

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, December 4, 2024
10:25 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON,
VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN QUETCY M. LOZADA
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS
COUNCILMAN JEFFREY YOUNG, JR.

BILL: 241084

1 - - -

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: We
3 have a quorum for Appropriations
4 and we are recessing it until
5 11:00 a.m. Thank you.

6 (Recess.)

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
8 Good morning. Good morning,
9 everyone. Thank you for your
10 patience. Welcome to the hearing
11 for the Committee on
12 Appropriations. I know the hour
13 has come and a quorum of the
14 Committee is present.

15 To my left,
16 Councilmember Lozada, Councilmember
17 Gauthier, Councilmember Gilmore
18 Richardson. To my right,
19 Councilmember O'Neill,
20 Councilmember Thomas and
21 Councilmember Bass. A quorum of
22 the Committee is present. The
23 hearing is now call to order. This
24 is the public hearing of the

1 Committee on Appropriations

2 regarding Bill No. 241084.

3 Mr. McMonagle, please

4 read the title of the bill.

5 THE CLERK: Bill No.

6 241084, authorizing transfers and

7 appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024

8 from the General Fund, from certain

9 or all City offices, departments,

10 boards and commissions, the Water

11 Fund from certain or all City

12 offices, departments, boards and

13 commissions, the Grants Revenue

14 Fund from certain or all City

15 offices departments, boards and

16 commissions and the Transportation

17 Fund from certain or all City

18 offices, departments, boards and

19 commissions, to the General Fund to

20 certain or all City offices

21 departments boards and commissions,

22 to the Water Fund to certain or all

23 City offices, departments, boards

24 and commissions, and to the

1 Transportation Fund for certain or
2 all City offices, departments,
3 boards and commissions.

4 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

5 Thank you, Mr. McMonagle.

6 Can you please call the
7 first panel that we have to testify
8 for Bill No. 241084.

9 THE CLERK: Yes. Can we
10 please have Sabrina Maynard.

11 (Witness approached
12 Witness table.)

13 MS. MAYNARD: Good
14 morning.

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
16 Good morning, Sabrina. State your
17 name for the record and then you
18 can proceed.

19 MS. MAYNARD: Yes. Good
20 morning, everyone. I'm Sabrina
21 Maynard, the City's Budget
22 Director. Good morning, Chair
23 Squilla and members of the
24 Appropriations Committee. I'm here

1 to testify in support of the Fiscal
2 Year 2024 Year-end Transfer
3 ordinance. You've also received
4 written testimony from each
5 department with a request in the
6 Transfer ordinance and
7 representatives of those offices
8 are also in attendance today.

9 The annual Year-end
10 ordinance is a routine ordinance we
11 transmit each year during the fall.
12 It is necessary for our financial
13 statements and is intended to make
14 sure that our final appropriations
15 for last fiscal year align with
16 last year's obligations. Most of
17 the items in the ordinance are for
18 departments that went slightly over
19 their FY24 personnel budgets.

20 The FY24 Year-End
21 Transfer Ordinance bill proposes
22 transferring appropriations within
23 and between the General Fund, Water
24 Fund and Transportation Fund. You

1 have my written testimony outlining
2 each department's request. I thank
3 you for the opportunity to testify
4 and we would be happy to take any
5 questions the Committee may have.

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

7 Thank you, Sabrina. Could you just
8 explain real quick the process in
9 which the cleanup is happening for
10 money that was spent in the
11 previous budget?

12 MS. MAYNARD: Yep. So
13 typically these are departments
14 that have gone over their personnel
15 budgets. Some examples are some
16 higher overtime, folks that
17 transfer kind of on-and-off grants
18 or between funds, so there were
19 some small adjustments, higher
20 costs for temps, to process
21 appeals. So these are sort of
22 routine Class 100 adjustments
23 across the board for a couple of
24 departments in FY24 for a net

1 impact of about \$10 million.

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

3 Councilmember Thomas.

4 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
5 morning. Question: So looking at
6 what the Admin is requesting today
7 and thinking about some of the
8 fiscal commitments that have been
9 made in the past, what puts us in a
10 position where we should consider
11 approving yet another request from
12 the Admin when we've had fiscal
13 commitments that still haven't been
14 met yet as it relates to previous
15 budgets, previous Appropriation
16 Committee hearings and other
17 agreements that we've had?

18 MS. MAYNARD: So this is
19 something that -- so these are all
20 things that have happened in FY24.
21 They've been completed. I'm not
22 sure which items you're referring
23 to, but we're happy to work with
24 your office if there are items that

1 are unaddressed.

2 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
3 if you knew that you had to come
4 before us to make sure that this
5 cleanup happened in order to put us
6 in a position to keep the City
7 fiscally stable and keep our
8 finances and our bond rating in
9 good status, why would you wait
10 until this late in the process to
11 come to us to ask us to approve
12 this request while simultaneously
13 not meeting other commitments that
14 you've discussed with this
15 Committee and other members of this
16 body?

17 MS. MAYNARD: So I'm not
18 sure what commitments you're
19 referring to. Happy to -- if you
20 have a list, happy to work through
21 them. This is a routine ordinance.
22 We do this every fall. This is the
23 same timeline we typically have
24 where we come back in the fall for

1 the things as we close our prior
2 yearbook items that have
3 overdrafts.

4 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

5 Sure. I've been on the
6 Appropriations Committee for a
7 couple years now so I'm aware of
8 the process and what we do as it
9 relates to systemically assuring
10 that the economics of the City stay
11 in a stable and responsible way.
12 But I think what we're seeing right
13 now is a situation where again if I
14 heard you correctly, you said that
15 you would be willing to work with
16 us based on other fiscal
17 commitments that have happened in
18 the past.

19 Is that you, yourself,
20 or are you speaking on behalf of
21 the Admin? Because if that's the
22 position that you have, we have all
23 of that information actually
24 readily prepared right now and we

1 can get this addressed in the next
2 24 hours, if that's the position of
3 the Admin.

4 MS. MAYNARD: So if
5 there are commitments we've made
6 that we haven't fulfilled, we are
7 happy to look at what they are and
8 work with you.

9 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:
12 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
14 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
15 very much, Mr. Chair.

16 And thank you, Sabrina,
17 not only for the presentation but
18 for the information that's been
19 shared today. My one question is
20 relative to any of the Class 100
21 funds that are now going from
22 Grants Revenue to the General Fund.

23 Could you speak to how
24 much overall in Grants Revenue is

1 going to the General Fund for Class
2 100 and what the specific trends
3 are in that regard over the last
4 several years?

5 MS. MAYNARD: Yes. So
6 pulling up the total, it's
7 mostly -- sorry. Let me get the
8 exact numbers. So most of the
9 transfer sort of driven by a couple
10 of departments, and we pull from
11 the Grants Fund because that's
12 where there's more appropriations,
13 so we can only move appropriations
14 that already exist. I am not good
15 at doing math while I am talking.
16 One second. So we are transferring
17 10 million from the Grants Revenue
18 Fund to other funds. And so,
19 that's split across a couple of
20 different areas.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
22 RICHARDSON: And I think I'm
23 specifically referring to anything
24 that's Class 100 being transferred

1 to the General Fund.

2 MS. MAYNARD: Yes. One
3 second. Okay. So that's largely
4 about \$7 million to Fire; \$700,000
5 to Public Health; \$1.4 million to
6 the Law Department; \$61,000 to
7 Sustainability; \$5800 to the Board
8 of Revision of Taxes. I think
9 those are -- and so, in terms of
10 how that compares to previous
11 years, this is actually a smaller
12 ordinance than we typically have.

13 So in FY23 it was a net
14 impact of about \$20 million. It
15 was larger in FY22. It was smaller
16 in FY21, so it has varied from
17 year-to-year. But this is the
18 smallest in the last six years.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
20 RICHARDSON: Sure. So I think my
21 overarching question that you may
22 not be able to answer fully today
23 is relative to any positions that
24 were originally grant-funded based

1 on additional outside grants
2 revenue that we have received as a
3 City.

4 Once those grants end,
5 how many of those positions and how
6 much does that impact the General
7 Fund for the positions that are not
8 ended but are moved into the
9 General Fund?

10 MS. MAYNARD: Okay.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: And I'm not talking
13 about just for this. I'm going
14 back to the previous Administration
15 because that's during the COVID
16 period, and that was the time we
17 received a number of outside grant
18 opportunities to help the City stay
19 afloat and provide needed and
20 necessary service during the
21 pandemic.

22 My overarching concern
23 is that that practice is continuing
24 as a matter of practice at this

1 point because of what happened
2 during COVID and figuring out how
3 many positions that were grant-
4 funded that should end at the end
5 of the grant but is then
6 transferred into the General Fund.
7 I need to understand and know the
8 impact that is continuing to have
9 on our General Fund.

10 And so, you'll probably
11 have to go back a couple of years
12 under the previous Administration
13 and then let us know how that is
14 sort of happening moving forward.
15 That's the overarch -- it's an
16 overarching question that impacts
17 our General Fund, and how much we
18 have to spend in Class 100 knowing
19 that we still have the vacancy rate
20 where it is and because of that we
21 have to continue to address
22 overtime in a different way. Okay.
23 I need to understand those trends
24 for our budget process.

1 MS. MAYNARD:

2 Understood.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Thank you very much.

5 MS. MAYNARD: Yep.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

9 Thank you.

10 Are there any other

11 questions?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

14 Seeing none, thank you for your

15 testimony.

16 Mr. McMonagle, can you

17 please read the next person to

18 testify.

19 THE CLERK: Can we

20 please have Larry Krasner.

21 (Witnesses approached

22 Witness table.)

23 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

24 Good morning, Larry. Thank you for

1 participating. Just state your
2 name for the record and you could
3 proceed.

4 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

5 KRASNER: Good morning. My name is
6 Larry Krasner. I'm the elected
7 District Attorney for the City and
8 County of Philadelphia. Good
9 morning, everyone. It is a
10 pleasure as always to be here and
11 have the opportunity to speak with
12 you.

13 I do want to make sure
14 even though I don't see him here at
15 the moment that I say good morning
16 as well to Council President
17 Kenyatta Johnson. Obviously, I'm
18 here to answer questions and
19 provide information to all of you,
20 Majority Leader Katherine Gilmore
21 Richardson, Appropriations Chair
22 Mark Squilla and the Council as a
23 whole, including of course
24 Councilmembers O'Neill, Bass,

1 Thomas, Gauthier and Lozada. Thank
2 you so much for the opportunity to
3 speak here.

4 I understand there may
5 be a limited purpose to my
6 testimony. I'm going to try to
7 confine my testimony to about 10
8 minutes. And then to the extent
9 that there are questions, I am more
10 than happy to address any topic
11 that is of concern to all of you.

12 The entire executive
13 team and DAO staff are committed to
14 a balanced comprehensive approach
15 to prioritizing public safety
16 through modern enforcement,
17 violence prevention, intervention,
18 interruption and prevention more
19 generally.

20 While we also understand
21 that while the professional staff
22 and leaders working within
23 government, our law enforcement,
24 our Philadelphia City Council, the

1 DAO and grassroots organizations
2 have worked incredibly hard since
3 the pandemic to reduce gun violence
4 and violent crime statistics. That
5 is no answer to people who have
6 suffered the loss of a family
7 member.

8 There is no amount of
9 data that is going to address that
10 harm and that pain and that of
11 course is why we have to double-
12 down on our efforts at public
13 safety, at prevention and at the
14 things that are in some ways going
15 well.

16 We cannot forget names
17 like Alaysia Smith, a 13-year-old
18 murdered in North Philadelphia;
19 Devin Weedon, Gratz High School
20 student who was murdered last year;
21 Laron Williams, Jr., 12 years old,
22 murdered while riding his bike near
23 his grandmother's house last year
24 and there are so many others. I

1 understand that's a big concept and
2 we are here on nuts and bolts, but
3 it is the nuts and bolts that
4 ultimately make a tremendous
5 difference and hopefully can
6 prevent the loss of another Laron
7 Williams as we move forward
8 together.

9 In order to achieve the
10 aforementioned, our office
11 continues to seek appropriate
12 consequences and accountability for
13 offenders, for bullies, for
14 criminals while simultaneously
15 exonerating innocent people who are
16 sitting in jail in the seat of
17 someone who is guilty. Our efforts
18 to achieve high quality and fair
19 prosecution are supported daily by
20 the Assistant DAs, the Victim
21 Services team, support staff as
22 well as the professional men and
23 women of our law enforcement
24 community assigned to the DA's

1 Office as Philadelphia County
2 detectives and detailed
3 Philadelphia Police Department
4 personnel, these are people who
5 work in our office, they are funded
6 directly and indirectly through our
7 office and they play a very crucial
8 role in all of our efforts at
9 modern enforcement and prevention
10 as well.

11 Our law enforcement
12 staff lead investigations. They
13 provide support to witnesses and
14 survivors in our Relocations
15 program. And I will speak to you
16 in a moment about the cliff that we
17 are facing in terms of funding for
18 relocation of vulnerable victims
19 and witnesses who could be
20 intimidated, could be killed, could
21 be harmed in the course of
22 prosecuting a case or afterwards.

23 These law enforcement
24 personnel provide transportation

1 support to Commonwealth witnesses
2 who are testifying in very complex
3 and sometimes very frightening
4 cases. They provide subpoena
5 services ahead of preliminary
6 hearings, trials and other court
7 proceedings so that we are able to
8 put forward the evidence to meet
9 our burden of proof beyond a
10 reasonable doubt.

11 I do want to thank
12 Philadelphia Police Department and
13 our other law enforcement partners
14 for being true partners, for really
15 doing some pretty wonderful things
16 in terms of collaboration. I would
17 be remiss if I did not personally
18 thank Philadelphia Police
19 Commissioner Kevin Bethel and his
20 executive team for their close
21 collaboration, Philadelphia Sheriff
22 Rochelle Bilal and her team, other
23 local state law enforcement as well
24 as FOP Lodge 5 President Roosevelt

1 Poplar and his executive team who
2 have been wonderful partners in
3 many ways in terms of furthering
4 the interest of their members while
5 simultaneously furthering the
6 interest of all Philadelphians in a
7 city that is safer and freer as we
8 move forward.

9 So I want to thank them
10 again. Needless to say, we have
11 close partnerships in the FBI and
12 the ATF, the DEA and work very
13 effectively with them at times.
14 The little picture is that I'm
15 testifying here today in support of
16 the DAO's request of \$31,200 in
17 Class 300. That is in the General
18 Fund to fully fund uniform clothing
19 allowance costs in the DAO for our
20 men and women who serve with
21 dedication, professionalism and
22 honor. These are personnel who
23 require uniforms at times who are
24 members of the FOP and who, like

1 any other members of the FOP, are
2 in our view very much entitled and
3 deserving of that clothing
4 allowance.

5 That funding is already
6 there as I understand it. It is
7 already in a different class that
8 we are not talking about additional
9 expenditures. We are talking about
10 making sure that it is listed where
11 it should properly be.

12 Additionally as the DA's Office
13 continues to strengthen its
14 partnerships with law enforcement,
15 community and faith-based partners,
16 we stand in solidarity with Council
17 and with this Administration in
18 working to make Philadelphia safer,
19 cleaner, greener with economic
20 opportunity for all.

21 And I do want to
22 sincerely thank members of Council
23 who have heard us and have heard us
24 time and again when we were in

1 severe need. There have been times
2 in the past when the relocation
3 money ran out in the middle of a
4 gun violence crisis and when we
5 came to Council, including
6 Councilmember Curtis Jones who's
7 not here today, when we came and we
8 said we're at a cliff, the money
9 has run out, we have to pay for
10 people to be housed in a place
11 where they can't be found and they
12 can't be harmed, Council has
13 answered time and again, and we are
14 very grateful for the support and
15 partnership we have had from
16 Council going back now a number of
17 years.

18 There are several
19 initiatives that we think can
20 continue to make Philadelphia head
21 in the right direction. As many of
22 you know, while data is not the
23 answer it is a factor and the data,
24 as it exists right now, indicates

1 that Philadelphia may have the
2 lowest number of homicides -- well,
3 let me state it differently. Out
4 of the last 56 years, this may be
5 the third lowest number of
6 homicides in 56 years.

7 I'd like to see it be
8 the first and I really do believe
9 that a city that has at times
10 suffered from chronic violence for
11 a lot of reasons that we all
12 understand could become a city that
13 enjoys continuing ongoing safety at
14 levels with which we are
15 unfamiliar. Obviously, that
16 requires some level of investment,
17 but I want to thank Council again
18 for being willing to see that,
19 being willing to invest in that and
20 being willing to understand that
21 that kind of an investment has
22 consequences for the safety of the
23 public and the freedom of people
24 who should not be in a jail cell.

1 In a spirit of unity,
2 there's a lot of talk about unity.
3 I'm a big believer in unity. I'm
4 trying to get better with unity,
5 but in a spirit of unity I do want
6 to just briefly mention some of the
7 initiatives for which we sought
8 funding earlier and highlight a
9 couple that are really crucial and
10 essential at this time.

11 I will just touch on
12 them. We put in for funding -- and
13 if you want the amounts, I'm happy
14 to provide them, for cleaner and
15 greener enforcement to deal with
16 short-dumping. We put in for a
17 Dangerous Drug Offender Division,
18 which would be going after high-
19 level drug dealers who've been
20 owning corners for generations.

21 We put in for a Cold
22 Case Investigation Unit because
23 there are a lot of cases that are
24 still out there where parents need

1 to know who took the life of their
2 loved one and they're not solved
3 and they can be. There are the
4 means there, but there has to be a
5 willingness to put some people on
6 it to do it full-time in
7 collaboration with law enforcement.

8 Data Gov lab, I won't
9 get into the details, but this is
10 the use of data and criminological
11 expertise with community for the
12 purpose of allowing them to have
13 input on solving the problems that
14 plague their particular
15 neighborhood, strengthening the
16 operations of the Gun Violence Task
17 Force. I don't know that there's
18 anything the DA's Office should be
19 more proud of than the reality that
20 we have been able to point to the
21 elimination of various shooter
22 groups, some of which have been
23 around for a long time. All of the
24 major members taken down. The name

1 itself disappearing.

2 Well, that has been the
3 deep-dive investigative work of the
4 Gun Violence Task Force, which we
5 would love to continue. We put in
6 for a repeat Domestic Violence
7 Offenders Unit. I think that
8 speaks for itself. We put in for a
9 Public Integrity Unit, something at
10 a time when the rich are only
11 getting richer and the poor getting
12 poorer could be very, very
13 important to make sure that our
14 governmental institutions are not
15 pushed in a funny direction.

16 And now, if I may
17 highlight the cliff. We also put
18 in for additional funding for the
19 DAO's Relocation Unit. The reason
20 for this is very simple. When you
21 have terrible levels of gun
22 violence as we had a few years ago,
23 those cases don't get tried 10
24 minutes later. They often get

1 tried two and three years later.
2 And the people who are willing to
3 come forward as victims or as
4 witnesses have to be protected and
5 they have to be protected moving
6 forward.

7 At this point, what we
8 need is \$740,000 in additional
9 funding. If we do not get it, we
10 will not -- and understand we don't
11 get that money. Okay. This is a
12 passthrough. The money comes to us
13 and it goes out the door. It goes
14 to pay for hotels. It goes to pay
15 for relocation. It goes to pay all
16 the expenses to keep people safe so
17 they're not killed, so they're not
18 harmed before they can come to
19 court. That is a cliff that needs
20 to be addressed.

21 And as I said, I have
22 every confidence that this
23 Administration at all levels deeply
24 cares about that. But I would be

1 remiss if I did not bring that to
2 your attention. We have more
3 specifics on that should you want
4 it.

5 Just a couple more quick
6 references. There's no doubt in my
7 mind we have assembled the finest
8 bunch of attorneys that I have ever
9 seen in the Philadelphia District
10 Attorney's Office and I've been at
11 this 37 years. There are some
12 remarkable people here, people who
13 are making a huge sacrifice and
14 have other opportunities all day
15 every day.

16 We put in for equitable
17 increases for them because it is
18 devastating to a family when they
19 have lost a loved one and they
20 start out with a very capable
21 attentive prosecutor who leaves for
22 lack of proper funding. And then
23 that one is replaced by another
24 attentive and capable prosecutor,

1 someone we've invested in for years
2 to train them up and they leave.
3 And now, you have a family that two
4 or three years in is on their third
5 capable, attentive prosecutor. We
6 need that support because it makes
7 all the difference in the world, as
8 I'm sure you know, to have staff
9 that is top shelf, that is super
10 capable, that is trained up, that
11 has fire in the belly, that is
12 there to do the right thing.

13 And finally, I do want
14 to let you know that there is
15 necessary funding to support
16 technology. This is because we are
17 moving into the future. We are at
18 the point where a lot -- we are no
19 longer dealing with typewriters and
20 pieces of paper when it comes to
21 discovery from the police
22 department. We have body-worn
23 cameras which provide a wealth, but
24 a very time-consuming wealth, of

1 information and evidence.

2 We have everything
3 passing electronically, basically
4 everything from the police to us,
5 and soon enough it may even be
6 passing to the courts. Other
7 cities have done this. It saves a
8 tremendous amount of money in the
9 long run. It makes these cases
10 much easier to get to the finish
11 line, but we have actually been
12 defunded for some of our technology
13 at a time when we cannot afford
14 that refunding. And so, we have
15 put in for those requests.

16 I thank you kindly for
17 listening to me. I almost kept
18 within 10 minutes. And if there
19 are any questions, I'm happy to
20 address them along with my team,
21 which includes Bob Listenbee, First
22 Assistant, Jen Lin, Chief of Staff
23 and we have a whole football team
24 of heavy players over here. Yes,

1 sir.

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

3 Thank you. Thank you, Larry, for
4 your testimony. I see the request
5 for relocation would be around
6 \$740,000?

7 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

8 KRASNER: Yes.

9 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And
10 then what was the technology
11 request?

12 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

13 KRASNER: The technology request
14 that we put in was for \$550,000.
15 This is recurring with annual
16 increases. I can get into the
17 details if you are interested.

18 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And
19 that would be for next year's
20 budget?

21 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

22 KRASNER: This is money we put in
23 for this year. And we were --
24 okay. The FY25 request is 655.

1 The request that we made earlier I
2 understand to be 555 -- oh, I'm
3 sorry. There's another \$100,000
4 request for equipment, so it's a
5 total of 650.

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

7 Okay. So that would be for like
8 the mid-year?

9 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

10 KRASNER: Yes.

11 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

12 Right. So you didn't spend it yet
13 for that?

14 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

15 KRASNER: Correct.

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

17 Okay. All right. Thank you.

18 Councilmember Gauthier.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21 Good morning, District

22 Attorney Krasner, Bob and the whole
23 team. Thank you for being here.

24 Thank you for your good work,

1 especially with the Gun Violence
2 Task Force. When I think about
3 everything that we've gone through
4 as a city over the past few years
5 and the record amounts of gun
6 violence that we experience, it's
7 hard to believe sometimes, but I
8 think the Gun Violence Task Force's
9 work is something that we should
10 lift up and be very proud of as a
11 city.

12 I started in Council in
13 2020 and it coincided with this
14 dramatic increase in gun violence
15 and we were just seeing street
16 group violence all across West and
17 Southwest Philadelphia, but you all
18 have systematically destabilized
19 these groups or ended these street
20 groups. And it's just a very
21 efficient use of our City's
22 resources in terms of focusing on
23 the most dangerous, the small
24 handful of very dangerous people

1 that have been causing and wreaking
2 havoc in West and Southwest
3 Philadelphia and across the city,
4 so I just wanted to commend you for
5 that.

6 I also wanted to focus a
7 little bit on relocation. I know
8 my office has received calls,
9 especially during the pandemic, of
10 people who were just terrified,
11 right, terrified because they've
12 witnessed something and they want
13 to get to safety. And I can't
14 imagine being in that situation
15 myself and we've also experienced
16 in my office when relocations
17 couldn't happen for various reasons
18 to disastrous consequences.

19 So I wanted you to talk
20 a little bit, especially about the
21 City money and the difference
22 between the City relocation money
23 that you get and the other more
24 restrictive funding just to put

1 more of a point on why this is so
2 critical.

3 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

4 KRASNER: Thank you, Councilmember
5 Gauthier. Let me just say two
6 sentences and then First Assistant
7 Listenbee is going to get into a
8 little bit of the specifics on
9 this.

10 So please understand
11 that Council did a remarkable thing
12 a few years ago when they said we
13 have to do more than simply deal
14 with the flow-through funding, the
15 state funding. The issue with a
16 lot of state funding is it has a
17 whole bunch of criteria that have
18 to be met. They're not always met.
19 They're hard to meet in a time-
20 sensitive manner and when lives are
21 on the line, you got to move. So
22 Council recognized that a few years
23 ago to their credit.

24 And there are times as

1 much as possible we're going to use
2 that other funding, but there are
3 times when we got to move now, and
4 we got to do something right now
5 because public safety requires it,
6 the integrity of our court process
7 requires it. And that is why the
8 City money is so crucial because it
9 comes without the handcuffs. It
10 comes with a more general ability
11 to use it. I will now defer to
12 First Assistant Listenbee.

13 MR. LISTENBEE:
14 Councilmember Gauthier, it's a
15 pleasure to be here and I'm going
16 to try and address your questions.
17 But if you have other questions,
18 please feel free to ask them. Each
19 year we receive funds from the
20 Attorney General's Office. Those
21 funds have certain parameters.

22 The basic parameters are
23 a participant must testify or agree
24 to testify in a specific

1 prosecution within Commonwealth
2 courts; there must be an
3 affirmative referral from a law
4 enforcement agency or from one of
5 our staff people; the participant
6 must be a victim of a real or
7 potential intimidation harassment
8 or harm because of their witness
9 status; and finally, the criminal
10 status background of a witness or
11 household member may negate their
12 eligibility, which is often a
13 problem or issue that we come up
14 with.

15 For Fiscal Year 2023 we
16 received approximately \$612,000
17 from the state that we expended for
18 those purposes within that narrow
19 criteria. For City funds we have a
20 little more flexibility. We still
21 require that the participant must
22 be a victim or co-victim or witness
23 of a violent crime, participant
24 must meet the criteria of the PA

1 State Attorney General. And if
2 they don't and there's some
3 specific reason they don't, we
4 still embrace them with an effort
5 to try and help them.

6 The challenges that we
7 faced have been numerous. We've
8 often found that there's not only
9 the victim but also the co-survivor
10 in the family. Sometimes a parent,
11 sometimes a child, and we've been
12 involved in relocating them on a
13 short-term basis, and that
14 typically lasts two to three
15 months. And then for a longer term
16 basis, completely to a different
17 location in the city or outside the
18 city, sometimes within the three-
19 state area, and we've done that as
20 critically and vigilantly as we
21 could.

22 We found that we needed
23 to have our executive team work
24 very closely with our relocation

1 team. So for the last six months
2 on a weekly basis we've met with
3 our Relocation team to examine all
4 the critical cases and try and
5 address each one of the problems
6 that's come up and they have been
7 numerous.

8 And sometimes we find
9 that we may have solved a problem
10 temporarily and we thought it was
11 over and then a person comes back
12 to us and we have to work with them
13 quickly to get them relocated to a
14 new location. Sometimes the
15 witnesses agree to testify, we
16 relocate them and they're not able
17 to testify for one reason or
18 another.

19 Sometimes the defendants
20 get out and we're back where we
21 started all over again. So we try
22 and react very quickly. We try and
23 address these problems with a great
24 deal of compassion and empathy.

1 We've in addition recently added a
2 DA's detective to the team that
3 goes out to where our participants
4 are located to make sure that
5 they're doing well on a regular
6 basis. Sometimes there are
7 problems with the hotels. There's
8 problems with the locations where
9 we send people, and we now have
10 that DA detective that goes out and
11 tries to help out.

12 Even with all those
13 measures, even with a lot of
14 attention, even with a lot of phone
15 calls, even with tremendous effort
16 both from our part of the effort
17 within the DA's Office and from
18 City agencies that assist us, we
19 still find that there are problems
20 with the issues. We come back and
21 we still work on them as best we
22 can.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER:

24 Thank you.

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

3 Thank you.

4 Councilmember Bass.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

6 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 This is somewhat

8 related, much more unrelated but I

9 wanted to put on the record and ask

10 you, Mr. DA, as we move forward

11 about a few homicides, and we've

12 talked about them before and I'd

13 like to see if there's any updates

14 on these. And they were the

15 homicides of 13-year-old Jeremiah

16 Wilcox in my District in 2022;

17 15-year-old Devin Weedon in my

18 District in 2023; 17-year-old

19 Dayemen Taylor in 2024; and also

20 27-year-old Kymere Carlton, which

21 we've talked about extensively who

22 was a City Council employee and a

23 father of three.

24 The three teenagers that

1 we had discussed before, each of
2 them were either on their way from
3 school to school or hanging out
4 with schoolmates. And so, I think
5 it's a wonderful thing, obviously
6 as we all do, that homicides are
7 down. We are all very much
8 grateful for the work that everyone
9 is putting in, including the
10 Philadelphia Police Department,
11 your office and so many others in
12 reducing violent crime in our city.

13 But for those who have
14 lost loved ones, and this is
15 obviously just a very small
16 sampling of unsolved cases, but
17 those who have lost loved ones
18 would really like to hear something
19 about these cases. So we've
20 discussed them before. When I see
21 you in the future, I'm going to
22 discuss them again. And I'm
23 wondering if there's anything at
24 all that you can report to us

1 today.

2 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

3 KRASNER: Well, thank you for your
4 question, Councilmember. And I
5 truly appreciate your diligence on
6 behalf of your constituents who
7 have suffered losses and are
8 looking for some sliver of justice
9 from the criminal justice system.

10 As for the Wilcox,
11 Weedon, Taylor cases, I did not
12 come prepared with a lot of
13 details, but if you allow me just a
14 moment to speak to our Chief of
15 Homicide Non-fatal Shootings.
16 Ordinarily, these are very active
17 investigations where our office is
18 consulted with some frequency by
19 the Philadelphia police, but let me
20 see if I can get you any update
21 there.

22 As for the fourth case,
23 I'm not aware of any new
24 developments in that case. We

1 remain open. If there is any new
2 evidence, we remain open to
3 reconsidering that. As you know,
4 the statute of limitations for
5 homicide is the entire life of the
6 defendant.

7 So I don't want anyone
8 to think that the door is closed
9 with reference to these cases. And
10 if you'll allow me just a moment to
11 check in with my Chief of Homicide
12 Non-fatal Shootings Unit who works
13 closely and regularly with
14 Philadelphia police, perhaps I can
15 give you a little more insight on
16 Wilcox, Weedon and Taylor.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

18 Thank you.

19 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

20 KRASNER: Councilmember, I just had
21 the opportunity to speak to ADA
22 Joanne Pescatore, who is our
23 Homicide Non-fatal Shootings Chief.
24 She says that she doesn't have

1 updates with her at this time. She
2 will check later today and get you
3 information before the end of the
4 day with reference to those three
5 cases.

6 I will say this though.
7 I think you have highlighted a
8 really important issue which is
9 that there is a feeling among many
10 people that cases get cold and then
11 they get closed and I think that's
12 terrible. I think that is
13 terrible. I think it is very, very
14 encouraging to family members who
15 have lost a loved one and who in
16 general, and I don't say this to be
17 critical of this city because it's
18 true all over the country, but in
19 general half or more than half of
20 homicides are never solved. There
21 is never an arrest. And the
22 ability that we have now with phone
23 technology, with DNA, with other
24 techniques to solve cold cases is

1 remarkable.

2 I'll just bring one to
3 your attention. This was someone
4 who got away with this crime for
5 about 30 years and his crime was
6 the strangulation, rape, murder of
7 a 30-year-old medical student.
8 Well, with the help of the FBI that
9 man is now in custody. He's
10 charged with that crime, he's also
11 charged with multiple unsolved
12 attempted rapes and that is the
13 consequence of improvements in DNA
14 and the willingness of the FBI to
15 work with us and work with the
16 Philadelphia police to solve that.

17 We would love to see
18 more than that. I think it's
19 awful, it is awful to have to say
20 that in the United States with all
21 of our collective efforts half or
22 more than half of homicides
23 ordinarily nationally don't get
24 solved. I think that's terrible.

1 So that is part of the reason that
2 we were seeking funding to have a
3 Cold Case Unit that would try to
4 take new technology, new techniques
5 and solve some of these older
6 cases. I truly share that concern
7 with all of you.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

9 Well, thank you, Mr. District
10 Attorney. I do want to just add to
11 that, that cases involving -- you
12 know, it's interesting. I was
13 looking at this morning about a
14 homicide in New York City of an
15 executive and the amount of sort of
16 like national attention that it
17 got.

18 And so, it's real when
19 we say that depending on who you
20 are, the level of urgency changes.
21 It's not equally placed. And so,
22 while I'm grateful that your
23 office, the police department, the
24 FBI were able to solve a 30-year-

1 old cold case and bring justice to
2 the family and for this victim, I
3 also know that when it comes to
4 particularly young African American
5 boys and men, there is not the same
6 level of priority or attention to
7 those cases as there are to others.

8 So I just want to again
9 call their names out, bring up the
10 conversation around them and we'll
11 have this conversation again in the
12 future. And I'm hopeful that at
13 some point we'll be able to stop
14 having this conversation because
15 we'll be able to have apprehended
16 and brought justice to those
17 families as well.

18 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19 DISTRICT ATTORNEY

20 KRASNER: Thank you so much for
21 your question. I completely share
22 your concern.

23 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

24 Thank you. Thank you,

1 Councilmember.

2 Are there any other
3 questions for this witness?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA:

6 Seeing none, thank you so much for
7 your testimony.

8 We heard from all -- is
9 there anybody else here to
10 testify -- oh, also recognizing
11 Councilmember Young is here for the
12 hearing.

13 Is there anyone else
14 here to testify on Bill No. 241084?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: So
17 right now we will not go into a
18 public committee meeting. We will
19 adjourn the hearing until
20 Wednesday, 12/11/24 at 3:30 p.m.

21 Thank you. Recess the hearing
22 until Wednesday, 12/11/24 at
23 3:30 p.m. Thank you.

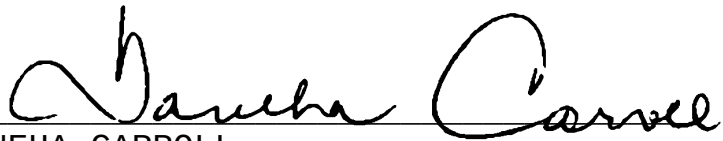
24 (Committee on

1 Appropriations concluded at
2 11:56 a.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 that this is a
correct transcript of the same.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Taneha Carroll". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Taneha" and the last name "Carroll" clearly distinguishable.

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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