 continuous training yearly and we make
18 sure that they are fully aware of all of
19 the issues and concerns that will evolve
20 around a homicide death in the City of
21 Philadelphia.

22 Now, to go to our funding,
23 we're excited because we were just
24 recently awarded another \$1.2 million to
25 carry out this program for another three

1 years within the District Attorney's
2 Office. And when I say this, the reason
3 I get excited about this part is because
4 this has never been done in a
5 prosecutor's office before where we're
6 actually boots on the ground -- and I've
7 heard you mention boots on the ground --
8 so we are the boots on the ground as
9 well as our community engagement team.
10 We are there specifically to service the
11 homicide families here in the City of
12 Philadelphia, but we will make sure that
13 if there are other nonfatal shootings if
14 we need to refer out, we will provide
15 those referrals for them.

16 But in this next funding
17 stream, we hope to be able to expand our
18 team a little further. And we're also
19 looking for additional funding because
20 of course with the numbers going up in
21 homicide, we certainly need more active
22 peer crisis responders on the ground and
23 certainly, we need some that have
24 various language skills and other skills
25 that we can really utilize to support

1 these families.

2 So once again, we are very
3 excited about the work that we will be
4 doing. We love our partnership with the
5 Philadelphia Police Department because
6 they provide us with the alerts. So
7 once we're alerted by them, we'll know
8 that there's a homicide loss and we're
9 able to work with our medical examiner's
10 office and our office to get that
11 information quickly and to provide
12 support to the families immediately in
13 the aftermath of a homicide loss. Thank
14 you.

15 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
16 Thank you, Reverend Maxwell. We're
17 going to shorten our presentation a
18 little bit in light of the time.
19 Mr. Mike Lee who was going to talk about
20 bail, something I've discussed many
21 times with members of Council, is going
22 to reserve comments for any questions
23 there may be. You're all familiar with
24 the struggles that we have in requesting
25 our high bails we're not getting on

1 shooting cases. And we're going
2 directly to G. Lamar Stewart. He's
3 going to speak about prevention. I'll
4 just have two words of that to sum up
5 and we'll be ready for questions.

6 G. Lamar.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And just
8 for the record, District Attorney Larry
9 Krasner, I did send a formal invitation
10 to Judge Patrick Dugan who oversees the
11 bail commissioners. He wasn't available
12 for today. He did send over a written
13 statement for the record, but there will
14 be a follow-up hearing, which will we
15 will recess this hearing for as a
16 follow-up for other City agencies and
17 neighbor organizations that want to
18 participate in this discussion. I think
19 it's April 16th.

20 Nevertheless, I just wanted to
21 state that for the record because we
22 have to also address this issue around
23 bail and figure out again are we doing
24 everything possible to keep those who
25 are basically a harm to our community

1 behind bars. So I just wanted to state
2 that for the record.

3 Go ahead, G. Lamar Stewart.

4 MR. STEWART: Thank you,
5 Councilmember. And thank you, District
6 Attorney.

7 Next slide, please. As
8 mentioned before the break where we had
9 the opportunity to hear from two of our
10 students from Mathematics, Civics and
11 Sciences, Aja Moore and Cayla
12 Waddington, our Community Engagement
13 Unit at the Philadelphia District
14 Attorney's Office is very committed to
15 initiating prevention models throughout
16 our office. And one of those
17 initiatives is a listening session that
18 we had with students across the City of
19 Philadelphia every third week of the
20 month.

21 We're connected to 14 schools
22 currently, a couple of schools in each
23 police division, where we spend 90
24 minutes every third week of the month at
25 each school. Right now we're virtually.

1 Pre-pandemic we were actually physically
2 in the building. We're discussing
3 topics, whether it's gun violence or
4 civic education or know-your-right
5 sessions or bullying or peer pressure,
6 among other topics.

7 Next slide. As I mentioned,
8 we're at several schools. One of the
9 schools or a few of the schools listed,
10 Mathematics, Civics and Sciences,
11 Dobbins, Maustbaum, Vocatio, Martin
12 Luther King High School, Lankenau, South
13 Philadelphia High, Add B. Anderson,
14 William Kelley as well as Longstreth.

15 Next slide. And so, part of
16 also our prevention model is really to
17 connect with the community as often as
18 possible. So the community's voice is
19 very critical to the work that we do
20 around building bridges between the
21 community and the DA's Office. So our
22 DAO staff of both liaisons as well as
23 other support staff. We are in 40 to 50
24 civic association meetings, media
25 association meetings, PDAC meetings,

1 meetings with our faith-based partners,
2 building relationships with residents
3 and stakeholders across the City of
4 Philadelphia.

5 We've just begun meeting with
6 City Council staff as well just over the
7 last couple of weeks, bringing persons
8 from our office to meet with
9 representatives from various different
10 City Council offices so that the
11 Directors of Constituent Services and
12 others who are applying services to
13 constituents across the City that have
14 direct access to people who are making
15 decisions, but also who have access to
16 the support and resources for those who
17 are victims and co-victims of crime.

18 We also continue to partner
19 with credible messengers and community
20 organizations and anti-violence
21 activists to promote our monthly ONE
22 STOP Hub. As we speak now, we have a
23 team of community engagement staff on
24 the ground in Northwest doing canvassing
25 around areas that have been impacted by

1 gun violence over the last couple of
2 weeks. They'll be in East Division
3 tonight. They'll be on the ground until
4 about 9 or 10 o'clock this evening
5 engaging with residents, with victims,
6 with stakeholders, connecting them to
7 our ONE STOP Hub, which I'll talk about
8 here momentarily.

9 We host a monthly virtual
10 community town hall, which focuses on
11 various different topics and we
12 highlight units within our office,
13 whether it's our Family Violence and
14 Sexual Assault Unit or if it's our Gun
15 Violence Task Force or one of the other
16 units that provide support to victims of
17 crime.

18 Next slide. Additionally, of
19 course we're engaging with our faith-
20 based community. And part of prevention
21 for us really is not only connecting
22 with community-based organizations, but
23 also our faith leaders who serve
24 diligently in the community. Faith
25 leaders like Reverend Myra Maxwell who

1 you just heard from, who pastors in
2 South Philly. But we partner with about
3 100-plus faith partners across the City
4 of Philadelphia.

5 Pre-pandemic we were hosting
6 quarterly faith-based breakfasts, where
7 we were having conversations engaging
8 with our faith leaders around solutions
9 to the issue of gun violence, but also
10 allowing them to provide feedback to
11 reforms and policies that the DA has
12 instituted under this Administration.
13 We collaborate with faith institutions
14 and faith leaders on anti-violence
15 outreach initiatives that is impacted by
16 gun violence as well.

17 Next slide. So as was
18 mentioned just a moment ago, every first
19 Thursday of the month since September of
20 2019, we've launched the ONE STOP Job
21 and Resource Hub. And ONE STOP is a
22 service-oriented approach that helps
23 restore communities' trust in the
24 justice system, specifically the DA's
25 Office. We certainly believe that there

1 is a correlation between poverty and
2 crime. And while we focus heavily on
3 those first two Ps, partnership and
4 prosecution, we realize the emphasis and
5 the need to also focus on prevention in
6 helping people get connected back into
7 gainful employment and opportunities
8 that will help them along the way, as we
9 heard from our students at Mathematics,
10 Civics and Sciences.

11 And so, we're partnering with
12 153 different employers and we have part
13 of our list of employers and all of them
14 are part of the hub every month. But
15 pre-pandemic, we would bring about 50 to
16 60 employers into rec centers and into
17 schools and we would transform those
18 spaces into job interview sites. Now,
19 in the pandemic we are hosting this
20 virtually. We normally have around 30
21 to 35 employers and other social service
22 providers. But our list of employers is
23 around 153, and then we have about 91
24 different participating, other resource
25 providers, whether that's housing or

1 victim services or job training or youth
2 mentoring or addiction treatment or
3 expungement clinics. So we've been able
4 to connect about 3500 people to job and
5 social services since we've launched the
6 hub back in September of 2019. And you
7 will hear one of those success stories
8 in just about two minutes.

9 Next slide. As we mentioned
10 just a moment ago, there are --
11 pre-pandemic we were able to host
12 several of these hubs or ONE STOPs, I
13 should say, in various different
14 Councilmanic Districts. Before the
15 pandemic, we've had ONE STOPs at
16 Columbia North YMCA, West Philly YMCA,
17 South Philly High, Simons Rec Center,
18 Heitzman Rec Center, Triumph Baptist
19 Church, but unfortunately because of the
20 pandemic, we had to take the hub
21 virtually, but it's been a success. So
22 we've had several ONE STOPs before the
23 pandemic. There have been 17 total; 9
24 of those hubs have been virtually.

25 Next slide. So our next ONE

1 STOP Hub is going to be this Thursday,
2 April 1, 2021. The Zoom information is
3 right there on the screen and that will
4 be our last slide for our presentation.
5 Thank you much.

6 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
7 Thank you kindly, Councilmember. We
8 appreciate everyone's patience.

9 I just have about two minutes
10 of stating the DAO's goals for 2021.
11 First and foremost, we're going to
12 advocate for prevention because it works
13 and because it is something that has
14 been proven in LA and Chicago and other
15 places to be more effective than simply
16 putting more money in into other efforts
17 that have not shown success. We have to
18 do that. This is the Black Clergy's
19 plan. For those of you who saw the
20 announcement of their plan last week, it
21 is what community groups are crying out
22 for all over the City and we support it.

23 Second, and here I must
24 respectfully disagree with our Police
25 Commissioner. We're going to advocate

1 for forensics and I mean vigorously.
2 Forensics don't just solve crimes that
3 aren't getting solved, and we already
4 know that there is a tremendous
5 challenge in solving shooting cases,
6 they also make those cases strong enough
7 to prove. They make it so we can win in
8 court.

9 Yes, we had a nearly 85
10 conviction rate right before the
11 pandemic for homicides by gun and for
12 shootings. Why isn't it 90? Why isn't
13 it 91? Why isn't it 92? This matters.
14 This is really important. The amount of
15 money we are speaking about here is
16 small. But I want you to understand how
17 desperate this is.

18 There is a gunshot residue
19 machine that has been broken for two
20 years in our forensics lab. It means
21 that there has to be outside vendors
22 used whenever we need to check gunshot
23 residue. It's expensive. It's slow.
24 It makes it harder to solve
25 investigations. We cannot afford it.

1 There are too many people being shot and
2 too many lives being lost.

3 Second, when we talk about a 20
4 to 25 percent success rate at doing DNA
5 involving ballistics for another 50,000
6 pieces of evidence, that's an incredibly
7 high rate. If you can do something with
8 DNA that you couldn't do before that's
9 going to tell you who touched 1 out of
10 every 4 guns or is going to tell you who
11 touched 1 out of every 4 whatever it may
12 be, another piece of evidence, you
13 cannot only possibly solve that crime
14 but you can stop all of the retaliatory
15 shootings. When I say it would cut the
16 homicide rate 10 percent, I might very
17 well be talking low. We have to do
18 this. It is such a small amount of
19 money.

20 In a City that is approaching
21 \$1 billion on its police budget that has
22 had a record \$80 million in overtime,
23 for some reason I just keep hearing this
24 word overtime, we're talking about \$4.5
25 million to \$5 million, the Commissioner

1 agrees, in the first year, about \$2
2 million to \$2.5 million thereafter and
3 some space, which I thought was actually
4 in those numbers, but regardless that's
5 what we're talking about.

6 I thought this would cost \$50
7 million. It is peanuts compared to the
8 value of saving 10 percent of our
9 homicide rate, saving what at the moment
10 would be about 50 human lives. It's
11 peanuts. We have to do this. It's
12 crucial.

13 In terms of our other goals,
14 communications, we will continue with
15 our weekly press conferences in which we
16 have been updating on gun violence every
17 week in addition to discussing other
18 topics. We will continue with our
19 collaborations to increasing them and
20 improving them. As I've indicated, I
21 think we have some very strong
22 collaborations on novel programs with
23 the PPD. We hope to continue to even
24 more with our other partners.

25 Convictions, Mr. Listenbee went

1 by it quickly and it was a very, very
2 important point. And I want to make
3 sure it's not missed. Yes, we want to
4 make sure that our convictions are
5 righteous, that we are not hiding
6 evidence, that we are following the law
7 but we want our conviction rates to keep
8 going up. 85 percent is great, but we
9 need our convictions for gun possession
10 cases to increase as well.

11 I won't go into all the details
12 there, but he told you something very
13 important. And I got to give credit to
14 the courts on this one. They set up,
15 and we were in agreement on this, a
16 court dedicated to doing preliminary
17 hearings on gun cases. It has been in
18 operation since about March 8th.

19 Let me tell you what the rate
20 for cases being held over for trial is:
21 That first week, March 8th, there were
22 45 cases listed. There were 28 hearings
23 held. Only 1 case was thrown out. 27
24 of those cases are headed for trial.
25 That is a 96 percent rate of cases being

1 held to go to trial. These are gunpoint
2 robberies, they're domestic violence
3 cases where a gun is pointed, they're
4 pistol whippings, they are drug cases
5 where there's a gun possessed, 96
6 percent. The next week, 91 percent.
7 The next week, 93 percent. This is what
8 happens when we have good collaborations
9 with the PPD and some of the kinks in
10 the system are getting knocked out.
11 This is what happens when we have good
12 collaborations with the courts.

13 And so, we're very excited
14 about continuing down that kind of road
15 of prioritizing not only the convictions
16 but outreach and support to victims, and
17 of course our community engagement will
18 continue. We hope it will be even
19 better in '21. And those are all the
20 comments I have before questions.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
22 Larry, for your presentation. Thank
23 your team also for their presentation as
24 well.

25 I want to note for the record

1 that we have also been joined by
2 Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez,
3 Councilman Allan Domb, Councilman Mark
4 Squilla. I'm going to have -- and
5 Councilman Curtis Jones is queued up for
6 the first question.

7 I just want to start off before
8 I turn it over to Curt, just to try to
9 get an understanding of I'm all for the
10 prevention component. I think you're
11 definitely in the right direction from
12 that aspect. I always talk about how
13 your integrity, your review committee is
14 outstanding because we definitely don't
15 want to have people, individuals who are
16 railroaded and put in prison for things
17 they haven't done. And so, I always
18 commend you on those particular things
19 that you're working on. And I like this
20 comprehensive approach today because it
21 talks about the prevention measures
22 inside the school, which I had no idea
23 that you all were working on, which I
24 think is great, especially engaging our
25 young people.

1 I just want to get a clearer
2 understanding. I understand you have
3 your report in terms of the 85 percent
4 conviction rate. There's a report
5 today, and I always believe what I read,
6 but I want you to clarify the data as it
7 relates to what was reported today that
8 we all woke up reading in the
9 Philadelphia Inquirer saying, we're
10 arresting individuals, we'll probably
11 get more than 3,000 guns off the street
12 this year. I know your response was,
13 well, just getting them off the street,
14 that's just half the battle. You have
15 to arrest and move forward. But also,
16 the continuous cycle of individuals who
17 are being arrested and are getting back
18 out on the street.

19 And it seems like there's a
20 philosophical difference in approach.
21 Because obviously on one end, I'm
22 definitely not for people being
23 railroaded with bogus evidence. That
24 part I never will be supportive of. And
25 I don't also believe in mass

1 incarceration.

2 I know one of your staff said
3 this is going to be like a war on guns.
4 But I have to also say just being frank,
5 I think it's everybody's collective
6 responsibility and saying what we ask
7 the Police Department about their arrest
8 rate, their conviction rate. When I do
9 go into the neighborhoods and I do talk
10 to people, people just have a sense of
11 feeling that it's the Wild Wild West.

12 So just clarify those numbers
13 for us, if you can, Larry, as it relates
14 to -- I'm quite sure your team went
15 through and did a fact-check today when
16 the article came out, I'm pretty sure
17 because -- but that's one narrative that
18 says it's not being done. And then
19 there's a presentation today that says,
20 wait a minute, these are the incidents,
21 these are the arrests and here's who
22 we're convicting. So just give us an
23 overview for individuals who have
24 questions around this area.

25 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

1 Sure, I'm happy to do that. And I have
2 to say data is always tough because you
3 got to be real clear about what you're
4 talking about. So the article that was
5 written today and I'm not saying that I
6 can resolve it, but let me just give it
7 its due. It's about gun possession.

8 It's about cases that the lead charge,
9 the main charge, is possession of a gun.

10 As I understand the article,
11 it's not about a shooting at all. It's
12 not about a homicide by gun at all. It
13 is not about a robbery with a gun. It's
14 not about dealing drugs with a gun. It
15 is strictly and specifically and only
16 possession of a gun where that is the
17 lead charge. That's what I understand
18 it to be based on what was said to me
19 during the interview, right.

20 When I tell you our statistic
21 that we had a nearly 85 percent
22 conviction rate for shootings and for
23 homicides by gun right before the
24 pandemic hit, I'm talking about
25 shootings and homicide by gun. Yes,

1 there's a gun charge in that case, but
2 it's more than just possession of a gun.
3 It's an actual shooting. It's an actual
4 homicide by gun. So those are different
5 statistics, right.

6 This is what I think is true
7 from that article, and I'm going to be
8 as transparent as I possibly can. In
9 the same way we have seen a five-year
10 decline in the solve rate, meaning the
11 clearance rate, the rate at which police
12 are able to identify a shooter, we have
13 seen a five-year rate of decline.

14 In the conviction rate for mere
15 possession of a gun, and I'm not
16 indicating to you I think possession is
17 not serious, it is serious. But I'm
18 saying possession of a gun is different
19 than a shooting. It's different than a
20 homicide by gun. We've seen both of
21 them go down. Obviously, that's bad.

22 I do not want a five-year
23 decline in the rate of conviction for
24 possession of gun to continue. The
25 Commissioner does not want a five-year

1 decline, which is essentially what it
2 is, in the rate at which they're able to
3 solve shootings to continue. We want to
4 work together to try to make things
5 better, but that's a completely separate
6 question.

7 How are you doing with the
8 shooting cases? We're doing the work.
9 We're getting it done. We are
10 convicting people and we're being fair
11 and we're having that integrity you're
12 talking about when we do it. I want to
13 do better. That's why I'm talking
14 about, come on now, forensics. Overtime
15 is nice for your paycheck. We've had
16 plenty of overtime. We've had record of
17 overtime. Again, we still have
18 shootings going through the roof. It
19 hasn't solved it.

20 Let's take a little bit of that
21 overtime. Let's take a little bit of
22 that record-setting 80 million. Let's
23 just take 5 million and let's put it
24 into this and let's see whether this
25 offers another avenue. So those are the

1 differences.

2 The other thing you need to
3 understand about that article -- and the
4 Police Commissioner actually kind of
5 suggested this, although she didn't get
6 into the point -- when you talk about a
7 conviction rate, here's the hard part:
8 Conviction rates are going to be pretty
9 accurate for, say, 2015. If anybody who
10 was arrested in 2015, that case is over,
11 right. 2016, they'll be pretty
12 accurate.

13 But by the time you get to 2018
14 and 2019, some people arrested in 2018
15 have not had their cases concluded.
16 Remember, the courts shut down in the
17 beginning of 2020. A lot of people
18 arrested in 2019 have not had their
19 cases concluded. The courts shut down.
20 Almost nobody who got arrested in 2020
21 has had their case concluded. So when
22 you look at a conviction rate for 2020
23 or 2019, that rate is going to come up
24 as the courts reopen and we actually go
25 to court. What you're seeing there is a

1 lot of cases pending and those cases
2 have not come to trial yet, so we can't
3 show a conviction until then.

4 But let me give the article its
5 due. We are not happy with the
6 conviction rate, with mere possession of
7 guns. We've had these complex
8 discussions. I won't rehash them, about
9 what it means to find a gun in a car
10 instead of on a person and how it's a
11 bigger task to prove the gun that's in
12 the trunk belongs to the driver than
13 there is to prove a gun that's in a
14 waistband from somebody walking down the
15 street is that person's. But one of the
16 ways we fix that is forensics, is to
17 actually do the work that needs to be
18 done with the sciences.

19 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And I'll
20 follow up before I turn to Councilman
21 Jones. Lastly, for right now, the
22 weekly meetings with your top-level DAs
23 and the detectives from the Philadelphia
24 Police Department, how are they -- it
25 started on December 7th. What's the

1 progress you have been making with that
2 particular arrangement, that partnership
3 working with the police on a deep
4 detailed level? Because on one end, and
5 I'm watching the comments from both
6 sides, I know you talked about stronger
7 evidence, right, to make sure that cases
8 stick. So how is the progress coming
9 with you two teams sitting at the table
10 figuring out how do you get the best
11 evidence in terms of moving forward so
12 we can do a better job when it comes to
13 prosecuting those individuals and cases
14 won't be dismissed based upon the lack
15 of thorough evidence?

16 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER: So
17 I referenced this, but maybe I wasn't
18 clear. I think it's made a lot of
19 progress. As I said, I'm an old car
20 mechanic back in my teen years. There's
21 been a huge improvement in how DNA is
22 done. It's not just a question of just
23 taking it off the gun. You got to take
24 it off of whoever you think's connected
25 to the gun too, right.

1 So to the Police Department's
2 credit when we all sat down and we
3 realized this disconnect, they have
4 changed that and that has been a real
5 improvement. Instead of 19 cases where
6 they took it off the gun but they never
7 took it off the defendant, we now have
8 them taking it off the gun 19 times and
9 the defendant 19 times at the beginning
10 when there's enough time to get the
11 results. That's a big improvement.

12 Another big improvement has
13 been in the quality of the paperwork.
14 We used to often get paperwork that
15 would say things like, I made an
16 investigatory stop, I made a temporary
17 detention. Well, that's a legal
18 conclusion. That doesn't tell me what
19 you did. But we need the paperwork to
20 say what happened because that looks bad
21 in the courtroom when you just put down
22 that language, instead of saying, well,
23 I saw him doing certain things with his
24 hand in his pocket and it seemed like he
25 had a heavy metal object in his pocket

1 and then I approached him and then I
2 asked him this and he told me that. We
3 just need to have a tighter case in
4 court. So bottom line, there is that
5 they have improved. But through those
6 discussions about how we need better
7 paperwork over at court, the quality of
8 the paperwork, the work done by the
9 police is improving.

10 We are not yet where we would
11 like to be, being the DA's Office, in
12 terms of grabbing social media from
13 someone who has a gun and just arrested.
14 Because if you can grab that social
15 media or just make it a policy that
16 we're always going to try to get it,
17 then you're going to get it before they
18 erase it, before they get home or before
19 they can pick up a phone and say, yo,
20 take down the rap video that shows me
21 with the gun that they just caught me
22 with. So we're still working on that.
23 And obviously, I don't control what they
24 do. They're strongly suggesting that
25 that can be a powerful pool to increase

1 the accuracy, but also the provability
2 of those cases.

3 There's some Live Stop car
4 issues. I won't get deep into that, but
5 it does affect seizures. Because if
6 you're doing the search of a vehicle, an
7 inventory search, under certain
8 circumstances you process where that has
9 to be right and that's another work in
10 progress. We are, I think, getting
11 better results on witnesses at the
12 hearing. Because at that early phase,
13 we're able to ask the police to focus on
14 certain cases where we may have witness
15 issues, witnesses fearful or this
16 witness just didn't want to show up, so
17 we're getting that. And I believe a lot
18 of that's reflected in what I was just
19 talking about, this 96 percent hold
20 rate, 91 percent hold rate, 93 percent
21 hold rate.

22 And then the other thing is on
23 the constructive possession issue,
24 trying to prove that the gun in the
25 trunk belongs to the defendant. We know

1 that at the top levels in the Police
2 Department, the brass are pushing memos
3 through to educate on this point.
4 That's a good start. Those are some of
5 the ways, some of the concrete ways, and
6 I think the car is getting fixed. The
7 broken parts are getting replaced. and
8 I think honestly it's one of the most
9 effective things we've been able to do
10 with the PPD.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Larry, is
12 it illegal for let's say a car gets
13 pulled over and whomever is closest to
14 the gun gets assigned the case; is that
15 illegal? Just asking.

16 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER: You
17 know, it can be if what's going on is
18 you got six people in that car and you
19 got nothing more than it's stuffed under
20 a seat and there's somebody sitting on
21 that seat is 1 inch closer than the
22 person in the back seat, that probably
23 does not rise to the level that the
24 Pennsylvania Appellate Courts would say
25 gives you probable cause for that

1 person.

2 Now, any little factor you can
3 change that. If you run that person's
4 social media and he's holding the gun,
5 we're there. You get the DNA to
6 connect, we're there. If you observe
7 something, if you observe the person
8 stuffing it under that seat and then you
9 find the gun where the stuffing
10 happened, that may do it. But that's
11 exactly the kind of problem we're
12 looking at. Often, you have a good
13 level of suspicion. We totally
14 understand the stop, the arrest and the
15 confiscation of the gun, but we would
16 like to win that case too and I know
17 that they would like us to win that case
18 too.

19 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
20 Thank you. Councilman Curtis Jones.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: (Muted).

22 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
23 Councilmember, I think you're muted.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Councilman
25 Curtis Jones -- I want to note for the

1 record the presence of Councilwoman
2 Jamie Gauthier and Councilwoman Kendra
3 Brooks.

4 And I want to call on now
5 Councilman Curtis Jones and next
6 Councilman Derek Green.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
8 Mr. Chairman.

9 Thank you and welcome,
10 Mr. District Attorney. The other day --
11 and I want to thank your staff and your
12 team for whenever there is an incident I
13 hear from the District Attorney's Office
14 about what's going on and things
15 happening in my District and I
16 appreciate it.

17 G. Lamar Stewart has walked
18 scenes up there with us and whether it's
19 you or one of your team, it tends to put
20 the neighborhood where these things
21 happen a little more at ease that we are
22 on the case, that we are in the
23 neighborhoods and that we are processing
24 in realtime what's going on.

25 It's got so bad, Mr. Chairman,

1 that when I see his name pop up in my
2 cell phone, I almost don't want to
3 answer it. The other day he was just
4 checking on things and I had to remind
5 him that every time his name pops up, I
6 get that kind of reaction, but keep
7 calling me, keep informing me about
8 what's going on. Thank you and your
9 team.

10 I want to switch and say in
11 COVID, it has attacked not only
12 individuals but entire systems, whether
13 we talk about criminal justice, whether
14 we talk about the prison system, whether
15 we talk about the court system and your
16 office.

17 What I want to know is, is
18 there a way that the Chairman and
19 members of this Committee can receive a
20 time process from the point of arrest,
21 to the point of charging, to the point
22 of preliminary hearings and throughout
23 trial to get a sense of not only time
24 but as of money? And what it actually
25 cost to process a felony case? How much

1 does it cost to process a murder case?
2 Because I think if we put those things
3 in context when we try to reprioritize
4 funding, we will understand that a penny
5 wise is a pound foolish if we do not
6 invest in this equipment that you
7 mentioned. It is a no-brainer for us to
8 want to update the technology in your
9 Office and the Police Department, in
10 detectives having cell phones to better
11 do their job.

12 I want to step up to the plate
13 and ask that this Committee get a list
14 of those types of equipment so that
15 during the budget process, we can drill
16 down on that and that's a statement and
17 not a question. But now here comes the
18 question: How much does the average
19 felony case cost? How much does the
20 average murder case cost taxpayers?

21 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

22 Wow, Councilmember. That is a
23 fascinating question. I cannot entirely
24 answer it. But let me tell you what I
25 will try to do to answer it for you and

1 we will try to answer it for you. So
2 with most homicide cases, the defendant
3 is going to sit in jail. With all first
4 degree, second degree cases they're
5 going to sit in jail, so we have to look
6 at the cost of that incarceration.

7 Whenever you go to court, you
8 have a lot of employees in court. It's
9 not just the judge. It's also going to
10 be various different court officers.
11 When you subpoena police officers to
12 testify, of course some of them may be
13 receiving overtime, often significant
14 overtime and then of course they've
15 investigated the case and the entire
16 period of time that they have
17 investigated the case has been on the
18 clock, it's been part of the payroll, if
19 not, overtime as well.

20 And many homicide detectives do
21 a lot of overtime understandably because
22 they often need to solve the case within
23 24, 48 hours, if they don't solve it at
24 all. That's before we even get to what
25 my office does and what we cost. So

1 that's a difficult calculation. And
2 probably even more difficult than a
3 pandemic, honestly because one of our
4 goals before the pandemic was to speed
5 up the period of time it takes to get to
6 the conclusion of a shooting case.

7 It was I believe about 365 days
8 when we took office. And with some good
9 collaboration with the courts and also
10 with the defendant, we were able to
11 knock that down to about 180 days, which
12 was important. We thought it was mostly
13 important to get the message back to
14 friends of the defendant that you can't
15 be shooting because there will be
16 consequences and it's going to come a
17 lot more quickly than you thought. It
18 would be half a year instead of a year.

19 It also had effects in terms of
20 cost. If you don't have to go to court
21 40 times, if you go into court 20 times,
22 there's savings. If you're not in jail
23 for a whole year, if you're in jail for
24 a half a year, there's savings.
25 Obviously, the most important thing is

1 to get the right outcome, but that's a
2 part of it. So we can try to work on
3 those kinds of factors.

4 Another way to look at it I
5 suppose would be to ask the Police
6 Department to provide us with the total
7 budget that goes into homicide cases and
8 then divide it out by the number of
9 homicide cases they have, look at the
10 total budget for our personnel who deal
11 with homicide cases one way or another,
12 which is 90 percent personnel case to
13 find that out by the number of cases
14 that we prosecute. I mean, those are a
15 couple of ways we can try to get at it.
16 I can tell you this, it's a heck of a
17 lot of money, and --

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: And,
19 Mr. District Attorney, the reason why I
20 asked that is we have to make some
21 grown-up decisions over this budget, how
22 we allocate money for prevention versus
23 cure. And so, in making those
24 decisions, we want to have apples-to-
25 apples comparison. I can invest

1 \$100,000 in the end part or I can invest
2 \$30,000 in the prevention part, so
3 making those accurate decisions based on
4 measurements of how much time and how
5 much money it cost to do things.

6 Now, having said that, one of
7 the reasons that it was mentioned that a
8 lot of the cases don't wind up with
9 successful outcomes in prosecutions is
10 witnesses. And one of the things early
11 on when I first came here, we put a lot
12 of -- a little more, not a lot, it's
13 unfair to say a lot, a little more in
14 witness protection to create a sense of
15 safety that people who have the courage
16 to come forth and identify individuals
17 who are pulling these triggers would
18 have a sense that their government was
19 here to protect them in ways that was
20 tangible.

21 And so, where are we with that
22 and what progress are we making so that
23 people feel comfortable coming forward,
24 offering their testimony to fairly move
25 trials forward?

DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

Councilmember, let me try to be as open as I possibly can. It is a very longstanding issue that police go to a crime scene of a shooting and they survey the neighborhood for a witness, often they don't even have the victims there because they've gone by private automobile to the hospital, they've got a bunch of cartridge casings, blood on the ground, bullet holes and things and it is frequently the case that what they face is there is not a single witness who is willing to talk to them.

And often when they go to the hospital, there are people in the hospital who don't want to talk to them either. It's a real challenge. But when we do get a witness, when we do get somebody who actually has something to say, then we have to do everything we possibly can to protect them. We appreciate that City Council a few years ago put aside a chunk of money. I think it was probably a quarter of a million

1 or something like that --

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: It was.

3 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER: --

4 for this purpose. And we are using the
5 money we can access. We get a lot of
6 the state money because Philadelphia has
7 more of an issue honestly with gun crime
8 than Carbon County, so we're spending a
9 lot of that. But it is an expensive
10 process. I think the number I was given
11 by my unit it's often about \$30,000 to
12 do a relocation or even a temporary
13 relocation of families.

14 Keziah Cameron and our team
15 have done pretty amazing work. We have
16 people whose prime duty is this sort of
17 thing. But there are also other layers
18 to it. The CARES process itself can
19 facilitate things, by facilitating
20 communication with the detectives, by
21 making it easier for them to let us know
22 when they feel that there is some
23 danger.

24 I do wish we had the kind of
25 money the feds have. The kind of money

1 they will expend on a mob informant to
2 move that person to Florida and change
3 their name and identities forever, I
4 wish we had that. We don't have all of
5 it.

6 Now, there's a separate part of
7 this though, which is that sometimes
8 what we get from witnesses is not that
9 they're so fearful. It's that they're
10 reluctant for other reasons. Someone
11 did a bad thing with a gun, but that
12 person was a friend or was a lover or
13 something like that. And the
14 Commissioner has been helping us in that
15 we've been trying to beef up the number
16 of DA detectives we had.

17 This is an office that at one
18 time had about 110. And by the time I
19 came into office, we were down to about
20 30 to 40 DA detectives. We're never
21 going to have 6500 law enforcement
22 personnel like the Police Department.
23 We don't need that. But for us to be
24 able to go to 50 or 60, so that if we
25 really need to send someone who is not

1 in uniform to the home of a witness to
2 get them in a car and offer them the
3 convenience, which is also the urging,
4 that they need to come down and testify
5 in the right place at the right time, we
6 can do that.

7 I appreciate the Commissioner's
8 willingness to detail some of her
9 officers to us. There actually is a
10 long line of officers who are trying to
11 interview to work with us and we
12 appreciate that. She has done that in
13 small groups. We're going to continue
14 to try to bring them over in small
15 groups.

16 Also, as I mentioned earlier,
17 in our weekly meetings as we identify
18 cases where there may be a problematic
19 witness, let's say it's the girlfriend
20 of the defendant, right, who saw
21 something very important but is not
22 really feeling like talking about it
23 three months later the way she was
24 willing to talk about it the night of
25 the shooting, what we're doing is

1 identifying those cases in the moment,
2 right, after the arrest, the week after
3 the arrest. And then we're able to talk
4 to Deputy Commissioner Nash especially,
5 and also Dales and others and say, what
6 can we do to make sure that witness
7 comes to the prelim, can we prioritize
8 that with your detectives, and we're
9 seeing a good and positive response when
10 we do that.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: One of the
12 things I'd like to look at as these
13 dollars come in from Washington is a
14 tristate relocation process that
15 utilizes HUD houses that we might
16 renovate during a two-year period during
17 the course of a trial to relocate a
18 witness to another part of the tristate
19 area for two years and then sell that
20 property after that relocation, so that
21 no one kind of gets a beat on where
22 these houses are located. Sell it and
23 then do another 12 or so in the tristate
24 area just to keep people safe.

25 One of the things that I know

1 about is there was a hotel, which I
2 won't name downtown where a lot of
3 witnesses were kept. And one of the
4 individuals who was a witness for a
5 murder trial was a smoker, smoked
6 cigarettes, came outside of the hotel to
7 smoke a cigarette, saw the defendant
8 going to see CJC for another trial. She
9 panicked so bad she didn't even go back
10 to get her clothing. She jumped on the
11 first thing smoking to get away, so we
12 should not traumatize people twice by
13 saying you saw something, you're going
14 to step up to the plate and testify, but
15 we can't in good conscious keep you
16 safe. We can do better. We must do
17 better to balance the scales of justice.

18 I want to keep people out of
19 jail. But those people who commit those
20 heinous crimes that are killing our
21 babies, well, I want witnesses to come
22 forward and feel protected by us.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

25 Councilman Derek Green and then

1 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.

2 I also just want to remind
3 everybody to be direct with your
4 questions as we go through this process.

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

7 Thank you, District Attorney
8 Krasner. I want to thank you for
9 stating on the record that witness
10 issues, intimidation has been a
11 longstanding challenge from the issue of
12 public safety. The fact that witnesses
13 not being able to attend court
14 proceeding is not a new phenomenon.
15 It's not an issue that has happened just
16 in the past year, but this is an issue
17 that has gone on for a number of years.
18 That's always been a problem.

19 Based on that perspective and
20 some of your earlier comments regarding
21 witness issues, in your upcoming budget
22 do you anticipate additional increase or
23 request for dollars to address witness
24 issues from your perspective?

25 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

1 Councilmember, my recollection is, yes.
2 I haven't seen our final proposal. But,
3 yes, my recollection is we do anticipate
4 doing that.

5 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And then you
6 also talked about the need for more
7 detectives in your Office as a way to
8 help address this issue and you also
9 anticipate that being part of your
10 budget proposal going forward?

11 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
12 Yes, Councilmember. Although that gets
13 interesting because DA detectives are
14 detailed from the Police Department.
15 Now, we reimburse the police. So in
16 essence, it will be an increase in our
17 budget but a decrease in the police
18 budget. The City will not have an
19 increase in the dollars associated with
20 it.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So from the
22 perspective of some who would say defund
23 the police, what I'm hearing from you is
24 we would need additional dollars to help
25 provide the support and assistance for

1 witnesses in order to bring about more
2 safety for those witnesses and get more
3 prosecution?

4 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
5 Councilmember, DA detectives do a lot of
6 things in this office. One of those
7 things is to escort witnesses and
8 protect witnesses. But they also do
9 things like solve stolen house cases,
10 which we've been doing, which is an
11 important issue in the City. We need
12 them for all of those purposes.

13 Let us understand, defund the
14 police is kind of a vague term. I have
15 never taken the position nor do I take
16 it now that we should eliminate police
17 or that we should eliminate the funding
18 of the police. In my mind, defunding
19 the police is not the best term, but it
20 refers to being wise about how money is
21 used and what resources are used to make
22 us safer.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
24 for that. And when I made that
25 statement, I didn't mean that you have

1 made that statement. I was just saying
2 in a broader perspective for those who
3 were saying we need to defund the
4 police, I think that has a large
5 perspective and impact. And so, what
6 you were just talking about is one way
7 that if additional resources were
8 dedicated specifically for detail of
9 detectives to the DA's Office will
10 specifically help with witnesses. There
11 may be an area where an increase in
12 funding may occur, but some may view
13 that as going counter to defunding the
14 police from those who have a broad
15 perspective, but that's something we're
16 doing to try to specifically address the
17 public safety issues that we've had,
18 especially regarding witnesses and
19 prosecutions.

20 I wanted to also go into the
21 perspective that I think that
22 Councilmember Jones touched on and also
23 the Chair touched on earlier in
24 reference to convictions. And I want to
25 make sure I understand the perspective

1 that you talked about earlier.

2 From what I heard today and
3 also from previous perspectives, there
4 is -- and I want to make sure I
5 understand this correctly -- an
6 insufficiency of evidence that has
7 caused, outside the witness issue, but
8 just on that perspective, there's an
9 insufficiency of evidence that has
10 hampered prosecution. I want to make
11 sure I'm correct in my understanding of
12 that.

13 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER: In
14 a limited number of cases, yes, sir. We
15 did an investigation of about 400 gun
16 cases where there was not a conviction
17 at the end of it. And we had a pretty
18 experienced team go through all of them.
19 The biggest problem we had was not
20 nonappearance of necessary witnesses.
21 That was about a 51 percent rate among
22 those cases that failed, but there was
23 also a 23 percent category, the second
24 biggest category was the evidence was
25 insufficient.

1 Sometimes as you know having
2 been a prosecutor, sometimes you know
3 you can't fix that. There's just
4 nothing more there, but sometimes you
5 can because maybe there was that extra
6 layer of investigation that would have
7 repaired it. Maybe there was those
8 forensics that the City hasn't bought
9 yet that we would love to see which
10 would have solved that case.

11 So, yes, I would say we found
12 in looking at that group of 400 cases,
13 about 23 percent of them the evidence
14 was insufficient. Obviously, we're not
15 always going to be able to bring another
16 layer. Sometimes the case is just
17 insufficient. It's all the evidence you
18 have even if you're Sherlock Holmes,
19 right. But there are those cases where
20 we believe more evidence would be
21 possible that could have led, you know,
22 in terms of conviction.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And so,
24 based on that insufficiency of evidence,
25 you believe that if more -- well, if

1 either more dollars were provided for
2 forensics, that would help bolster the
3 case so you wouldn't have that issue?

4 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

5 Yes, sir.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. And I
7 guess my question outside the issues of
8 witnesses when you say insufficiency of
9 evidence, in order for these matters to
10 get to court, that would have had to go
11 from the Police Department, an officer
12 doing what's called a 48, which then
13 goes to a detective which does a 49, and
14 then someone in the District Attorney's
15 Office does the charging of that in
16 order to get into court.

17 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

18 That's correct. We have to find
19 probable call, so we have to basically
20 find more than likely, 51 percent
21 likelihood that the defendant committed
22 a crime, and we try to be as fair as we
23 can about that. But of course, in order
24 to obtain a conviction, you got to show
25 a lot more than 51 percent. You have to

1 show proof beyond a reasonable doubt,
2 whatever very high number that is, but
3 it's a lot more than 51 percent.

4 And needless to say, we're not
5 perfect. There are occasions when we
6 might think it's 51 percent. We go to a
7 preliminary hearing and the judge throws
8 it out. The judge thinks it's 49
9 percent, because the preliminary hearing
10 is another probable cause stage as you
11 know, Councilmember. So that's the
12 thing. I don't believe these police
13 officers are trying to charge someone
14 where they think they have nothing to do
15 with it. I don't believe that. I would
16 just love to see cases where when it
17 comes in the door, we're not at 51
18 percent or 62 percent. I'd love to see
19 cases coming in the door where either
20 that or very soon we're going to be 95
21 percent. We're going to know that we
22 can prove this beyond a reasonable
23 doubt.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I guess what
25 challenges me is that it's gone through

1 the charging process and based on the
2 review of an officer, a detective and
3 your charging unit, then that's had
4 basically three levels of review to at
5 least get it to a manner that's now
6 started a court proceeding. And I
7 understand issues when you take it to
8 trial and it either doesn't make it to
9 the preliminary hearing or gets
10 dismissed at trial.

11 But I'm talking about those
12 cases where your Office decided to
13 withdraw those cases even though another
14 part of your Office approved it from a
15 charging perspective as well as a
16 detective and an officer. Can you give
17 us some perspective on why those cases
18 were withdrawn?

19 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER: The
20 truth is very few of them are withdrawn
21 in the sense that our office says this
22 isn't good enough. We have seen a lot
23 of cases that were rejected by the judge
24 after the judge hears the evidence at
25 the preliminary hearing. When we see a

1 case that is withdrawn at the
2 preliminary hearing, it's almost always
3 because a necessary witness has refused
4 to appear now two or three times, maybe
5 four times.

6 So on paper that was a good
7 case. Because if Mrs. Jones came in and
8 said, I saw the man run out of the house
9 with a black revolver, we had all we
10 needed. Mrs. Jones didn't come once,
11 she didn't come twice. Mrs. Jones
12 didn't come a third time. So what was
13 in fact a good case on paper, it was at
14 least a case where we had probable
15 cause, is now a bad case on paper. We
16 have an essential. The essential
17 witness is not coming in despite the
18 efforts we're able to make. So that's
19 when you withdraw it.

20 You withdraw it basically
21 because you stand up in front of judge.
22 The judge says, let's go, and the
23 witness you need is not there even
24 though you've tried multiple times. I'm
25 not saying you're suggesting this at

1 all, Councilmember. I know you're
2 astute in these matters. But this is
3 not a situation where we sit around and
4 look at cases and toss them in the trash
5 can because we just say, yeah, we
6 charged this but this is a junk case.
7 That's not what's happening here.

8 We are trying to get cases as
9 they come in. If they meet a probable
10 cause standard, we're going to charge
11 it. And then we are trying to get them
12 past a preliminary hearing to a trial.
13 Sometimes we have plenty of evidence.
14 Sometimes we don't have enough.
15 Sometimes (inaudible) in the charging
16 phase but it's a good one and a crucial
17 witness doesn't show up, whether that's
18 a police witness -- which it usually is
19 not. The police failures to appear on
20 these cases is something like 10
21 percent, right. About 90 percent of
22 these situations where witnesses will
23 not come in, if it's a civilian that we
24 need.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I guess what

1 I'm trying to get a perspective from the
2 information we've heard from the Police
3 Department regarding arrests, the
4 information I'm hearing regarding the
5 dismissals by judges because it's not
6 sufficient evidence at a preliminary
7 level versus historically from the
8 District Attorney's Office and from my
9 experiences where, yes, there are times
10 when you have a court of session file
11 that has been listed three times, it now
12 must be tried by a judge.

13 And there are times when
14 getting a police officer in a courtroom
15 may be challenging because they are on
16 training or back in the day used to be
17 in Family Court or in another courtroom
18 and you may need to be in the courtroom.
19 But from my experience, yes, there are
20 times when there are certain cases where
21 you need a witness there.

22 But in many of the cases your
23 key witness is an officer and the
24 officer, as you said, is there basically
25 90 percent of the time. But what I'm

1 hearing is that there's a greater
2 reliance on individual witnesses. And
3 based on your own perspective, witnesses
4 have been hard to get at court hearings
5 for a long period of time. So give me
6 some more context on why that's
7 occurring and we're not relying more on
8 the police officers to be able to make
9 these at least get over the threshold of
10 preliminary hearings. Because from my
11 experience, and I've had a chance to
12 talk to other former prosecutors over
13 the years, preliminary hearings
14 generally have not been the bar to get
15 things going forward, but it seems like
16 that's the bar now.

17 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

18 Councilmember, let me -- again, I'm
19 probably not being clear. So the 400
20 cases we looked at were failures. These
21 were cases where it was not held. You
22 are absolutely correct, that when the
23 only witnesses you need are police,
24 we're going to hold a huge portion of
25 them. They're going to go to trial.

1 Those are very straightforward cases
2 from a prosecutorial perspective. We
3 just need the officer to show up, and
4 they are trained to show up, they are
5 paid to show up, they're subpoenaed to
6 show up, and generally they will show
7 up.

8 Every now and then, yes,
9 they'll be stuck in another courtroom, a
10 judge will be, let's just say, a little
11 overeager to get rid of a case. Every
12 now and then you'll have a police
13 officer who may be injured on duty for a
14 long period of time and eventually the
15 case will be thrown out because you
16 can't get that evidence up there. But
17 we're not having a problem in general.
18 We're not having an extraordinary
19 problem in general with cases that are
20 just police cases.

21 The cases that are a problem
22 for us, and there are quite a few, are
23 cases for example of a domestic violence
24 situation where, for example, a woman
25 calls the police and says, my estranged

1 ex-husband just came in here and he
2 pointed a gun at me. It is a black
3 revolver with a wooden handle, and then
4 he went out and got into a '72 Ford.
5 It's purple.

6 So 15 minutes later, they
7 pulled over the '72 Ford that's purple.
8 They don't find the gun there, but you
9 do have a credible witness who is saying
10 that she saw the whole thing. Well, we
11 have a case there unless she doesn't
12 show up. And needless to say, in
13 certain domestic situations for a
14 variety of different reasons, sometimes
15 there's an eagerness at the time of the
16 arrest that is gone later, okay. And
17 there are many, many different reasons.

18 It could be fear. It could be
19 a restoration of the relationship. It
20 could be all kinds of issues around I
21 need support for the child, I don't want
22 to take the child. It could be any
23 number of things. So those are the
24 cases in which we're seeing a
25 difficulty. And even though they're not

1 the main cases, I agree with you,
2 they're not the main cases. In our
3 study of 400, there was a significant
4 number of them.

5 I don't want to suggest to you
6 we're having a big problem of getting
7 police to come to court. Generally,
8 they are coming to court. Sometimes
9 every now and then they don't and that's
10 how you end up with 10 percent of those
11 dismissals being police witnesses who
12 don't come in. But we do have cases
13 that are more than that.

14 We do have cases where it is
15 important to have the neighbor or it's
16 important to have a person who had a gun
17 pointed at them at a bar to come in.
18 That may be someone who really doesn't
19 want to go to court, doesn't really want
20 to be a part of that process, thinks
21 it's more dangerous to participate and
22 doesn't really know the person who
23 pointed the gun and everybody is sober
24 now, right, so that can happen as well.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Mr. Chair, I

1 don't want to belabor this point because
2 I know that other people have questions.
3 I will venture and I will close with
4 this, that the issue with domestic
5 violence has always been an issue and a
6 concern. Those have always been the
7 most troubling to try to move forward in
8 a criminal context because of the things
9 that the District Attorney said.

10 But there still seems to be a
11 significant disconnect between the
12 number of gun convictions in reference
13 to VUFA charges based on withdrawals and
14 dismissals that previously we didn't
15 have that same level but now has been
16 more of a concern. And when you look at
17 the issue that we're dealing with the
18 homicide and the shooting issue in the
19 City of Philadelphia, I will venture the
20 vast majority of those who are doing the
21 majority of the crime and the shootings
22 and homicides tend to be a small subset,
23 and it just seems like that subset is
24 not getting to a conviction rate at the
25 level it should.

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
3 Councilman Derek Green.

4 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
6 you, Mr. Chair.

7 Hi, District Attorney Krasner.
8 Thank you for the presentation and thank
9 you for all of the assistance your
10 Office has given to my District, in
11 particular around relocations. Thanks
12 for always being present in the
13 community, and thank you for your strong
14 focus on prevention.

15 My comments and questions are
16 around VUFA too. I want to understand
17 better some of the conflict that seems
18 to exist between PPD saying that they're
19 making a certain amount of arrests and
20 that there's a gap in convictions that
21 are increasing.

22 And I too agree with
23 Councilmember Johnson that I don't think
24 we want to be overly punitive to people
25 in our communities. I don't think we

1 want to convict people that should have
2 been arrested. And, in fact, I think we
3 should be investigating as much energy
4 in figuring out why young men in our
5 communities want to carry guns, right,
6 and try to stop that behavior. But I do
7 find this issue very confusing. It's
8 like a back-and-forth that's been going
9 on for months and months and months, and
10 we just need to better understand it.

11 And so, I wanted to ask -- you
12 talked through some of this with
13 Councilmember Green and Johnson. I want
14 to know if we can see the actual data to
15 really kind of dig in and to figure out
16 what's going on here. It's confusing to
17 me as a Councilmember. I think it's
18 confusing to the public, and I just
19 don't think the back-and-forth is
20 helpful for us kind of moving forward.
21 And so, to the extent that we can
22 understand it better and get to the
23 bottom of it, I think it's better for
24 everyone.

25 And I'm not putting that blame

1 on you. I just was waiting for this
2 panel to ask more questions about it and
3 to dig in a little bit more. So if
4 that's data that could be made available
5 to Council, I think it would be
6 appreciated.

7 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

8 First of all, thank you, Councilmember
9 Green, for his questions. I forgot to
10 say that.

11 Thank you for your questions,
12 Councilmember Gauthier. Of course, we
13 will be happy to work with you, work
14 with Council on any sort of data you
15 would like to see. And it's tough,
16 because I really do want to be a united
17 front. I really do want to be
18 collaborative. We've done some very,
19 very good things in collaboration. But
20 the difficult part about talking about
21 data is that some of the five-year
22 decline in conviction rate for mere
23 possession of a firearm, that ain't
24 good. The five-year decline in the
25 solve rate for shootings, that ain't

1 good.

2 I'm not saying that to point a
3 finger or to blame someone else. I'm
4 saying that because just like you and
5 other members of Council want to solve
6 this problem, we want to solve this
7 problem. I think PPD and DAO have
8 gotten pretty far in terms of having a
9 relationship of trust where we can push
10 data back and forth across the table.

11 Some of that data is going to
12 make us look good. Some of that is
13 going to make us look bad. But that's
14 the only way we get to the bottom of the
15 problem. So I am more than happy to
16 provide you and other members of Council
17 with the data that you want. Maybe
18 you'll look at it and say, y'all did a
19 very thorough job, now we know the path
20 ahead. Maybe you'll say, this data is
21 whack. We need to do this data again,
22 it's something wrong with this.

23 Look, we have to deal with the
24 truth. That's what I want to do. So I
25 would be delighted to assist in any way

1 we can in trying to further that. I do
2 think it provides a pathway forward and
3 I think there's some good news that has
4 been laid out today actually about some
5 progress in the PPD, in the DAO, in the
6 prosecution of gun cases, in the
7 prosecution of shooting cases, in
8 solving the homicide cases. I think
9 that there's been some good news here.
10 But there's nothing I'd rather do than
11 to assist Council in this regard.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
13 you so much.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
15 so much, Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.

16 Any other questions from
17 members of the Committee?

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN:
19 Councilmember Johnson, I just have one
20 other quick question.

21 I wanted to follow up on the
22 work that the Police Department has done
23 in Pinpoint areas. Can you give some
24 perspective on your work with the Police
25 Department in those Pinpoint areas? I

1 was very and I am still critical of the
2 Police Department in reference to
3 clearance rates, but it seems like
4 they've made some progress in those
5 Pinpoint areas and I just want to get a
6 perspective in the District Attorney's
7 Office in your role in those areas as
8 well.

9 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

10 Councilmember, I would love to answer
11 that question. I don't know if Chance
12 Lee is on the call. Mr. Lee is the head
13 of our Intelligence Unit. He also heads
14 the collaborative that meets every week
15 to go over cases, and I think he
16 probably would be the best source of
17 information on Pinpoint areas. If you
18 would like me to try to get back to you
19 within a couple of days, I can do that.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: You can just
21 provide it to the Chair because that
22 does seem -- even though I don't want to
23 make assumptions, it does appear that in
24 those Pinpoint areas the Police
25 Department is doing a better job and I

1 would venture that's probably based on
2 the collaboration information along with
3 the District Attorney's Office in those
4 areas, although I do have still concerns
5 city-wide regarding their ability to
6 clear cases and the District Attorney's
7 Office on convictions.

8 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
10 welcome.

11 Any other questions from
12 members of the Committee?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: All right.
15 Well, one, I want to thank you, District
16 Attorney Larry Krasner and your team,
17 for your comprehensive presentation and
18 thank all the Members who are sticking
19 around for this what I would call
20 marathon hearing, but I haven't had a
21 hearing on gun violence that didn't last
22 the whole day, especially prior to the
23 pandemic. But thank you for your
24 presentation and have a good day.

25 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

1 Thank you all.

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Can the
3 Clerk please call the next panel.

4 THE CLERK: Dr. Jessica Beard,
5 Marla Davis-Bellamy and Aleida Garcia.
6 And you may begin in the order I called
7 your name.

8 DR. BEARD: Thank you for the
9 opportunity to share my perspective on
10 gun violence in Philadelphia with this
11 Committee. I'm speaking to you as a
12 trauma surgeon, a gun violence and
13 public health researcher, a mom and a
14 Philadelphian.

15 I work at Temple University
16 Hospital, which is the busiest trauma
17 center for gunshot wounds in the City.
18 My profession, trauma surgery, was
19 developed to address the physical wounds
20 of violence. Every single day I go to
21 work at Temple I'm ready to care for the
22 next patient with a gunshot wound. My
23 job is always hard. It is both
24 physically and emotionally grueling.
25 But this past year since the beginning

1 of the pandemic, it's been unbearable,
2 running from patient to patient,
3 sometimes caring for two, three or four
4 more critically gunshot injured patients
5 at once.

6 Each shooting victim is a
7 person who's wounded and suffering
8 asking me if he's going to die, wanting
9 to hold my hand as she goes into
10 surgery. At work, I wear plastic shoes
11 so that I can wipe them down when they
12 get bloody. I wear scrubs so that if my
13 patient's blood gets on me, I can change
14 my clothes quickly.

15 One night this fall, I changed
16 my bloodied scrub five times. Almost
17 every night I am on call in the
18 hospital, I have to perform life-saving
19 surgery that results in extreme
20 disability for my patient like a
21 colostomy bag or sometimes even an
22 amputation or I have to tell a patient
23 that he will never walk again or tell a
24 mom her son is dead. And I will tell
25 you, the wails of a mother who has lost

1 her baby stay with you forever.

2 During the height of the
3 pandemic, I was sometimes responsible
4 for more than 60 injured patients at one
5 time. I bet you know all about how the
6 COVID-19 pandemic has impacted health
7 care workers on the front lines. Have
8 you heard about the stress gun violence
9 causes to health care workers and to
10 hospitals? Can you imagine the stress
11 of dealing with an unprecedented surge
12 in gun violence during this pandemic?

13 Research from our team at
14 Temple found that the weekly rate of
15 shootings in Philadelphia has nearly
16 doubled since the onset of COVID-19
17 containment policies in Philadelphia in
18 March of 2020, and the carnage is far
19 from over. I sat down many times last
20 week to write this testimony and many
21 times my pager went off, interrupting my
22 writing gunshot wound, gunshot wound,
23 another gunshot wound. Gun violence is
24 a public health emergency in
25 Philadelphia and across the United

1 States.

2 We are living in a historic
3 moment coming out of a global pandemic
4 with newfound experience with what a
5 public health response to disease can
6 look like. And we have that experience
7 in a political climate where we are
8 finally reckoning the structural racism.
9 The time is now to understand, discuss
10 and address gun violence as the public
11 health problem that it is. A public
12 health response should approach gun
13 violence as an epidemic that can be
14 contained and disrupted like any other,
15 mitigated with intervention strategies
16 and eradicated by addressing root causes
17 including racism.

18 The Mayor's biweekly briefing
19 on gun violence is a golden opportunity
20 for City leaders to begin to broaden the
21 lens on gun violence from one focused on
22 law enforcement strategies to one truly
23 grounded in a public health approach,
24 setting us on a path to prevent shooting
25 deaths, reduce injuries and save lives.

1 During the first briefing, I do
2 not recall hearing any discussions of
3 how gun violence is impacting our City
4 economically, how hospitals are meeting
5 the increased burden of gun violence and
6 how the root causes of gun violence,
7 including racism, are being specifically
8 addressed. Surely in a briefing on
9 COVID, we would hear answers to these
10 questions, so we should be asking them
11 about gun violence.

12 Following the first briefing,
13 the majority of press questions were
14 focused on law enforcement responses
15 because gun violence was not framed as a
16 public health emergency. This was a
17 missed opportunity for media,
18 politicians and community members to
19 discuss and begin to understand gun
20 violence as a public health problem with
21 tangible and actionable solutions.

22 In response to the first
23 briefing, I co-authored an op-ed for the
24 Philadelphia Inquirer along with Jim
25 MacMillan for the Center of Gun Violence

1 Reporting at Community College of
2 Philadelphia. We outlined what a more
3 effective briefing might look like and
4 the sort of questions we would like to
5 see answered by the Mayor and City
6 officials. We would like to hear from a
7 wide variety of sources, not just law
8 enforcement about what is being done,
9 how it is being evaluated, what new
10 research shows and how we compare to
11 other cities.

12 In addition, we would like to
13 hear clear and simple explanations of
14 how gun violence prevention programs
15 work and how we know they are working.
16 We also recommended that the City
17 elevate gun violence information
18 services to the standards set by COVID-
19 19 efforts, by distributing a press
20 release following each briefing, sharing
21 daily public summaries and continuing to
22 organize and update the newly released
23 home page and data dashboard with more
24 open data than is presently made
25 available.

1 You may ask why this is
2 important. This is important because
3 what we have been doing is not working.
4 Media reporting on public health threats
5 like gun violence directly influences
6 the way the public understands and
7 responds to the health threat. If the
8 Mayor can help Philadelphians understand
9 the public health context, root causes
10 and solutions for gun violence through
11 these biweekly briefings, this can go a
12 long way to gain support for effective
13 solutions and begin to stem the tide of
14 shootings in the City. Thank you for
15 the opportunity to speak with you today.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
17 very much.

18 Will the Clerk call the next
19 panel.

20 THE CLERK: Marla Davis-
21 Bellamy, you are next to give testimony.

22 MS. DAVIS-BELLAMY: Good
23 afternoon, Chairman Johnson and members
24 of the Special Committee on Gun
25 Violence. It's an honor and pleasure to

1 speak with you this afternoon about the
2 work of Philadelphia CeaseFire,
3 particularly during this past year when
4 we have seen a significant increase in
5 gun violence.

6 At Philadelphia CeaseFire, our
7 focus is prevention and intervention
8 which for us means cultivating
9 relationships with those who are high
10 risk as well as getting out in front of
11 incidents before a homicide or shooting
12 occurs.

13 We began this journey 11 years
14 ago replicating an evidence-based model
15 started in Chicago proven to be
16 effective in the reduction of violent
17 crime. We're probably one of the few
18 community-based violence prevention
19 programs in the City that has been
20 evaluated. And I've included a copy of
21 our evaluation for your review.

22 The evaluation completed by
23 Dr. Caterina Roman of Temple
24 University's Criminal Justice Department
25 indicated that the implementation of

1 CeaseFire was associated with the
2 statistically significant reduction in
3 shootings. The reductions was
4 equivalent to 2.4 shootings per month
5 per 10,000 residents. Comparing two
6 years before CeaseFire to the two years
7 post-implementation of CeaseFire, shows
8 there was a 30 percent reduction in
9 shootings in three police service areas
10 within the 22nd Police District.

11 All of this came about as a
12 result of former Governor Rendell making
13 violence a priority for the Commonwealth
14 of Pennsylvania. During that time, the
15 Violence Policy Center of Washington,
16 D.C. identified Pennsylvania as having
17 the highest Black homicide rate in the
18 country. The Governor responded by
19 putting all of his Cabinet secretaries
20 together and giving them a mandate to
21 find solutions.

22 As the Chief of Staff of the
23 Pennsylvania Department of Health at
24 that time, I was at the meeting and then
25 knew that it was going to be a difficult

1 task as I know now. But immediately
2 after, the Governor received a call from
3 the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the
4 largest health care foundation located
5 in Princeton, New Jersey. They told him
6 about a public health program they were
7 funding called Chicago CeaseFire, now
8 know as Cure Violence Global.

9 The program at that time was
10 being replicated in a few cities across
11 the country, including Baltimore and
12 they were very pleased with their
13 success. I was particularly drawn to
14 the model because it is driven by a
15 community organization within the target
16 area that has been identified based on
17 data. They also hired credible
18 messengers from the community to serve
19 as outreach workers and violence
20 interrupters.

21 These individuals are often
22 returning citizens that are familiar
23 with the neighborhood as well as with
24 gang members and others who are engaged
25 in violent crime. The minimal salary is

1 \$16 per hour for these positions and
2 they also come with full-time benefits.
3 To start the project here, we were able
4 to secure seed dollars from PCCD for
5 implementation of the program in North
6 Philadelphia where most of the shootings
7 at that time were occurring.

8 Then John Daly of Temple
9 Medical School, who recently passed
10 away, also played a critical role giving
11 his willingness to host the program at
12 the medical school. Former Commissioner
13 Ramsey, also from Chicago, supported the
14 initiative. I remember him saying, if
15 you can make an impact in the 22nd
16 Police District, you can duplicate this
17 program anywhere in the City.

18 Philadelphia CeaseFire engages
19 everyone from clergy to PHA to funeral
20 home directors, behavioral health
21 therapists and parents. We also include
22 a community hiring panel to weigh in on
23 each candidate for open positions. We
24 provide support services for those that
25 we recruit to become a part of the

1 program. However, success for us is
2 measured solely on the reduction of
3 homicides and shootings.

4 Our case management support
5 includes five home visits a month, three
6 telephone calls a week with the idea of
7 staying in our client's ear like a gnat,
8 reminding them of the goals they have
9 established and what's at stake. Our
10 strict intervention goal led to a
11 partnership with DBHIDS and Drexel's
12 Healing Hurt People, which enabled us to
13 expand the program and engage victims of
14 violent crime that were treating at
15 three of our Level 1 trauma centers.

16 We've also received funding
17 support from NFL player Will Parks, a
18 safety with the Denver Broncos and
19 native of Philadelphia, wherein the
20 Broncos has supported Philadelphia
21 CeaseFire for two years as part of the
22 NFL program My Cause My Cleats. This
23 program is a partnership with the City's
24 Parks & Recreation Department and has
25 been used with the basketball program in

1 the 14th Police District.

2 PCCD also supports our crisis
3 response initiative that was designed to
4 provide mental health counseling support
5 on site to residents, clients and those
6 that have been impacted by violence in
7 our 30-foot Winnebago. COVID-19 has
8 made face-to-face meetings a challenge.
9 So we now work virtually with our
10 clients and hope to have our mobile
11 crisis response unit up and running this
12 spring. We also have been planning to
13 add a few additional staff to assist and
14 support young victims of violent crime
15 as well.

16 Since the onset of the COVID-19
17 pandemic, we've also launched the Philly
18 HUB. This public health approach to
19 crime prevention came about through the
20 Department of Justice technical support
21 call with community-based violence
22 prevention grantees. Chelsea, a city of
23 about 40,000 people near Boston, had a
24 high rate of violent crime and was
25 listed in 2014 as the most dangerous

1 city of Massachusetts. Despite it's
2 small size, it was also ranked 11th on a
3 2014 list of the country's 100 most
4 dangerous cities.

5 Prior to starting the Chelsea
6 HUB, residents who would potentially
7 benefit from social services often fell
8 through the cracks due to a lack of
9 communication among related
10 organizations. Led by the Chelsea
11 Police Department, the group which is
12 composed of employees from roughly 30
13 social service groups and agencies meet
14 at roundtable every Thursday for an
15 hour.

16 The facilitator introduces a
17 situation to the group which could
18 include an encounter or call received by
19 the police regarding an incident that
20 could benefit from support by a social
21 service agency. The situation could
22 also be introduced by an agency member
23 of the Hub.

24 As an example, when I visited
25 Chelsea, one of the Hub members had

1 encountered a woman in the ER that had
2 been domestically abused the night
3 before. She asked the patient if she
4 was okay with her presenting the
5 situation to the Hub, which was
6 scheduled the next day. She explained
7 to the patient the Hub included members
8 that could help her with shelter, food
9 and employment.

10 The following day at the Hub,
11 the social worker described the incident
12 to the 40 agencies sitting around the
13 table. They asked her about the
14 situation. She provided information
15 about name, address, date of birth, and
16 they immediately checked their iPads and
17 laptops to see if their agency was
18 already providing support services to
19 her. They also quickly identified
20 additional services that she may be
21 eligible for.

22 In addition to this discussion,
23 one of the agencies at the Hub must
24 serve as the lead. As the lead agency,
25 they are responsible for following up

1 with the client within 24 hours after
2 presenting the situation to the group.
3 The lead agency also huddled immediately
4 after the meeting with other social
5 services that are interested in
6 assisting with this situation and
7 developing strategy.

8 Afterwards the agency lead and
9 representatives for the situation lead
10 the meeting and go to the client's home
11 for a door-knock. The door-knock
12 enables them to introduce themselves and
13 learn more from the client about the
14 situation. At the meeting the following
15 week, the lead agency provides an update
16 to keep the other partner agencies
17 informed of any and all progress.

18 To date, the Chelsea HUB has
19 been engaged in over 700 situations and
20 has seen a 40 percent reduction in
21 violent crime. Given their success, we
22 brought the Chelsea HUB leadership team
23 to Philadelphia and conducted a training
24 with them in February of 2020 with
25 several agencies in the City who were

1 interested in replicating their
2 approach.

3 Following the training, based
4 on data the group decided to focus its
5 efforts primarily on young people city-
6 wide between the ages of 13 and 24. We
7 meet with our group which includes
8 approximately 30 to 35 agencies and
9 organizations every Monday at 11:00.

10 Some of the agencies represented include
11 Victim Services, the Health Law Project,
12 DHS, Juvenile Probation, DBHIDS,
13 (inaudible) several CUAs, St. Chris,
14 Penn Hospital and Black Lives Matter.
15 We also have participation from staff of
16 City Council as well.

17 Our first situation involved a
18 19-year-old who suffered a spinal cord
19 injury resulting from a bullet wound.
20 Both the victim and his mother, who's
21 the primary caretaker, are confined to
22 wheelchairs in the home. Our Hub within
23 24 hours provided behavior health
24 support. Groceries were delivered the
25 day of the referral and weekly

1 thereafter. We assist the family with
2 victim compensation claims. We now
3 provide transportation to medical
4 appointments. Efforts are also being
5 made to assist the victim's brother with
6 employment.

7 This family enabled us to learn
8 about the disabled and some of the
9 ongoing challenges they have. We have
10 received additional referrals of spinal
11 cord injury patients and those who are
12 recovering from gunshot wounds to the
13 face. We're helping them all with
14 insurance, food, clothing, mental health
15 support and their transition home from
16 their rehab hospital stay. We learn
17 something new every day. We've led
18 others out of their silos and have a
19 made a concerted effort to reach any and
20 everyone who needs support.

21 Violence is learned behavior
22 and a symptom of a larger problem which
23 is behind it. This can be trauma,
24 poverty, lack of parenting or as a young
25 man told me last week, not knowing how

1 to lose. The one thing I do know for
2 sure is that it's going to take a
3 commitment from all of us as well as
4 resources from the public and private
5 sector and philanthropy to help turn
6 things around.

7 I would like to assure you that
8 Philadelphia CeaseFire and the Philly
9 HUB are committed to this process and
10 are available to assist in any way that
11 we can. Thank you very much for the
12 opportunity to testify.

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Will the
14 Clerk call the next witness.

15 THE CLERK: Aleida Garcia.

16 MS. GARCIA: Good afternoon,
17 Councilman Johnson and fellow members of
18 the Special Committee for Gun Violence
19 Prevention, members of City Council and
20 all guests. My name is Aleida Garcia.
21 I'm the mother of Alejandro Rojas-Garcia
22 and Co-founder of the National Homicide
23 Justice Alliance.

24 Thank you for all the important
25 work that everyone on this call is

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1 doing. I want to thank you especially,
2 Commissioner Outlaw, for your work and
3 those new cell phones. Today I have
4 heard a great evolution in our
5 conversation from when Councilman
6 Johnson first began the Special
7 Committee on Gun Violence Prevention.
8 As I listen today, I began to hear more
9 focus on practical solutions in a more
10 defined direction. I'm feeling hopeful
11 about the future of our City.

12 My son Alejandro Rojas-Garcia
13 was shot 15 times and left to die on
14 January 24, 2015, as if his life never
15 existed and didn't matter. Alex was 1
16 of 15,696 people who were murdered in
17 the United States in 2015, and he was 1
18 of 256 murdered in Philadelphia in 2015.

19 Since that year 2015, we have
20 seen a steady increase in shootings and
21 homicides. And I want to let you know
22 that it is painful to reiterate my
23 experiences. But if telling my story
24 will save one life, I will tell it again
25 and again. What we can never do as

1 leaders or officials is get behind a
2 microphone and rob the public of hope by
3 saying that gun violence is a given and
4 that there is little that we can do
5 because we are messengers of hope.

6 Today my main points are, 1,
7 how can we use existing resources in the
8 City. Gun violence prevention and
9 postvention plans can be integrated into
10 every City office, especially in the
11 Philadelphia School District, the
12 Department of Human Services and Parks &
13 Recreation.

14 Community wealth creation --
15 Point No. 2 is a community wealth
16 creation for existing residents of
17 target communities where gun violence is
18 the highest should be a main
19 consideration of the Philadelphia City
20 Plan for 2035.

21 Working and collaborating --
22 I'm sorry. Point No. 3, working and
23 collaborating with federal, state and
24 local authority and stakeholders is
25 important for our success. And No. 4,

1 increasing capacity of law enforcement
2 and prosecution systems to handle the
3 increase in violence.

4 We fight for our lives and the
5 lives of our children. The great
6 majority of Philadelphians are good
7 law-abiding citizens who want a safe
8 place to live and raise their family and
9 we want to be supported by City
10 government in our efforts to develop our
11 neighborhoods and ourselves.

12 Part of the mission is really
13 to outsmart that small group that is
14 creating the problem into stopping the
15 violence and crimes that they commit and
16 have them face the consequences if they
17 do commit a crime, shooting or murder.
18 There is a present sense of lawlessness
19 in our City, and many vulnerable
20 citizens are imposed upon by criminal
21 activity. People can't continue to
22 raise their children in bullet-ridden
23 neighborhoods or stay inside all day,
24 not because of COVID, but because they
25 are afraid of becoming a victim.

1 The continued gun violence is
2 painful for all of us. And we know that
3 some of it comes from a long history of
4 inequity. In Philadelphia last year
5 2020, there were 499 homicides; 87
6 percent African-American victims and
7 their families; 12 percent Latino and
8 their families. So 99 percent of
9 homicides involve people of color.

10 And as of today, the number of
11 murders in Philadelphia stands at 119.
12 And we've been seeing the percentages
13 rise and fall from 45 percent to today's
14 28 percent according to the Philadelphia
15 Police Department crimes and statistics
16 page.

17 The trajectory in Philadelphia
18 for 2021 with a 45 percent increase from
19 499 murders last year, when I did the
20 math it points to over 700 homicides.
21 Exactly it came to 698 because of the
22 fluctuating percentages. So we have to
23 ask ourselves at which point do we stop
24 having the capacity and the funds to
25 manage the epidemic of violence.

1 I propose that all the plans we
2 make for the reduction and elimination
3 of gun violence and crime be integrated
4 and synthesized as a part of the overall
5 Philadelphia City Plan, which has a
6 long-term vision for the City. Many of
7 the plans for the City's future hinge on
8 reduced violence. We also need to have
9 a plan with immediate and measurable
10 impacts, a midterm plan that would begin
11 now but would be creating a plan that
12 would be enforced in 5 to 10 years, and
13 then a long-term plan that would benefit
14 from basic works and continue to work in
15 10 to 20 years and continue to build
16 from there.

17 Thirty years ago I was witness
18 to the devastation of our City during
19 the crack epidemic. The lack of
20 effective response back then has a
21 little something to do with what we're
22 living now, and our response will affect
23 generations 30 years or more into the
24 future. Making the decisions now will
25 pay dividends in saving lives and

1 creating a better quality of life in
2 Philadelphia.

3 I believe that all City
4 agencies should be a part of the
5 solution. I would like to see Parks &
6 Recreation pay older kids stipends and
7 have them trained in conflict resolution
8 to work with younger peers, and Animal
9 Control to have a summer program where
10 kids can apply to help with the animals,
11 not just clean the cages, but to have
12 real experiences that could possibly
13 lead them into wanting to work with
14 animals in the future.

15 The Streets Department can
16 carry a stop the violence message, a
17 message of hope and/or information about
18 resources available in the City on their
19 trucks. The Mayor can challenge leaders
20 of City agencies to come up with ways to
21 give youth pay and experience as well as
22 being messengers for peace. Other
23 departments can hire youth to work and
24 learn in offices and court. They can
25 even be assistants maybe for City

1 Council. We can plan to involve high
2 school juniors and seniors in paid-
3 certified opportunities that they can
4 use to get employment after graduation
5 or put on their college application.

6 Right now there is a camera
7 program already in existence for
8 businesses that can be expanded and be
9 part of our efforts to gather
10 information and be funded for the
11 purposes of collecting information after
12 a shooting. Many citizens may not have
13 cameras because of cost or simply don't
14 know how it works, which ones to buy or
15 how to install them. But we can help.
16 If the City installs cameras, there
17 should be an agreement to share street
18 footage if an event or a shooting or
19 homicide occurs.

20 I also believe that the
21 enforcement and prosecution of shooters
22 and murderers has to meet the level of
23 the crime. All cases are different so
24 there is room for mitigating
25 circumstances. However, the message

1 needs to be that killing or attempting
2 to kill another human being is not
3 tolerated in our City.

4 We see random shootings in cold
5 blood and murders. And when an
6 individual makes those choices, they
7 have to be prepared to face the
8 consequences. I know that Philadelphia
9 is our home and our responsibility, but
10 it is difficult to effectively battle
11 gun violence alone in an isolated corner
12 of the country. A local, state and
13 national collaborative perspective can
14 be more effective in all areas of
15 prevention and response. Cities and
16 states can share information and learn
17 from successes as well failure.

18 I want to give you an example.
19 The individual that murdered my son
20 lived in Camden and was a leader in a
21 multi-state gang based in Salinas,
22 Puerto Rico with extensions in Camden,
23 Philadelphia and Holyoke, Massachusetts.
24 This gang has been responsible for
25 multiple murders, and I even had the

1 opportunity to visit Salinas, Puerto
2 Rico and speak to another mother whose
3 son was murdered by the same gang in
4 Holyoke, Massachusetts.

5 Locally we are struggling with
6 the overwhelming challenge, and I
7 encourage Mayor Kenney and City Council
8 to consider reaching out nationally for
9 support. We need the best research on
10 gun violence prevention and response to
11 understand the challenges and find
12 strategic points of intervention that
13 can level the trajectory of the current
14 national level rise in gun violence and
15 care for traumatized families and
16 communities.

17 There's a frustrating sense of
18 normality and murder and crime that is
19 happening in our country. Acceptance is
20 part of the problem. I struggle to
21 understand acceptance of this kind of
22 behavior. But I also know that before
23 our family was affected by it I always
24 thought it could never happen to us.
25 And the reality is that we are all in

1 the crossfire and the only way to ensure
2 our own family's safety is to work
3 together to reduce gun violence
4 everywhere. Thank you.

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
6 very much, Ms. Garcia. It's always I
7 thank you for your courage. I thank you
8 for your inspiration. I thank you for
9 your empowerment, but most importantly
10 challenging us whether we're in City
11 government, state government, federal
12 government or even our City leaders. I
13 thank you for just challenging us to
14 continuously step up to the plate and
15 doing everything we can possible around
16 this particular issue, so I want to
17 personally say thank you.

18 We have a question from
19 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.
20 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier, are you
21 there?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. I'm
24 sorry. I didn't see that she had to
25 step away for another commitment.

1 So I have a couple of
2 questions. And, Marla, you've been
3 around for a while. And thank you,
4 Dr. Beard, as well for challenging us to
5 also address this as a public health
6 emergency.

7 The Mayor has declared gun
8 violence in the City of Philadelphia a
9 public health emergency back in 2018
10 with a resolution I introduced working
11 in partnership with Dorothy Johnson-
12 Speight from Mothers In Charge. Have we
13 seen a coordinated effort around
14 addressing this as a public health
15 epidemic? I don't think so as people
16 would like to see thus far. So
17 obviously, it's much work to do as it
18 relates to addressing it from that
19 aspect.

20 But, Marla, give us just an
21 overview of some of the best practices
22 that you have done. I know you're doing
23 your Hub, which I think is great because
24 the organizations, the grassroots
25 community organizations who are really

1 on the ground doing this work that have
2 the trust of the community, and so I
3 watched that but I know your work that
4 you've been doing in the past. But just
5 give us an overview of what do you
6 believe are some of the best practices.

7 And my purpose of inviting you
8 to participate is because I believe this
9 is a situation that we need all hands on
10 deck, right. It's not one particular
11 model. I think it's all models because
12 we had 500 homicides last year. And so,
13 we're not in a position that we can
14 limit ourselves to one particular
15 approach. As long as the data shows
16 that it's evidence-based and it gets the
17 job done, we should be doing everything
18 possible thinking outside the box.

19 So, Marla, just give us an
20 overview from your perspective of what
21 do you think are some of the best
22 practices as it relates to us in
23 addressing this issue.

24 MS. DAVIS-BELLAMY: Sure.
25 Well, I can tell you that my experience

1 is primarily focused on the public
2 health approach. We had talked about
3 certainly GVI and some other kind of law
4 enforcement approaches to this issue.
5 And just from my perspective, and this
6 is something I firmly believe, that
7 there are many evidence-based practices
8 out there that municipalities have found
9 work.

10 I think in some instances
11 people think that it has to be law
12 enforcement or public health. But I
13 think as you mentioned, we're a large
14 city and we've got a significant problem
15 and I don't think there's anything wrong
16 quite frankly in terms of implementing a
17 law enforcement approach in some areas
18 and Cure Violence and other public
19 initiative in other areas.

20 One reason why I'm really kind
21 of a huge advocate of the public health
22 approach and certainly Cure Violence
23 Global is I know it works. I had the
24 opportunity -- this program is being
25 replicated everywhere from Cape Town,

1 South Africa to Iraq to New Orleans,
2 several sites in New York City and New
3 York state. All of us have an
4 opportunity periodically to talk
5 together about the issues and the
6 challenges and we work to support each
7 other. We're all seeing the same thing
8 in terms of younger shooters, for
9 instance, in our municipalities.

10 And the whole notion of street
11 outreach, I think working -- there's
12 nothing like a young person engaging
13 with, speaking with someone who has
14 walked in their shoes. I spoke to a
15 group of young people last week from the
16 Juvenile Justice Center and I invited a
17 former client of ours. And I was a
18 little bit concerned because he's 28.
19 And you know in our world right now, at
20 28 you're an OG by then, right. But
21 this young man talked about -- he faced
22 the same kind of challenges. He had
23 multiple felonies on his record and had
24 given up in terms of hope. And you
25 could hear a pin drop in the room. All

1 of them just wrote down his name, wrote
2 down his phone number. And this is the
3 kind of response that we get, not just
4 from young people from JJC, but all over
5 the City.

6 We talk to high school
7 students, junior high school students.
8 We actually reached out to 1st graders
9 who also engaged in this. The stories
10 that they tell, some was losing friends,
11 losing loved ones and having someone who
12 can relate to that, having someone who
13 kind of understands the life and the
14 lifestyle of a shooter.

15 I hear people often times
16 negatively talk about people who are
17 engaged in that lifestyle. But often
18 times I've been told they don't feel as
19 though they had a choice. They needed
20 to provide for their family and there
21 was no other option out there. They
22 didn't feel there was no other option
23 out there for them.

24 So I brought a former client.
25 He gave them a list of things that they

1 could do. He talked about selling old
2 tires, going to tire stores and getting
3 tires and then selling the rubber and
4 certainly working that way. We had
5 purchased bikes for people to begin
6 deliveries in terms of restaurants. You
7 have to be a little bit creative.

8 But the thing is I think that
9 if in fact we took an interest, because
10 many of our young people don't feel as
11 though we care. And when I say we,
12 oftent times they don't know our elected
13 officials. I'm talking about those of
14 us who live in our communities or
15 neighborhoods, store owners. They don't
16 think we really care about them.

17 And so, I think that we have to
18 really take a look in the mirror, look
19 at ourselves. Today we're certainly
20 focusing on law enforcement or certainly
21 the panels I have heard. But it's not
22 just about law enforcement. It's not
23 just about Council. We ourselves, we as
24 parents, grandparents, godmothers,
25 concerned people, when we see something

1 wrong, we need to say something.

2 The program I started years ago
3 in terms of Say Yes to Help, a program
4 that Jordan Harris took part in, I've
5 known him since he was 7 years old. We
6 had little kids in that program who are
7 on death row today that we knew had
8 anger issues very early on. And so, we
9 need to target those individuals. Our
10 elementary school teachers, our
11 kindergarten teachers can tell you this
12 young man needs some help. But we're
13 not making those connections.

14 Our 13-year-old shooters who
15 have dropped out of school, that should
16 be on somebody's plate. What can a
17 13-year-old do after they have dropped
18 out of school. So I'm just saying to
19 you that there are very interested
20 people, very dedicated people but we are
21 not working collectively. We're not
22 having the dialogue that we need to
23 have. And we need to have more of this.

24 I'm learning more and more from
25 your Council hearings, but not

1 everybody's participating in Council
2 hearings, so where did they get that
3 information from. I just think that we
4 really need to honestly say that we need
5 to make this issue a priority. That's
6 why I used the example of Governor
7 Rendell and pulling the Cabinet
8 secretaries together, because I don't
9 think really from my standpoint we
10 embraced the fact that we have a
11 problem.

12 We have these mass shootings
13 and it just seems like we grieve for a
14 couple of days and then it's on to the
15 next one. Something's wrong with that.
16 I told you the story about meeting a
17 business owner, a florist, an MBE
18 florist based in Chicago, deeply engaged
19 in gun violence education, violence
20 prevention.

21 I asked, why do you do it? He
22 said, they do it because the City
23 expects them to. There's an expectation
24 that everyone who lives, works, plays,
25 constructs buildings, lays down floors

1 is owning this problem. We are at that
2 point where all of us, I don't care who
3 you are, the grocery store, the bank,
4 the babysitter, we all have to be in
5 this.

6 And so, I just think that
7 really kind of helping folks understand
8 that we are connected, Black, White,
9 Brown, it doesn't matter. We are all in
10 this together. We have to be in this
11 together in order to move the needle.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
13 Marla. I appreciate your perspective.
14 I appreciate your comments as well. And
15 you're right, it has to be a sense of
16 urgency across the board and
17 collectively when it comes to addressing
18 this issue.

19 It surely keeps me up at night,
20 right, being a father of two African-
21 American Black boys, but I still live in
22 the neighborhood that raised me, so it
23 keeps me up at night. But at the end of
24 the day, it should keep everybody up at
25 night when you can't even go to the mall

1 to go shopping, right, without fearing
2 for your life or you can't even go out
3 and hang out at a social entertainment
4 complex without fear of your life being
5 taken. So, yes, I definitely agree you.

6 Again, this is a call to
7 action. We have these hearings because
8 also it sheds light and transparency and
9 accountability about how are we tackling
10 this issue comprehensively.

11 We are doing a roundtable with
12 Councilwoman Helen Gym, specifically
13 with the children and how are they
14 dealing with trauma, right. Because
15 when these young children are murdered
16 and the kids go to school the next day,
17 how are they processing it, right. When
18 everybody's talking about what happened
19 on social media, the social media beefs
20 and how are the little brothers and
21 little sisters processing it, do they
22 grow up to be the shooter or do they
23 grow up to be more aggressive or do they
24 just look within themselves and maybe
25 not express themselves as they normally

1 would prior to them losing their loved
2 one, which is from a health standpoint
3 something that can have devastating
4 consequences on how a kid shuts down and
5 how they respond to just life in general
6 for the rest of their lives. And so,
7 thank you, Marla, for your comments and
8 thank you for participating on your
9 panel.

10 Councilman Curtis Jones.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: I just want
12 to say this has been a long journey, but
13 this testimony you just gave, ma'am, was
14 worth waiting for. And it gave a
15 holistic approach as to all of our
16 collective responsibility in this
17 situation.

18 And it reminds me of what
19 Sister Falaka Fattah told me, you can't
20 be afraid of things you say you love.
21 These kids aren't from another planet,
22 another country. They're our children
23 and we have to give them what they need
24 from the places we can provide it. And
25 everybody can't be a Chair of the Gun

1 Violence Committee, but everybody can
2 choose to be a father, choose to be a
3 coach, choose to be a mentor or a
4 teacher, choose to be the grocery clerk
5 that really gives a helping hand when
6 needed. So I am so grateful to hear
7 your testimony. Thank you, Ms. Bellamy.

8 MS. DAVIS-BELLAMY: I
9 appreciate that. And just so you know,
10 I sat at the feet of the Queen Mother
11 when we first got into this work, so
12 she'll definitely let you know that.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: All right.
14 Thank you so much.

15 MS. DAVIS-BELLAMY: Sure.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
17 so much. And to Dr. Beard, is
18 Dr. Beard still on before we call the
19 last panel?

20 DR. BEARD: I'm here.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And,
22 Dr. Beard, just again thank you for your
23 testimony, the public health standpoint.
24 I know my colleagues and I are looking
25 at -- I worked on this initiative before

1 when Governor Rendell was the governor
2 when I served as a State Rep regarding
3 hospital-based intervention, which kind
4 of addressed the trauma around when
5 individuals are shot or murdered and how
6 the family responds up inside the
7 hospital, right. But we're looking at
8 is CHOP talking to Penn, is Penn talking
9 to Temple, is Temple talking to Einstein
10 when they're dealing with shooting
11 victims, right, and is everybody on the
12 same page in terms of the response, the
13 level of resources that are provided to
14 the family members, but most importantly
15 stopping the retaliation when it comes
16 to shootings.

17 We appreciate your comments
18 specifically around how we have to
19 address this as a public health
20 epidemic, and hopefully moving forward
21 when we have these briefings, and I know
22 the Administration, which is the Mayor's
23 team, they're on the next panel as well,
24 will have the opportunity to take in
25 your testimony that was mentioned

1 earlier about how do you make sure that
2 we are incorporating a holistic approach
3 when we have these public briefings.

4 Because you're right, it is
5 bigger than law enforcement. It has a
6 public health component to it,
7 especially around trauma, because we all
8 know hurt people hurt people. It's just
9 that simple. The retaliations that I
10 saw are a result of one young friend
11 being murdered by someone else and the
12 friend taking on the responsibility of
13 retaliation because he's hurt deep down
14 inside or the mother is hurt. And as a
15 result of her being hurt, she may not
16 stop the friends from going to retaliate
17 because she's still dealing with a level
18 of hurt and pain.

19 And so, we just want to thank
20 you and acknowledge you for your public
21 health approach and we will be in
22 contact with you as well in terms of
23 following up on how we want to look at
24 this from a public health standpoint.
25 And thank you for your work.

1 DR. BEARD: Thank you so much
2 for having me and for listening to what
3 it's like to be a trauma surgeon in the
4 City. And I'm absolutely happy to talk
5 more about this. I think it's sort of
6 everyone wants to say they're taking a
7 public health approach. But public
8 health is actually sort of a discipline
9 that approaches things in a step-by-step
10 manner.

11 The first step is actually
12 information, right. So that's why
13 knowing how many people are shot, who's
14 being shot, where they're being shot is
15 very important. That's important to law
16 enforcement for their planning, but it
17 should also be important to folks who
18 are intervening from a public health
19 standpoint like CeaseFire. Because
20 without data, we can't actually test if
21 what we're doing is working.

22 And public health also is about
23 prevention, right. It's not about going
24 to the very end and then punishing the
25 shooter. It's about preventing the

1 situation that resulted in a shooting
2 sort of approximately time and space,
3 but even more antecedent to all of the
4 gun injury, if that makes sense.

5 So again, I'm happy -- what I
6 want to get across also is the role of
7 media, right. So the way that you
8 choose to approach gun violence, the way
9 that you as politicians choose to
10 discuss gun violence really influences
11 the way that the public understands it.

12 And so, if you're having a
13 briefing and if you're discussing gun
14 violence just from the lens of law
15 enforcement or if our local media really
16 only has law enforcement as sources,
17 then it's always going to be a problem
18 of criminal justice, rather than a
19 public health problem. So I think if we
20 can really start to use that language
21 and really start to have a broader set
22 of interventions that are coordinated, I
23 think that will be effective. I hope
24 so. And thank you for the opportunity
25 to speak.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
2 welcome. Will the Clerk --

3 MS. DAVIS-BELLAMY: And,
4 Councilmember Johnson.

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Sure.

6 MS. DAVIS-BELLAMY: I don't
7 know if Dr. Beard was around when Rob
8 Reed was here in Philadelphia. But he
9 actually spent a night in every Level 1
10 trauma center across the City. And if
11 we ever get past COVID, maybe some of
12 our Councilpeople would like to join you
13 in the trauma bay and actually walk in
14 your shoes one night in the spring or
15 the summer.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:
17 Absolutely. Well, listen, I thank all
18 of you for being on this call. I have
19 reached out to Dr. Farley, Dr. Beard,
20 just around the concept of gun violence.
21 And I have had meetings with him in the
22 past around a public health approach.
23 So again, this is the right time to
24 revisit it in terms of the discipline
25 and also how we shape the conversation

1 moving forward. And so, thank you very
2 much.

3 Can the Clerk please call the
4 last panel.

5 THE CLERK: We actually have
6 two more panels, Mr. Chair.

7 The next one is Shondell
8 Revell, Erica Atwood and George Mosee,
9 Jr. And you may begin in the order in
10 which I called your name.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes. Can
12 we start with Ms. Erica Atwood, please.

13 MS. ATWOOD: Sure. Good
14 afternoon, Chair Johnson and members of
15 the Special Committee on Gun Violence
16 Prevention. My name is Erica Atwood. I
17 serve as Senior Director for the Office
18 of Policy and Strategic Initiatives for
19 Criminal Justice and Public Safety for
20 the City of Philadelphia.

21 Today I'd like to use our time
22 together to discuss our updated approach
23 to creating safe and healthy communities
24 in Philadelphia. Even as we continue to
25 face challenges of the global pandemic

1 and the aftershock of civil unrest
2 coming from the vestiges of decades-old
3 systemic racism. And I've been honored
4 to serve in various roles in City
5 government over several administrations.
6 And I see this new position as an
7 opportunity to bring training and
8 experience I've gained over 20 years
9 working here in Philadelphia and across
10 the country fighting for healthier
11 communities and safer streets,
12 particularly for Black and Brown people.

13 As I said, the last time I
14 testified before this body, this is hard
15 work. I'm extremely focused on the
16 value of communities and the beauty of
17 the people who make up Philadelphia.
18 Since starting in this role in November,
19 I immediately jumped back into the
20 Roadmap to Safer Communities, and began
21 to update our framework which will be
22 announcing the details tomorrow during
23 Mayor Kenney's gun violence briefing at
24 1:00 p.m.

25 The original Roadmap will

1 continue to serve as the core
2 comprehensive, strategic action plan
3 that guides this work for us. The
4 revamped framework of the Roadmap
5 reflects the major historical challenges
6 we faced over the past year. And today
7 I'd like to highlight a few of those.

8 With the new Roadmap, we are
9 doing an environmental as well as a
10 public health approach, and additionally
11 we'll be prioritizing community
12 engagement. With our weekly tactical
13 meetings, we are bringing together two
14 City agencies and stakeholders to
15 address the quality-of-life issues in
16 our most vulnerable neighborhoods.

17 Under the guidance of Dr. Ruth
18 Abaya, the Health Department's
19 Intervention Manager, we developed a
20 public health framework rooted in the
21 Haddon Matrix, a commonly used paradigm
22 in the injury prevention field. As a
23 part of our community engagement
24 efforts, my team is developing a program
25 of events and workshops and partnership

1 with young leaders, community
2 organizations and other City
3 departments.

4 Better communication we know is
5 paramount to these efforts. And with
6 that, we are launching a new website,
7 social media platforms beginning with a
8 Facebook page and Instagram under the
9 handle PhillyAlive215. While the Office
10 of Violence Prevention has been the
11 City's agency most associated with the
12 Roadmap's work in the press and in the
13 public, we maintain that OVP is but one
14 of the several agencies serving as a
15 cornerstone through the new holistic
16 approach.

17 The other credible agencies are
18 the Office of Criminal Justice, the
19 Office of Re-entry Partnerships and Town
20 Watch Integrated Services, all of which
21 serve under my cluster. This multi-
22 faceted technique makes sure we
23 democratize our resources so that we
24 elevate all the key tenets of gun
25 violence strategies on a national level,

1 prevention, intervention and enforcement
2 and re-entry.

3 Our efforts cannot be
4 beneficial without understanding how the
5 City is reforming the criminal justice
6 system which has contributed to decades
7 of inequity, injustice and deep-seated
8 mistrust in Black and Brown
9 neighborhoods. Beyond reforming the
10 system, we must support those who have
11 been trapped in it for years, if not
12 generations.

13 It is why connecting returning
14 citizens to opportunities and resources
15 through our Office of Violence
16 Prevention is so critical. These are
17 only some of the ways that the four
18 agencies under the CJPS cluster is
19 supporting the enhanced Roadmap. Under
20 the revised plan, we are tracking
21 quality-of-life indicators where
22 shootings took place and analyzing the
23 areas of experience with violence. We
24 are looking at who got shot, who did the
25 shooting and how they may be one in the

1 same.

2 We are also working with our
3 criminal justice partners to deal with
4 the proliferation of guns, including
5 straw purchases, tracking the disturbing
6 trends of shootings and homicides that
7 take place in homes where it's more
8 difficult to intervene. Unfortunately,
9 we are not alone in these struggles, as
10 nearly every major city in the country
11 has reported sharp increases in deadly
12 gun violence, knowing that we are
13 deepening our engagement with national
14 partners like Cities United, Faith In
15 Action and Everytown.

16 Additionally, we are
17 strengthening coordination of our work
18 here at home with the Group Violence
19 Intervention program launched last
20 August, the Community Crisis
21 Intervention Program, our Violent
22 Prevention Partnership and Warrant
23 Initiative and the Police Department's
24 Operation Pinpoint technique.

25 Gun violence reduction and

1 community health and safety cannot
2 happen without investing back into the
3 community. We are focused on finding a
4 diverse array of employment
5 opportunities for individuals. And it
6 is why we have invested in our Targeted
7 Community Investment Grants with another
8 cohort being announced tomorrow.

9 CJPS has also administered
10 microgrants supporting local
11 organizations, helping those to advance
12 the administrative goals to reform and
13 support returning citizens. And those
14 grants are being issued through our
15 Office of Criminal Justice and our
16 Office of Re-entry Partnerships. We are
17 applying nearly \$3 million received from
18 MacArthur Foundation's Safety and
19 Justice Challenge to reduce the racial
20 disparities in our jails to work towards
21 a cure for our overreliance on a
22 punitive system and to find alternatives
23 for restitution for those who are not a
24 danger to society.

25 Gun violence is not a -- gun

1 violence is a symptom, not the root
2 cause. And it is a symptom of
3 generations of divestment in Black and
4 Brown neighborhoods. While gun violence
5 is a malignancy that must be immediately
6 removed and even when we get our numbers
7 down, we must continue to work to heal
8 our neighborhoods so they can enjoy the
9 freedom of remission of the cancer
10 oppression. Thank you and I'm here to
11 answer any questions you may have.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you
13 very much.

14 I'm going ask for Mr. George
15 Mosee, because I know a lot of your
16 work, George, overlaps with the Office
17 of Violence Prevention and the purpose
18 of asking you to come out. Just give us
19 an overview and update on the
20 intervention work that you are doing
21 because your team is on the ground.
22 You're dealing with the shooters.
23 You're dealing with their family
24 members. Can you go ahead, sir?

25 MR. MOSEE: Well, you're

1 referring of course to the Community
2 Crisis Intervention Program, which is
3 one of three programs at the
4 Philadelphia Anti-Drug Anti-Violence
5 Network. We also have our Human
6 Services Department, which includes case
7 managers, human services coordinators
8 and employment specialists.

9 We also run one of DHS's
10 intensive prevention services programs.
11 And I mention those because they're part
12 of the continuum of prevention that's
13 necessary if we're going to make a dent
14 in violence in Philadelphia. But as far
15 as the Community Crisis Intervention
16 Program that is concerned, those are the
17 boots on the ground as you referenced.

18 And we deliberately hire people
19 who are from the community, people who
20 have lived lives that are consistent
21 with the lives of the people that
22 they're trying to reach. And the hope
23 is that by bringing people like that on
24 board, they'll have a kind of built-in
25 credibility with the folks that we're

1 trying to reach. That credibility isn't
2 designed to help us to investigate
3 folks, to ensure that they're
4 prosecuted.

5 To the contrary, we're purely
6 about prevention. And what we firmly
7 believe is that even the folks who have
8 the potential to shoot a gun, who have
9 the potential to be the worst people in
10 our communities are people who will take
11 advantage of the opportunity to turn
12 their lives around if that opportunity
13 is presented to them. And so, our
14 community crisis intervention workers
15 who in some jurisdictions are referred
16 to as violence interrupters deliberately
17 try to develop relationships with the
18 would-be combatants. And once they
19 develop those relationships, they dig in
20 to find out what's going on in the
21 community, what the source of the beef
22 is. And once we understand exactly
23 what's going on, we try to mediate, we
24 try to prevent retaliation, we try to
25 ensure that nobody fires a gun. Now, to

1 be frank with you, that means that some
2 other stuff might get by us. We might
3 let it slide because our primary purpose
4 is to stop the shooting.

5 One of the things that I just
6 mentioned was mediation. And when you
7 mediate, you usually have to have a
8 carrot with a stick. We don't go
9 (inaudible) involvement, but we try to
10 find out what it is that we might be
11 able to contribute to the situation that
12 would make the situation go away.
13 Anecdotally, we've had cases whereby
14 repairing a car that was strewn with
15 bullets or replacing windows that had
16 been broken out by gunfire. We've been
17 able to squash the beef. That means we
18 spent some money. That means that we
19 put in some sweat equity. And that also
20 means that we get the combatants to
21 participate.

22 And you'd be surprised -- well,
23 I know you wouldn't, Councilman Johnson.
24 But the fact of the matter is unlike the
25 way it used to be back in the '60s and

1 '70s, we're not always talking about
2 folks from different turfs. Sometimes
3 we're talking about people on the same
4 block. And in spite of the fact that
5 they grew up together, they still want
6 to shoot each other. What we've been
7 able to find, whatever it is, that might
8 represent common ground so that we can
9 squash the beef.

10 I heard my good friend Marla
11 talk about the medical approach, viewing
12 violence as a health issue. And we
13 certainly adopted that wholeheartedly.
14 In fact, my entire Community Crisis
15 Intervention Program advocates, all of
16 them have been trained and will be
17 trained with the Cure Violence model.
18 We've recognized, as you indicated
19 earlier, it's important to have an
20 evidence-based approach. There's no
21 reason for us to reinvent the wheel.
22 The Office of Violence Prevention has
23 supported this wholeheartedly and
24 financially, and it's given my people an
25 opportunity to be trained by folks from

1 Chicago who have already implemented and
2 utilized a proven method for many, many
3 years and we're hopeful that those
4 results will be realized here in
5 Philadelphia.

6 I have to tell you that 2020
7 was a difficult year, as it was for
8 everybody. 2020 was a year when we had
9 a strategy that we wanted to implement
10 but weren't able to do it fully because
11 of the restrictions caused by the
12 pandemic. You could imagine that when
13 your primary objective is to develop
14 relationships. But when you have to
15 stand 6 feet away from people wearing a
16 mask, that certainly inhibits your
17 ability to do that.

18 Nevertheless, we were able to
19 grow the program to what we currently
20 have, which is 57 advocates, boots on
21 the ground. We're still working to get
22 to 64. And as I said, we're fully
23 training all those people to work with
24 the public that we serve.

25 I can tell you this in closing,

1 that the Philadelphia Anti-Drug Anti-
2 Violence Network has long recognized,
3 and I always like to point out in that
4 very long title is the word network, so
5 we're not in competition with anybody,
6 and we'll work with anybody. And the
7 fact of the matter is that that's our
8 real strength, that we've developed
9 relationships, that we're collaborating
10 with the community.

11 In addition to identifying the
12 would-be shooters, we're identifying the
13 viable leadership in communities and
14 we're working together, which is the
15 only way that we'll be able to prevent
16 violence in Philadelphia. Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
18 Just a couple of quick questions: You
19 have 57 boots on the ground. How do you
20 prioritize what part of the City or
21 police districts individuals are
22 stationed in?

23 MR. MOSEE: We're in 13 police
24 districts, and our deployment is always
25 dictated by where the violence is. We

1 rely on information that we receive from
2 the City, including the Delaware Valley
3 Intelligence Center. They provide us
4 with the statistics. And based on their
5 Pinpoint areas, that's how we deploy our
6 people.

7 In fact, one of the things that
8 we're doing through the Cure Violence
9 approach is refining the geographical
10 areas that we'll be servicing. And that
11 will accomplish two things: We won't be
12 stretched so thin that we won't be
13 effective, and it will also help us to
14 better analyze the outcomes to determine
15 whether it was, in fact, as a result of
16 our presence and our activity.

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And I had
18 another question around what kind of
19 data in terms of measurables, in terms
20 of goals that show how you're meeting
21 your objectives in terms of the work
22 that PAAN is doing, how are you
23 measuring how effective you are and what
24 kind of data can you provide that shows
25 that since we've been in inception,

1 here's how we're reaching our targeted
2 goals around this issue of gun violence,
3 here's how many groups we've worked
4 with, here's how many young people we've
5 come in contact with, here's how many
6 people we got resources and the types of
7 resources, whether it be employment,
8 behavioral health services, child
9 support services or things of that
10 nature?

11 MR. MOSEE: So I was listening
12 to each variable as you stated them and
13 we cover all of that. So we're looking
14 at all of that empirical data. But
15 what's really important is that we have
16 to refine the geography. Because at the
17 end of the day, what we're measuring is
18 the reduction of violence.

19 I can't take credit for the
20 reduction of violence in the 7th Police
21 District because we're not there. I
22 have to know --

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I'm with
24 you there. But, okay, let me ask you
25 this: Could you provide -- in the

1 office let's just say you should have a
2 document of data and even if it's
3 specifically reducing gun violence,
4 because the young men that you hire,
5 that's what they're hired to do in terms
6 of organization, where could you provide
7 that data? That's all. Since the
8 inception of PAAN, to date these are the
9 categories and here's the impact that
10 we're having in these particular
11 categories as it relates to the work
12 that we're actually doing.

13 And I know you said the number
14 one thing is reducing the gun violence
15 and stopping the shootings. Again, my
16 question is what are you using to
17 measure that and then where is that data
18 that shows that we're on target reducing
19 violence and here is how we have
20 approached it?

21 MR. MOSEE: So the creation of
22 the Community Crisis Intervention
23 Program and the evolution of the
24 development of that program has happened
25 in stages. You may recall that we

1 started out with nine people, and those
2 nine people were in a number of
3 districts, complete police districts.
4 And so, in my humble opinion that was a
5 mistake. We should have started out in
6 even smaller areas, because I can't in
7 good conscience attribute the reduction
8 or the increase in violence in those
9 districts to the nine people that I
10 have.

11 Now, we've grown it as I said
12 gradually. And it wasn't until the
13 middle of 2020 after the pandemic was
14 full speed ahead that we actually
15 reached the number 50. You can imagine
16 that in addition to the difficulty with
17 developing relationships, it was
18 difficult to hire people during the
19 pandemic, but we were able to reach 57
20 currently.

21 What I want to do now and what
22 we are doing is refining those areas so
23 that I can make the statement with good
24 conscience and answer the question that
25 you're asking. However, I will tell you

1 this, that we do have the number of
2 homes and the number of mediations, the
3 number of incidents. And when I say
4 incidents, I'm talking about the
5 shootings that we've responded to, the
6 number of events, the number of times
7 that we've been out there with you
8 pounding the pavement. And I can give
9 you all the information, but I can't do
10 the correlation between the variables to
11 tell you exactly what that's resulted
12 in, in terms of the outcome that we're
13 looking for.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. All
15 right. And so, if you can provide that
16 information just as a starting point,
17 that just will be helpful. Obviously, I
18 support the work that you all have been
19 doing. You all always come out pounding
20 pavement, intervene when these conflicts
21 happen and I appreciate the work that
22 you're doing.

23 Obviously, I would like for you
24 all to expand that model, as you do the
25 Cure model training as well. But I just

1 believe as many boots on the ground and
2 organizations that we're collaborating
3 with, like you talked about networking,
4 helps us get to the root cause of why
5 some of these issues are actually
6 happening.

7 The only question I have for
8 Erica, and I know I have Shondell, but
9 my questions were really geared towards
10 Erica and you, Mr. George. Erica,
11 GVI --

12 MS. ATWOOD: Yes, sir.

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- before
14 I get to my next panel, I just want to
15 ask this. Now that the weather is
16 getting better, will we do call-outs in
17 a social distance way as opposed to
18 individually?

19 MS. ATWOOD: We haven't made a
20 decision on that yet. We're considering
21 that just based on how it works, we're
22 going to stay for now until we start to
23 see our COVID numbers really go down
24 considerably until we know that our
25 vaccination rates are up. We just don't

1 want to put people -- we don't want to
2 be the cause of putting people in
3 jeopardy.

4 What we've been doing is
5 working. We've been making the contacts
6 and I'm confident in the team that we
7 can continue to kind of do the door-
8 knocking and leave folks where they are,
9 which is a little different than calling
10 them in right now.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Is your
12 office working in partnership with
13 Probation and Parole regarding GPS?

14 MS. ATWOOD: That's a --

15 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Like,
16 nobody is really getting monitored right
17 now other than virtual, so no one's
18 getting a urine taken from them if
19 they're getting high -- I'm just having
20 a real conversation -- but that's not
21 being checked. There's no face-to-face
22 conversation.

23 And so, I know this is not on
24 you because we have reached out to
25 Probation and Parole to be in our

1 follow-up hearing after the holiday
2 weekend. But nevertheless, I was just
3 wondering if there's coordination of
4 someone saying, okay, we know the courts
5 are closed, we know there's no in-face
6 visitation, right, there aren't any
7 urines being taken. And I'm going to
8 say the important part, there aren't any
9 prevention services being offered to
10 young people who are on probation and
11 parole.

12 I say that because, again, I
13 was on probation, right. And while I
14 was on probation, it just sparked in me
15 the encouragement to go to Mansfield
16 University because I had a good
17 probation officer. She was in my ear.
18 She was popping up on my block when I
19 was outside, like what are you doing.
20 That's not happening today, right.

21 And I guess other than virtual,
22 I would think that GPS system with the
23 virtual at least to kind of -- if we can
24 be real about the conversation, probably
25 some of the young men need that

1 structure and young ladies, right, and
2 that extra support.

3 I'm an Ivy league grad. And I
4 think I come from an, you know, my
5 family is good, did the best they could,
6 right, but I still wanted to be in the
7 streets, if I can be upfront and
8 transparent in this hearing. But when I
9 was on probation, right, I had a good
10 probation officer. And I received some
11 additional support that was outside the
12 household that kind of encouraged me to
13 stay on the right path and I had extra
14 structure, the reporting kind of kept me
15 a little focused. And I know that's not
16 happening right now because the courts
17 are shut down and Probation and Parole
18 is pretty much virtual.

19 And so, that's not really on
20 you, Erica. I just know being over top
21 of the criminal justice umbrella, I just
22 was wondering if that conversation was
23 taking place because GVI does fall under
24 that purview.

25 MS. ATWOOD: Yes. So I want to

1 broaden the conversation around
2 Probation and Parole a little bit. So
3 GVI deals with a finite amount of
4 individuals. And one of the programs,
5 we do have in my portfolio through
6 off-the-grid partnerships is our
7 Neighborhood Resource Centers. That
8 would change the game around how we do
9 probation and parole.

10 So imagine when you were on
11 supervision if all you had to do was
12 walk to the building that might have
13 been two blocks away from you, you not
14 only got to see your probation officer,
15 if you needed to file for unemployment
16 benefits or you needed a new ID, if you
17 needed career wardrobe, your incredible
18 and capable mentor might have been
19 there. And so, this is something we
20 have in our strategy that we've been
21 trying to launch for some time. And
22 it's something I've worked on prior to
23 coming back to the City, so even bigger
24 than us improving -- let's do something
25 a little different than improve the

1 system we know may not work.

2 And so, let us start to kind of
3 do something, that radical shift, to
4 change and expand what we can do to
5 support individuals that are on
6 supervision that might have gone a
7 little astray and get them back and get
8 them support, not only for them, but
9 imagine if you got support because you
10 were on supervision, but your mom could
11 go there, your dad could go there. Your
12 little brother could go to a mentoring
13 program all at this center.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good.
15 Erica, I'm going to do this a little
16 non-conventional, but I have another
17 panelist who wants to chime in and make
18 a comment on this concept. This is a
19 young man who's doing some good work
20 that I wanted to be a part of this
21 process. And I thought his voice is
22 definitely needed. And if we don't have
23 young people as part of the
24 conversation, it's all for nothing.

25 John Solomon.

1 MS. ATWOOD: That's one of my
2 boys.

3 MR. SOLOMON: Thank you,
4 Councilman Kenyatta Johnson. My name is
5 John Solomon. I am the CEO founder of
6 Endangered Kind. Endangered Kind is a
7 mobile advocacy organization of
8 Philadelphia that is helping the local
9 communities shift the narrative impact
10 of gun violence by engaging high-risk
11 youth and young adults.

12 We've effectively reached high-
13 risk youth from the ages of 15 to 34
14 acting as trust liaison reaching the
15 underserved demographic. But I wanted
16 to interrupt because I actually just got
17 some news and I didn't want to sign off
18 without kind of letting the people
19 that's on here know how real gun
20 violence is.

21 My brother just got shot, my
22 blood brother, which is an individual I
23 talk to a lot. I spent time with him in
24 prison. Just to get the news while
25 we're on this phone call, I didn't

1 really want to interrupt but I just
2 wanted to let y'all know this issue is
3 real.

4 We out here on a day-to-day
5 basis trying to connect with these guys
6 all across the City, me and my partner
7 Rob Shuler. And we've been effectively
8 connecting with these individuals
9 because we understand that within the
10 street culture, they can be a little
11 against new people and they tend to be
12 untrustworthy when it comes to talking
13 to individuals that they're not familiar
14 with. So that's pretty much where we're
15 coming at.

16 We hit the streets in different
17 parts of the City and we build trust
18 with these individuals because we
19 understand people that go through trauma
20 have trust issues. And that's being
21 people that are culturally relevant and
22 have cultural influence out here, it is
23 our job to connect with these
24 individuals and plug them into services
25 and resources that's out there and put

1 them in front of people such as
2 yourselves that's on this panel that's
3 actually talking and that's actually
4 helping to contribute to preventing
5 violence.

6 I'm going to sign off, kind of
7 keep y'all updated. I'll talk to you,
8 Councilman Kenyatta. It's an emergency
9 situation so I'm going to head out and
10 kind of see what's going on.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: All right.
12 John, keep your head up. I'll call you
13 later on.

14 MS. ATWOOD: I'll check on you
15 as well.

16 MR. SOLOMON: Okay. Have a
17 good one.

18 MR. REVELL: For real, John,
19 whatever you need.

20 MR. SOLOMON: No problem.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And so,
22 Erica, that was -- wow. That was good
23 feedback. I know we have a resource
24 center that's going to be in Southwest
25 Philadelphia. So this is why we do the

1 work that we do.

2 MS. ATWOOD: Yes.

3 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And this
4 is why all of our hearts are in the
5 right place because we're dealing with a
6 real serious issue. That's an example.
7 It's not political for me. If I wasn't
8 elected, I would be still doing the same
9 work because it started from having
10 somebody taken away from me in this
11 process, so I get it.

12 But good perspective, Erica.
13 They do have a resource center that's
14 going to be located in my Councilmanic
15 District, Southwest CDC. And so, that's
16 a good perspective when we talk about
17 probation, when we talk about parole,
18 but overall preventative support for our
19 young people.

20 I don't have any key questions
21 for Shondell even though I asked him to
22 be on the call. He had some other
23 things to do. But I just know all three
24 of you work together comprehensively. I
25 know the work that OVP is doing. But to

1 me it's tri-fold, OVP, PAAN and your
2 role, Erica, in terms of making sure
3 everything under the umbrella is being
4 comprehensively addressed.

5 If any of my colleagues have
6 any questions for the Office of Violence
7 Prevention or Philadelphia Anti-Drug
8 Anti-Violence Network or Ms. Erica
9 Atwood, you can. If not, I will call on
10 the next panel.

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Shondell,
13 my staff has asked me, do you want to
14 give an overview of your testimony for
15 the record?

16 MR. REVELL: Yes.

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Give us a
18 brief update just for the record since
19 you were on the public agenda. And
20 then --

21 MR. REVELL: Do you want me to
22 read the whole testimony?

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: No, you
24 can summarize it.

25 MR. REVELL: Okay. Let me get

1 to the key points then. The key points
2 George already pointed out with the
3 Community Crisis Intervention Program.
4 Can you hear me?

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, I
6 hear you. One second.

7 Councilwoman Jamie, would you
8 like to ask a question now?

9 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Sure.
10 I mean, does Shondell want to finish
11 or --

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Shondell,
13 do your summary and then I'll let
14 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier go and then
15 we'll call our last panel.

16 MR. REVELL: For the interest
17 of time, I'll just give the highlights
18 because a lot has already been said. I
19 wanted to just point out and kind of
20 support what George said about the
21 Community Crisis Intervention Program.
22 We do have extensive data. We've been
23 working on that.

24 For instance, since January
25 through last Thursday, CCIP teams have

1 made 576 home visits and responded to
2 227 incidents. They are out there. And
3 as everyone knows, not just when an
4 incident happens, but also trying to
5 form those relationships.

6 Another key part as Erica
7 pointed out -- before I get to that, a
8 big part of our collecting information
9 for CCIP is we've selected American
10 Institutes for Research, AIR, to
11 evaluate CCIP for the period between
12 April 1st to March 31st, so we do have
13 someone to evaluate at the cost of
14 \$150,000. It will provide a systematic
15 method for studying CCIP and practices
16 so we can achieve those goals that
17 everyone is talking about.

18 Last but not least, I want to
19 jump to our Targeted Investment Grants.
20 I do have to say that we are going to
21 award 30 recipients for the amount of
22 \$500,000. Over the past several years,
23 two years, we invested about \$2 million
24 into the communities. I think this is a
25 perfect opportunity to look at how we

1 can bolster that.

2 I know we've talked several
3 times about it. But the more boots we
4 have on the ground, the more
5 initiatives, the more feel-good programs
6 we have in the community, it reinvests
7 people's attitude on how they can save
8 their own community and become more
9 connected to the solution and not the
10 problem. That's all I have.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
12 Shondell. I have a quick question:
13 Just in terms of, and I know my office
14 did some research on this, Targeted
15 Investment Grants, how much was allotted
16 and -- wait, let me change that. How
17 many groups did you actually fund, not
18 this cycle but the last cycle total?
19 Because our focus is to expand that
20 area, right. We think it should go from
21 5,000, I think the match is, how much,
22 20,000, correct?

23 MR. REVELL: 20,000. I know we
24 talked about 50,000, right?

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yeah, I

1 believe it should at least be 50 for the
2 organizations really out there doing
3 some hard work and really need support
4 and really expanding the footprint of
5 organizations that are actually
6 supported, that are actually doing
7 aggressive work to help be preventive
8 when it comes to addressing the issue of
9 senseless gun violence.

10 And so, give me an idea of how
11 many groups you have supported total
12 versus how many obviously you would want
13 to have supported, because I know there
14 were some people who didn't get support.

15 MR. REVELL: We had about 100
16 thus far. I think the challenge is, and
17 we've talked about this several times,
18 you have these initiatives who you've
19 helped grow throughout the periods
20 who've been funded two, maybe going into
21 three times, but how do you further
22 support that. And not just giving them
23 a higher grant total, but how are you
24 building those supports to help them get
25 to the next stage. And that's the

1 difficult part of it.

2 You know you have a small
3 amount of money. You can't really keep
4 refunding opportunities because you have
5 new initiatives coming in. So we really
6 got to look at how do we build this out,
7 how do we finally say we want to invest
8 in this and build this out, because not
9 just making the grant total a higher
10 amount is going to be sufficient.

11 MS. ATWOOD: And if I may,
12 Councilmember, to add to what Shondell
13 said, in addition to kind of spreading
14 the wealth, so to speak and having kind
15 of a higher amount as well as kind of a
16 broader amount, there's also an
17 opportunity here to strengthen the
18 organizations that we do fund so they
19 can diversify their ability to do
20 fundraising to resource development.

21 What does it look like that not
22 only are they able to get \$50,000 from
23 the Office of Violence Prevention, but
24 they can also qualify for a William Penn
25 Foundation grant or they can qualify for

1 a national foundation grant or they can
2 put in a contract with Department of
3 Human Services. So what does it look
4 like to even strengthen these
5 organizations and develop their capacity
6 beyond just giving them money for the
7 program that they have.

8 You and I know, we work with a
9 number of community organizations and
10 community leaders that do good work, but
11 couldn't build a budget if you paid them
12 twice as much, so what does it look like
13 to support that work and that's
14 something we're really focused on that
15 we're going to launch kind of once we
16 get through our planning for spring and
17 summer, is how do we build an academy,
18 so to speak, for community leaders and
19 community organizations.

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You took
21 the words out of my --

22 MR. REVELL: Let me just add
23 this --

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Go ahead,
25 Shon.

1 MR. REVELL: -- I just want to
2 throw some context on this because I
3 don't know if everyone on the call knows
4 this, just to see the level we're
5 talking at. We had over 700 individuals
6 apply for our grants, and we've only
7 been able to give 100 grants out. There
8 is a lot of opportunity that is slipping
9 through the crack, I believe. And
10 that's why building a system like
11 Erica's talking about is crucial.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: When you
13 say you were only able to give out 100,
14 are you saying because they didn't
15 qualify to accept the grant or the lack
16 of funding? Because Erica is talking
17 about building and I understand clearly
18 what she's talking about. She's talking
19 about building a bootcamp so they won't
20 just be dependent upon government
21 funding. So I'm clear on that.

22 But when you say you only gave
23 out 100 and 700 applied, why were the
24 600 denied? Is it funding or not
25 qualified paperwork?

1 MR. REVELL: It's multiple
2 reasons. We have a level system. So
3 you might have people who scored high,
4 but because of the lack of funding if we
5 couldn't include them in the grantee
6 award, more money means more
7 opportunities. You might have some
8 organizations that scored low, that we
9 might be able to invest in and build
10 them up for the next round. So they
11 can -- so it's a combination.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
13 It's good that you clarified that
14 because funding is one area and if they
15 didn't qualify paperwork-wise -- and
16 just so you know, I'm also working with
17 a team with PCCD, Pennsylvania
18 Commission on Crime and Delinquency,
19 right. And you have grassroots groups
20 that have been applying for funding from
21 PCCD, right, but it's also a paperwork
22 issue. So we're looking on a state
23 level doing a bootcamp so individuals
24 can learn how to be qualified for the
25 grant opportunities, right.

1 But I also want to say this
2 though: There's organizations that can
3 do outstanding paperwork that we have
4 been funding forever, right, and do not
5 have a track record of being on the
6 ground, in the neighborhood, talking to
7 the young people, talking to the parents
8 who's lost loved ones, but they can
9 partner with an organization that's on
10 the ground and use those numbers, right,
11 as part of their numbers, right, and
12 they will get funding. And there's
13 proof. It's just not me saying that
14 these things happen.

15 And so, it's definitely a
16 delicate balance. Because if we talk
17 about quantitative and qualitative
18 analysis, right, it's easy to write off
19 a lot of organizations that are actually
20 doing that grassroots up-in-your-face
21 work and that was the whole purpose of
22 why that grant was created because
23 everyone is not going to be a United
24 Way. Everyone is not going to get the
25 same type of funding as the variety of

1 organizations that come through our
2 budget year after year after year that
3 has no impact on what we're doing when
4 it comes to grassroots community work.

5 And so, I definitely understand
6 the balance and the approach in terms of
7 making sure those groups are supported,
8 but also help them go to the next level.
9 So we're on the same page. I just
10 wanted to add a different level of
11 clarity around that issue.

12 MR. REVELL: Yes, sir.

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And so, at
14 this time we're going to ask for
15 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
17 you, Mr. Chair.

18 I had to step out for a little
19 bit so I apologize if this was already
20 discussed. I wanted to get a sense of
21 how OVP is thinking of its needs as we
22 move into budget time, to the extent
23 that you're able to talk to us about
24 that at this point. And what do you
25 think you need, particularly given the

1 moment that we're in and the increase in
2 homicides and shootings?

3 MR. REVELL: Well, I think a
4 perfect place to start is what we just
5 got finished talking about, investing in
6 the community, where you're going to get
7 the best bang for your buck, putting
8 more money back into the community,
9 taking ideals that people have and
10 turning them into programs that actually
11 work.

12 I don't believe we need to
13 reinvent the wheel. I'm humble enough
14 to know when a program like a barbershop
15 has an afterschool program for kids is
16 more impactful sometimes than a big
17 organization holding a health fair. I'm
18 just sorry. That's just the reality of
19 it. So supporting us in a way where we
20 can build out some of the capacities in
21 our grants program, I think is one of
22 our first priorities.

23 Looking at how we can further
24 expand CCIP to different areas,
25 including different community-based

1 organizations. That's a hell of a
2 model. My first thought when I
3 developed the model was having different
4 areas of the City having community-based
5 organizations who are indigenous to
6 those areas run that model in that part
7 of the City, but it takes dollars. It
8 takes funding. How do we build that out
9 and consciously how do we further
10 involve smaller community-based
11 organizations.

12 You might not have the big
13 organization that has 500 people. They
14 might only have 20. How do we get them
15 and make them a part of the picture, how
16 do we build their capacity and then give
17 them support to do the work.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
19 you. So definitely, the Targeted
20 Investment Grants and CCIP. Certainly,
21 I think Council has an interest in those
22 efforts as well.

23 What do you think outside of
24 OVP? I know there are other agencies
25 that work with you all and help you to

1 achieve what it is you're trying to
2 achieve on the Roadmap. As we move into
3 budget time, do you have thoughts there
4 is about ways that we can increase the
5 efforts of other agencies in a way that
6 can impact gun violence in our City?

7 MR. REVELL: I'll let Erica
8 address the Roadmap.

9 MS. ATWOOD: Yes. So one of
10 the things with the Roadmap that we've
11 really changed is that we've elevated
12 it. And so, when it initially launched,
13 it was primarily coming out of OVP.
14 What we've done again is democratize the
15 effort and we now have all of the units
16 that are reporting up through me
17 contributing to how we create safer and
18 healthy neighborhoods and reduce the
19 impact of gun violence.

20 And so, we are in conversations
21 with some of our federal partners, some
22 of our philanthropic partners. We are
23 also kind of waiting to kind of really
24 dive in with Budget Office to see how we
25 can support the Roadmap as it stands and

1 then expand what will be our
2 sustainability plan. We've got three
3 more years here. And so, what does it
4 look like that we invest in this work
5 for 30 years, so that's kind of where
6 we're focused now. And I will have some
7 specificity as we get closer to the
8 budget.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
10 you. I don't have any more questions.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I'm sorry.
12 Well, I was being a parent.

13 So no other questions for
14 members of this Committee, I want to
15 thank the panel for taking time out of
16 y'all schedule. And, listen, I talk
17 frequently with all three of you just
18 around this issue. It's just important
19 that -- and we're all on the same page.
20 We just got to figure out how to save
21 our youth. It's like all hands on deck.
22 It's been an emergency, been a sense of
23 urgency. And if not now, when. If not
24 us, who. Because the reality is our
25 young people need us, our communities

1 need us and there's no other important
2 thing that we can be working on right
3 now than keeping our young people safe
4 and supported. So we thank you for
5 taking time out of your schedule.

6 Can the Clerk please call the
7 next panel.

8 MS. ATWOOD: Thank you.

9 MR. REVELL: Thank you.

10 THE CLERK: Carl Day.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So I want
12 to take a moment to just acknowledge
13 Pastor Carl Day for your hard work, your
14 dedication, bringing a fresh faith-based
15 approach to the issue of gun violence
16 and really intertwining the two and just
17 thank you for taking time out of your
18 busy schedule and joining this really
19 important discussion. This is only a
20 continuation of many discussions, but
21 followed up by action around addressing
22 this issue of senseless gun violence.

23 And so, it's been a very long
24 day, but I didn't expect this to not be
25 a long day because it's such a

1 critically important issue. So thank
2 you and we appreciate you. Just state
3 your name for the record and your
4 organization as well.

5 PASTOR DAY: Thank you,
6 Councilman Johnson. Pastor Carl Day,
7 Cultural Changing Christians based out
8 of North Philadelphia. Heard a lot on
9 this call and I appreciate you for
10 calling this hearing and all City
11 Council for partaking in it. And to the
12 last panel, they know I got love for
13 them. I do work with OVP, Shondell,
14 Erica aka Dahsar.

15 But I will say this, I work --
16 obviously, I'm beyond just pastoring the
17 church on Sundays. I'm actually in
18 North Philly right now responding back
19 to brothers and talking about what's
20 going on in light of losing that
21 55-year-old man yesterday, so I'm
22 sitting in the van right now so y'all
23 can hear me.

24 So we mentor young boys, over
25 46 of them across the City, Team Boys.

1 Pre-COVID every day we held them in our
2 safe zone after school from 3:00 to
3 6:30, poured into them. We set them up
4 on monthly stipends. A lot of this
5 stuff was grassroots funding ourselves,
6 you know what I'm saying. We're pushing
7 networks and working and hustling and
8 bustling the social media.

9 Also, OVP supported us through
10 the Targeted Investment Grant, which has
11 served as a great support as well.
12 Councilman Johnson, I'm certainly on
13 board with you as far as increasing it
14 as well, but I thank them for their
15 support.

16 I also do a lot of work hitting
17 these corners on a regular. We host
18 conversations on the corner. I step
19 outside on the streets, me and my team
20 and the brothers that we have, and we
21 really get deep down into what's going
22 on. I also educate these brothers.

23 When I'm inside any of these
24 hearings or I'm inside of these rooms
25 talking amongst City leaders, letting

1 them know what they're up against,
2 trying to expand their mental beyond
3 their zip code, that's part of my
4 mental. I've been also letting them
5 know.

6 And, Councilman, shout-out to
7 you because you text me jobs, all kinds
8 of opportunities for these brothers and
9 try to bring them and connect them to
10 those resources.

11 Right now we're currently
12 working -- I'm working currently to
13 bring a cluster of young leaders
14 throughout our City right now, people
15 like John Solomon who was just now
16 previously on, and we're organizing
17 those on-the-ground leaders who are
18 really doing effective work to continue
19 to build a coalition of sorts to really
20 keep expanding the impact, bringing
21 these men together in these communities,
22 letting these men know we ought to be
23 present and we have to take our
24 communities back on another level. So
25 this violence issue is definitely

1 serious. We certainly need to continue
2 to expand on the resources and the
3 support that the City is bringing on.

4 Another thing that I would like
5 to address, two things that I would like
6 to state, and just for the record of
7 everybody listening, I do think we
8 should throw the terminology boots on
9 the ground in the trash. And the reason
10 why I'm saying so is that these guys
11 aren't just merely boots on the ground,
12 they're leaders on the ground and we
13 should acknowledge them as such.

14 Leaders on the ground that are
15 out hearing that terminology to some
16 form and degree, they view it as if
17 they're being belittled, as if they're
18 not intelligent as the so-called
19 generals who sit behind board rooms and
20 desks, so I do want to speak on behalf
21 of the brothers who are out here and
22 sisters who are doing amazing work on
23 the ground. Let's acknowledge them as
24 leaders on the ground because that's
25 what they are.

1 And then on the second thing, I
2 would like to say in regards to further
3 support of both of the points that you
4 all made, those particular leaders that
5 we know are doing the work, I think that
6 the City in regards to what could be
7 needed and utilized -- and I said this
8 to the AG recently about in terms of
9 microgrants -- but we also should cover
10 the overhead.

11 And when I say overhead, I'm
12 just saying rental cost or at least the
13 space cost for some of these guys and
14 women who are doing work on the ground
15 who have the relationships already, who
16 have the trusted communities, because
17 what we represent is safe spaces and
18 hubs of sorts whereas though we can do
19 the rest of the work free.

20 It's just like the average
21 citizen of Philadelphia. If your rent's
22 paid, you don't care what else is going
23 on in your life. As long as you can,
24 you'll get out and do what you have to
25 do with little to no care for anything.

1 So a lot of these organizers, the ones
2 that we're talking about that we're
3 acknowledging all the time, let's show
4 that we're really fully in support of
5 them. Take care of whatever yearly
6 rental is.

7 And guess what, write the check
8 out yourself to whoever the leasing
9 person is. But what that's going to do
10 over a long period of time -- just
11 imagine, 365 days out of the year
12 somebody can turn that key open and
13 invite and have communities, have those
14 brothers in there for a safe space so
15 people that they trust and get poured
16 into without worrying about I got to
17 keep jumping on social media to ask
18 people to donate to my organization,
19 because this is the hustle and bustle
20 that many people have to do.

21 So again, we're resourceful.
22 We've been resourceful, but I definitely
23 wanted to state that. I think that that
24 will do a tremendous amount of help to
25 those who, Councilman Johnson, as you

1 refer to that really, really are doing
2 the impactful effective work. And I
3 just think that's something that the
4 City could do in efforts to really get
5 behind those types of individuals that
6 we're talking about.

7 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
8 Pastor Carl. And to me, that's like
9 a -- and I'm quite sure Councilwoman
10 Jamie Gauthier, who's going to come up
11 next, she feels the same way.

12 For me personally, especially
13 when you know who's doing the work,
14 that's the least that we can do, right,
15 at end of the day. And again, I've been
16 doing this work for a little while. And
17 I'm sure if all of us begin doing
18 research, we can see groups that have
19 been getting significant budgets over a
20 significant period of time, right, but
21 may not have the same type of impact,
22 right, that the leaders on the ground
23 are having when they're out on the
24 street going corner to corner, block by
25 block, house by house, really talking

1 to -- it's only a small population that
2 become shooters. It's not everybody,
3 right.

4 Now, you may have some of the
5 good kids who might be halfway in,
6 halfway out that may start to follow.
7 But we have to acknowledge and figure
8 out a better way to support the
9 organizations that are actually out
10 there being effective.

11 And I call it sometimes a
12 nontraditional sense because the
13 academics will say, oh, I want to see
14 the stats, right. And that's the easy
15 way to write some folks out real easy
16 from the door. I've been around and I
17 know the non-profit game. That's the
18 quick easy way.

19 But this is the same community
20 center that has the whole hood coming to
21 their community center to get resources,
22 and that leader is the one that when
23 something does go down gets the phone
24 call saying what can I do to help the
25 situation out so it doesn't resolve into

1 something that is even worse for our
2 neighborhoods. And so, point definitely
3 noted, something that I will continue to
4 advocate from my lens.

5 And at this time, I want to
6 turn it over to my colleague
7 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
9 you, Mr. Chair.

10 I just wanted to thank Pastor
11 Day for his testimony and for driving
12 home this point that we have to do a
13 better job of supporting the people who
14 are doing this incredibly important work
15 in our communities. I think this work
16 is as important as policing.

17 And so, I know that the
18 Councilmember wants to help us move
19 forward to supporting the community work
20 in a better way and I do too, and I hope
21 we can build an even stronger sentiment
22 around that.

23 And I also wanted to thank you
24 for your work in my community. Thank
25 you for being on 52nd Street during the

1 civil unrest and for talking to young
2 people and for trying to get them home
3 safely. It's much appreciated.

4 PASTOR DAY: You're welcome.
5 Thank you.

6 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
7 Any other questions and comments from
8 members of the Committee?

9 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Councilman
10 Johnson, this is Councilmember Thomas.

11 I just wanted to take a moment
12 to say thank you to Pastor Carl, to you,
13 to all the witnesses, and offer my
14 condolences to the young man who talked
15 having someone shot even here today.
16 This is a serious issue that we're
17 dealing with. And I appreciate
18 everybody who's on the ground doing the
19 work. I'm 100 percent an advocate of
20 putting more dollars and resources in
21 that direction.

22 Councilmember Johnson, I just
23 wanted to say thank you to you before we
24 close out. I appreciate your
25 leadership. I've been on Council now

1 for a little over a year, and often I
2 sit in this Committee hearing
3 specifically, and for the most part I
4 don't say much.

5 I might text you a little
6 something or ask a question here or
7 there. But these hearings are so
8 informative as it relates to where we
9 are and what's going on with gun
10 violence, that I feel like there's
11 nothing else that we do that gives us
12 the information that we collect here
13 today to better equip us so we know what
14 to fight for, whether it's the advocacy
15 pulpit, and advocate the things like the
16 different lists that you ran through at
17 the beginning of the hearing or whether
18 it's actual legislation or fights that
19 we must have during the budget season.

20 So I just wanted to say thank
21 you to everybody who testified. But
22 most importantly, Councilmember Johnson,
23 thank you for your leadership. Because
24 without these Special Committee
25 hearings, I would be lost as it relates

1 to what's going on in the City and why
2 we have the gun violence problem.

3 I think we understand the
4 problem. I think now we're starting to
5 turn the corner as it relates to the
6 conditions that the pandemic created to
7 put us in a position where we can have
8 some solutions, so thank you everybody.

9 Thank you, Councilmember
10 Johnson. I appreciate your leadership.

11 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.
12 Thank you, Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier
13 and the other Councilmembers who decided
14 to stick this day out and really stay on
15 this call. Because at the end of the
16 day, again our children are dying. We
17 host these hearings for transparency and
18 accountability, but most importantly
19 this is where we get some of our best
20 ideas, recommendations and solutions
21 from and listening to the people and
22 giving them a chance to have a say-so.

23 They don't always see the
24 meetings such as Councilwoman Jamie
25 Gauthier and Katherine Gilmore

1 Richardson and I had yesterday about
2 addressing gun violence here in the City
3 of Philadelphia or the other meetings
4 that we have behind the scenes working
5 aggressively around this issue. But
6 nevertheless, the hearings provide
7 transparency and accountability, but
8 most importantly community input in this
9 process.

10 With that being said, we have
11 an individual who we would like to call
12 on for public comment. And then after
13 that, this Committee will be recessed
14 until a follow-up date for a follow-up
15 hearing, which is Part 2 to this hearing
16 where we have City agencies and
17 individuals who would like to also
18 participate and we decided to make it a
19 two-part hearing series.

20 Will the Clerk call the
21 individual for public comment.

22 MR. SMITH: Hello?

23 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

24 THE CLERK: Desmond Smith.

25 MR. SMITH: Hello, everyone.

1 Can y'all hear me okay?

2 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, we
3 can hear you.

4 MR. SMITH: Wonderful. Ladies
5 and gentlemen of the Committee and
6 panel, I appreciate the time you set
7 aside for me. I'm glad to have listened
8 to the entirety of the hearing today
9 starting at 10 o'clock this morning. A
10 lot has been said here today. It's
11 truly been wonderful. I will try to be
12 brief out of respect for everyone's
13 time, especially given that it's the end
14 of the day. Though frankly as I'm sure
15 you've all experienced, it's a
16 challenging thing to try and condense
17 thoughts on this issue, especially to a
18 small amount of time so I will do my
19 best.

20 My name is Desmond Smith. I'm
21 a proud resident of the City of
22 Philadelphia. I'm completely invested
23 emotionally and financially in
24 Philadelphia's future as a resident,
25 citizen and businessman. In a previous

1 life, I was a certified firearms
2 instructor and remained an avid
3 enthusiast.

4 Today I own and restoring
5 90,000 square feet of historic property
6 in Kensington. My neighbors and
7 community mere blocks from the Somerset
8 Station are plagued by gun violence and
9 drug activity, which as you all know
10 seem to go hand and hand.

11 I don't feel the need to
12 recount stories here today, but suffice
13 it to say it seems we're in the
14 epicenter and we all experience the
15 effects of this problem on a regular
16 basis. I do not envy the task before
17 us, before all of you, but we are in it
18 together. I wish to offer my assistance
19 as a citizen of this City in whatever
20 ways I'm able to.

21 In short, it seems to me that a
22 hole has formed in our society which has
23 left the burden and responsibility for
24 teaching morality, social skills and
25 accountability for one's emotions and

1 actions in the hands of it seems the
2 government and some areas of the private
3 sector.

4 In my view, this responsibility
5 traditionally seem and ideally seem to
6 rest with the family and perhaps with
7 the church. But as we all know, we
8 don't live in an ideal world so we must
9 adapt, we must overcome and we must
10 press forward as well as we're all able
11 to. And I feel like what I've heard
12 today is a lot of stories that represent
13 exactly that adaption overcoming and
14 pressing forward.

15 We're here to discuss
16 reasonable ideas for intervention, so I
17 wish to focus solely on voluntary gun
18 buybacks, something that I feel is only
19 one tool in a portfolio of options at
20 our disposal to address a truly multi-
21 faceted problem.

22 Earlier, Ms. Bellamy cited some
23 interesting tools that sounded pretty
24 remarkable in my opinion. If I had to
25 take a second focus, which we don't have

1 time for today, I would choose the
2 societal impacts associated with the
3 extremely high rate of fatherlessness in
4 certain households, but we'll stay on
5 the topic of voluntary buybacks for this
6 hearing for my remaining time.

7 I often find that thinking in
8 terms of basic economics is a helpful
9 exercise, so it's thinking in terms of
10 incentives and unmet needs. I submit to
11 you that perhaps our issue is not how
12 many guns are out there, but why people
13 choose to commit crime and acts of
14 violence with these weapons. It's my
15 belief that we need strong preventative
16 incentives, which reach those people so
17 that they may address their unmet needs,
18 using avenues of our choosing which
19 promote better outcomes for our City.

20 Let's assume, and this perhaps
21 is a big assumption, but let's assume
22 that money is the driving unmet need for
23 a notable portion of these people who
24 commit these crimes. There are other
25 reasons certainly, but let's just stick

1 with money.

2 It seems to me that the
3 potential of voluntary gun buybacks to
4 address this need is rarely fully
5 realized. A 2019 MET analysis from
6 current trauma reports claims that Black
7 men are the most common victims of fatal
8 firearms injury and are mostly
9 perpetuated by members of that same
10 community. Yet as a group, they are
11 some of the least likely to participate
12 in gun buybacks. Why might this be?
13 Philadelphia's most recent buyback
14 program in January of 2021 allow people
15 to turn in a firearm in exchange for a
16 \$100 gift certificate.

17 I feel that this incentive may
18 miss our target audience entirely, so to
19 speak. How so? Is it possible that the
20 buyback prices are so significantly
21 below MSRP and street price for these
22 firearms to therefore offer little to no
23 incentives for this demographic to
24 participate if we assume that a notable
25 portion of these crimes are committed

1 due to lack of money. The cheapest and
2 least desirable handgun on the market --
3 this thing is truly a piece of junk -- a
4 Hi-Point C-9 has an MSRP which is double
5 that at \$200 or about 350 illegally on
6 the streets to my understanding. Even
7 back in the '70s we observed the same
8 pattern. A very common handgun, the
9 Smith & Wesson Model 36, cost \$110 back
10 then.

11 In 1974, one of Baltimore's
12 most widely reported gun buyback
13 programs offered \$50 per firearm, also
14 less than half the MSRP of a very common
15 firearm at that time. For the record, a
16 Model 36 today has an MSRP of \$789. I
17 couldn't tell you what the black market
18 street price is for that one or for a
19 GLOCK 19 or Remington 870. But I assure
20 you it is significantly more than \$100.

21 Now, why is this information
22 important. Imagine an at-risk
23 individual in a desperate situation who
24 may be considering a violent crime with
25 a firearm for the purposes of obtaining

1 more money. It seems reasonable to ask
2 if turning his illegal \$350 Hi-Point C-9
3 for \$100 gift card provides the economic
4 or social incentive to justify his
5 turning away from criminal activity.

6 Please recall that in my
7 opinion these are the people we should
8 be focused on. They are the ones we
9 should strive to incentivize using
10 preventative measures that address their
11 unmet needs directly. Frankly, if this
12 hypothetical individual can avoid
13 getting caught -- and it's a big if, I
14 know -- but if he can avoid getting
15 caught, he may deduce that he's
16 financially better off trying to rob a
17 gas station at gunpoint or sell the gun
18 illegally versus participating in a
19 buyback program.

20 I submit to you at \$100 the
21 incentive is not there for this group.
22 Again, I feel that creating that
23 incentive is an extremely important item
24 for us to focus on if we want our
25 voluntary buyback programs to truly be

1 successful.

2 How do we do this? I believe I
3 have a perspective which may help us
4 consider that question, if I may ask for
5 a little more time if it's not too much
6 trouble for everyone. It seems to me we
7 must rethink Philadelphia's voluntary
8 buyback program to possibly meet or
9 exceed the street value of these
10 weapons, and do so with a mobile unit on
11 wheels constantly stationing itself in
12 the neighborhoods that need it most on a
13 regular basis.

14 To draw a crude comparison, and
15 I'm sorry because it is crude, think of
16 it like an ice cream truck, except
17 instead of selling ice cream, it buys
18 back guns, no questions asked.
19 Certainly --

20 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: All right.
21 Thank you. Sir, you have to get ready
22 and wrap it up if you don't mind. It's
23 beyond the five-minute mark.

24 MR. SMITH: Sure. I appreciate
25 the notice there. Let me say in closing

1 I do thank you for your patience,
2 everyone.

3 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Sure.

4 MR. SMITH: Money is certainly
5 not the only unmet need used to justify
6 crimes of gun violence by the
7 perpetrators, nor should gun buybacks be
8 the only tool at our disposal. There
9 are certainly many causes which require
10 many solutions.

11 What I hope to show in closing
12 is how reframing issues in terms of
13 foundational economic principles,
14 incentives and unmet needs may help us
15 to ask different questions and
16 appreciate complex issues from new
17 perspectives that are fair, reasonable
18 and uphold our constitutional rights.
19 So I sincerely thank you for your time.
20 And however I may be of assistance for
21 this Committee, please do not hesitate
22 to reach out. My best to you all.
23 We're rooting for you, and I thank you
24 again.

25 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: No, we

1 thank you for your insight. I'm one of
2 the Councilmembers that hosted a gun
3 buyback in partnership with the Father's
4 Day Rally and Jeff Brown's Shoprites, so
5 I will definitely take back this
6 information.

7 And just so you know as a point
8 of information, most of the time we know
9 that the guns that are turned in from
10 the gun buybacks aren't from the
11 shooters. But we do know, according to
12 the Philadelphia Police Department,
13 there is a significant amount of
14 firearms that are stolen out of
15 individual houses. And so, we just also
16 make sure that during the gun buyback if
17 there's individuals who have guns just
18 laying guns around their houses, this is
19 an opportunity if they wanted to get rid
20 of them. Not doing anything regarding
21 their constitutional right because they
22 have their own free will and choice to
23 turn in their gun because they don't
24 want to keep it anywhere, this gives
25 them that opportunity.

1 And also, just from my
2 experience a lot of the guns are
3 revolvers. But a 357 can take your life
4 just as well as a 9 mm. A 38 Snub can
5 take the life just as a 45. And so,
6 that's a lot of caliber of the guns that
7 we see that's majority turned in. But
8 we do see some other high-powered
9 weapons turned in as well, which I did
10 see when somebody turned in an AR-15
11 before, a couple of sawed-off shotguns
12 as well as a couple of brand new 45s in
13 cases that I've seen.

14 And I'm going to be honest, a
15 couple of times when I saw people bring
16 in close to brand new guns, it would
17 kind of boggle my mind that they were
18 turning them in, but I couldn't question
19 their choice of turning them in because
20 I guess they felt as though they
21 probably didn't want to have them
22 sitting around their household.

23 I do understand exactly where
24 you're coming from saying that they want
25 to put a value out there in the event

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1 that you're doing a gun buyback, like
2 take that 100 to maybe 250, maybe 500.
3 That's something that's duly noted. But
4 I do want to say thank you for taking
5 time out of your schedule, listening to
6 this conversation and contributing to
7 this conversation and most importantly,
8 this dialogue around action in
9 addressing senseless gun violence here
10 in the City of Philadelphia. So thank
11 you very much.

12 MR. SMITH: Thank you. I
13 appreciate that very much.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: All right.
15 Take care.

16 And so, any other questions or
17 comments from members of the Committee?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Anyone
20 else here to comment from the public?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
23 With that being said, this concludes the
24 Special Committee on Gun Violence. This
25 hearing will be recessed until Friday,

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1 April 16th at 9:00 a.m. Thank you
2 everybody for taking time out of your
3 schedule and being here on this very
4 important critical call.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

6 RICHARDSON: Mr. Chair, thank you so
7 much.

8 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
9 Mr. Chair.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're
11 welcome. Thank you.

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Great job.
13 Thank you.

14 (Special Committee on Gun
15 Violence Prevention concluded at
16 6:05 p.m.)

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

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

TANEHA C. CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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

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