

Committee on The Environment
April 17, 2017

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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, April 17, 2017
1:15 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE PARKER
COUNCILMAN AL TAUBENBERGER

RESOLUTION 161075 - Resolution authorizing the
Committee on the Environment to hold hearings
regarding adoption and achievement of a "zero
waste" goal for the City of Philadelphia.

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1
2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
3 afternoon. We're going to start our
4 hearing.

5 And once again I want to say
6 good afternoon. My name is Councilwoman
7 Cindy Bass. I'm the Vice Chair of the
8 Committee on the Environment. The City
9 Council Committee on the Environment is
10 now in a public hearing to hear testimony
11 on Resolution No. 161075. And we want to
12 thank everyone who has stepped away from
13 their office, from work to join us here
14 today.

15 We do have the presence of a
16 quorum. We have Councilman Derek Green,
17 Councilman Bobby Henon, Councilwoman
18 Cherelle Parker. And we want to
19 acknowledge Councilman Green for remarks
20 as the primary sponsor of this
21 resolution.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
23 Chairwoman Bass.

24 I just wanted to just open this
25 hearing up in reference to this whole

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2 concept of zero waste, which is a
3 laudable goal.

4 In the current environment that
5 we have here in the City and seeing some
6 of the things that we've been impacted by
7 at the federal level, it's unfortunate
8 that some of the things that have
9 transpired federally in reference to the
10 environment and some of the activity that
11 we're trying to do to reduce and address
12 the issues that impact our climate,
13 impact our city and our state and our
14 country.

15 However, at the local level,
16 I'm glad to see that the Administration
17 is moving forward with their perspective
18 in reference to zero waste. These
19 hearings are a way to continue that
20 conversation, how we can do all that we
21 can to make sustainability something that
22 we all think about in a regular way and
23 how we can reduce what we do that impact
24 the climate, impact our city, and impact
25 our nation.

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2 So I'm glad to be here and glad
3 to have this conversation. I look
4 forward to working with all of the
5 witnesses and the Administration on this
6 very important issue and bringing this
7 concept to the forefront so people have a
8 much more cognizant perspective on how
9 these things impact us on a day-to-day
10 basis.

11 Thank you.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And thank
13 you, Councilman.

14 And we'll now ask the Clerk to
15 read the title of Resolution No. 161075.

16 THE CLERK: Resolution No.
17 161075, resolution authorizing the
18 Committee on the Environment to hold
19 hearings regarding adoption and
20 achievement of a "zero waste" goal for
21 the City of Philadelphia.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
23 very much. And can we now have the Clerk
24 identify and call up the first panel to
25 testify on this resolution.

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2 THE CLERK: Panel No. 1, Nic
3 Esposito, Director of the Zero Waste and
4 Litter Cabinet; Commissioner Carlton
5 Williams; and Ms. Linda Knapp, Chair of
6 the Food Policy Advisory Council.

7 (Witnesses approached witness
8 table.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. And
10 thank you for being here today. If you
11 want to state your name for the record
12 and begin your testimony.

13 MR. ESPOSITO: Thank you. My
14 name is Nic Esposito and I am the Zero
15 Waste and Litter Cabinet Director for the
16 City of Philadelphia.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Can you
18 pull the mic a little closer, please.

19 MR. ESPOSITO: Thank you.

20 So thank you and good
21 afternoon. Thank you, Chairwoman Bass
22 and the members of the Committee. Again,
23 my name is Nic Esposito and I am the
24 Director of the Zero Waste and Litter
25 Cabinet in the Managing Director's

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2 Office, and I'm here to offer testimony
3 for Resolution No. 161075 regarding
4 adoption and achievement of the zero
5 waste goal.

6 The Zero Waste and Litter
7 Cabinet, created through Executive Order
8 13-16 signed by Mayor Kenney on December
9 20th, 2016, is an interdepartmental
10 effort to increase the waste diversion
11 rate toward a long-term goal of zero
12 waste entering landfills or convention
13 incinerators, combat litter, and enhance
14 the cleanliness of streets and public
15 spaces. The Cabinet is chaired by
16 Managing Director Michael DiBerardinis
17 and Deputy Managing Director for
18 Transportation and Infrastructure Michael
19 Carroll. Along with the operating
20 departments represented by the Managing
21 Director and Deputy Managing Director,
22 the Cabinet also includes representatives
23 from Philadelphia City Council, Planning
24 and Development, the Commerce Department,
25 SEPTA, the District Attorney's Office,

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2 PennDOT, the School District of
3 Philadelphia, and seven community and
4 private sector seats.

5 The creation of the Cabinet was
6 inspired by two very distinct and
7 important components. The first was the
8 very specific anti-litter language in
9 Mayor Kenney's transition report. As per
10 the transition report section directly
11 related to the Environment Committee,
12 Mayor Kenney made a pledge to create the
13 Cabinet and declared "addressing litter
14 will ensure that every neighborhood has
15 litter-free parks, streets, rivers, and
16 streams, while making Philadelphia a more
17 beautiful place to live, work, and
18 visit." The report also included a goal
19 of an expanded litter index, which I'm
20 happy to report is also underway.

21 The second component is the
22 City's Greenworks Plan, which states in
23 Vision 7 that "Greenworks visions a
24 sustainable city where Philadelphians
25 waste less and keep our neighborhoods

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2 clean." This vision also had very
3 specific language recommending that
4 Philadelphia follow in the footsteps of
5 cities such as Los Angeles, New York,
6 Atlanta, Dallas, San Francisco, and
7 dozens of other larger and smaller cities
8 to adopt a zero waste goal, and we are
9 proud that through Executive Order 13-16,
10 Philadelphia now joins those cities in
11 finding a sustainable future for waste
12 management.

13 So what is a zero waste goal?
14 As it is defined by other cities and the
15 larger waste management industry,
16 including this definition from the
17 Grassroots Recycling Network, zero waste
18 is a philosophy and a design principle
19 for the 21st century. It includes
20 recycling, but goes beyond recycling by
21 taking a whole system approach to the
22 vast flow of resources and waste through
23 human society. Zero waste maximizes
24 recycling, minimizes waste, reduces
25 consumption, and ensures that products

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2 are made to be reused, repaired or
3 recycled back into nature or the
4 marketplace. Zero waste designation is
5 currently given for 90 percent diversion
6 of waste from landfills.

7 Although I personally feel that
8 this a very thorough and aspirational
9 definition, we as a Cabinet feel that due
10 to the unique conditions of Philadelphia,
11 specifically the age of our
12 infrastructure, the density of our
13 housing, our economic conditions, and our
14 Pennsylvania state laws, which differ
15 from states such as California and New
16 York that have crafted legislation for
17 zero waste inspired waste reduction
18 goals, such as urban composting permits,
19 we as a Cabinet needed to create a
20 uniquely Philadelphia definition of zero
21 waste that takes into account our
22 specific city conditions while at the
23 same time follows national and industry
24 best practices.

25 Aside from the breadth of

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2 experience and expertise of Cabinet
3 members in making upgrades and
4 improvements to critical institutions,
5 infrastructure and government services,
6 the Cabinet also works closely with the
7 Solid Waste Recycling and Advisory
8 Committee, or SWRAC. This committee is
9 convened by the Streets Department as per
10 the state-mandated Act 101 to assist in
11 crafting the Municipal Solid Waste Plan,
12 a requirement for all municipalities in
13 Pennsylvania to report every ten years.
14 SWRAC also contains many industry and
15 municipal experts, some of whom you may
16 hear from today.

17 In the spirit of collaboration
18 that has been the hallmark of the Cabinet
19 thus far, the Cabinet has coordinated the
20 SWRAC for helping define zero waste for
21 Philadelphia. I would also like to take
22 a moment to recognize Streets Department
23 Commissioner Carlton Williams, who you'll
24 hear from momentarily. An aspirational
25 goal like zero waste is nothing more than

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2 a good idea without the will to
3 operationalize and achieve that goal, and
4 I must say that with Commissioner
5 Williams' leadership, Philadelphia has
6 the potential to lead the way among major
7 cities in the United States in tackling
8 these waste and litter problems.

9 Thanks, my friend.

10 So what does a Philadelphia
11 zero waste plan look like? Although our
12 City's zero waste definition is still
13 being developed by the Cabinet and the
14 final version will be included in the
15 Cabinet's final plan due to Mayor Kenney
16 on July 1st, I would like to point out a
17 few preliminary highlights.

18 The first is that there is
19 currently a large debate in waste
20 management circles as to how to actually
21 calculate the diversion rate of 90
22 percent. A diversion rate measures the
23 total tonnage of all waste produced in
24 the City. An example, materials that go
25 into the landfill and all materials

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2 diverted through methods such as
3 residential, commercial, and industrial
4 recycling and/or composting. Diversion
5 is calculated by dividing the total
6 tonnage of all waste by the amount
7 diverted.

8 When it comes to diversion,
9 it's possible to use general numbers like
10 the landfill, single-stream recycling,
11 and compost, should our city have those
12 capabilities, but we are currently
13 attempting to dig deeper into what an
14 actual diversion rate can be by
15 considering not only the single-stream
16 recycling, both residential and
17 commercial, or industrial construction
18 and demolition recycling, but also other
19 non-single stream recycling facilities
20 such as e-waste, universal waste, which
21 is light bulbs and batteries, and white
22 metals, appliances and textiles, et
23 cetera.

24 We are also exploring organics
25 processing facilities such as food waste

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2 and yard waste that can be composted in
3 traditional outdoor facilities as well as
4 through processes such as anaerobic
5 digestion currently used by the Water
6 Department that rely on microorganisms in
7 controlled indoor facilities to break
8 down organics waste from sources such as
9 garbage disposals. Although many cities
10 such as New York, San Francisco, and
11 Minneapolis are ahead of Philadelphia in
12 terms of composting, the Streets
13 Department is currently conducting an
14 organics feasibility study to understand
15 our capacity for composting all types of
16 biodegradable materials here in
17 Philadelphia and throughout the region.
18 And I would like to point out that
19 Philadelphia was actually one of the
20 first major cities in the United States
21 to provide curbside organics collections
22 in the 1980s with collected kitchen
23 scraps that went to the pig farmers in
24 New Jersey.

25 However, the most sustainable

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2 waste management practice is not wasting
3 in the first place. We plan to include
4 food recovery and clothing recovery in
5 our calculation of our diversion rate.
6 With so many opportunities for donating
7 clothing in the City and organizations
8 such as Philabundance that recovered
9 almost 17 million pounds of food last
10 year, we are focusing our goals and
11 metrics on the most comprehensive
12 interpretation of a diversion rate.

13 But even with this
14 comprehensive and well-planned view of
15 how we are assessing the materials we
16 divert, one pitfall of basing a zero
17 waste goal on 90 percent diversion is
18 that the numbers can be skewed by heavy
19 recycling materials such as construction
20 and demolition materials. We can learn
21 from the experience of other cities as we
22 create our system for tracking our
23 progress toward zero waste while pushing
24 the bar higher. The people working on
25 Philly's zero waste plan are creating

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2 what I think is one of the most
3 progressive goals in the country, and
4 that goal is that along with our
5 comprehensive approach of diversion
6 tracking, we will completely be able to
7 phase out the use of landfills and
8 conventional incinerators by 2035.

9 Achieving this goal will
10 require much coordination and planning by
11 the City and our private sector partners.
12 It will also take much national and even
13 international advocacy by the zero waste
14 cities to force manufacturing markets to
15 respond to consumer demand for more
16 compostable and recyclable packaging and
17 products. But due to the current market
18 forces for the foreseeable future, we
19 will have the need to dispose of a
20 portion of our materials, which we hope
21 to accomplish by utilizing our
22 waste-to-energy capabilities in the City
23 and region. Waste Management currently
24 operates the SpecFuel plant in the
25 Northeast, which turns certain waste into

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2 fuel pellets that can be burned like
3 coal. We also have the Covanta plant in
4 Chester, which converts a much larger
5 variety of waste into electric energy.

6 However, we are cognizant of
7 the environmental impact of
8 waste-to-energy such as greenhouse gases
9 and the possibility of overreliance on
10 this technology that could inhibit our
11 society from creating truly recyclable
12 and biodegradable products. While we
13 will rely on waste-to-energy as part of
14 our strategy over the next few decades,
15 the goal of the zero waste definition
16 that we hope to achieve by 2035 is for a
17 cap on the percentage of our materials
18 that go to waste-to-energy, which will
19 most likely be 10 percent of materials,
20 leaving intact the industry standard of
21 90 percent diversion rate goal. We feel
22 that this rationale takes into
23 consideration the current conditions of
24 our waste stream ceiling on recyclables
25 and biodegradable materials while also

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2 holding us to a high standard on
3 environmental stewardship and social
4 responsibility.

5 In closing, our ultimate goal
6 for this work is to educate and inspire
7 Philadelphia to no longer consider what
8 we throw in the trash as waste, but
9 rather as a resource that is valuable to
10 our society. It's my opinion that for
11 too long we have taken our sanitation and
12 waste systems for granted, and the work
13 of the Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet is
14 to connect everyone back to how they can
15 do their part in making Philadelphia, as
16 Mayor Kenney said, a more beautiful place
17 to live, work, and visit.

18 I would be happy to answer any
19 questions you may have, and thank you
20 very much.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.
22 And we're going to hold the questions
23 until the very end. And I also want to
24 acknowledge that we've been joined by
25 Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell.

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2 Commissioner, you want to state
3 your name for the record and begin your
4 testimony.

5 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: Yes.
6 Good afternoon, Chairwoman Bass and
7 members of the Committee. My name is
8 Carlton Williams, Commissioner of the
9 Department of Streets, and I'm pleased to
10 be here today to provide testimony
11 regarding zero waste in the City of
12 Philadelphia.

13 The Department is pleased to
14 play a key role in the new Zero Waste and
15 Litter Cabinet created by Mayor Kenney in
16 December of 2016. The Cabinet is focused
17 on eliminating litter and reducing waste
18 to landfill and incinerators by 2035.

19 Streets has made significant
20 progress over the past decade redirecting
21 waste from landfills and incinerators.
22 We have increased our recycling diversion
23 rate from 5 percent to 20 percent, and in
24 doing so, we are saving the City millions
25 of dollars in disposal costs. However,

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2 we need to do more to remove waste by
3 developing new opportunities to increase
4 diversion even further. Zero waste
5 strategies help the City accomplish this
6 goal. Zero waste principles include the
7 five R's - reduce, reuse, recycle,
8 recover, and residual. We project that
9 organics make up about 20 to 35 percent
10 of the waste stream, recycling about 35
11 percent, textiles 10 percent, C&D, which
12 is construction and demolition, 15
13 percent, and residual waste will make up
14 the final 15 percent.

15 We currently are conducting a
16 feasibility study so that we may provide
17 recommendations for implementation of
18 organic programs and processes in an
19 effort to further divert organics from
20 our waste stream. The study is
21 anticipated to be completed by this
22 summer. We'll focus on the quality of
23 organic material both food and yard
24 waste, capacity, processing options
25 available for processing material,

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2 collector costs, and user end markets.
3 The recommendations will be considered in
4 developing a long-term organics plan for
5 the future.

6 Solid Waste and Recycling

7 Advisory Council mentioned earlier as the
8 SWRAC is also working to help the Zero
9 Waste and Litter Cabinet by defining zero
10 waste and to help develop zero waste
11 implementation strategies. The Council
12 is currently benchmarking zero waste
13 goals developed in other cities and to
14 aid in the development in the City of
15 Philadelphia. The City's zero waste
16 strategy will be based on the Waste
17 Composition Study and set a strategy for
18 zero waste for the future. The SWRAC is
19 also working on a partnership program
20 with the Streets Department to develop a
21 zero waste partnership program. The zero
22 waste partnership program is designed to
23 encourage various stakeholders to adopt
24 and implement zero waste strategies. The
25 proposed partnership seeks to address a

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2 variety of stakeholders in three main
3 categories - business and industry,
4 community-based and non-profit
5 organizations, and individual residents.
6 Each of these stakeholders plays a vital
7 role in our goal toward zero waste, and
8 we hope to develop a partnership program
9 to motivate all to practice zero waste
10 strategies.

11 We are excited to be working
12 with City Council and the Zero Waste and
13 Litter Prevention Cabinet in helping the
14 City of Philadelphia meet its zero waste
15 goals.

16 Thank you for inviting me to
17 testify.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
19 Commissioner. And we're going to hold
20 the questions until the end.

21 And, Ms. Knapp, if you'd like
22 to state your name for the record and
23 begin your testimony.

24 MS. KNAPP: Yes. Thank you,
25 Councilwoman Bass and other members of

1 4/17/17 - ENVIRONMENT - RES. 161075
2 the Committee. My name is Linda Knapp
3 and I am an appointed member of the
4 Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory
5 Council, FPAC, and I'm Chair of FPAC's
6 Zero Waste Subcommittee. I am here today
7 to testify on behalf of my appointed
8 colleagues at FPAC.

9 As a volunteer body that
10 advises the Administration on how to
11 better partner in the regional food
12 system, the FPAC applauds City Council
13 and the Administration on their efforts
14 to make Philadelphia a zero waste city.

15 The FPAC strongly supports the
16 development of zero waste policies and
17 practices, with an emphasis on increasing
18 surplus food donation and using food
19 waste and other organic material for
20 composting to support gardens and urban
21 farms. Implementing zero waste practices
22 reduces hunger, food waste, and the
23 associated greenhouse gas emissions,
24 while enriching local food-producing
25 gardens and compost-generating

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2 businesses.

3 In October 2015, FPAC approved
4 a set of zero waste policy
5 recommendations and are pleased to see
6 how much progress the City has made in a
7 couple years with support from the
8 Administration and City Council. The
9 following is an overview of FPAC's
10 recommendations with updates on the
11 progress that we have collectively made
12 toward achieving zero waste.

13 Establish a zero waste policy
14 in the City: In fall 2015, FPAC
15 recommended to Mayor Kenney's transition
16 team that the Mayor establish a zero
17 waste policy for the City of Philadelphia
18 that incorporates waste reduction,
19 recycling, and food waste composting. In
20 December 2016, Mayor Kenney signed
21 Executive Order 13-16 establishing a Zero
22 Waste and Litter Control Cabinet within
23 the Managing Director's Office. FPAC
24 applauds the creation of the Cabinet and
25 looks forward to supporting the Cabinet

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2 in the development and implementation of
3 its action plan.

4 Increase the City's zero waste
5 practices: The City is effectively
6 modeling food waste recovery practices
7 through Waste Watchers, a
8 volunteer-driven waste diversion program
9 at the Philadelphia Marathon and other
10 large events. Waste Watchers has now
11 become an integral part of the Zero Waste
12 and Litter Cabinet community engagement
13 strategy. Under the Cabinet, Waste
14 Watchers will be expanded as a
15 certification program with a zero waste
16 focus for residents interested in
17 organizing block cleanups, educating
18 community members about zero waste
19 practices, and volunteering at events.

20 Waste Watchers will partner
21 with existing stewardship groups such as
22 block captains to implement the
23 certification program. The City is also
24 supporting the National Football League,
25 NFL, to operate Waste Watchers during the

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2 2017 NFL Draft in Philadelphia at the end
3 of the month.

4 Our third recommendation,
5 support increased surplus food donation.
6 During summer 2016, the Zero Waste
7 Subcommittee supported Philadelphia Parks
8 and Recreation efforts on a pilot project
9 to donate excess summer meals from the
10 park and rec facilities to local food
11 pantries. FPAC also supported a
12 coalition of local anti-hunger groups
13 self-titled "Operation Food Rescue" to
14 promote the use of the Food Connect App
15 at the 2017 Democratic National
16 Convention. Through Operation Food
17 Rescue, Food Connect recovered over
18 11,000 pounds of food that would have
19 been wasted from local DNC events and
20 distributed it to food pantries, soup
21 kitchens, and shelters. Food Connect
22 continues to be used by restaurants and
23 caterers across the City, and Operation
24 Food Rescue is actively preparing for the
25 NFL Draft this month as well.

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2 Promote and support backyard
3 composting: The City can promote and
4 educate residents about composting
5 benefits, backyard composting methods,
6 and bins that can be purchased or built.

7 Support the growth of
8 community-based composting efforts: In
9 fall 2016, FPAC organized the
10 Philadelphia Community Compost System
11 Design Competition to raise awareness
12 about the benefits of community-based
13 composting and to identify cost-effective
14 models that can be replicated in
15 community gardens, schools, and other
16 neighborhood locations. The competition
17 is currently underway, and FPAC will
18 promote the results at the end of the
19 summer.

20 Encourage the use of compost
21 and/or compost production on the Land
22 Bank's urban agriculture projects: FPAC
23 is pleased that the Land Bank regulations
24 allow for on-site composting.

25 For the full list of FPAC's

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2 zero waste recommendations, please visit
3 our website, phillyfpac.org/zerowaste.

4 We are encouraged by City
5 Council's support of achieving zero waste
6 in Philadelphia and strongly believe that
7 we can all effectively work together to
8 make this goal a reality in our great
9 city.

10 Thank you for the opportunity
11 to testify today.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And thank
13 you for your testimony.

14 I just had a couple of
15 questions, and then I know that
16 Councilman Green had some questions as
17 well.

18 And my first question is for
19 Mr. Esposito. And I thank you for being
20 here today and for your testimony. Some
21 time ago we put together an Eighth
22 District sanitation initiative, which is
23 very, very similar to the zero waste and
24 litter campaign that the City is doing.
25 And so I did want to acknowledge Maurice

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2 Sampson, who is going to testify next, I
3 believe, and who is actually a member of
4 the Eighth District sanitation
5 initiative. But nonetheless, when we
6 started out, we were exploring a number
7 of different things and issues around
8 dumping and the concept of people dump
9 litter. It always just baffles my mind.
10 Well, actually, it doesn't as much
11 anymore, because I kind of understand it
12 a little bit now. But I always wondered
13 for many, many years why is it that
14 someone would take trash from their home
15 and carry it and take it somewhere and
16 leave it there instead of just putting it
17 out on trash day. And so we had a very
18 spirited conversation, and the
19 Commissioner, we were grateful to have
20 our Commissioner attend that particular
21 meeting with us, and one of the things
22 that we learned is that people dumping in
23 many cases may be a function of not
24 having what could be considered a luxury,
25 the luxury of storage space for trash.

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2 And so when I grew up in North
3 Philadelphia, we had our backyard and we
4 had our two trash cans back there, and so
5 we had a -- it wasn't a large space, but
6 we had a small space so that we could
7 store our trash cans. And now in the
8 house I currently live in, we have trash
9 cans, recyclable bins, but we have space
10 for that. And so what happens if you
11 don't have space for trash? Then in many
12 cases, you have to get rid of it. You
13 have to dump. You can't wait. It's
14 Monday. Trash day is on Friday. You
15 can't wait until Friday to figure out
16 what to do with it. So that's something
17 that we see happening.

18 Your testimony was very good,
19 but it also struck me as very academic,
20 and so I was wondering if you could talk
21 about some of the things as a District
22 Councilmember that I hear on a regular
23 basis, not about 2035. I think that
24 people are really concerned, and
25 justifiably so, about the amount of trash

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2 that we see throughout the City. Our
3 city is -- it's dirty. It's dirty. We
4 all have to acknowledge. We ride past
5 locations on a regular basis. The
6 Streets Department, they do their very
7 best. They're out there cleaning up. We
8 do clean up. We always schedule cleanups
9 in our districts and throughout the City
10 of Philadelphia. We work very closely
11 with the Streets Department, but --
12 Commissioner, you can probably speak to
13 this as well -- we clean up an area and
14 then the very next day, the very next
15 week, it's as if we didn't touch it.

16 And so that is some of what we
17 hear on a regular basis. I was wondering
18 if you could just speak to some of that.

19 MR. ESPOSITO: Sure. And thank
20 you again for this, and thank you for
21 what you're doing with the Eighth
22 District Task Force. It was a great
23 conversation we had, and we really look
24 forward to working with you all in the
25 future.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

3 MR. ESPOSITO: And thank you
4 for saying this sounded academic, because
5 I'm not an academic. I came from
6 operations in Parks and Rec.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: It sounded
8 very academic.

9 MR. ESPOSITO: Thank you.

10 So, yeah. So we wanted to show
11 kind of what the strategy is, and there's
12 a lot of strategy coming around zero
13 waste, but, again, what I always remind
14 people whenever I'm talking about the
15 Cabinet in the world, in the media,
16 whatever, is let's not forget the litter
17 piece, because the litter piece is really
18 on the forefront of the service that we
19 have to do for the citizens. We can't
20 put this zero waste aspirational goal
21 that's out to 2035 when the neighborhoods
22 look the way that they do and the litter
23 conditions.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Because my
25 fear is that we will lose population by

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2 2035 if our neighborhoods continue to
3 have the appearance of being dirty.

4 MR. ESPOSITO: Yes. So that's
5 one thing. And the Commissioner
6 mentioned the zero waste partnership
7 program, which he can talk much more
8 about. The tagline that we've been using
9 is "zero starts with one." So you'll
10 hear zero starts with -- you can say one
11 community, one person, one action. But
12 we're also looking at that as a litter
13 index rating of one. So the litter index
14 that I mentioned, we're taking an index
15 of the entire city of what the litter
16 conditions are.

17 We have a rating that's based
18 on Keep America Beautiful's metrics of
19 one through four, one being the best,
20 four being the worst. And our intent is
21 we're not going to get to zero waste if
22 the neighborhoods get to one. They're
23 not going -- until we have those
24 conditions.

25 I've done tons of cleanups. I

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2 come home. I live in East Kensington.
3 And when there's trash all over the
4 place, even as the Zero Waste and Litter
5 Director, I will admit that my first
6 priority is just getting it into a bag
7 and getting it out to the curb. I try to
8 do some source separation, but, again,
9 that affects how we're going to actually
10 get things diverted.

11 So cleaning up the City is one
12 piece. I was just testifying this
13 morning for a bill that Councilman
14 Clarke, President Clarke, had put forth
15 around waste management plans for
16 developers and talked a lot about what
17 our strategy is going to be for
18 enforcement to kind of ensure that
19 Philadelphia is not open anymore as a
20 place where you can come and dump your
21 trash on vacant lots, especially the
22 contractors.

23 When it comes to homeowners, I
24 will say that a lot of times the trash
25 that you are seeing -- again, I came from

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2 Parks and Recreation. When we were out
3 in our parks, you would see a lot of
4 short dumping. A lot times it would be
5 neighbors' trash. A lot of times that
6 trash was food waste, whether it was
7 take-out that they just had or they just
8 had -- went and got crabs or something
9 and they don't want to keep the crab
10 shells inside.

11 So by being able to have the
12 infrastructure set up as well as the
13 education -- and, again, we're trying to
14 have the City and the residents meet
15 halfway. Of having people have better
16 options for how they can store trash in
17 their house, especially when it comes to
18 food, that I think is something that's
19 really going to change the paradigm on
20 people going out and dumping like across
21 from the park.

22 Again, it is hard. I know that
23 there's been bills that have been passed
24 about more indoor trash storage on new
25 construction, things of that nature. I

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2 think those are positive steps in the
3 right direction, to have it -- the City's
4 changed. The construction is different.
5 What does that infrastructure look like?
6 But I think for now, everything that we
7 can do through improved waste management
8 practices to spread that I think is going
9 to really alleviate the problems that
10 you're speaking about, especially the
11 litter and short dumping.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. Very
13 good.

14 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:
15 Councilwoman, thank you very much, first
16 of all, for allowing me to participate in
17 that meeting. I thought it was very
18 helpful. It's kind of -- those are the
19 type of conversations that we need to
20 have to develop action plans to move
21 forward.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I'm glad to
23 you hear you say it. We meet every
24 single month. We'd be happy to have you
25 back.

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2 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: I
3 certainly will be there.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: As well
6 as other community-based reasons as well
7 in other districts.

8 We just completed the Tenth
9 Annual Philly Spring Cleanup. Over the
10 last ten years, we've moved millions of
11 pounds of trash off the streets. The
12 unfortunate problem is there are still
13 people in our society who treat our
14 areas, parks, locations, recreation
15 centers like dumping grounds. And so I
16 think the biggest thing that I'm looking
17 forward to that comes out of the Litter
18 Cabinet is a stronger enforcement
19 strategy that looks towards using video
20 surveillance such as cameras to be able
21 to catch illegal dumpers in our city and
22 also working with City Council as well to
23 increase fines and to work with the
24 District Attorney's Office and the Police
25 Department to actually prosecute illegal

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2 dumpers. I think that is one of the
3 biggest challenges that we currently face
4 in our city in terms of litter. The
5 blatant illegal dumping that happens in
6 some of our neighborhoods is
7 unacceptable, and we certainly need to
8 take aggressive action to address it.

9 The other part of it is, I
10 think that we are working with the School
11 District to start working with our
12 younger population. We have a program
13 called Green Schools with Recyclebank
14 where we donate our points to create
15 grant funds so that we can start
16 educating young people on the importance
17 of being good environmental stewards.
18 These funds are used to promote green
19 school projects such as rain barrels,
20 cleanup days, environmental conservation
21 days at their schools so that they can
22 take those habits back home and teach
23 others not to dump, appreciate the
24 environment, so forth. So far we've
25 given over \$250,000 to schools,

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2 Philadelphia public schools and charter
3 schools, who participate in the program,
4 and this year alone we're happy that over
5 \$46,000, which is our largest grant award
6 yet, is going to over 13 schools.

7 So we're extremely excited that
8 our young people are getting involved,
9 but, again, I just want to echo your
10 sentiments about the problems that we
11 face not only with contractors' illegal
12 dumping, but with people who just take
13 trash out of their homes and place it on
14 corners, which is causing a real problem
15 with litter conditions in our city. So
16 we're working with the Zero Waste and
17 Litter Cabinet to see if we can come up
18 with strategies to address that.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Very good.
20 Very good.

21 Commissioner, can you give us
22 some sort of an idea since we're in
23 budget hearing season, can you give us
24 some sort of an idea of how much do we
25 spend on dumping, on picking up trash

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2 that is dumped, whether it's residential,
3 commercial, just to get a sense of how
4 much we're spending versus how much are
5 we spending on our Zero Waste Cabinet.
6 I'm just trying to get a sense of are we
7 allocating our dollars the best way.

8 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: So we
9 spend about \$1.4 million picking up
10 illegally dumped material.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Say
12 that again.

13 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: \$1.4
14 million. That equates to about 13,000
15 tons of material. That includes both the
16 collection costs and the actual disposal.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay. Very
18 good.

19 And one last question actually
20 for Ms. Knapp. Thank you for your
21 testimony as well. Very, very
22 interesting. I did have a question. And
23 as we talk about food waste, can you give
24 me an idea as an individual, what can I
25 do personally, what can I do to stop food

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2 waste, whether it's in my household, in
3 my neighborhood? If we could just sort
4 of drill down in ways that we could help,
5 number one, folks who have food issues,
6 food insecurity, don't have access to
7 fresh healthy foods. I'm always feeling
8 some kind of way when I go to a store,
9 let's say like a Produce Junction, and
10 you get 100 apples for a dollar, some
11 ridiculous number of apples and whatever
12 you get at a very, very low cost, and
13 then you waste a good portion of that
14 product just because you don't know what
15 to do with it.

16 I was quite intrigued when I
17 saw in your testimony that you
18 basically -- your organization sort of
19 rescued food that was probably going to
20 be discarded, the Commissioner would have
21 to cart away, and rerouted that to those
22 in need.

23 So on an individual level, are
24 there things that we can do to help
25 further that mission in our own personal

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2 lives?

3 MS. KNAPP: Thank you for your
4 question. In the household I think the
5 first thing to do is in purchasing food,
6 trying to make sure you purchase amounts
7 that you will use, and if you do get a
8 good bargain, as we all do, perhaps share
9 the extra food with neighbors, you know,
10 because we do that on our block. We have
11 a lot of people. We really know each
12 other well on the block. If somebody has
13 extra food, I have a bushel of apples, do
14 you want some. So we try to make sure
15 it's put to good use.

16 Now, the best way to compost is
17 to have a backyard composting system, and
18 the Earth Machine is the one that we have
19 and many cities recommend for people.
20 Our household has a very small backyard,
21 yet we have the Earth Machine in the
22 backyard and we -- there we can compost
23 most of our food waste. So it really
24 reduces down the amount of trash we
25 actually put out. With the single-stream

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2 recycling and the food composting, we
3 don't put out much trash every week. And
4 we also try to be just very careful about
5 what we purchase and how we purchase it.

6 The other thing that you can do
7 is, there is a company in the City that
8 will come by and for a fee --

9 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Bennett.

10 MS. KNAPP: And I know --
11 right. So that's been a part for
12 Bennett, but Bennett is the only game in
13 town right now, as I understand. And so
14 that's a very effective way to do it as
15 well, because some people don't want to
16 do the backyard composting, and for a
17 fee, they can do it. We have people in
18 our neighborhood who do that, and Bennett
19 is a local business employing local
20 people and growing and doing everything
21 locally. So that strengthens the local
22 economy.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Yes.

24 MS. KNAPP: I think at the
25 household, that's what we can do.

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2 The efforts in surplus food
3 donation that we've been supporting are
4 ones where we have larger volumes of
5 food. It's hard for one household just
6 to donate to a food pantry unless you
7 have excess food, because there's some
8 health requirements in terms of that, and
9 we really promote making sure that all
10 those health requirements are complied
11 with. So we're looking at this point in
12 terms of the larger institutions of how
13 they can take surplus meals and donate
14 them locally to local food pantries.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
16 very much.

17 Councilman Green.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
19 Madam Chair.

20 I just wanted to raise a couple
21 of comments and ask some questions. I
22 think one of the challenges -- and many
23 in the panel just spoke to this issue --
24 is, we really have to change the culture.
25 We are looking at legislation now in

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2 reference to short dumping, to address
3 that. At least a percentage of the
4 market, both residential as well as
5 commercial entities that do short
6 dumping, and trying to use the
7 legislative process to change the
8 culture, but it's a much larger
9 perspective than that. I'm glad that the
10 Administration has taken on this
11 initiative of zero waste. It's kind of a
12 continuation of the work started under
13 the Nutter Administration with Greenworks
14 and now continuing to zero waste and more
15 focused on waste and consumption, but I
16 think what's often lost is the economic
17 impact of just the waste that we have in
18 the City of Philadelphia. I mean, if you
19 look at our landfill tipping fees, the
20 amount of money we spend every year on
21 that, and that's an area that if we
22 really start to divert more of our trash,
23 we can reduce that cost. And also the
24 economic impact of creating a greater and
25 robust economy around this industry

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2 and -- multiple industries, which also
3 can provide more jobs in the City of
4 Philadelphia. That's one of the reasons
5 why I look at this not only as a way to
6 reduce expenses in the City of
7 Philadelphia but also how we can create
8 more jobs in the City of Philadelphia
9 considering the high level of poverty.

10 So I wanted to kind of ask you,
11 any one of the panelists, to talk about
12 what steps can we take to change the
13 culture within the City, not only the
14 residents but also City Administration
15 and people that work in the City, and how
16 we can move forward on that zero waste
17 goal, because I think it's a great
18 concept, but we have to have concrete
19 steps on how to get there.

20 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: Thank
21 you, Councilman, for your comments. I'll
22 start and then I'll let the panelists
23 also follow up.

24 One of the things I mentioned
25 earlier in my testimony is a zero waste

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2 partnership program to establish a
3 relationship with industry, because
4 everyone plays a very important role in
5 this, as you mentioned earlier. Those
6 who make the products have to be creating
7 products that are environmentally
8 sensitive to what we purchase and
9 consume. So we want to focus on business
10 and industry.

11 The food waste industry is a
12 huge part of that. We have hotels, we
13 have stadiums, we have special events and
14 all who are generators of these type of
15 items, what they purchase and what they
16 buy. Green products is also important.

17 So if we can start encouraging
18 those institutions and businesses to
19 practice green zero waste strategies,
20 we're ultimately setting the foundation
21 for us to move forward.

22 The second stakeholder that we
23 wanted to identify is our community-based
24 organizations. So Linda talked
25 graciously about Waste Watchers and the

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2 programs that she's promoting as well.
3 Those type of programs help educate
4 people on the importance of managing
5 their waste. We want to start treating
6 waste not as something to just be
7 discarded, but a resource to actually be
8 managed. And so if we can start training
9 our young people as well as other people
10 to engage in that concept, we can
11 actually show them that this is actually
12 an economic benefit for them to
13 participate in, even at the individual
14 household level. So we want to encourage
15 that through education and outreach and
16 creating incentive programs for them to
17 do so.

18 The final person is actually
19 the user, which is the individual
20 residents who actually buy goods and
21 services and discard those each and every
22 day. Through our Recyclebank rewards
23 program, we have over 200,000 people
24 signed up, and we reward people for
25 actually recycling. We're actually ready

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2 to take that to a next level and reward
3 them for practicing zero waste.

4 One of the things that was
5 talked about earlier, which Linda talked
6 about, was backyard composting. We want
7 to give people points for participating
8 in things like backyard composting,
9 because it makes up a significant portion
10 of our waste stream. About 13 percent of
11 our waste that's diverted -- can be
12 diverted if we start practicing zero
13 waste in regards to composting. And also
14 another 12 percent if we include food
15 waste and leaf and yard waste as well.

16 So that's where we think the
17 next big ticket item is focusing on. We
18 hope the feasibility study will give us
19 recommendations for individuals and
20 businesses to participate in these type
21 of programs, and the partnership program
22 will encourage people to join our efforts
23 to do so.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And just to
25 follow up, I do applaud some of the

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2 initiatives that the Administration is
3 taking in reference to partnerships with
4 private entities, and from my
5 recollection, NFL has a zero waste goal
6 for the draft in reference to trying to
7 eliminate as much waste as possible
8 during that large event, and the large
9 events are good, also the education for
10 our youth, but I guess something of a
11 more mainstream perspective. And I
12 understand the concept with Recyclebank,
13 although I've gone through some issues in
14 the past years under other
15 Administrations and the challenges with
16 Recyclebank, but how do we really get
17 that in a more mainstream perspective?
18 Because that seems -- I mean, although
19 you say 200,000 people or households, it
20 seems still very niche oriented. How do
21 we really change the culture in a more
22 mainstream way to get people to think on
23 a regular basis how they divert trash?

24 MR. ESPOSITO: So a couple
25 things. First off, thank you so much for

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2 putting this resolution forth. It was
3 really nice coming into this job as
4 pretty much the same time when the
5 resolution came out that City Council was
6 also supporting this. To see it in a
7 holistic way is really important, and for
8 your bill for upping the fines for short
9 dumping.

10 So I think some things I would
11 think about, just from the food waste
12 side -- so I'm working very closely with
13 the draft right now, working with the
14 NFL, which has been a really great
15 partner. I had a great experience with
16 them. And I was talking to a reporter
17 about this, and they were asking about
18 meat going into the compost. And he
19 says, well, what do you do with a half a
20 cheese steak?

21 And I was like, why would you
22 leave half a cheese steak? Eat the whole
23 cheese steak, right? You bought it.
24 It's tasty. That's the thought. I mean,
25 I grew up -- my grandfather grew up in

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2 the Depression. He would always -- his
3 tagline was always, take all you want,
4 but eat all you take. So there's
5 thinking like that that kind of comes
6 back into play of what is waste and kind
7 of connecting people back to it. So
8 there's the cultural things that I think
9 the Commissioner was just talking about
10 will probably continue.

11 Another thing I will say too
12 is, I brought up in my testimony the
13 operationalizing of this goal. So
14 although there's many sustainability
15 components, it's driven by sustainability
16 and it's driven by care for the
17 environment and green, whatever you want
18 to call it, the fact is if we don't
19 operationalize it on a city level that
20 this is just how we do things -- and I
21 think that's what we're really excited
22 about, what our zero waste goal will
23 be -- you're really not going to make
24 movement on it. You'll want it relegated
25 to this other thing. Oh, it's something

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2 you do if you want to be sustainable or
3 something different. It's, this is how
4 we do it, right? We don't use the
5 telegraph anymore. We've gone past that.
6 We have the Internet and we have cell
7 phones and things of that nature.

8 So similar to what we're doing
9 with this. And I think you see that
10 success already with recycling. When
11 recycling was kind of first introduced in
12 the '70s and '80s and then it kind of
13 limped along a little bit, you had to put
14 all your different buckets out and you
15 had to source separate everything, well,
16 until that point -- and the Commissioner
17 can talk more about the numbers on this,
18 what the diversion rates were -- and some
19 neighborhoods didn't even have a
20 diversion rate because they weren't
21 recycling. Now it's single stream,
22 because we met the residents halfway and
23 we created the infrastructure for it,
24 that it's just how we do things, there's
25 different diversion rates. Places like

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2 Chestnut Hill and other parts of the City
3 have very high diversion rates, like 30
4 percent, when you have some parts of the
5 City where they're at like 15 percent,
6 but they're at a percentage. You drive
7 around all around the City, you see blue
8 buckets out and people have recycling in
9 it. They get it.

10 So now that we're kind of
11 bringing that -- you talked about making
12 it mainstream. I think making it just
13 not like again the other sustainability.
14 This is just how the City functions.
15 That's really the kind of thing that
16 we're putting into this zero waste goal.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And just to
18 follow up on that, I just think if
19 there's a way you can message -- I mean,
20 there's a reason why marketing works.
21 When you have a specific message and you
22 constantly remind people of that message,
23 it has a tendency to sink in. I don't
24 think people on a citywide perspective
25 really have an understanding of the cost

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2 this is to the City of Philadelphia, and
3 that just by changing -- if one person
4 changes their behavior and it multiplies
5 to a household, to a block, to a
6 neighborhood in the City, how much that
7 can impact us in reducing our costs as a
8 city. That could be additional funding
9 for -- I mean, you can put together a
10 marketing piece, by you participating in
11 recycling, diversion, composting, that
12 could maybe pay for an additional person
13 at your local rec center or -- I mean,
14 you can put together the perspective just
15 based on the amount of money we spend on
16 landfill and tipping fees every year and
17 equate that to various services that
18 residents need or want to have more of.
19 And I think if people have that
20 understanding of what the cost
21 perspective is, they may be more willing
22 to take more activities and change their
23 own operations and behaviors and
24 patterns, because I don't think people
25 really have that perspective of the cost

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2 dynamic. And it's not just a feel good;
3 this is good for the environment, good
4 for the community, it makes things look
5 cleaner, but this has a real financial
6 impact to the City of Philadelphia, and
7 any way we can reduce expenses is a way
8 that we can provide more goods and
9 services to the City and to the residents
10 of the City.

11 MR. ESPOSITO: From another
12 perspective, a marketing standpoint, so a
13 lot of times people get disconnected from
14 that plastic bottle that they put in the
15 recycling bin. It gets bundled up and
16 then gets sent somewhere. It could go
17 overseas, it could be another part of our
18 country. You're not connected to what
19 actually happened to that plastic bottle.
20 Whereas, the great marketing point we
21 have now is for the Marathon, which is a
22 zero waste event, Waste Watchers and the
23 Sustainability Office worked really hard
24 to make that happen. We have the compost
25 that was taken from there went to

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2 Fairmount Park, the Recycling Center.
3 That compost has now been broken down,
4 and now that compost this spring is being
5 used in Philadelphians' gardens that came
6 from Philadelphia. So that kind of
7 connection, that's what we're looking to
8 do.

9 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: Yes,
10 Councilwoman. I just want to also follow
11 up on your point. I think that's a very
12 important economic aspect that you point
13 out. I just want to give you the numbers
14 for the City of Philadelphia. We spend
15 \$35 million a year to dispose of trash
16 and discard it. We're currently paying a
17 small fee. I'm happy to hear that it's
18 gone down even further, \$5 when we
19 recycle, which means that we're saving
20 millions of dollars on avoided landfill
21 and disposal fees.

22 We need to have that same
23 concept for zero waste. And so the more
24 that we can divert out of the waste
25 stream, the more it saves the City of

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2 Philadelphia. And where markets are
3 favorable, a few years ago we actually
4 made \$6 million off of our material that
5 we recovered.

6 And so our way of trying to
7 incentivize people to do that through our
8 rewards program is a way of giving back
9 to keep them involved and connected, but
10 we will show the bigger picture in a
11 marketing campaign to show how when their
12 individual habits at their households can
13 affect what we spend on, and those
14 dollars could be used for other critical
15 services in the City of Philadelphia. So
16 we certainly will follow up on that point
17 in terms of a marketing aspect and
18 driving that home as well.

19 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I just have
20 a few more quick questions. You talked
21 about the organic feasibility study.
22 That will be completed sometime --

23 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: This
24 summer.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: This summer?

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2 And so that's part of the plan to kind of
3 eliminate using landfills by 2035, by
4 increasing organics and diversion?

5 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: Yes.

6 So I'll just give you a brief overview of
7 what you can expect from that study.

8 Organics make up, we believe, both food
9 waste and yard waste, about 25 percent of
10 the waste stream. So if you look in
11 terms of numbers, in recycling we have a
12 20 percent diversion rate, which is about
13 120,000 tons of material. So anywhere
14 between another 130,000 and 150,000 tons
15 we believe that we can take out of the
16 waste stream and put it back into
17 productive use.

18 We have a recycling center out
19 in Fairmount Park that we're looking at
20 to see if we can create new tree --
21 compost for residents to enjoy to put
22 back in the gardens. We also are looking
23 to work with the Water Department to see
24 what kind of biofuel opportunities exist,
25 and also in the next couple of years, we

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2 have a new waste contract that will be
3 negotiated, and we're hoping to do what
4 we did with the last contract, which is
5 to spur private investment, which will
6 increase jobs here in the City of
7 Philadelphia.

8 When we built SpecFuel, which
9 is located up in the Northeast section of
10 the City, there was only one other
11 facility in the country in San Antonio,
12 Texas. We encouraged them through our
13 changing process and through our contract
14 negotiations to say, we want one built
15 here in the City of Philadelphia. That
16 led to not only additional reduced costs
17 in terms of what we pay per ton, it also
18 created jobs here for the City of
19 Philadelphia, and of course that's
20 critical to our tax base as well. I
21 believe it created about 72 jobs here in
22 the City of Philadelphia, and that's
23 outside of the construction of the
24 facility that was existed here as well.

25 So we're hoping to use those

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2 opportunities to promote other
3 public-private investment partnerships
4 for the benefit of the City of
5 Philadelphia.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: When is the
7 waste contract up you just referenced?

8 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: 2019.

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. And
10 then also I've been a strong advocate of
11 trying to grow the composting industry
12 here in the City of Philadelphia. I
13 think that has a lot of promise
14 considering the amount of waste we have
15 in the City and the amount of products
16 that can come out of that.

17 You made reference to Fairmount
18 Park. I know I've been discussing
19 different ideas, along with a number of
20 people in this room, about that. I'm
21 glad to see that's moving, but hopefully
22 we can move that forward so we can
23 provide additional opportunities, so the
24 Water Department won't have to buy
25 product from outside the City. We can

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2 buy product from ourselves and get
3 product from ourselves as opposed to
4 spending money when we have the resources
5 here to do it on our own.

6 Final question. Considering
7 some of the changes with the federal
8 administration -- and I know, Nic, in
9 your testimony you talked about hopefully
10 the market will change and you have more
11 manufacturers making more recyclable
12 products -- are there concerns from what
13 you've seen in talking with maybe other
14 cities and other jurisdictions about what
15 some of the dynamics in the current
16 federal administration, how that may go
17 the other direction and you won't have as
18 many products or like kind of a stalemate
19 in reference to products being more
20 recyclable? And that's for anyone on the
21 panel.

22 MR. ESPOSITO: Sure. So thank
23 you for that question. I would say from
24 what I've seen, there's not things that
25 are -- obviously affecting the EPA's

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2 operations in general are going to affect
3 moving this work forward, especially
4 things like clean water, clean air.
5 There's greenhouse gas emissions that
6 come with landfills and incinerators and
7 things of that nature. So if you're
8 starting to relax that enforcement, it
9 can affect moving forward.

10 But I will say that, like as I
11 said in the testimony -- you hear this a
12 lot. Mayor Bloomberg from New York has
13 written a lot about this, about cities
14 kind of leading the way through this
15 period that we're in politically. With
16 the amount of cities -- I just named a
17 few in there. You're talking dozens of
18 major cities in the United States and
19 then municipalities and counties even
20 that are adopting zero waste goals. I
21 mean, it's my projection -- this is not
22 totally scientific, but I will say within
23 the next -- by the time we hit our 2035
24 goal, I would say a majority of Americans
25 will be living in an area with a zero

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2 waste goal. So when you have that kind
3 of market force -- even when I show the
4 list of all the cities, it's probably 50
5 million people right there who are living
6 in these areas. So once those market
7 forces really are able to kind of drive
8 that, I think -- and you're already
9 seeing that. I think that their industry
10 is going to have to respond to what the
11 infrastructure and again the
12 operationalized way that we're going with
13 especially waste management in the
14 future.

15 So, yeah. Again, that's
16 something that we keep tracking what's
17 happening at the federal level, but I am
18 confident that what we're doing here at
19 the municipal levels around the country,
20 we should be able to keep it moving
21 forward.

22 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: Yes,
23 Councilman. We are keeping our eye on
24 things as well, especially with
25 recyclable markets, because that is a

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2 very market-driven material. It's very
3 volatile. As I mentioned earlier, some
4 years we were actually making money.
5 We're now spending to process recyclable
6 material. It's still cheaper than waste.
7 So it's very favorable. In fact, today
8 we got good news that we weren't paying
9 \$17 a ton. It's now down to \$5 a ton,
10 and hopefully that trend will continue.
11 And we think that is largely driven by
12 Amazon and those gift -- the prices
13 continue to create cardboard demands.
14 And we're watching those type of market
15 factors.

16 Obviously if there's any
17 changes in what people buy and produce,
18 it's going to affect how we process and
19 dispose. So those are kind of the
20 impacts that we're keeping our eye on.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
22 Madam Chair.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
24 Councilman.

25 Councilwoman Blackwell.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you.

4 Good afternoon, everyone.

5 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: Good
6 afternoon.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: How
8 long has the zero waste initiative been
9 part of -- is it new being part of the
10 Streets Department?

11 MR. ESPOSITO: So the Zero
12 Waste and Litter Cabinet was signed by
13 Executive Order by Mayor Kenney on
14 December 20th, 2016. So that started the
15 Cabinet. So the Cabinet is working with
16 the Streets Department. I think the
17 power of the Cabinet is that it is kind
18 of working through the Managing
19 Director's Office and then other agencies
20 and departments to bring everyone to the
21 table. So we're really the conveners of
22 all this work, with the Streets
23 Department being what Managing Director
24 DiBerardinis likes to call the anchor
25 organization in that.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So how
3 are you funded, through Streets or
4 through Managing Director, or how?

5 MR. ESPOSITO: So basically all
6 that's funded right now is my position.
7 That's through the Managing Director's
8 Office. I work for the Managing
9 Director. But what we are doing is --
10 again, the point of the Managing
11 Director's Office is working with the
12 operating departments and the resources
13 that they're already expending on this
14 work, as we saw \$1.4 million already in
15 cleanups, is how if we all work together
16 can we better streamline the spending of
17 that money and kind of the resources and
18 the staff time taken to really make the
19 change that's needed to get to the heart
20 of these issues.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I see.
22 So it's not a new funding issue for the
23 City?

24 MR. ESPOSITO: Nothing funded
25 yet.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

3 Commissioner, you mentioned 35. What was
4 it, 35?

5 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS:

6 Million?

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: 35
8 million?

9 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: For
10 disposal fees.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: For
12 this trash removal?

13 Years ago -- and we still get
14 it at community meetings you hear it as
15 well -- groups ask for more trash cans
16 and if -- I know if they do them, then
17 they have to take them out of the trash
18 cans and put them out when trash is put
19 out. But would it make it easier or less
20 expensive if we could have the men pick
21 up trash in special cans on corridors and
22 all of that?

23 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: That's
24 a good point, Councilwoman. In some
25 areas it works. In some areas it

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2 doesn't. So where we have full
3 participation from community-based
4 organizations, we have gotten an
5 increased amount of cooperation in
6 reducing litter on streets. So we'll
7 work with CDCs. For instance, in your
8 district, we work very closely with the
9 University City District who has a
10 dedicated cleaning team who makes sure
11 that people use those cans the way
12 they're intended. Unfortunately, if
13 someone just -- sometimes people just ask
14 for trash cans at certain locations, and
15 if they're not serviced properly, they
16 become illegal dump sites, and people
17 start to take household trash and put
18 around them and ultimately they become a
19 problem. So it depends on each
20 situation. We are certainly willing to
21 work with any community that wants to try
22 to install trash cans. I think in fact
23 the Zero Waste and Litter Cabinet that
24 Nic is working on is actually doing a
25 study to see the impacts of a trash can

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2 in certain areas, does it actually reduce
3 or increase litter, and we're waiting to
4 see that outcome. But just from our
5 experience, those groups who are
6 committed to making sure it's used for
7 its intended purpose is the ones that are
8 most successful and the ones that we are
9 certainly encouraged to work with to try
10 to put additional trash cans in those
11 locations.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
13 you.

14 Now, it may be -- Commerce is
15 coming up here next, but with regard to
16 some of our corridors, you know how you
17 hear -- they pick it up Saturday, and
18 Monday it's trash all over 60th Street or
19 52nd Street or whatever the situation is.
20 Are you all involved with that or does
21 Commerce make those decisions?

22 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: We work
23 with Commerce very closely on those
24 corridor projects, yes. We certainly
25 strongly encourage it, because they

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2 usually have a relationship with the
3 BIDs, business improvement districts, and
4 the CDCs. That's where we establish
5 those relationships. And the stronger
6 the BID or the CDC in that area, the more
7 likely that they're getting greater
8 cooperation to do hand cleaning.

9 They are limited by resource to
10 be able to hire people either from the
11 community or staff up to be able to get
12 that trash continuously, because you're
13 absolutely right, we'll clean it up on a
14 Friday and then on Monday it looks like
15 it was never touched in weeks. So those
16 are the things that I think are
17 challenging to those groups, but we do
18 work very closely with the Commerce
19 Department.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So
21 should we worry you or Commerce first?

22 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: I think
23 both.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Okay.

25 COMMISSIONER WILLIAMS: We

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2 certainly will work together on that.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: All
4 right. Thank you.

5 Thank you, Madam Chair.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

7 And thank you all for being
8 here today and for your testimony.

9 Can we have the Clerk call up
10 the next panel of witnesses to testify.

11 THE CLERK: Panel No. 2,
12 Maurice Sampson, Eastern PA Director,
13 Clean Water Action; Saleem Chapman,
14 Policy and Advocacy Manager, Sustainable
15 Business Network; Melissa Muroff,
16 Esquire, President of Roofmeadow.

17 (Witnesses approached witness
18 table.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.
20 Thank you for being here today and for
21 your patience. And if we could, Maurice,
22 we'll have you start first. And state
23 your name for the record and begin your
24 testimony.

25 MR. SAMPSON: Thank you,

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2 Councilwoman Bass, members of the
3 Committee. My name is Maurice Sampson.
4 I am the Eastern Pennsylvania Director
5 for Clean Water Action. I also serve as
6 a member of the Streets Department Solid
7 Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee,
8 or SWRAC.

9 There was a PowerPoint style
10 presentation that was handed out. I want
11 to make sure you have that in hand. I'll
12 refer to elements of it, so I wanted to
13 make that clear.

14 I am here today on behalf of
15 Clean Water Action to offer testimony in
16 support of adopting a zero waste goal
17 and, very specific, a zero waste by 2035.
18 I want to offer comments based on the
19 concept paper I wrote about a year ago,
20 Zero Waste in Philadelphia by 2035. It
21 was first produced as part of a
22 discussion of the SWRAC's goal
23 subcommittee that was tasked a year ago
24 with developing these goals originally
25 for the solid waste plan that was

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2 approved by the state.

3 It's my understanding -- and
4 that was confirmed by a conversation
5 today -- that we're going to be working
6 with the Litter Cabinet to continue that
7 work.

8 I have -- so just to lay out
9 several questions. Why set goals?
10 Exactly what is zero waste? How can it
11 be useful in supporting a sustainable
12 waste management program in Philadelphia?

13 Now, nationally recycling goals
14 were first established as a metric to
15 plan and implement municipal recycling
16 programs in the early '80s. The goals
17 were a function of mandatory recycling
18 legislation in 14 states, including
19 Pennsylvania. Most of them initially
20 targeted between 20 and 35 percent over a
21 period of five to ten years. The
22 programs were all funded by fees levied
23 on trash at the landfill by the state,
24 and municipalities in order to get that
25 money were required to submit plans to

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2 receive the funding. They were awarded
3 based on their progress additional funds,
4 and that goal-setting process -- I'll say
5 two things about it. One, it was
6 actually developed by industry. I think
7 there's a thought that all recycling came
8 from environmental groups, but the truth
9 was in the early '80s, the focus was on
10 bottle bills. Actually, the
11 environmental community didn't feel
12 getting everybody to recycle at their
13 door was a practical idea, that bottle
14 bill would be a better way to do that.
15 And these things sort of happened at the
16 same time. There was a number of bottle
17 bills passed in the early '80s right as
18 we were starting with the recycling. But
19 the impetus for recycling came from
20 industry. It came from industry
21 specifically in New Jersey and in Rhode
22 Island, and they were interested in the
23 materials. And they felt that if we
24 could provide consistent quality and
25 quantity of materials, they could slowly

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2 change their process to stop using virgin
3 because it was so much cheaper. And the
4 impetus then was the whole energy crisis
5 that we've gone through in the late '70s,
6 and it takes so much less energy to
7 process recovered materials than it does
8 to process virgin materials. In fact,
9 part of the zero waste ethos is that if
10 you consider what is involved in
11 replacing that recycled material, that
12 recycled can, for every can of recycling
13 you put out, you're actually saving the
14 equivalent of eight others, when you talk
15 about the mining, the milling, the
16 processing, and the pollution. That is
17 the huge impact. In fact, one of the
18 predictions is that the -- if we recycled
19 everything, it would be the equivalent of
20 20 percent of the global warming impact
21 of all the power plants in the country.
22 So it is not small. It's a huge climate
23 item in the climate element as well as
24 any number of pieces.

25 Now, goals are important. When

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2 properly used, they provide direction,
3 accountability, and metrics to measure
4 the progress. What we want to avoid is
5 what has happened over time since the
6 early '80s and the misuse of goals as
7 bragging rights to compare the success of
8 programs for what appear to be lesser
9 performing programs. From state to state
10 and even from program to program,
11 measurement criteria are so different.
12 Direct comparison is like comparing
13 apples, oranges, and horses.

14 The result can lead to a
15 municipal -- to an expectation of
16 municipal operating departments for waste
17 management that are unrealistic, and over
18 time those managers who used to use those
19 goals shy away from them because they
20 felt it got them in more trouble. So
21 once we set a goal, we need to keep that
22 in mind.

23 Setting a goal for zero waste
24 is an opportunity to think about waste in
25 a different way, about reducing the 80

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2 percent of the waste that we are right
3 now incinerating versus trying to
4 increase the 20 percent that we are
5 recycling. Another way of putting it is
6 if you're not for zero waste, then how
7 much waste are you for?

8 There was a definition given of
9 zero waste. My simple one is this: 100
10 percent diversion of waste from landfills
11 and waste-to-energy incineration through
12 waste reduction, recycling, food donation
13 and composting. A 90 percent diversion
14 is a successful zero waste program, but I
15 think zero should be zero.

16 Now, if we're going to do this,
17 we need a strategy as to how we're going
18 to get to 2035 and make it happen.

19 If you look at Page 3 of what I
20 gave you there, there's a chart that
21 reads Whose Waste Is It? Three Sectors.

22 There are several things we
23 need to know when we talk about setting
24 goals. Whose waste are we talking about
25 and how much waste is there? What is in

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2 the waste that can be recovered? What is
3 the goal that I have to reach every year
4 if I want to get to 100 percent by 2035?
5 And what is the program every year to
6 meet that goal?

7 As I think, Councilwoman Bass,
8 you talked about 2035 is being a long
9 ways away. This is about understanding
10 what's going to happen this year.

11 The chart that I gave you
12 there, trash basically is very different
13 in the way it's collected in three
14 sectors in the City. You have your
15 municipal waste, or what I really should
16 say is municipally collected waste. Then
17 you have your commercial sector waste,
18 which is collected by private haulers.
19 And then you have construction and
20 demolition waste, which has a whole
21 separate kind of collection method. And
22 when you look at those three, then you're
23 talking about almost 2.8 tons of -- I'm
24 sorry. It's 2.5 million tons a year.
25 Actually, I should say in 2014, where my

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2 numbers came from. And what that breaks
3 down to is that in the City, the
4 City-collected trash is about 25 percent
5 of the total amount, the commercial is
6 about 60 percent of the total amount, and
7 about 15 percent of that is what makes up
8 in C&D.

9 Now, when you look at what the
10 collection rates are and recycling rates
11 are in each of those sectors, just taking
12 them alone, the City, we know we're doing
13 about 20 percent. In the commercial
14 sector, they're doing about 45 percent.
15 And in the C&D, they're doing 93 percent.
16 So you might say one in three sectors is
17 already in the zero waste zone. And all
18 of that is really about the economics.
19 It really does not pay for the
20 construction and demolition industry to
21 bury the trash. In fact, when they built
22 the Acme on Germantown Avenue, they tore
23 down the old building, recycled it, and
24 used it in the new building. It never
25 left the site, and that is sort of the

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2 nature of how that construction industry
3 is working.

4 Commercial is similar. There
5 isn't a waste hauler in the City who
6 doesn't want to recycle more. It costs
7 them more to haul it to a landfill or to
8 an incinerator. They got to wait in
9 line. And you want to talk about carbon
10 footprint, a well-operating diesel truck
11 only gets 2 miles a gallon. So the more
12 we pick it up and the more we transport
13 it, the greater our carbon impact is.

14 So when we look at it that way,
15 the other question that we want to ask
16 is, you know, what are we counting? And
17 what are we measuring? And what are we
18 reporting to? I would submit to you --
19 and I like the way the City is putting
20 the program together. The idea of
21 partnership for commercial makes sense.
22 We don't control commercial. But when
23 you look at a place like Atlanta that has
24 no mandatory recycling, they have a
25 program there that is voluntary and is

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2 based on incentives for business, and
3 they've got a booming program going on,
4 because people like to talk well of
5 themselves. And it's actually all run by
6 the commercial sector in Atlanta. And
7 when you take what our mandatory
8 requirements are for commercial and you
9 match them with the voluntary side of it
10 and you give awards and recognition and
11 you acknowledge those doing a better job,
12 their competition has to deal with that.

13 One of the great contributions
14 of the sustainability movement is, that
15 is a real economically driven item.
16 People want to purchase and they want to
17 shop and they want to deal with people
18 that are more sustainable. So being able
19 to advertise that you got an award or a
20 recognition gives you an edge over your
21 competitor. So using that in the
22 commercial sector really makes sense.

23 The numbers and where we need
24 to look at is what we're responsible for,
25 the municipal trash, and what we have to

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2 pay for with our tax dollars, and that's
3 where our greatest focus should be.

4 Now, if you go to Page 4 on
5 there, you'll see another chart. The
6 waste composition study right now is
7 being redone. It absolutely has to. The
8 effect of online marketing has completely
9 changed what the waste stream looks like,
10 and most of us only guess about what's
11 actually in it. But if you want to talk
12 about recovering it, you want to talk
13 about reducing it, you need to know
14 what's in the waste. You need to know
15 what the low-hanging fruit is in terms of
16 if you pull it out, it's going to make a
17 difference.

18 The chart I gave you is based
19 on the 2009 study, and it's good for
20 illustrated purposes. If you see there,
21 curbside recycling, if you look at all
22 the materials that we put at the curb and
23 say what's 100 percent of the materials
24 that are in the waste stream that we put
25 at the curb, 20 percent of the waste

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2 stream is bottles, cans, paper, plastic
3 bottles. 24 percent. We are doing
4 around 20 percent. So we're doing 75
5 percent of everything that's there. So
6 we're doing a really good job.

7 Compostables by the 2009 study
8 is about 23 percent. It's almost as much
9 as we're talking about with regard to
10 what's in curbside.

11 There is -- 21 percent of our
12 waste is actually construction and
13 demolition waste that comes from the
14 residents. So we have as much C&D waste
15 in our waste stream as we do almost with
16 the compostables and the recycling.
17 Almost three thirds -- three-quarters of
18 our waste is highly recoverable.
19 Remember we said that C&D waste is a 93
20 percent recovery.

21 Now, no one is doing this, but
22 if there was a program that could pick up
23 the C&D waste, it could be recovered very
24 high, and it's something that's unique to
25 Philadelphia. When the waste composition

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2 study was done in 2009, one of the things
3 that the company acknowledged was no city
4 in the country has as much C&D waste in
5 its waste stream as Philadelphia does.
6 So it's just interesting and it's a
7 different way of thinking. Is there a
8 way that somehow we can get that and pick
9 it up separate? Because if we did, it's
10 a whole lot cheaper. They're actually --
11 we have in Revolution Recycling and our
12 Burns Recycling, we actually have two
13 very large facilities, and if you go
14 there, especially if you go to Richie
15 Burns' operation and watch it coming in,
16 it looks exactly like what you see being
17 thrown away on a lot, what they're taking
18 off there, and it's a real good trip.

19 Now, 23 percent of what we have
20 is what I referred to as pure trash. You
21 have the chart there, so it shows you
22 what that makes -- what that is composed
23 of. That's why we have to get clever.
24 That's where we need to start asking the
25 question, what can we replace, what can

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2 we substitute that be can reused or that
3 can be recycled or that can be composted.
4 What kind of things do we have to deal
5 with with policy in terms of dealing with
6 how we can reduce those things, how can
7 we reduce that faction that is purely
8 waste and you're not going to recover it.
9 There really has not been a good use yet
10 that I'm interested in about, baby
11 diapers.

12 Last point I want to make is
13 that we need a planning process that is
14 annual. One that I would suggest, for
15 instance, through this Solid Waste and
16 Recycling Advisory Committee, which is
17 what it's designed for, where we look at
18 the previous year's experience and we
19 look at a projection of what it is that
20 was captured by the various City
21 programs, so we evaluate where we were
22 and ask the question. Four percent a
23 year will get us -- if we start in 2015,
24 which is when I wrote my report, we need
25 to do 4 percent a year to get to zero

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2 waste by 2035. So the question every
3 year is, what is the 4 percent you're
4 going to get this year? That's the
5 question that would come from Council.
6 Tell me what the 4 percent it is you're
7 going to get this year. What does it
8 look like? What is it going to cost?
9 How are you going to make that happen
10 this year? And last year, gee, you know,
11 you were supposed to get 4; you only got
12 2 and a half percent. What happened
13 there? How do we deal with that? That
14 is sort of the annualized questioning
15 about getting us there.

16 Now, I will tell you -- I'm not
17 going to go through all of these. You
18 have them in front of you, but I actually
19 went through the year. It's a process of
20 looking at last year, planning for the
21 year to come, looking at the technology.
22 Let the Streets Department, which is a
23 very capable collection agency, let them
24 tell you how it is that they can make it
25 happen and give you what it costs. Then

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2 there's a whole other decision that has
3 to be made that you make every day, is
4 that something we want to spend, because
5 if we don't, we got to move the
6 percentage in a different direction.
7 That puts us together to work among the
8 environmental groups and others to argue
9 that you should spend that money, but
10 it's a fair process. It's the way the
11 system works.

12 So to go on here, in
13 conclusion, Clean Water Action supports
14 and encourages the adoption of a zero
15 waste goal with a timetable. If it's not
16 a timetable, it's just a pronouncement of
17 something we would like to happen.
18 You've got to have a goal. You've got to
19 have a timetable of when you want to get
20 there.

21 The recommended timetable that
22 has an annual planning process with a
23 progress report -- and, again, without
24 those elements, I think that a zero waste
25 goal is meaningless.

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2 I really encourage City Council
3 to work with the Administration to assure
4 that the program is adequately funded.
5 And I will tell you that 4 percent a year
6 sounds hard, but the truth is, right now
7 part of the first year program, we don't
8 know how to recycle. That's a problem
9 across the whole country right now. We
10 don't know how to properly recycle. The
11 truth is, in Philadelphia -- and I've
12 been here the whole time -- we have never
13 done a comprehensive education program on
14 recycling in the City. We give people
15 buckets and we expect them to figure it
16 out. But a comprehensive programs starts
17 in the schools where the kids take the
18 behavior home, and it's about making sure
19 people understand exactly what goes in
20 that container, because right now we do
21 not.

22 So in this year, we've got to
23 look at how we clean up what our
24 recycling is. There is probably a couple
25 percentage points -- we say that it's 20

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2 percent, but we don't talk about how much
3 gets sorted out and thrown away because
4 it's trash when it goes there. We call
5 that contamination. You can look at
6 contamination. It tells you how well
7 you're educating everybody. That is your
8 metric for how well we are doing, is how
9 much of that is. At different times in
10 the past, it's been as high as 9 percent.
11 Okay? It's much better now, but it has
12 been as high as 9 percent -- I'm sorry;
13 wrong. Fourteen percent. It's been as
14 high as 14 percent.

15 As the program develops, I
16 would encourage each member of City
17 Council to look at what the City does
18 with its goals, and like you have a
19 sanitation initiative, look at what you
20 can do to give your own awards, your own
21 recognition in Council. Standing up on a
22 business district and recognizing a small
23 business for doing a lot gets some
24 visibility, it gets people saying, well,
25 that's where I want to go. So it

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2 actually helps encourage business, and
3 that's something that -- the City has got
4 more brainpower happening on this now
5 than I have ever seen. In fact, I'm
6 watching to me what looks like a fantasy,
7 having done this for so long, to see this
8 kind of energy coming out of this
9 Administration. But there are some
10 really smart people at work in the City
11 who really understand their stuff,
12 looking at how to put this together.

13 When they come with programs,
14 ask, well, how can I make a program like
15 that for me where I am in my district?
16 Because zero waste is about not the City
17 doing zero waste as a whole, but it's
18 about everybody saying, how do I do zero
19 waste in my home? It starts with one.
20 The goal is ideal. The slogan is ideal.
21 How do I do zero waste in my home? What
22 does zero waste look like to my business?
23 What does zero waste to City Hall? We
24 can all have our own goals. We can know
25 exactly what it looks like, so we know

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2 what it is we have to do to get there.

3 I have probably said enough.

4 Thank you.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, thank
6 you for that very thorough testimony.

7 Thank you, Maurice.

8 And if we can have Mr. Saleem
9 Chapman. Please state your name for the
10 record and begin your testimony.

11 MR. CHAPMAN: Sure. Good
12 afternoon, and thank you for the
13 opportunity to address you today. My
14 name is Saleem Chapman and I'm the Policy
15 and Advocacy Manager at the Sustainable
16 Business Network of Greater Philadelphia.

17 I'm here today to recommend and
18 support the City's adoption of a zero
19 waste strategy, but to encourage them to
20 go even a step further and to adopt net
21 zero goals. Net zero extends further
22 than zero waste and also aiming to
23 conserve water and reduce energy usage in
24 addition to elimination of solid waste.
25 Net zero is an untapped economic

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2 strategy. We've seen it has the
3 opportunity to stimulate innovation,
4 economic growth, and job creation.

5 Net zero addresses a couple of
6 challenges that today's businesses are
7 facing. Confronting increased resource
8 scarcity and rapid technology change,
9 businesses are adopting triple
10 bottom-line practices to mitigate against
11 upward cost pressures on their supply
12 chain.

13 Each year, the United States
14 buries \$11 billion in recyclable
15 materials, and this is calling -- the
16 magnitude of this value loss is calling
17 for rethinking of how we can better and
18 more intelligently use and employ our
19 resources. Companies are beginning to
20 look at component recovery as a strategy
21 for this. You see it taking place in the
22 mobile phone industry. A lot of mobile
23 phone carriers are now implementing
24 take-back schemes as a way to recoup
25 components and, as a result, they're

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2 seeing a reduced material cost as much as
3 50 percent.

4 The sporting industry is
5 another place that this is taking place.
6 So even our local sporting team, the
7 Philadelphia Eagles, is a leader in this
8 strategy, having diverted about 99
9 percent of their waste since 2012. It's
10 as a cost containment strategy, because
11 they were seeing putting things in a
12 landfill was much more expensive than
13 actually sorting the trash and recycling
14 it. So they actually employ people on a
15 weekly basis to sort through the trash.
16 So from the fan perspective, you're only
17 putting it in one place. It's
18 single-stream recycling, but they
19 actually are employing people on the back
20 end to actually source the trash out. So
21 providing job creation in that place as
22 well.

23 So using as an example, we see
24 opportunities in new economies,
25 specifically waste diversion, as an

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2 opportunity to create jobs. As I just
3 stated, recycling, remanufacturing, and
4 reuse is very labor-intensive and there
5 are a lot of activities that that
6 involves, and as a result, you see that
7 recycling creates ten times more jobs
8 than putting it in a landfill, and reuse
9 creates as much as 30 times more jobs
10 than putting it in a landfill.

11 But what we're most excited
12 about is the new business opportunities
13 that net zero provides. You'll hear
14 businesses such as Roofmeadow, which
15 Melissa and Bennett Compost talk about,
16 the opportunity to create new industries
17 around these strategies. But what we see
18 specifically in SBN is the green
19 stormwater infrastructure industry. As a
20 result just using our businesses as a
21 proxy in the 2016 economic study, we saw
22 that our business -- that the green
23 stormwater infrastructure industry is
24 having an economic impact of almost \$60
25 million on an annual basis, supporting

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2 430 local jobs, and creating nearly \$1
3 million in local tax revenue. And there
4 are some other stats and figures from our
5 report that I shared with you inside my
6 testimony.

7 So business see themselves as
8 sort of the primary driver towards a
9 shift to the net zero economy, but there
10 is also things that government can do.
11 Specifically, the City of Philadelphia,
12 you exercise pretty strong influence over
13 your supply chain, and so we recommend
14 the adoption of a sustainable procurement
15 strategy, which is not only looking at
16 being fiscally responsible, but also your
17 social equity and environmental
18 stewardship as well.

19 So it will look a little bit
20 deeper beyond just the initial cost point
21 and also looking at the entire lifecycle
22 perspective when procuring goods.

23 So at SBN, we will continue to
24 work with the City towards the adoption
25 of a sustainable procurement policy.

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2 Actually just this -- two weeks ago, we
3 launched a study that's going to look at
4 local procurement and the barriers that
5 businesses are facing in terms of
6 engaging with both anchor institution and
7 government procurement. And so we'll be
8 looking forward to completing that study
9 later this summer and sharing those
10 results with you.

11 Thank you for the opportunity
12 to testify today, and I look forward to
13 answering any questions you may have.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
15 for your testimony.

16 And we'll hear from Ms. Melissa
17 Muroff. How are you?

18 MS. MUROFF: I am fine. Thank
19 you. Good afternoon.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
21 afternoon.

22 MS. MUROFF: Thank you,
23 Councilman Green, Councilwoman Bass for
24 this opportunity. I am delighted to
25 testify in favor of a net zero philosophy

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2 and its impact on local businesses and
3 communities. My name is Melissa Muroff.
4 I am the President of Roofmeadow. We are
5 a woman-owned specialty landscape
6 architecture and engineering firm located
7 in Mount Airy. For 20 years, we have
8 been creating amenity green spaces on
9 challenging urban sites that tend to
10 manage huge amounts of stormwater. Our
11 projects range from engaging green roof
12 parks like Cira Green to stormwater
13 playgrounds like the new Waterloo Rec
14 Center.

15 I am inspired to weigh in in
16 favor of a net zero philosophy for the
17 built environment regarding stormwater,
18 and insofar as stormwater is concerned,
19 Philadelphia is really lucky.
20 Philadelphia's groundbreaking Green City,
21 Clean Waters program already is
22 turbo-charging efforts to minimize
23 rainwater discharge into an overtaxed
24 sewer system.

25 Non-compliance with the federal

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2 Clean Water Act subjected Philadelphia to
3 an EPA administrative order for
4 compliance and consent in 2012.
5 Obligated to present a doable plan to
6 achieve compliance with the Clean Water
7 Act, Philadelphia proposed to the EPA and
8 the PADEP a cutting-edge citywide plan
9 called Green City, Clean Waters.
10 Adopting this novel plan saved the City
11 about \$8 billion compared to the
12 traditional approach of building bigger
13 sewer pipes and treatment plants.

14 So Green City, Clean Waters
15 uses tools like stormwater fees and
16 regulations to vest property owners with
17 the responsibility of restricting
18 rainfall from flowing into the City
19 sewers from their own property. That's
20 fair. These fees and regulations lay the
21 foundation for stormwater managing green
22 space and for critical sewer
23 infrastructure maintenance. Waiving
24 these stormwater fees and/or regulatory
25 compliance for any reason is really

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2 undermining this critical work.

3 Certainly fees and regulations
4 have the effect of redistributing wealth,
5 but this redistribution is promoting a
6 net zero philosophy, generating new green
7 space amenities across all neighborhoods,
8 has boosted revenues in my industry by
9 about 14 percent, and is supporting, as
10 Saleem said, a minimum of 430 local jobs,
11 according to the Econsult/SBN report that
12 Saleem had mentioned. These City
13 incentives that motivate property owners
14 to reuse and recharge rainwater also are
15 recharging jobs for architects, landscape
16 architects, engineers, contractors. This
17 is a sector that was devastated by the
18 2008 financial crisis. Our industry is
19 rebounding, and Green City, Clean Waters
20 is helping.

21 For Roofmeadow alone, this
22 fertile business climate has allowed us
23 to spin off a new contracting company
24 that now employs nine people and to form
25 a stormwater playground collaboration

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2 with a newly formed Philadelphia-based
3 partner firm. We applaud the City's
4 continued support of programs like Green
5 City, Clean Waters that helps encourage a
6 net zero stormwater discharge and that
7 delivers net positives to Philadelphia
8 businesses and neighborhoods. The City's
9 leadership and vision at this level
10 inspires Roofmeadow and a lot of other
11 businesses like it to continue to
12 reinvest and recommit to Philadelphia.

13 Thank you for this opportunity.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And thank
15 you for your testimony.

16 Councilman Green.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
18 Madam Chair.

19 I wanted to start with
20 Ms. Muroff and Mr. Chapman. Thank you
21 for your advocacy, both through your
22 entrepreneurial venture, as well as to
23 SBN. And I'm curious from the
24 perspective of folks along the economy
25 aspect and the economic benefits this

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2 provides in creating jobs in the City of
3 Philadelphia. I think -- and this goes
4 back to my question in the first panel --
5 that we don't spend enough time talking
6 about by having a zero waste or a net
7 waste type of policy, what type of
8 economic benefits in industry type of
9 jobs can be created throughout the City
10 of Philadelphia. So if you could talk a
11 little bit about that from your
12 perspective from SBN and also from
13 Roofmeadow, what job opportunities it
14 provided for you within the City because
15 of some of the things that have occurred
16 in this environment.

17 MR. CHAPMAN: Sure. I can
18 start, and I think the best example is to
19 use my own personal story. I grew up in
20 West Philadelphia. I didn't know much
21 about sustainability. I didn't go to
22 school for sustainability or anything
23 like that. I sort of found myself in it
24 as a result of a social justice advocate.
25 I wanted to see the economic resurgence

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2 of my community. And I, for a while,
3 worked in environmental justice sort of
4 trying to mitigate the more negative
5 aspects of capitalism, for lack of a
6 better term, but when I found out about
7 SBN and saw the opportunity, one, to
8 address environmental concerns but, at
9 the same time, spur a whole new economy,
10 it was something that really connected
11 and resonated with me. And I think that
12 as an environmental community, we don't
13 do a good enough job of telling that
14 story and articulating it in a way that
15 connects with people who may not see the
16 more positive aspects. If they don't
17 have sort of the vibrant park space or
18 some of the other environmental amenities
19 that express so much passion for people
20 to protect, it's really hard for them to
21 understand or connect with that
22 narrative. And so we need to find the
23 narrative in a framework that they can
24 connect with and understand that this is
25 the conduit to really address some of the

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2 longstanding concerns that they've had.

3 MS. MUROFF: That question is
4 really a pleasure to answer, because
5 prior to Green City, Clean Waters and the
6 City's commitment to move away from
7 throwing out stormwater, I guess,
8 throwing it out down the sewer, we didn't
9 really work much here. We've been based
10 in Philadelphia since 1997. In the
11 beginning, we hardly worked in
12 Philadelphia. We worked everywhere else.

13 Since Green City, Clean Waters,
14 since there was a motivation to use
15 stormwater as a resource and as a way to
16 recharge community spaces and amenities,
17 everything changed. I really have to try
18 to make sure that the company works in
19 other jurisdictions, because almost all
20 of our work is here.

21 But that's not really all. The
22 stormwater industry that got created
23 launched a local trade association, which
24 is GSI Partners -- it's a project of
25 SBN -- that supports the Greater

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2 Philadelphia area. I don't know of
3 another trade association based on green
4 stormwater infrastructure in the country.
5 That's really novel.

6 Thirdly, the motivation to use
7 stormwater and create community spaces
8 and build communities launched this whole
9 kind of stormwater playground initiative,
10 and that served as an impetus to try to
11 create a new local economy in
12 Philadelphia around play workers as a way
13 to bring communities together to create
14 job opportunities for youth in
15 communities that are really struggling in
16 that regard.

17 So I am seeing like this domino
18 effect of job creation and of community
19 building that's fascinating. It's a
20 really exciting time for our industry.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And on
22 several perspectives, I want to -- Mr.
23 Sampson, we've had conversations
24 regarding composting here in the City of
25 Philadelphia, and thank you for your very

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2 detailed testimony. And you heard some
3 of the commentary made by the earlier
4 panel in reference to trying to grow
5 composting here in the City of
6 Philadelphia, and I'm curious on your
7 thoughts on that, because that's some of
8 the things we've talked about in the past
9 but really needs -- I think that's a
10 really robust opportunity here in the
11 City of Philadelphia, but it's got to be
12 done in the right way.

13 There's been attempts at
14 different types of composting
15 initiatives. We talked about in Delaware
16 and the digester and that type of process
17 that didn't pan out well, but I think
18 Philadelphia provides a prime opportunity
19 for that.

20 And then, two, just to follow
21 up on that, considering that we were so
22 far ahead of the game years ago in
23 starting curbside recycling and then we
24 kind of got away from that and now we're
25 kind of trailing many other cities. So I

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2 wanted to get your thoughts on that as
3 well.

4 MR. SAMPSON: Well, why don't I
5 start there. It's all relative. Where
6 we were in 1985 to nearly the '90s was in
7 a planning process before anybody else
8 had started planning. And the people
9 came to visit the City from San Francisco
10 and from Los Angeles, and they modeled
11 their planning process after the one that
12 was going on here. And then what
13 happened is that we simply stopped
14 moving, and they kept moving forward. We
15 had the opportunity. We did a pilot --
16 we did the initial pilot program that was
17 in Mount Airy/Chestnut Hill, and then we
18 just went into hibernation for a number
19 of years while everybody else went ahead
20 and pulled it off.

21 I always like to be careful and
22 say we were ahead. It was all relative.
23 We weren't really -- we weren't
24 recycling, but we were way ahead of
25 everybody in figuring out what needed to

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2 be done, and we lost the political will,
3 you know. And until 2007 when Mayor
4 Nutter came in, we had not really put out
5 an effort. It's sort of hard to imagine
6 how far we've come in that amount of
7 time, but we did not have citywide
8 curbside recycling until really the
9 spring of 2008.

10 I think on the other side,
11 composting is an industry that has hardly
12 started yet. It is in its infancy in our
13 region. And just as an example that sort
14 of marries what we've all been saying
15 here, green infrastructure uses a lot of
16 compost. I know one of the companies
17 that makes it, and what he says to me,
18 you know, a lot of our costs that you're
19 paying is the transportation cost to get
20 the compost to you. If you made it here,
21 you could make it from your own organic
22 waste and to your compost, with people
23 employed there, with a procurement
24 program that essentially you got Streets
25 Department involved, you got the Water

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2 Department involved, building green
3 infrastructure projects. Everything
4 happens without leaving the borders. In
5 fact, the whole nature of the compost
6 industry is is that you want to try to
7 put your site as close to the center of
8 the population as possible, because where
9 it gets used is mostly in landscaping and
10 those kind of operations. It's where the
11 people are. So by putting it close to
12 where everybody is, you cut down that
13 transportation. There is more
14 opportunity to profit if you're in that
15 field. And then again, we know it's 24
16 percent of our waste. So that's
17 win-win-win. I mean, you can keep
18 counting the wins. It just comes over
19 and over again.

20 The thing about composting is
21 you're right, it has to be done right.
22 It is an industry-driven phenomena.
23 Recycling was an industry-driven
24 phenomena. That's really important to
25 understand.

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2 We can set the environment for
3 it by being receptive to it, but you're
4 talking about bringing in folks who can
5 make the investment and giving them what
6 they need.

7 The site in Wilmington was 600
8 tons per day. It was the size we needed
9 for the City of Philadelphia. It wasn't
10 the process that didn't work. The
11 process worked. In fact, the process was
12 considered the edge of technology. It
13 was the people running it. And it was a
14 massive failure that had to be closed
15 down, because if it wasn't, it would have
16 destroyed composting for probably another
17 generation.

18 But you want to look at that
19 picture of that footprint. We can do
20 that in Northeast Philly. We have the
21 space. It's here, you know. Maybe what
22 we need is a willingness to invest and
23 support that. Our job is to figure out
24 how to collect it from the residential.
25 But it's going to happen from the

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2 commercial sector first. They want to do
3 it, but the service isn't available. And
4 the service isn't available because there
5 aren't enough facilities around.

6 Now, there's enough permitted
7 facilities in the old gravel pits that
8 are outside of the City. They've all
9 been permitted for composting, and there
10 is more than enough room, but the truth
11 of the matter is, they're just outside of
12 the travel distance that makes any sense
13 for somebody to drive a truck and pick it
14 up, you know.

15 We could look at putting
16 together our own transfer station where
17 we receive it from collectors in order to
18 go out there. That's a strategy. Most
19 of the people using that first one would
20 be commercial dealers picking up from
21 commercial operations, but then that's
22 where a big chunk of the food waste sits
23 in all these restaurants that are opening
24 up in the City, you know, but a strategic
25 investment of City funds there. Once the

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2 collection system is in place, the
3 processing system is in place, then we
4 can talk about pilot programs from the
5 City, how do we pick it up, because
6 that's a whole other part of this. And I
7 have to tell you, the part that I know is
8 the hardest and we are so far from
9 talking about it, we have to reconfigure
10 our whole waste collection system when it
11 comes down to doing composting.

12 Recycling only began when I was
13 having a meeting and three members of the
14 union stepped in and said, we won't stop
15 running the trucks as long as you put two
16 people on every truck. And a recycling
17 pilot program then began about six months
18 later. Until then, there was a hesitancy
19 to do anything, because we weren't sure
20 if we could cross that barrier.

21 We are not at that point yet.
22 That is a point we're going to have to
23 jump when it comes to providing
24 composting for everybody from the
25 resident, but right now helping the

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2 industry build and figuring out what
3 strategic support can we give, because
4 the players are here. I mean, quite
5 frankly, we have some people who are
6 running programs here that write the
7 regulations for the state. They know how
8 to do it. People from New York have been
9 trying to bring them their trash, and
10 it's like, we don't deal in trash. We
11 make a product. So if you're bringing us
12 garbage, you can take it home. And they
13 have the right attitude. And they've
14 been here. They were actually at your
15 hearing here before. In fact, that whole
16 idea was mentioned at that hearing of how
17 we could do it here.

18 But we need to do a whole lot
19 more conversation with our haulers, our
20 waste haulers in the City. They are not
21 in this loop. The people that do the
22 collection of trash are not in this loop
23 at all.

24 When the Pope came to town, we
25 didn't even have a good list of who all

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2 of them were. We got it together, but
3 the truth of the matter is is that we
4 have critically distanced ourselves from
5 the haulers forever, and if we're going
6 to do this, they have the expertise, they
7 know how to pick up and collect, and we
8 need to bring them in the loop.

9 I have to tell you, at the
10 beginning of recycling, everybody was at
11 that table. I learned recycling from
12 industry. I learned from haulers and I
13 learned from people in the industry.
14 That's where I learned how to do this
15 game, and it's where we're going to learn
16 how to do composting. But it is an
17 industry-driven phenomena in which we
18 will take advantage of in order to move
19 the material from each household into the
20 marketplace. And any other thought or
21 some idea that we're going to create the
22 industry, that's not what's being talked
23 about now, but if you hear it, I'm
24 telling you, it is the wrong way. It
25 won't happen like that.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
4 Madam Chair.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

6 Thank you all for being here
7 today. Thank you so much for your
8 testimony and the wealth of information
9 around this important issue.

10 And if we could have the Clerk
11 now call up the last panel, Panel 3.

12 And is there anyone else here
13 to testify who has not signed up on a
14 panel?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Is there
17 anyone else?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Okay.

20 THE CLERK: Panel No. 3, Tim
21 Bennett, Founder and Principal of Bennett
22 Compost; Kaitlin Bowdler, Deputy Director
23 of Sustainability, Philabundance; Logan
24 Welde, Esquire, Staff Attorney to Clean
25 Air Council.

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2 (Witnesses approached witness
3 table.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: And once
5 again, I just want to put out another
6 call. If there's anyone else who wanted
7 to testify but did not sign up, there's
8 still time to sign up. Okay?

9 And, Mr. Bennett, if we can
10 have you go first. We'll just have you
11 state your name for the record and begin
12 your testimony.

13 MR. BENNETT: Great. Thank
14 you, Councilwoman. My name is Tim
15 Bennett. I'm the Founder and Principal
16 of Bennett Compost. I want to thank
17 Councilman Green for inviting me and also
18 Councilwoman Bass, who has been a
19 longtime supporter of everything that we
20 do, and we've been helping her compost
21 for a little while at her home.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you
23 very much.

24 MR. BENNETT: No problem.

25 So I'm here to kind of just

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2 share my story again of how we started
3 and what opportunities we see.

4 Eight years ago I lived in a
5 second floor apartment in South
6 Philadelphia and I wanted to compost, but
7 I didn't have space to do it. So I
8 thought about how I could handle that. I
9 talked to some people, and I started this
10 company with a hundred dollars and a
11 desire to kind of learn and do and grow.

12 Today we're not a huge company,
13 but we do employ four full-time people
14 who all make a living wage and who will
15 very shortly have health benefits. We
16 also employ six part-time people. We
17 collect household food waste from over
18 1,700 households throughout Philadelphia,
19 throughout many of the different
20 neighborhoods throughout the City. We
21 also work with about 75 different
22 commercial customers to collect their
23 waste and turn it into compost as well.

24 I really see this both kind of
25 as an opportunity to grow what we do in

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2 terms of an environmental impact, but
3 also, as has been mentioned, as really an
4 economic impact. And I think that we can
5 kind of offer a case study for how it can
6 be done in partnership with private
7 industry.

8 I didn't come in here with
9 extensive knowledge or extensive
10 expertise when I started, but what we've
11 learned and the systems we've developed
12 can be replicated by other entrepreneurs
13 and other businesses throughout the City
14 to create similar things to what we're
15 doing throughout the City in all
16 different neighborhoods, because as we've
17 mentioned, the closer you can do to
18 collection, the better it is for both the
19 environment and the economics, and
20 aligning those two things is really kind
21 of important.

22 What I would encourage Council
23 to think about as they move forward with
24 this is how the people who are already
25 doing composting in the City, people not

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2 just like myself and the people I work
3 with, but people like The Compost Coop in
4 East Kensington, The Dirt Factory in West
5 Philadelphia, Saul High School up in
6 Roxborough, the things that they are
7 already doing around composting and how
8 those programs can be replicated as well
9 in different communities throughout the
10 City, how they can create economic
11 opportunities and employment
12 opportunities for the people there.

13 I would also encourage Council
14 to reach out to their colleagues on the
15 state level to help to look at the
16 regulatory infrastructure around
17 specifically urban composting and small
18 to medium-scale facilities. So that
19 while I don't personally believe we need
20 one big facility the size of Wilmington
21 that can handle 600 tons a day of food
22 waste, I'd like to see 200 facilities
23 that can handle three to four tons a day
24 of waste. I think that's really the kind
25 of -- spread-out approach is really the

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2 way to go in terms of that.

3 I do think that the work the
4 City is doing in setting up the Zero
5 Waste Council is a good step. I think
6 that the conversations that we've had
7 with the Administration and specifically
8 Mr. Nic Esposito have been very
9 encouraging in terms of their direction
10 and the goals that they're setting. So I
11 would encourage Council to work with them
12 and also to hold them accountable to the
13 things that they say that they're going
14 to do.

15 And I would like to thank you
16 again for your time and look forward to
17 any questions you may have later.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Councilman
19 Green.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So I'm
21 curious, what are some of the dynamics
22 that you would think from the things
23 you've learned from your business, from
24 when you started with a hundred dollars
25 to where you are now? Like what were

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2 some of the public policy things you
3 would need to see at a local level for
4 your business to grow and for other
5 businesses to grow to increase and
6 enhance the composting industry in
7 Philadelphia?

8 MR. BENNETT: I'm sorry. Can
9 you just repeat the first part of that
10 question.

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I mean,
12 considering where you started, what are
13 some of the things you've learned since
14 you started your business and what are
15 some of the policy decisions that can
16 happen at the local level, either from
17 the legislative branch or the executive
18 branch, to help grow the composting
19 industry in the City?

20 MR. BENNETT: So I think some
21 of it is just around kind of the
22 messaging around composting, what's
23 important. There have been times when --
24 most of the people we work with have been
25 very good and very positive, but more

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2 support and more even just kind of
3 cheerleading and modeling of what the
4 right behavior is. So seeing the City,
5 seeing Councilpeople, seeing community
6 organizations kind of leading the way in
7 terms of what they're looking to do and
8 what they're looking to educate people
9 on.

10 I'm a big believer that when
11 you're the only person -- only one person
12 is doing it, they're just kind of a weird
13 person. They're doing their own thing,
14 right? And then two or three people
15 start to do it and it starts to become,
16 well, they're kind of just a little bit
17 of a different group. And then once more
18 and more people start to do it, more and
19 more people want to do it. They see it
20 as just the thing that you do, not
21 something extra that you do. And so
22 working to kind of encourage those
23 behaviors through education and through
24 promotion and also looking at creative
25 ways to use existing land space that may

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2 be available, whether it's in the Parks
3 and Recreation system, whether it's in
4 other City-owned land to look at space
5 that is both near to residential areas to
6 make it more economically viable to do
7 processing close by, but secluded enough
8 that you're not doing it right in
9 someone's backyard, because you do want
10 to be mindful even when composting is
11 done correctly and on a smaller scale,
12 that you want to be mindful of neighbors
13 and other concerns that they might have.

14 I also would just encourage
15 Council to look at other things that
16 other states might be doing, places like
17 New York City that's done some work
18 around community composting and also
19 places like San Francisco and Seattle and
20 Austin, places that are looking at
21 municipal composting on larger levels and
22 to kind of see what works there and what
23 doesn't work there and try to bring some
24 of those strategies back. And then just,
25 like I said, continue to talk to the

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2 people who are doing it on a local level.
3 So talking to, again, not myself, but
4 there are other people who are doing it,
5 The Compost Coop, The Dirt Factory, Saul
6 High School, and seeing what they're
7 doing well and how those can be
8 replicated so that every district and
9 every neighborhood in the City can have
10 places where composting is happening and
11 things are working well.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.
13 Your comments kind of reflect some of the
14 earlier comments that I made with the
15 first panel about marketing and
16 messaging, and I think you're spot on in
17 reference to municipal -- we talked about
18 recycling earlier, where it was kind of
19 like, well, you're the interesting person
20 that does recycling, and then more and
21 more people start doing it, it becomes
22 mainstream, trying to change the culture.
23 I think that's what would need to happen
24 here in the City of Philadelphia, but
25 from a public sector perspective, we have

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2 like the large megaphone that can make
3 that happen. And I think part of the
4 challenge is that we need to dedicate
5 resources to help message the concept and
6 also letting people know the benefit of
7 recycling and -- composting, excuse me,
8 in the City of Philadelphia, what type of
9 financial impact it has.

10 One thing you made reference to
11 is community composting, and I've been
12 trying to explore that concept. I know
13 it raises challenges when you have a
14 larger, slightly larger, composting site,
15 when you have multiple people involved in
16 that process and how it can attract other
17 elements and challenges. You made
18 reference to New York and San Fran. How
19 have they done community composting? Is
20 that like a small -- like on a block
21 level or a neighborhood level? How are
22 they doing that?

23 MR. BENNETT: Well, they're
24 doing -- I mean, San Francisco actually
25 is doing kind of citywide municipal

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2 composting, but New York City has
3 actually invested resources in developing
4 specific community composting programs.
5 So on individual scales where they're
6 composting doing either collections at
7 farmers' markets or having drop-off sites
8 where people can bring stuff to. And I
9 think combining some of those ideas,
10 which we're also seeing in Philadelphia,
11 like I said, with place like The Compost
12 Coop and The Dirt Factory, with frankly
13 some of the stuff that we're doing in
14 terms of neighborhood collection routes
15 and neighborhood collection of materials
16 and working to how do we integrate that,
17 how do we replicate what we're doing and
18 how do we incentive people in different
19 neighborhoods.

20 We did a pilot program a couple
21 years ago with a neighborhood group,
22 Urban Tree Connection in West
23 Philadelphia, and during the two years
24 that we were working with them, we
25 actually were able to get more people on

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2 the one block right off of 53rd Street.
3 I forget exactly -- 53rd and Wyalusing,
4 the 5300 block of Wyalusing, and more
5 people doing curbside collection than any
6 other block in the City, and that was
7 because of a partnership between us and
8 private -- us and the private sector and
9 a non-profit organization with community
10 ties and then working with funders to
11 kind of provide some funding for what a
12 program like that would look like on a
13 very small micro scale, like I said, one
14 block. But that's kind of where you
15 start, is looking at these neighborhoods
16 in micro scales, working with existing
17 people who are doing things, testing them
18 out in small ways, figuring out what
19 works and doesn't, and then replicating
20 the things that work throughout the
21 neighborhoods and throughout the City so
22 that all of our residents have access to
23 this, all of our residents are available
24 to participate in both the environmental
25 and economic impacts.

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2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.

4 And thank you very much for the
5 service that you provide. I thoroughly
6 enjoyed Bennett Composting myself and the
7 very important work that you provide,
8 because it's really, as we all know, the
9 only service in the region that prevents
10 additional waste. There would be
11 additional waste, additional wait in the
12 pickup by the Streets Department. And so
13 you really do relieve the City of
14 Philadelphia from a considerable amount
15 of that weight. So, again, many thanks
16 to you.

17 MR. BENNETT: Thank you,
18 Councilwoman.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: You're
20 welcome.

21 And if we could have the next
22 person state their name for the record
23 and begin their testimony.

24 MS. BOWDLER: Good afternoon,
25 Councilwoman Bass and Councilmember

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2 Green. My name is Kaitlin Bowdler and
3 I'm the Deputy Director of Sustainability
4 with Philabundance, and thank you for
5 allowing me the opportunity to speak
6 today on the importance of a zero waste
7 goal.

8 Philabundance is the Delaware
9 Valley's largest hunger relief
10 organization, serving more than 90,000
11 people each week in nine counties across
12 PA and Southern New Jersey. Of those
13 served, 30 percent are children and 16
14 percent are seniors.

15 While one in eight in the U.S.
16 are considered food insecure, locally
17 hunger is a crisis faced by one in five
18 Philadelphians. With 40 percent of all
19 food in the U.S. going to waste -- that's
20 almost half -- there is an opportunity
21 for us to address two challenges with one
22 action.

23 In 1984, Philabundance was
24 founded on the idea that you can do food
25 recovery with one person and one car

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2 locally picking up food from Philadelphia
3 and delivering it. Today we distribute
4 approximately 24 million pounds of food
5 every year. Of that, 17 million pounds
6 is food that would have directly been
7 diverted from the waste stream. So we
8 already know that there can be a huge
9 impact when you do food recovery efforts.

10 We partner with local grocery
11 stores, farmers, manufacturers, and
12 others to recover items that they cannot
13 otherwise sell, whether because of a
14 cosmetic imperfection, an excess in
15 supply or simply because it's close to
16 "sell by" date. And nationally if we
17 diverted 15 percent of the perfectly good
18 food that's going to waste right now, we
19 could address over half of those who are
20 considered food insecure across the
21 nation. Think about what we could do
22 locally.

23 \$218 billion worth of food is
24 thrown away each year. According to the
25 EPA's Food Recovery Hierarchy, prevention

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2 is our first priority. So if you haven't
3 seen it, prevention is on the top and
4 then feeding hungry people is the second
5 priority. Because of that, we know that
6 you can retain a higher level of economic
7 value of that food the higher you reach
8 it in the chain. So food recovery should
9 be a high priority when we're considering
10 our zero waste initiative locally.

11 Philadelphia is uniquely
12 positioned as a major international port
13 and regional distribution hub for produce
14 and can play a leadership role in
15 reducing food waste. Vendors that donate
16 food also receive an economic benefit
17 through reduced hauling fees as well as
18 federal tax incentives. In the last six
19 months, Philabundance has recovered close
20 to a million pounds from our local
21 wholesale produce market that's down in
22 South Philadelphia. Normally vendors
23 would have to pay a disposal fee of \$65
24 per pallet, but because of us, we've
25 saved all of our vendor partners there

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2 over \$275,000 in just six months. In
3 that same time period, we've recovered
4 nine million pounds from the port. So
5 the international port of Philadelphia
6 brings in a large amount of food, but
7 most of that is going directly to waste.
8 So what we can come in is, we can recover
9 that food and we can save them hauling
10 fees as well as cost savings.

11 We have to think innovatively
12 in order to do our part to meet the
13 ambitious goal of 90 percent reduction by
14 2035, and that is why we're working with
15 the Claneil Foundation, a local
16 foundation, to pilot value-added
17 processing programs, which turns donated
18 food into a longer usable shelf life for
19 those items by turning it into cheese,
20 relishes, soups, whatever you can think
21 of, and then giving that directly to our
22 neighbors in need.

23 Philabundance is also
24 partnering with Food Connect app to
25 connect local small donors directly to

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2 those in need. In order to make
3 systematic change, we are working with
4 the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic,
5 SWRAC, and others to support policy
6 efforts to encourage waste reduction,
7 recovery, and composting across the
8 entire supply chain.

9 By making food recovery a
10 prominent part of the City's zero waste
11 goal, we can feed people, not landfills.
12 This, in turn, supports our whole
13 community and saves money across the
14 chain. City governments have a critical
15 role to play in convening all sectors of
16 society and to make change on this scale,
17 and I really do thank you for your
18 leadership on this issue.

19 I'd love to invite you and your
20 staff members to come to Philabundance.
21 I know Councilman Green has already been
22 to visit our site down in South
23 Philadelphia and your -- yes, I know you
24 know Glenn very well, Glenn Bergman, our
25 Executive Director. And so I do support

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2 both of your appreciation for the work
3 that we're doing.

4 So I just want to continue if
5 you ever want to come down or encourage
6 others to come visit us, I'd be happy to
7 give them a tour and show them around,
8 and we can continue to talk about how we
9 can collaborate to reduce food waste and
10 alleviate hunger in our region.

11 Thank you.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you.
13 And I just claimed Glenn as one of my
14 Eighth District Council constituent. But
15 thank you.

16 MS. BOWDLER: He claims you as
17 well and he wanted to make sure I said
18 hello on his behalf.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I'm so glad
20 that he does.

21 And, sir, if we can have you
22 state your name for the record and begin
23 your testimony as well.

24 MR. WELDE: Hi. My name is
25 Logan Welde. I'm an attorney at the

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2 Clean Air Council. Clean Air Council is
3 a Pennsylvania-based environmental
4 non-profit with headquarters in
5 Philadelphia, and we reach about 14,500
6 Philadelphians either through membership
7 or through activism.

8 So I was lucky enough to sit
9 through all the speeches today, and I
10 thought they were great. And as I
11 suspected, I felt that coming into this,
12 most of them were going to be about what
13 do we do in Philadelphia with the trash
14 that's here and how do we deal with the
15 trash that is in the City and how do we
16 divert it.

17 So I'm obsessed with trash and
18 waste in Philadelphia, and I want you to
19 just reimagine how you think about trash.
20 Don't think about trash as it's here, how
21 do we deal with it. It's like you
22 sitting in your home with your door wide
23 open and a robber coming in and you
24 saying, okay, you're here, what are you
25 going to steal? Don't steal that because

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2 I've got all my work on that computer.

3 No. You would lock your door.

4 You would make sure that your house is
5 protected.

6 We are leaving the City
7 vulnerable to people bringing trash in.
8 There is no responsibility on the part of
9 the restaurants, on the part of the
10 manufacturers, cigarette companies. They
11 bring their trash into the City and then
12 they let us deal with it. That's not the
13 way that a responsible, progressive city
14 should be dealing with it. So I'm
15 challenging you, rethink how you feel
16 about trash. Don't look at it as
17 something that we need to deal with
18 because it's here. Look at it as
19 something that we need to reduce before
20 it comes into the City. And I'm going to
21 give you a few solutions hopefully.

22 So it's an epidemic. I've
23 lived in West Philadelphia. I've lived
24 in Northern Liberties. I live in
25 Kensington now. And when I lived at 55th

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2 and Osage, it was disgusting. It was
3 trashed. Now, that was most of that area
4 out there. People get depressed when
5 they live in trashed neighborhoods.
6 Housing prices crumble. Businesses don't
7 want to walk into that area and open up a
8 shop there. Why would they? The
9 neighborhood is trashed.

10 Where I live in Kensington
11 right now, I have a dog. I don't even
12 need to take a plastic bag out when I
13 walk my dog because there are literally
14 150 bags on the corner of my
15 intersection. There's a store there and
16 there's a school right around the corner.
17 Every single morning the kids go in
18 there, they get their chocolate bars or
19 whatever they get in the morning, they
20 come out with a plastic bag and drop the
21 plastic bag on the ground. Every single
22 morning I pick up at least 15 plastic
23 bags from that corner alone.

24 So the fact is, we've changed
25 the way that we've lived. Nic mentioned

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2 his grandfather grew up in the
3 Depression. My grandmother grew up in
4 the Depression. My dad grew up in West
5 Philadelphia. We would talk about -- we
6 used to create -- I think you mentioned
7 earlier when you were younger, you would
8 create a little bit of trash every day.
9 You wouldn't create pounds and pounds of
10 trash every single day.

11 The average American -- and
12 Philadelphia is pretty average in this
13 respect -- we create four pounds of trash
14 a day. That's as much as families
15 produced in weeks a generation and a half
16 ago probably.

17 So where have we gotten this
18 from? Why have we become -- we're
19 basically producers of trash, and in the
20 City it's magnified. So, for example,
21 you go into a restaurant in the morning
22 and you can really tell -- you look at an
23 average day, and the average day is what
24 trash did I produce today? So you go
25 into the McDonald's in the morning and

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2 you get a Big Mac that's wrapped up. You
3 get fries in a container. They put it in
4 a bag. They give you utensils. They
5 give you ketchup, mustard, all these
6 condiments, and napkins. You throw out
7 90 percent of it because you didn't use
8 the 15 packs of ketchup that they gave.

9 So really by the end of one
10 day, we have produced so much trash, and
11 most of it was superfluous. Most of it
12 was stuff -- why do you need utensils
13 when you go to a restaurant to get
14 take-out to come home and throw them in
15 the trash when you've got silverware at
16 home? Why are we allowing businesses in
17 our communities to give people trash that
18 no one is going to use? They're going to
19 go right into the trash stream, and we as
20 consumers are paying for them.

21 So we've dealt with plastic
22 bags for a long time, and I'm sure some
23 of you might remember that I worked with
24 Councilman Squilla on a plastic bag bill.
25 It went nowhere. Unfortunately plastic

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2 bags are one of the most polluted items
3 in Philadelphia. It's something that we
4 can easily not only turn from a cost
5 source to Philadelphia but to a source of
6 revenue for Philadelphia.

7 We spend millions of dollars
8 cleaning out plastic bags from the water
9 infrastructure and the lakes and streams
10 that are around Philadelphia. We could
11 turn that into \$5 to \$7 million a year in
12 revenue generation, and all it is is
13 changing behavior.

14 We have become these people
15 that just expect to get trash every step
16 of the way. We walk into a restaurant,
17 we get trash. We walk into a store, we
18 get trash. We get trash with all of our
19 stuff.

20 It's an epidemic. So we need
21 to stop the trash that's coming into the
22 City, and the only way to really do that
23 is to put a fee on it. As I said,
24 plastic bags aren't free. When you go to
25 the grocery store, they break it into the

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2 cost of goods sold. You buy a can of
3 soup, you buy some deodorant, the price
4 of the bags is baked into those goods.
5 You're paying for that. So you go to the
6 checkout, oh, yeah, give me two bags,
7 they're free. They're not free. And
8 then the society, the community, the
9 municipalities got to deal with those
10 plastic bags or the other items, the
11 water bottles, when they're dropped on
12 the ground after the consumer is done
13 with them.

14 So really we live our lives
15 producing trash, and municipalities and
16 taxpayers are the ultimate people and
17 organizations that are dealing with that
18 trash.

19 So I just wanted -- there are a
20 few programs. This is -- who knows what
21 this sticker is? You've never seen this
22 sticker?

23 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: No.

24 MR. WELDE: This sticker is one
25 of the most valuable ways that we can

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2 deal with trash in Philadelphia at a
3 street level, right?

4 You can show it to them, sure.

5 So this is the circular-free
6 sticker. It's a circular-free program.
7 Before Clean Air Council started to pick
8 these up from L&I, they gave out about
9 9,000 of those. In my time at Clean Air
10 Council, we've given about 2,000 of those
11 away, and that's only been a few years.
12 I give them to people on my block. I
13 give them to -- every time we have an
14 event, we give them out to people.

15 It's a program that tells
16 someone when they come to your door, hey,
17 you cannot leave anything in this house.
18 So you know what? We need to expand this
19 program. We need to change the program
20 so that instead of opting out of the --
21 literally you're getting trash at your
22 door every day, and I know all three of
23 you live in Philadelphia, and I know you
24 know what I'm talking about. You come
25 home, you have a pound of trash at your

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2 door sometimes. And obviously I'm being
3 a little emphatic there, but there is a
4 lot of trash at your door. You put that
5 sticker on your door, they're not allowed
6 to leave anything.

7 So we need to change the
8 program. We need to make it so that they
9 can knock on your door and they can leave
10 something, but they can't just leave
11 trash on your doorstep, and you can have
12 a sticker that says, please leave a menu
13 here. So it should be an opt in, not an
14 opt out.

15 I mean, speaking about
16 robberies, what better way that you know
17 that someone's house is vacant or
18 unoccupied for a long period time than to
19 have four or five menus jammed into their
20 door, as I'm sure you've seen some of
21 your neighbors when they go on vacation
22 their houses look like that. So it
23 invites crime into neighborhoods when you
24 have that.

25 As I mentioned before, fees and

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2 deposits are really the only way if you
3 want to get serious about trash in
4 Philadelphia and create -- zero waste
5 isn't going to come from diverting all of
6 the things. I think a few members of the
7 panels have spoken about this today.
8 You're not going to be able to divert all
9 of the stuff that comes into the City,
10 because a lot of it becomes fugitive and
11 it becomes trash that floats around in
12 the wind.

13 So what we need to do: We need
14 to put a fee on plastic bags. We need to
15 start putting fees -- encourage
16 restaurants, find a way to encourage
17 restaurants not to just give plastic to
18 everyone. Bring your own container. I'm
19 going to show you, this is what I bring.
20 Every time I go out, I've got a
21 Tupperware container. When I get
22 take-out, I bring my own Tupperware
23 container, I bring my own napkin, and I
24 bring my own spork. I'm not saying
25 everyone can live this way, but it's

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2 easy. Once you get used to -- once you
3 change your behavior, this is how you can
4 start living.

5 My goal every single day,
6 produce zero trash. And I come pretty
7 damn close on a daily basis.

8 So what else can we do? And I
9 put a memo in there of ideas that I've
10 given over time to Councilman Green's
11 office and a few other offices. Actually
12 all of your offices.

13 So require restaurants to
14 charge for items. Make sure that they
15 don't just give these items out, because
16 ultimately taxpayers are paying for them.

17 The Yellow Pages, how many
18 people here have stopped using Yellow
19 Pages? We get millions of pounds of
20 Yellow Pages every single -- twice a year
21 in Philadelphia. Do you know who pays to
22 have the Yellow Pages shipped out of
23 Philadelphia and tipped? Because they're
24 often -- sometimes they'll go in the
25 recycling bin. Sometimes they don't. If

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2 it rains, that's ruined. It's
3 contaminated. That goes into the trash.

4 Philadelphia taxpayers pay for
5 Yellow Pages at about five pounds a book
6 times 1.5 million people to come into the
7 City twice a year. Why do we still have
8 Yellow Pages?

9 Prohibit Styrofoam. Styrofoam
10 is the type of material that is a cancer
11 to communities. It breaks up. It can't
12 be recycled. It goes and flows away into
13 the rivers, and it breaks up into small
14 pieces. It's almost impossible to pick
15 up.

16 Cigarette butts, they're one of
17 the most littered pieces of trash in
18 Philadelphia in most places. Put a
19 cigarette butt deposit on the cigarette
20 butts. Encourage people -- you talked
21 about jobs earlier. You start putting --
22 I lived in New York for eight years.
23 There are people whose whole jobs are to
24 pick up things that there's deposits on.
25 Water bottles, you see water bottles and

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2 plastic bottles all throughout the City.
3 Why don't we put a deposit on the bottle
4 and encourage people to walk around the
5 City and earn their income from bringing
6 that trash back and having it be
7 recycled? Cigarette butts, the same
8 thing.

9 Enforce recycling. I hear over
10 and over people who live in large
11 residential buildings who their building
12 doesn't recycle. It's very rarely
13 enforced.

14 And short dumping -- Saleem was
15 up here earlier. Saleem used to work at
16 the Clean Air Council. He and I for
17 years advocated to -- there is a program
18 in the short dumping law that allows
19 people to get money when they report
20 short dumping. It's never been funded.
21 On my block it's short dumped. Every
22 single week there is a new living room
23 set on the corner of my block. And you
24 asked the question, why do people bring
25 it to my vacant -- it's the City-owned

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2 lot, 1310. Why do people bring that and
3 dump that there? Every single week
4 there's a dumping of somebody's furniture
5 there. I don't know why actually, but
6 they do. So let's start reporting that.
7 Let's start getting citizens involved in
8 doing that.

9 Composting. Listen, that's
10 been talked about a lot here, and I agree
11 with everything that Tim said about
12 composting. We need it at the local
13 level. We worked on the Delaware
14 composting facility. The neighbors hated
15 it. It smelled so badly, it had to be
16 shut down. Maurice spoke about that
17 earlier. He was right. It was a
18 disaster, and it would have given a bad
19 mark to composting.

20 So we need local composting,
21 and get people involved. People will
22 start to like doing things once they get
23 used to it.

24 We talked about diversion.
25 Yes, that's really important, and

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2 education is really important, but how
3 many people here know not to put plastic
4 bags in their recycling bins? Probably
5 all of us, because you're Councilmembers.
6 Most people that I have lived on the
7 blocks with, they don't know that. You
8 walk down a block, you see a plastic bag
9 in almost every one of the recycling
10 bins.

11 Education goes a long way, but
12 what if we were able to keep 65 to 75
13 percent of those plastic bags out of the
14 stream to begin with? That would greatly
15 encourage people to stop putting things
16 that aren't supposed to be in recycling
17 bins in there.

18 So you need to stop the flow
19 of -- I was just in New Orleans, and it's
20 a very clean city, and I was thinking
21 about how can Philadelphia do this? They
22 have people picking up trash all the
23 time. They have bins everywhere.
24 They've got cigarette butt deposits.
25 TerraCycle is a New Jersey-based

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2 organization or a company that turns
3 things like cigarette butts into -- they
4 reuse them in plastic to make materials.

5 So in order to be as a zero
6 waste city, Philadelphia has got to get
7 creative. They've got to be
8 trailblazers.

9 I often hear people who work or
10 live in the City say, we're years behind
11 other cities. Well, that's not something
12 to be proud of. That's really something
13 to be ashamed of. We should be
14 progressive. We should be on the cutting
15 edge of all of the things that cities are
16 doing.

17 Councilwoman Bass, earlier
18 today you said, well, by 2035 do people
19 really want to live in a trashed
20 neighborhood or city? I can't tell you
21 how many friends of mine have visited
22 from out of city or out of state and they
23 say, Philly is a great city. I take
24 them, you know, down to Rittenhouse
25 Square. I take them all over the City.

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2 Philadelphia is a great, amazing city.
3 And then they -- the end of the sentence
4 is, it's just too dirty, I couldn't live
5 here.

6 Our city is trashed. We are
7 literally swimming in trash. You walk
8 out of your house and there are menus
9 flying everywhere, there are plastic bags
10 flying everywhere, Styrofoam cups
11 everywhere. We've got to really start
12 rethinking what do we want to do as a
13 city. Do we want to be a progressive
14 city with great infrastructure and people
15 moving here and building our tax base and
16 our housing levels, the prices of our
17 housing increasing, which helps the tax
18 base for the school system? You're not
19 going to get a great school system unless
20 we can start attracting new businesses
21 and new people to move to Philadelphia.

22 We should be a city that people
23 are flocking to. But it is just a
24 trashed city, and literally the only
25 thing that people complain about when

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2 they visit me here is this city is just
3 too dirty.

4 So I'm challenging you. Don't
5 think about the diversion. Think about
6 the diversion as, yes, we have to do
7 that. It's reduce, reuse, and recycle.
8 Think about recycling as the last step on
9 this process. It's reducing. Start to
10 enact legislation that puts fees on
11 things at the consumer level. Let a
12 consumer choose do I want to get a fork
13 for five cents when I don't need it, I'm
14 just going home? No, no. No thanks, I
15 don't want the fork, you know. We need
16 to change people's shopping behavior.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Well, I
18 want to thank you for your testimony, and
19 I couldn't agree with you more. I was
20 just thinking about Ikea and how when
21 Ikea changed their policy where they used
22 to give you a bag and then they started
23 charging you 50 cents for a bag. Let me
24 tell you, I made sure before I go in,
25 I've got all my bags and my newspaper.

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2 Like I don't need anything. You know, I
3 don't need to pay 50 cents or more for a
4 bag. And when you change sort of the
5 expectation when you go into a store or
6 if you're charging for a fork or a knife
7 or for the stack of napkins that they're
8 giving that you're going to hopefully not
9 throw away or waste, but that are still
10 at some point going to end up in a
11 landfill, you know, you're hopeful that
12 people will get the message.

13 Before we go further, I do want
14 to acknowledge Councilman Taubenberger
15 who has joined us.

16 And Councilman Green had some
17 questions.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
19 both for your testimony. I think it's
20 very important. It goes to the comments
21 both of the second panel and the first
22 panel about changing behavior.

23 I'm not sure if you heard it
24 earlier that I'm working on legislation
25 to increase the fees for short dumping,

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2 but I think you raised some good points
3 about deposits on different things,
4 because I think those are some other
5 ideas that we should be taking a look at.
6 I mean, I try to extend -- I can conserve
7 a lot. I mean, when Councilwoman Bass
8 mentioned Ikea, one of the bags we use
9 when we go to the beach is a blue and
10 yellow Ikea bag, because they're large.
11 So I always try and think of how can I
12 reuse something all the time. And one of
13 the things that really drives me crazy is
14 the circular person that throws the
15 circular on people's yards with the bag
16 in it. And so -- and Councilwoman Bass
17 and I were just talking about ways to try
18 to address that, because that just drives
19 me crazy. I was behind someone, I think,
20 on Saturday. They were just driving down
21 the street just tossing bags, one bag and
22 two circulars that people more likely are
23 not going to use. I know from my
24 neighbor, I picked it up and put it in
25 the recycling container.

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2 So it raises a good point in
3 reference to that. There's ways we need
4 to do a better job of changing culture.

5 So I guess I have two
6 questions. One for you, Logan. What are
7 some of the things that you see in other
8 cities that -- especially cities that may
9 have had similar issues with trash, large
10 urban areas that have had a trash issue
11 and how they've tried to address trash
12 over a period of time and what things
13 have they done?

14 And then, two, for Kait, for
15 Philabundance, I mean, what are some of
16 the things you're trying to do to grow
17 the stuff that you're doing from food
18 recovery? Ms. Knapp talked about food
19 recovery from her organization. I know
20 you do a lot in that regard. And just
21 seeing the operation you have at
22 Philabundance is really remarkable, but
23 what can we do at a local level to help
24 promote that so more and more people know
25 about the service that you provide in

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2 reference to recovering food and not
3 allowing it just to go to waste, but for
4 a lot of other people to use it? So
5 either person can start.

6 MR. WELDE: Thank you. And the
7 bag -- I just wanted to quickly mention,
8 the bag that you referred to is Redplum,
9 Donnelly Distribution. I have sent
10 countless e-mails to them. I was a block
11 captain. And they refuse to be good
12 businesses. They are a considerable
13 nuisance in Philadelphia, and I have
14 contacted them a number of times, and
15 they refuse to change their business
16 practices. And it is actually not legal
17 to drive and throw the bags. They've got
18 to do that by the door. And if you want
19 to tell your neighbors how to stop it,
20 put that sticker on their door.

21 I spoke with a person who walks
22 around and delivers them when I was at
23 55th and Osage, and I put that on the
24 house that I lived at. We got one every
25 single Friday. The person said they've

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2 been sued so many times, they've got a
3 wall of lawsuits, and if you deliver to
4 any of the houses that are on that wall,
5 you get fired immediately.

6 So, listen, they're not a good
7 neighbor. They trashed these
8 communities, and most people -- those
9 bags literally go from their doorstep
10 into hopefully their recycling bins, but
11 you know what, they go in with a plastic
12 bag into the recycling bin, which costs
13 the municipality money. So really you
14 need to -- you're thinking about this the
15 right way.

16 When you see trash and things
17 like that on the ground and things that
18 are dropped at people's houses, that's
19 money that's coming out of Philadelphia.
20 That's money that schools aren't being
21 able to provide books for the kids and
22 the other valuable resources for
23 Philadelphia.

24 So I did provide a five-page
25 memo, and Frank has the memo. It does

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2 exemplify a few things that other cities
3 are doing. I've spent years studying
4 what practices cities do to deal with
5 trash and litter in more productive ways
6 than to cost municipalities' taxpayers
7 money. But San Francisco, Seattle,
8 they're cities that really are more on
9 the -- New York City, they do a lot of
10 really progressive things on dealing with
11 litter in communities, but one of the
12 biggest things is putting trash cans on
13 every block.

14 This morning there were
15 people -- there must be a site visit up
16 at the park that I go to in the morning
17 at 6th and Master because there were
18 people there cleaning up, and they only
19 clean up when there's a visit from
20 someone in City Council or the Mayor.

21 But there's no trash cans in my
22 neighborhood. Other municipalities put
23 trash cans. And it does cost money, yes,
24 but we've got to balance that with how
25 much litter cost the communities also.

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2 And, honestly, to tell you the
3 truth, this circular-free program is one
4 of the best in the country. If we can
5 really ramp this up -- it's not funded.
6 There's someone at L&I that spends part
7 of their time working on it, but if we
8 can ramp up that litter-free program and
9 change the law as I suggested earlier to
10 make it so that it's instead of opt out,
11 it's opt in, that would be one of the
12 best ways to deal with street-level
13 litter in the whole country.

14 So putting fees on plastic
15 bags, putting fees on -- putting fees on
16 something -- as Councilwoman Bass
17 recommended earlier, municipalities that
18 are able to break out the cost and put
19 fees on them allows the consumers to make
20 the decisions. When people get the
21 decision and it's going to cost them
22 money, they're going to decide not to do
23 something more times than not when they
24 don't need the product to begin with.

25 So that's, I would say -- and

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2 as I mentioned before, there is a
3 five-page memo that has -- Frank said
4 he's given it to you. That does outline
5 a number of things that other cities have
6 done. So I'm obviously not going to go
7 through all of that right now.

8 But just a further example,
9 I've partnered with my school and my
10 neighborhood to bring all of the
11 one-sided paper. When I worked at Clean
12 Air Council, we print on double-sided,
13 but often it's one-sided. I take all of
14 the one-sided paper to my neighborhood
15 school. Why don't we encourage
16 businesses in Philadelphia to partner
17 with school districts and take -- we
18 throw out so much stuff at my office,
19 staplers that we don't need anymore,
20 things like that. I'm sure Comcast and
21 other large businesses, they probably
22 throw out tons and tons of stuff. Why
23 not encourage them to work with -- get a
24 sister or brother school and work with
25 that school, hey, what do you need that

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2 we're throwing out.

3 MS. BOWDLER: So, Councilman
4 Green, to answer your point about what
5 can individuals do to prevent, I would
6 say it's two parts. As far as prevention
7 goes, it's help the City by helping
8 yourself. They've done studies that a
9 family of four wastes \$1,200 worth of
10 food every year because everything is
11 going to waste. So there's a part of
12 your proceeds from your grocery shopping
13 is just going straight to the trash. So
14 if you plan what you're going to purchase
15 before you go into the grocery store,
16 that's going to be a big help.

17 Also supporting farmers'
18 markets, buying ugly produce, making sure
19 that there's -- the standards are
20 changing and being more open.

21 And then I would also say that,
22 again, your dollar counts. So supporting
23 sustainable businesses, encouraging
24 businesses to actually play a part and to
25 care about this. That's what we're

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2 seeing from the NFL Draft. That's why
3 there's a whole sustainability effort
4 that's happening around that. That's why
5 they're doing food recovery. It's
6 because of the good press that happens.

7 So the more that people care
8 about it, the more that this is
9 happening. That's also why Starbucks is
10 now partnering with Feeding America,
11 because their baristas and their cashiers
12 were saying that we didn't like seeing
13 this food go to waste every single night.
14 And so now things are changing, and
15 that's how I think an individual can play
16 a part in this.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

18 Councilwoman Blackwell.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you.

21 I like most of the testimony.
22 Only one thing I wasn't too pleased with
23 and, that is, West Philadelphia is my
24 area. But I'm happy to work with you in
25 any way that we can to make it better.

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2 MR. WELDE: You know, I grew up
3 hearing nothing but praise about West
4 Philadelphia. My dad grew up at 54th and
5 Osage, and I was lucky enough to live at
6 55th and Osage for a little while, and
7 it's a great neighborhood and the people
8 there are really caring. Everyone on my
9 block was just superb, but it's dirty and
10 it needs attention, it needs help.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
12 you very much. And, in fact, we're
13 getting ready to have a meeting because
14 where we had the issue with MOVE, they're
15 finally getting ready to put out an RFP
16 and fix up that area, but at any rate...

17 MR. WELDE: And I know I've
18 spoken with you before about single-use
19 bags, plastic bag fees. There are --
20 most of the grocery stores in West --
21 most of the big ones, Aldi's and some of
22 the other big grocery stores, they
23 actually don't provide bags. So already
24 there are people that have -- the plastic
25 bag industry points to the bag fees or

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2 bans as regressive. They're not
3 regressive. Do you know what's
4 regressive, is living in a neighborhood
5 that is so polluted with trash that
6 you're depressed all of the time, that
7 crime rates are higher, that businesses
8 don't invest there, that your house that
9 you bought 30 years ago is barely above
10 the price that it was 30 years ago. So
11 we're dedicating resources in the City to
12 more wealthy neighborhoods.

13 I've lived in and I live in
14 currently a very low-income community.
15 We don't get the resources that people in
16 Rittenhouse Square and some of the other
17 areas get.

18 So regressive, you want to talk
19 about regressive, it's those people in
20 those communities that are being burdened
21 by the amount of trash and litter that's
22 all throughout their communities. And,
23 you know, we have this UnLitter Us
24 program. I don't believe the program has
25 really done that much. Why not instead

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2 of funding the UnLitter Us program, give
3 awards. Make an award program in
4 Philadelphia. In each Council district,
5 the top two cleanest blocks -- you'll
6 send people around and you'll judge them
7 over the course of the year. The two
8 cleanest blocks get \$25,000 to do
9 projects on their blocks or something
10 like that. Take the -- stop paying
11 LeVane and the people to do a program
12 that, in my opinion, is pretty worthless.
13 Actually give it to people. Give some
14 tangible benefits to people. Beautify a
15 block after they win the award.
16 Encourage people to have ownership and
17 love for their blocks like they used to
18 have in -- I mean, they still have to a
19 very strong extent, but my dad when he
20 lived at 54th and Osage, their block had
21 so much pride in keeping their houses
22 maintained and the streets clean, and
23 they knew all their neighbors, you know.
24 The block captain system, I was
25 a block captain. It's a very useful

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2 program. How many people here have -- I
3 can't even think of anything the block
4 captain system has done lately to, hey,
5 let's beautify. Let's get the block
6 captains out there and get to know your
7 neighbors and beautify your block and
8 participate in this program that gives
9 awards to the blocks.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
11 you. That's a good idea, but we do have
12 a lot of -- we got a lot of good blocks
13 and block captains and all kinds of
14 organizations, Town Watch and a lot of
15 organizations, who work hard. Obviously
16 we have to do more, but we thank you for
17 your commitment and your ideas on many
18 things that we should do. Thank you.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
21 Councilwoman Blackwell.

22 Councilman Taubenberger.

23 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
24 you, Mr. Chairman.

25 A couple of thoughts and

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2 actually a couple questions. I'm not a
3 fan of plastic bags, even though I'm
4 former President of the Northeast
5 Philadelphia Chamber. Please write that
6 down, because long ago and far --
7 remember, Al Taubenberger really hates
8 plastic bags. You know why? Because I
9 was ground supervisor of Friends Hospital
10 for three and a half years. Plastic
11 bags -- and that was a long time ago.
12 There were plastic bags all around then.
13 It's even worse now. They're in trees.
14 They're everywhere. If you have someone
15 with a fence and you have a prevailing
16 wind either coming out of the east or the
17 west, it's probably coated with plastic
18 bags. It's really an obscenity.

19 So I'm no fan of plastic bags,
20 and any kind of reasonable legislation to
21 prevent their or to curtail their usage,
22 I will support.

23 The other thing is, my parents
24 were immigrants from Germany in the
25 1930s, and my mother was absolutely

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2 stunned, very, very stunned, on how when
3 she came to America, there was no
4 recycling at all. Nothing. I mean, in
5 the 1930s Germany, probably recycling was
6 somewhat modest, but there was still
7 recycling. So it takes a while to get in
8 people's thinking, but it can be very,
9 very helpful. In fact, now if you go to
10 Germany -- I visit my cousins -- there's
11 eight various different bins. I think I
12 need an engineer or someone to explain to
13 me where everything goes. And one time
14 in an airport I put the wrong thing in
15 the wrong one and the police officer blew
16 the whistle. I thought, this isn't good,
17 but I explained. And then they were
18 tolerant because I was an American.

19 But the fact is, I think
20 recycling is good. I think litter-free
21 is very good. I think it's something
22 that can even bring neighborhoods
23 together and it's something we should
24 strive for.

25 I did want to ask, Mr. Welde,

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2 if I could ask you, out of the top ten
3 cities, what city does it well? What
4 city does the right thing? And what's
5 the cleanest city out of the top ten?

6 MR. WELDE: I think that you're
7 probably going to have to look to the
8 Northwest - Seattle, Portland, San
9 Francisco. I think that they've been
10 doing it for a long time. And to your
11 point, it does take a long time to get
12 educated on it. But California, they're
13 just very aggressive about it. There's a
14 lot of people that are passionate about
15 the outdoors there. They're passionate
16 about the beach. And I think living
17 towards near the coast and on the coast
18 is something that you can see the
19 accumulation -- plastic bags and other
20 things really accumulate on beaches and
21 in waterways.

22 So I would say areas that are
23 near waterways are the most progressive.
24 And to answer your question more
25 matter-of-factly, I would say San

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2 Francisco, Seattle, Portland are probably
3 the top --

4 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: We
5 should be able to fit into that as we're
6 on two major waterways, the Schyulkill
7 and the Delaware.

8 MR. WELDE: Yeah. I think we
9 could be a leader in this. I actually --
10 an old roommate of mine just bought a
11 house in Philadelphia and she's planning
12 on renting it out because the prices are
13 so much cheaper here and she thinks it's
14 so desirable of an area to buy in. We've
15 got a gold mine here. Philadelphia is a
16 gold mine. My grandmother always said,
17 Philadelphia is the best city in the
18 world. We're between New York and
19 Washington. You can get anywhere in two
20 hours. She's right. And we don't have
21 earthquakes, she always said.

22 But we've got a gold mine here,
23 and we're literally letting -- it's like
24 the burglar analogy for the house that I
25 mentioned earlier, and I don't know if

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2 you were here or not, but we're letting
3 people come in and just trash our
4 community. We're letting people come in
5 who don't live here, who don't care about
6 our community like we do, come in and
7 trash our community, and it lowers the
8 values of everything in this community.
9 We can do commonsense measures that --
10 and when I'm talking about common sense,
11 it's crazy to me when someone takes a bag
12 and they've already got two or three bags
13 with them. The reason why they take it
14 is because the clerk instinctively gives
15 it to them, and they don't either have
16 the knowledge or the care to stop the
17 clerk and say, no thanks. And often I've
18 had actually to fight, not physically but
19 verbally, with the clerk not to give me a
20 bag.

21 So we're just accustomed now to
22 creating these amounts of trash that we
23 never did before. And, look, my
24 background is in business. I want
25 businesses to flourish. I live in

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2 Philadelphia. I own real estate in
3 Philadelphia. I want this city to be a
4 top tier city in all regards, and the way
5 we can do it is clean up Philadelphia.

6 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I
7 thank you, and I also thank you for your
8 passion, and at some point if you could
9 get me on your schedule, I would love to
10 have a conversation with you.

11 I do have one quick question
12 for Kait Bowdler, and that question is,
13 being I have a degree in agronomy, soil
14 science, field crop management, what's
15 our definition of an ugly vegetable?

16 MS. BOWDLER: Well, my
17 definition is different. I think the
18 industry definition is something that
19 can't sell at a grocery store. So if
20 it's not the right shape, if it's not the
21 right color, if it's a centimeter too
22 large or too small and it can't sell at
23 the grocery store, then that's what is
24 considered an ugly vegetable.

25 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER:

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2 That's a very interesting point. Long
3 ago in a plant nutrition course that I
4 took, we were starting the discussion on
5 organic farming. I mean, I got gray hair
6 and in fact less gray hair -- or less
7 hair, period. But the fact of the matter
8 is, discussion had just started, and one
9 of the professors -- I'll give you his
10 name. Professor Bergman of Penn State
11 University Plant Nutrition. He goes, you
12 want the definition, very simple
13 definition of organic growth? This is --
14 not 50 years ago, but 40 years ago. He
15 said, it's the way we did it 50 to 100
16 years ago.

17 And okay. But we know a lot
18 more now than we did then. But let me
19 also say this: The other part of that
20 problem or the other part is the person
21 that's buying the food -- and at that
22 point I think he said the American
23 housewife -- would not tolerate any kind
24 of blemish on any kind of apple or pear
25 or anything else. It's totally

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2 intolerable to them. They don't
3 understand it, even though the vegetable
4 is just really fine. They see it. They
5 don't want it. It ain't moving, which I
6 guess comes into your definition of ugly
7 vegetable.

8 MS. BOWDLER: Yes. So I would
9 say that we're a throw-away culture. If
10 it's not perfect, we don't have any use
11 for it. So that applies to a lot of
12 different things, whether it's waste,
13 whether it's food. And so, one, we need
14 to change how we look at it. We need to
15 value our food a lot more as a culture.

16 And then I would also say we
17 have to be a little more innovative about
18 what we do with the food that still
19 people are going to say that they can't
20 find a use for, they're not going to
21 purchase. So I talked a little bit about
22 earlier at Philabundance, we're looking
23 into value-added processing, which is
24 where basically you're taking all those
25 items, the ugly tomatoes, the bruised

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2 ones, the ones that have all of the sun
3 spots, and we're turning it into
4 different items that can then be either
5 sold or given to our agencies. So it's
6 going to be a pasta sauce, a soup, you
7 know, just trying to think a little bit
8 more about that.

9 There are a lot of, what
10 they're called, cold packers or
11 manufacturers in the area, and we need to
12 create more of a partnership. So, again,
13 to Councilmember Green's point, we can
14 create economic value with this too,
15 because we're creating more industry
16 within the area. So it's solving all of
17 those problems.

18 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I
19 think --

20 MS. BOWDLER: It's good
21 business. It's smart business.

22 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Oh, I
23 think it's a wise idea. And I would also
24 say it's unfortunate that most Americans
25 at this point have very little idea where

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2 their food comes from, whether it's an
3 animal product or it's a vegetable. I
4 mean, they have no idea how it got to
5 their table, and they ought to know. So
6 that's my parting words of wisdom.

7 MS. BOWDLER: I used to do
8 nutrition education, and the kids that we
9 worked with at inner city schools had no
10 idea that ketchup was from a tomato. So
11 it's just completely separate.

12 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: And
13 actually if you really did the whole
14 thing of ketchup, it has a bit of an
15 interesting history as well, which people
16 ought to know. We ought to know more
17 about the things we put in our bodies.
18 It's very, very important that we do, and
19 anywhere where I can personally help and
20 work with my colleagues with you to get
21 that education out there, I would be
22 happy to do so.

23 MS. BOWDLER: Well, thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank
25 you.

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2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you
3 very much for your testimony.

4 That testimony concludes all
5 testimony on Resolution No. 161075.

6 This concludes the public
7 hearing on the Committee on Environment.
8 This Resolution 161075 will be held to
9 the call of the Chair.

10 This concludes this hearing.
11 Thank you.

12 (Committee on the Environment
13 concluded at 3:45 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
proceedings, evidence and objections are
contained fully and accurately in the
stenographic notes taken by me upon the
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RPR-Notary Public

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