

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC SAFETY, COMMERCE
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND GLOBAL
OPPORTUNITIES AND THE CREATIVE/
INNOVATIVE ECONOMY

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, October 31, 2016
10:10 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR. CO-CHAIR
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH, CO-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

RESOLUTION 160829 - Resolution authorizing
Council's Committees on Public Safety,
Commerce & Economic Development, and Global
Opportunities and Creative/Innovative Economy
to hold Public hearings concerning recent home
invasions and armed robberies that have
victimized Asian business owners in the City.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Good

3

morning, everyone.

4

(Good morning.)

5

COUNCILMAN JONES: I like that.

6

And to our core respondents

7

from China, ni hao.

8

(Ni hao.)

9

COUNCILMAN JONES: I keep

10

diverse.

11

We are now opening our hearing,

12

joint hearing, on the Committee of Public

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Safety and Economic Development and

14

Global Opportunities and

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Creative/Innovative Economy concerning

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Resolution No. 160829.

17

Will the Clerk please read the

18

title of the resolution.

19

THE CLERK: Resolution No.

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160829, authorizing Council's Committees

21

on Public Safety, Commerce & Economic

22

Development, and Global Opportunities and

23

Creative/Innovative Economy to hold

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Public hearings concerning recent home

25

invasions and armed robberies that have

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2 victimized Asian business owners in the
3 City.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you so
5 much.

6 On the panel today we have
7 Councilman Green [sic], Councilman Domb,
8 Councilman Oh, myself, and Councilman
9 Gym. Greenlee. I'm sorry.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: We look
11 alike.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: All righty.
13 And I would like to have the
14 author of the resolution open the
15 hearings with a remark.

16 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
17 much, Chairman.

18 It is, number one, a pleasure
19 and an honor for me to co-chair with
20 Councilman Curtis Jones, Jr. for a number
21 of reasons. Public Safety is his
22 committee. That means law enforcement,
23 among other things, but also Commerce and
24 Economic Development, of which many of
25 the people that have been victimized are

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2 actually store owners. They have shops
3 and they live above their shops. And so
4 they have become targets, unfortunately,
5 of criminal activity.

6 While we have identified this
7 resolution as Asian American businesses,
8 they are predominantly Chinese American
9 businesses, and of that, a large portion
10 of them are actually Chinese take-out
11 restaurants, where many of the people are
12 struggling to make ends meet. They live
13 in poor conditions. They have a store.
14 They live above their store, and they
15 have become the targets of criticism,
16 ridicule, and now criminal violations in
17 the manner of burglaries into their home
18 with guns, and that threatens the seniors
19 and their children and others.

20 Today, it is important for us
21 as a government interacting with our
22 federal representatives, our county
23 representatives, most importantly, our
24 Philadelphia Police Department and
25 District Attorney's Office to show not

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2 only our citizens who are here today but
3 all of Philadelphia that crime will not
4 be tolerated and particularly when that
5 crime targets a specific group of people,
6 whether they be LGBT, whether they be
7 Muslims, whether they be Jewish, whether
8 they be Arabs, whether they be Chinese
9 merchants. When criminals begin to
10 target a group of people specifically,
11 that is a serious problem for everyone in
12 Philadelphia.

13 And so we have the opportunity
14 today to better understand what is
15 happening in terms of our city's response
16 to make sure that our city is in tune
17 with what the people are thinking.
18 Sometimes despite every good effort of
19 the City, there's a disconnect between
20 government and the people. We want to
21 make sure that that does not happen.

22 And so we're going to hear from
23 the victims and from the representatives
24 of the community to make sure that our
25 government is representing each and every

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2 person equally. And the great thing
3 about our country is that we believe that
4 all people should be afforded dignity,
5 respect, and the constitutional
6 protections. But our country is only as
7 good as we make it and keep it.

8 So with that, Chairman, thank
9 you very much and we'll begin with our
10 witnesses.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Xie xie.

12 Will the Clerk please read the
13 names of -- wait a minute. We have other
14 comments from the Committee, Councilwoman
15 Gym.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so
17 much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this.
18 And thank you so much, Councilman Oh, for
19 sponsoring the hearings on this very
20 important issue.

21 First of all, I just want to
22 welcome everybody who came out today and
23 especially all the communities who
24 organized to make sure that this is an
25 important issue that gets addressed.

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I would also like to just piggyback onto my Councilman's statements by saying, you know, the issues that we're dealing with are at the nexus of race and class and where a lot of issues around biases and stereotypes and as well the failure oftentimes of the City to provide appropriate language access to fully have the kinds of conversations that we need to have are at play. And because of that, I think this hearing requires us to listen very closely to one another, to listen very deeply.

There are some elements here that go beyond the narrow strict interpretations of the law and what people have the right to, and I think it's very important for all of us in this room, particularly those of us on the City and representative end of it, to be very open to hearing what is happening with our communities, especially with communities that don't feel like they have full language access dialogue with

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2 our City representatives, that we're very
3 open to hearing all of that.

4 I'm glad that the Commission on
5 Human Relations is here and other
6 entities that are also paying close
7 attention to this issue, because it is a
8 matter of law, but it's also a matter of
9 community and society, that we have to
10 rebuild some of these bonds that are
11 fracturing at our neighborhood level.

12 So thank you very much,
13 Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the hearing.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
15 Councilwoman.

16 If I heard my colleagues
17 correctly and one of the things that
18 should be noted, crime is crime, and we
19 get that. It happens in big cities. But
20 when it targets a race or group of
21 people, it constitutes a greater threat.
22 When criminals victimize seniors, when
23 criminals victimize people with language
24 barriers, when criminals victimize folk
25 because they perceive them to be

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2 vulnerable, that's when government steps
3 up and provides that kind of support to
4 reassure them that we are with them.

5 So with that, would the Clerk
6 please read the witnesses to testify and
7 their titles.

8 THE CLERK: Captain Fran Healy,
9 Lieutenant John Walker, Philadelphia
10 Police Department; George Mosee, First
11 Assistant District Attorney, Philadelphia
12 District Attorney's Office; Percy Giles,
13 Special Agent, FBI, Philadelphia
14 Division; Robert Reed, Executive
15 Assistant United States Attorney, U.S.
16 Attorney's Office for the Eastern
17 District of Pennsylvania.

18 (Witnesses already seated at
19 witness table.)

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.
21 Good morning, gentlemen, in
22 order.

23 (Good morning.)

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: You know the
25 drill. Pull the mic close to you, state

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2 your name for the record, and begin your
3 testimony, please.

4 CAPTAIN HEALY: Yes, sir.

5 Good morning, Chairman Jones
6 and Chairman Oh and other members of
7 Council. My name is Francis Healy and
8 I'm Special Advisor to Commissioner Ross,
9 and with me to my right is Lieutenant
10 John Walker from the Philadelphia Police
11 Department, Southwest Police Detective
12 Division. First, on behalf of
13 Commissioner Ross, who is unable to be
14 here today, I'd like to thank you for
15 including the Department in these
16 proceedings.

17 The issue before this Committee
18 is home invasion robberies and
19 specifically home invasion robberies
20 targeting Asian business owners.
21 Nonetheless, and irrespective of race,
22 ethnicity or origin, invading one's home
23 to threaten, harm or intimidate forever
24 destroys something sacred in all of us.
25 Home is the last bastion where the

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2 average person or people can feel safe.

3 So there's something specifically heinous
4 when criminals attack in one's home. The
5 comfort, security, and sanctity of the
6 home that most of us take for granted is
7 forever lost to the victims of home
8 invasion robberies.

9 The heinous acts have increased
10 across the Commonwealth and specifically
11 in Philadelphia for the last several
12 years in general but also against our
13 Asian communities. For example, in 2015,
14 the Philadelphia Police Department
15 reported a total of 908 home invasion
16 robberies. One hundred and forty-three,
17 or 15.7 percent, of these invasions were
18 committed against Asian/Indian
19 households. In 2016, through August of
20 this year, there were a total of 474 home
21 invasions, with 76, or 16 percent, being
22 committed against Asian/Indian
23 households.

24 It was for this very reason
25 that the Philadelphia Police Department

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2 supported additional state legislation to
3 address this specific crime, and I am
4 very happy to report that on Friday,
5 October 27th, 2016, Senate Bill 1062 was
6 submitted to the Governor's Office for
7 his approval. It is our strong hope that
8 the Governor will sign this legislation
9 into law. This bill increases the
10 maximum penalty for burglaries of a home
11 where the intent is to seriously hurt
12 someone within the home or where during
13 the course of the burglary the
14 perpetrator commits or threatens to
15 commit bodily injury to another person.
16 The distinction would only apply to
17 burglaries of the homes and would not
18 automatically increase the sentences of
19 the perpetrator, but would rather
20 increase the maximum sentence for which a
21 judge, within their discretion, could
22 sentence the perpetrator.

23 A crime that destroys the
24 sanctity and security of a person's last
25 refuge deserves to be addressed

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2 differently than a normal robbery or
3 burglary. So the Philadelphia Police
4 Department fully applauds the efforts of
5 our State Legislature and believes this
6 change will eventually have an intended
7 effect of reversing the current trend in
8 overall home invasion robberies in
9 Philadelphia as well as the rest of the
10 state.

11 At this point, I'd like to hand
12 off this testimony to Lieutenant John
13 Walker of Southwest Detectives to discuss
14 the efforts that he's specifically doing
15 at the ground level with different task
16 forces and how he's specifically dealing
17 with the issue of Asian home invasion
18 robberies, and after that point, we'd be
19 happy to answer any questions you may
20 have from the Philadelphia Police
21 Department.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
23 for your testimony.

24 If it's the will of the
25 Co-Chair and Committee, we'll allow all

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2 of the panel to testify before we begin
3 questions.

4 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Is that all
6 right? Thank you.

7 LIEUTENANT WALKER: Good
8 morning, Council. John Walker,
9 Lieutenant, Philadelphia Police
10 Department, Southwest Detective Division.

11 This disturbing trend of
12 incidents started back we can see in '08
13 where we had a series of home invasions
14 that were occurring in people's homes
15 just outside of the City. They own
16 businesses in the Philadelphia area.
17 There were being followed home by
18 individuals who were tracking them mostly
19 by observations back then in '08, but
20 then as it advanced forward in '09, '10,
21 and '11, we saw them starting to use
22 tracking devices on the cars.

23 Through those years, we've
24 arrested seven different crews of
25 individuals with the work of a task force

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2 that we created that included our
3 partners at the state and local level and
4 the federal agencies. The Federal Bureau
5 of Investigations, Percy Giles, is here
6 with us now. Rob Reed was very
7 instrumental in putting that group
8 together, and Pearl Kim from Delaware
9 County who assisted us as this crime was
10 observed by us and then we started to
11 build this out.

12 We started outreach programs.
13 We started going to the different
14 counties. Pearl Kim chaired a lot of
15 that for us. We went to Montgomery
16 County, Delaware County, Philadelphia
17 County obviously meeting with the Asian
18 business owners, advising them what we
19 were seeing and giving them some
20 suggestions on what we can do to improve.

21 Through these investigations,
22 it's no secret and it's out there as to
23 why these people are committing these
24 crimes. It's the old stereotypical idea
25 that was out there, that Asians don't use

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2 banks and they have a lot of money in
3 their homes. So our education program
4 was pretty much geared towards that and
5 has been geared towards that and has been
6 very successful in getting us information
7 that we need to solve these crimes.

8 In one of the incidents in
9 2012, which was the Terrance Downing
10 crew, we clearly had about seven home
11 invasions that were occurring in Radnor
12 and other sections in Delaware County.
13 But we had a meeting. We brought the
14 information out, and obviously the energy
15 is out there. But we needed a little
16 piece of information to help us out,
17 because we had nothing, and one of the
18 business owners who was driving home one
19 day just happens to look in his rear-view
20 mirror and he sees two cars, and he
21 believes they're following him. So he
22 does what we asked him to do, go back to
23 your place of business or drive to a
24 police station and report that.
25 Immediately he does. By the next day, we

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2 get a source comes in that says these two
3 guys from this area just bought these
4 same two type of cars.

5 In the most recent series of
6 events, which occurred in '16, they kind
7 of switched. They went to the Chinese
8 corner stores, the business-owned food
9 take-outs, and they were committing
10 burglaries. There were a total of 13
11 that started in May 3rd of this year.
12 The last one was on August 8th. On
13 August 8th, we actually had a meeting
14 scheduled at 2:30 in the afternoon with
15 the business association in Chinatown,
16 and one occurred actually that morning
17 prior to the 2:30 meeting.

18 So we had a ton of people
19 attended that meeting. Again, our group
20 was all together, our federal, state, and
21 local partners. We all talked. We
22 brought -- as we always bring, we bring
23 the Commerce Department in, because the
24 Commerce Department has some great things
25 they're doing for digital improvements

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2 and also facade improvements and they
3 have the matching grants. We brought our
4 partners from our victim service agencies
5 in Center City Philadelphia, the DA's
6 Office, Jennifer Lin and her crew come
7 in, and they explained what we can do as
8 a government agency to help these
9 individuals, and we tried to allay those
10 fears that are out there, that if you're
11 not legal in this country, that you
12 cannot report a crime. Because the only
13 way we can react is if we have a report
14 of crime.

15 So the good thing that came out
16 of that one meeting was, one of the
17 gentlemen was actually a victim of
18 robbery who did not report it. As a
19 result of us building that trust at that
20 meeting, as the Councilmen Gym and Oh
21 attended, the gentleman came forward as a
22 victim. The very next day when we got
23 that tip to identify the individuals
24 involved, he was one of our fact
25 witnesses who came forward for us.

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So I think it's a continuing process of educating and building that trust, and I think we have a pretty good solid system in place at this time, but it always can be improved upon. The trust needs to continue to improve, and there's a lot of things we're doing in the Department that can help, but when I look at statistics, again, they're important, but at the end of the day, if you get victimized, statistics mean absolutely nothing. So it's about engagement and it's about managing these expectations, and I think the Department has, from the captains in each districts -- we have 21 districts that have Police District Advisory Councils that can be joined by anybody in the community.

The second part of that, under Commissioner Ramsey, we started PSAs, our public service areas, which each are commanded by a lieutenant. Those people should be familiar to the owners of the

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2 businesses in that area, and that should
3 be vocalized by us. We do that better.
4 And there's a meeting every month with
5 the PSA lieutenant that can bring them
6 things forward.

7 A lot of the issues that have
8 come up at the meetings most recently
9 have been things that could be handled, I
10 think, at the captain level at the
11 districts, but it's a matter of
12 communicating to the businesses when
13 these meetings are being held and doing
14 things a little bit differently. And one
15 of the things we learned, as we always do
16 in these sessions, we try to discuss ways
17 to get information out quicker, as we do
18 with pizza delivery robberies that we
19 had. We send e-mails out to the owners.
20 But after the meeting I suggested that, I
21 was told that some of these businesses
22 don't have e-mails. They don't have fax
23 machines. So we learned that we have to
24 hand-deliver flyers out to people, which
25 is -- again, it's the importance of

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2 having the feedback coming back and forth
3 between too. And the heated -- or the
4 conversation, although sometimes is not
5 good, it sometimes turns ugly, it's
6 great. There's nothing wrong with
7 conflict and providing information,
8 because we have to understand what we
9 need to do to improve and keep these
10 businesses here, because let's face it,
11 without businesses here, our economy
12 fails. So we need these people here. We
13 respect you all. We want you all to tell
14 us your issues, and we will work with you
15 throughout this process.

16 Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
18 for your testimony.

19 MR. MOSEE: Good morning,
20 Council.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
22 morning.

23 MR. MOSEE: I'm George Mosee,
24 the First Assistant in the Philadelphia
25 District Attorney's Office. Also good

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2 morning to the members of the community.

3 I'm going to try to avoid being
4 redundant. An awful lot of what's
5 included in my written testimony has
6 already been covered, but I thought I
7 might start by helping us all to be
8 conscious of what crimes are being
9 committed here, the crime that can be
10 prosecuted. And so if we put ourselves
11 in the position of the victims of these
12 crimes, imagine yourself coming home from
13 work and you see that the door jam is
14 broken. You go into your home. Your
15 property is in disarray. Items are
16 missing, while the sanctity of your home
17 has been violated. Your life is changed
18 forever. You're the victim of a burglar.

19 Second scenario. Same
20 situation. You come home from work. The
21 door jam is broken, but this time when
22 you enter the home, the perpetrator is
23 there. Now, he didn't want you to come
24 home when you did. He didn't expect you
25 to come home, but now he's going to do

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2 whatever he has to do to avoid being
3 arrested. That may mean pushing you,
4 hurting you. He's going to do whatever
5 he has to do to get out of your home.
6 That burglary now includes the crime of
7 robbery, because it's a robbery when even
8 in the course of after committing a theft
9 you put the person in fear of bodily
10 injury or you come into contact with
11 them, however slight.

12 Third scenario. This time
13 you're already in your home and you hear
14 a knock at the door and armed masked
15 people come into your home. They tie you
16 up with a belt or even the ties that you
17 get from the Home Depot. They restrain
18 you. They threaten you. They want to
19 know where your property is, where your
20 valuables are.

21 You see how this nightmare has
22 escalated, to the point where now the
23 burglar wants you to be at home so that
24 they can put you in fear. In fact, your
25 life was threatened so that they can take

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2 your pride.

3 So these incidents, as has been
4 testified, have increased over the years,
5 but there's some characteristics that are
6 common to all of these episodes. First
7 of all, with regard to the Asian
8 community, it's motivated by bias and
9 stereotypes. The people who perpetrate
10 these crimes are well prepared. They
11 conduct surveillance. They make sure
12 that they know when the victim comes and
13 goes. As was testified to, they even use
14 technology. They attach GPS devices to
15 the automobile driven by the victim so
16 that they'll know exactly the route
17 that's taken by the person to get home if
18 they're not following them in fact.

19 The offenders who commit these
20 crimes are often members of crews that
21 commit multiple home invasions. So it's
22 not like we have hundreds of defendants
23 in Philadelphia who are doing this. We
24 have a select number of crews that do
25 this. They use what we can refer to as

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2 forensic countermeasures. That's the
3 gloves to make sure that there are no
4 fingerprints. They almost always have
5 masks on so that they can't be
6 identified. They dismantle surveillance
7 equipment. These incidents are well
8 planned.

9 Let's get to the motivation.
10 As I said, it's based on stereotypes and
11 bias. These are the stereotypical views
12 held by these defendants. How do we
13 know? After they're successfully
14 prosecuted, they tell us about the
15 motivation. So they believe that Asian
16 businesses do business in cash. They
17 believe that Asian businesses don't use
18 banks. They believe that Asian business
19 owners maintain large amounts of cash in
20 their homes or in close proximity to
21 where they sleep. They believe that
22 cultural traditions would make Asian
23 business owners ashamed and, therefore,
24 less likely to report offenses to the
25 police. They believe that Asian victims

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2 would be less able to make a cross-racial
3 identification. They believe that Asian
4 victims would be less likely to cooperate
5 with the prosecution because of language
6 barriers and potentially because of
7 immigration concerns.

8 I can tell you that with the
9 help of the Philadelphia Police
10 Department, Lieutenant Walker in
11 particular, we've been able to belie
12 almost all of these beliefs, and
13 consistent with that, I can tell you that
14 we're responding by making sure that
15 these cases are vertically prosecuted.
16 That means that one prosecutor is
17 assigned from the very beginning to see
18 the case through. We collaborate with
19 all law enforcement within Philadelphia
20 and outside of Philadelphia, because
21 unfortunately these crimes often follow
22 the victims to a home that's outside the
23 City limits. We work with the Police
24 Department, the county police, of course
25 the U.S. Attorney's Office. My good

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2 friend Rob Reed is here today. And we
3 have members of our office. You heard
4 mention of Jennifer Lin, and she works
5 with the Center City Crime Victims
6 Association. They're both -- they're all
7 Mandarin speakers, and they've been able
8 to break down those barriers that the
9 offenders believe would preclude victims
10 from accessing the system and effectively
11 bringing these people to justice.

12 So as I indicated, I want to
13 make this perfectly clear. Those were
14 stereotypical views held by the
15 offenders. I believe that the reality
16 dictates otherwise.

17 Thank you very much.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
19 for your testimony.

20 Wait a minute. Can you go
21 back. Give me a second, because at my
22 age, I kind of lose stuff, Mr. Chairman.

23 Two things. What I appreciate
24 about our law enforcement in Philadelphia
25 is that many of their countermeasures,

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2 police countermeasures, are statistically
3 driven. So if you cannot answer these
4 questions, that's fine. Can you provide
5 these answers to the Chair and Committee.

6 How many of these merchants
7 that have been victimized are on our
8 commercial corridors? Meaning there are
9 over 100 commercial corridors in the City
10 of Philadelphia. How many of the
11 victims, whether it's through acts of
12 robbery on the corridor at the business
13 location or followed home, as you
14 mentioned, which terrified me, with GPS,
15 how many of them are corridor businesses?
16 And if you don't know that, that's fine.

17 CAPTAIN HEALY: At this time I
18 don't know if our data breaks down in
19 that manner, but I can find out if we do
20 or we don't. I don't know, honestly.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I'd like
22 to get that statistic.

23 The second thing that I'd like
24 to know is how many of these crews
25 transcend just entrepreneurs? Because

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2 there are three types of prominent home
3 invasions that I followed as Chair of
4 Public Safety. Seniors are victimized.
5 People are following them from banking
6 institutions. Similarly, businesses are
7 followed from their place of business.
8 And then the third category of, quote,
9 "victim" are people that are allegedly
10 involved in drug businesses. So my
11 question becomes, statistically, we need
12 to see what the target of opportunities
13 are and then are these crews transcending
14 those three basic categories?

15 LIEUTENANT WALKER:

16 Statistically, it would be difficult to
17 give that. I can tell you from the
18 historical seven groups that we've dealt
19 with and this being the eighth, a
20 majority of those have not transitioned
21 into the elder communities.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: So they're
23 special --

24 LIEUTENANT WALKER: They're
25 specially identified targeting the Asian

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2 community in the seven that we've
3 attacked so far and are currently in
4 custody. Do they transition over to the
5 narcotics trade? I think some may have
6 from what our data tells us and what we
7 talk to them about, but the majority of
8 their focus and the groups that we've
9 identified from '08 forward have been
10 targeting Asians specifically for those
11 reasons that were identified.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: So in the
13 future, if you can provide that --

14 LIEUTENANT WALKER: Break it
15 out.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: -- provide
17 that similarity, that might be helpful.

18 LIEUTENANT WALKER: Okay.

19 MR. MOSEE: I would point out
20 that the groups that you just mentioned
21 all have one thing in common in terms of
22 the perception of the offenders. They
23 believe that those are people who have
24 cash on hand.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: Got it.

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2 Are any of them in the victims
3 also then intimidated, witness
4 intimidation? Are they coming back and
5 trying to dissuade them from testifying,
6 and how many -- are some of these crimes
7 going unreported -- I think I should have
8 asked that question first -- because of
9 the shame aspect?

10 MR. MOSEE: Well, that's a
11 difficult question to answer because if
12 that has been the impact, then we don't
13 know about it. It's not reported.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, I
15 would imagine. But that's something that
16 we should keep an eye towards as well.

17 MR. MOSEE: That does bring to
18 mind something that's really relevant to
19 this situation. People might ask, why
20 doesn't this crime, why don't these acts
21 warrant a charge of ethnic intimidation.
22 You know, you talked about intimidation.
23 It's because the ethnic intimidation
24 statute creates a threshold that's almost
25 impossible to meet. It requires that you

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2 get into the mind of the defendant and

3 actually establish that they did what

4 they did because they hated the group

5 that they perpetrated the crime against.

6 We don't have evidence of that. In fact,

7 the information that's provided to us

8 would seem to indicate that the

9 motivations are what I talked about

10 earlier, the belief that they have cash

11 on hand, the belief that they won't

12 cooperate with the authorities, and not

13 some hatred of the Asian people.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: I'm going to

15 turn it over to -- we'll go from left to

16 right.

17 Also we've been joined by the

18 real Councilman Green and also Councilman

19 Squilla and Councilwoman Blackwell.

20 I'm going to go with Councilman

21 Domb.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,

23 Mr. Chairman, and thank everybody for

24 attending today. Thank you to the panel.

25 Good morning.

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I have a couple of questions,
three or four questions. One is on the
statistics from the Police Department.
If I'm reading the information correctly,
in 2015, there were 908 home invasions,
and that was about 76 per month. In
2016, there's 474 through August. That's
about 59 per month. It's a 20 percent
drop. Is the Police Department doing
something differently? Because it
clearly is on a path to be a lot less
than it was in '15 than it will be in
'16.

CAPTAIN HEALY: So those data
only go through August of this year.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: I know that,
but if I take the math and I take 474
divided by eight months, I come out at 59
per month. If I take the math of '15,
I'm at 76 per month. All I'm saying is
that we've dropped 20 percent from the
'15 invasions to the '16 even counting
monthly analysis.

CAPTAIN HEALY: Averaging is

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2 not necessarily the way I can answer your
3 question. I mean, I can't tell you
4 hypothetically there's only going to
5 be -- that kind of makes no sense from
6 the statistical perspective for me to
7 answer that question. I'd like to answer
8 the question.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Could you
10 talk into the mic. Councilwoman can't
11 hear. I mean, many of the people can't
12 hear you.

13 CAPTAIN HEALY: Councilman,
14 with all due respect, I would love to
15 say, yes, we've done something
16 definitely, but I think without the
17 concrete data, because it's not on
18 average. It's not on average crimes. As
19 the Lieutenant mentioned, these are
20 targeted individuals based on groups of
21 criminals targeting, so there could be a
22 flux in one month over the other. So
23 until the end of the year is completed, I
24 don't think it would be fair to speculate
25 on the data.

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2 So, I mean, I would love to
3 say, yes, we've done something to reduce
4 it by 20 percent, but I don't think that
5 would be necessarily fair for me to say
6 at this point.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: But it's a
8 big difference right now so far, because
9 you're different 17 per month of eight
10 months. That's a lot. You're not going
11 to make that up in the next four months,
12 thank God. I don't think that will
13 happen. So maybe you should look at what
14 you did in '15 versus '16, if there was
15 something that was done differently.

16 CAPTAIN HEALY: What I will say
17 is -- and that's the issue why I brought
18 Lieutenant Walker here. We have a task
19 force that is actually addressing
20 specific Asian crimes. So hopefully they
21 are having an impact long term. And I
22 also believe the new legislation will
23 actually help create synergy in that
24 respect as well.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Let me ask my

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second question. I was always taught --
when I was 13 years old, I went to a home
that was actually being robbed. And I
was always taught as soon as you go to
the door, if something is happening, do
not go in. Walk away. Go to a safe
place. Call the police. So in the
instance the District Attorney talked
about, an instance where you go up to the
home and the jamb is broken and you walk
in, we should be educating everybody not
to walk in. Because there's two
instances there, one when there's nobody
there and one when there is somebody
there. So there's a big piece of
education that has to go on with business
owners. When you see that crime, do not
go in your home. Leave immediately. Go
to a safe harbor, call the police.

And the biggest piece of this,
though -- it goes with education -- is
cash. You have to change the whole
concept. I'm in the restaurant business
also. I don't want cash. I want credit.

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I do not want cash. I want credit. And we have to educate everybody that that's so important. So we change the whole equation of what people who are robbing stores, et cetera, understand. There's no cash there. It's credit now. So we have to figure out a way to educate business owners to push people to credit so they don't have the cash. That's very important, because that will take care of most of the situations. If there's no cash there, no one is really going there. They're going there because they think there's cash, as you said, District Attorney. They think there's a lot of cash, so they're going there. But if it was credit and they have nothing, you'll eliminate some of the stuff.

These are just suggestions, but I think if we could educate the restaurant owners how important credit is today versus cash, it would go a long way.

Thank you.

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2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
3 Councilman.

4 Councilwoman Gym.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so
6 much, Mr. Chairman, and again thank you
7 so much to our first panel for bringing
8 up the issues today. You know, one thing
9 that I do want to be a little bit careful
10 about, because I know that there's been
11 some mention about Asian Americans being
12 ashamed, and I think the turnout here
13 today shows very clearly that people here
14 are not ashamed to come forward and talk
15 about some serious issues, and that in
16 fact I want to be very careful about this
17 use of the fact that people aren't coming
18 forward because they're ashamed. Because
19 I think in previewing, if I can -- and
20 apologies to people who are going to
21 testify in the future -- I really
22 appreciate the testimony that was
23 submitted by a number of people
24 beforehand, and it's in part because it
25 gives us some indication about why people

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2 don't feel like they're getting responded
3 to and why they then turn away from
4 institutions that should be supporting
5 them.

6 The number one issue that a
7 number of victims who are going to
8 testify later repeatedly discuss is the
9 inability to get language access at the
10 point of most urgent need, and that's
11 specifically at the point in which they
12 contact 911 and at the request to get
13 outreach to the Police Department
14 immediately. Those are not access
15 shames. Those are actually major
16 barriers.

17 So I think that Ms. Liao from
18 Center City Crime Victim Services will be
19 testifying later that they found a series
20 of responses that she gave. She noted
21 that of the 185 business owners, 45
22 percent said that they did not get
23 connected to Language Line even after
24 calling 911. Seventy-five percent of
25 victims of crime do contact the police.

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So there's clearly not a shame issue that's at play. They don't have a problem contacting the police, but the problem is is that the main reason, 68 percent, who do not like calling police say the main reason is a language barrier, that they simply do not get language access at the point that they call the police, and that is their number one fear and concern.

Additionally, 58 percent of people who responded about the question of did the 911 receptionist offer you Language Line, 58 percent of them said no, that they did not -- either were neutral or strongly disagreed with that. And that actually one of the good things for our Police Department to understand is that once they do actually get in contact with the police, most people feel like they were listened to, they were heard, but they can't get to you.

And so I guess one of my questions is, do you -- does the Police

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2 Department meet regularly with victim
3 advocates who represent LEP communities
4 to understand these barriers that are
5 happening?

6 CAPTAIN HEALY: The answer to
7 your question, ma'am, yes, we do. The
8 Philadelphia Police Department LEP,
9 limited English language proficiency
10 policy, was worked out I believe in 2011
11 or '12 with the Justice Department to aim
12 towards having one of the best policies
13 in the country. We have a policy in
14 place now, not only Language Line, we
15 have in-house interpreters, PPT
16 authorized interpreters that we've
17 actually made sure they actually can
18 speak the language and actually -- not
19 just speak the language, but actually are
20 educated in how to actually do the
21 translation.

22 We also have in-person -- we
23 also have an in-person translating
24 service that's available more so for the
25 investigators to use during

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2 interrogations or questioning.

3 The front line point if -- let
4 me just say that if you're saying that
5 that is a bigger problem, then I will
6 take that back to my Police Radio,
7 because we do have Language Line access
8 and whenever the call takers can't
9 obviously communicate well, it's supposed
10 to be an automatic. We have an automatic
11 one-button push and it ends up in a
12 three-way conversation with our call
13 taker, the complainant, and Language
14 Line. And that's almost every language
15 you possibly can think of. But if that's
16 not being used effectively or if certain
17 communities don't think they're being
18 heard, like I said, I meet regularly with
19 a lot of the individuals from the
20 Language Line. I'll be very honest with
21 you, a lot of the issues are more Spanish
22 than they are some of the Asian
23 communities. So that is something I will
24 definitely look into with our Police
25 Radio. I mean, that's an easy call. I

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2 go downstairs and figure out -- make sure
3 that we're doing the right thing.
4 Because we have an outstanding policy,
5 but I need to make sure that it's
6 actually working in practice. I can
7 double-check with that. That's
8 absolutely easy.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yeah. I
10 appreciate that. Because I think that's
11 actually a very important aspect, that
12 it's not just about who is using it, but
13 whether communities actually feel like
14 they can get access to it.

15 But I guess my question was,
16 you used to meet with PICC every once in
17 a while. Like PICC had a roundtable on
18 public safety. How long has that -- when
19 was the most recent time you met?

20 CAPTAIN HEALY: I'll say
21 probably two or three months ago, the
22 latest meeting that I can recall where I
23 sat down with the individuals.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And if you
25 could continue that, I think that's

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2 really important, because I know that a
3 number of the communities that have been
4 around the public safety roundtable,
5 certainly when I was part of it at least
6 two years ago, had primarily referenced
7 language access and continuing issues
8 around language access with the Police
9 Department.

10 And could you just repeat again
11 what percentage of your -- could you tell
12 me a little bit more about your
13 demographics for the Police Department
14 and what percentage might represent Asian
15 American communities and specifically
16 languages.

17 CAPTAIN HEALY: The actual
18 language of the officers or the language
19 of our interpreters?

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Either.

21 CAPTAIN HEALY: I can get them
22 back to you. I don't have them -- I
23 wasn't prepared for that information, but
24 I can get that information for you. The
25 demographics of the Department itself as

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2 well as the languages that we speak

3 in-house? Yes, I'll get you that.

4 COUNCILMAN OH: Captain, if you

5 would provide that to the Chair. I'll

6 report to the Chair. I'll distribute it

7 to everybody else on behalf of Councilman

8 Jones as well.

9 CAPTAIN HEALY: Yeah.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And my last

11 question is, who is responsible for the

12 Police Department for liaisoning directly

13 with Asian American communities and

14 communities that are concerned about some

15 of these issues that are going on?

16 CAPTAIN HEALY: Well, as the

17 Lieutenant mentioned, it's everyone's

18 responsibility. I mean, we have our

19 PSAs, which the PSA lieutenants are

20 responsible to know who is in their PSA

21 areas, their police service areas, as

22 well as the communities, the business

23 owners. It's the Captains'

24 responsibility, but it goes up to as high

25 as the Deputy Commissioner. Deputy

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2 Commissioner Christine Coulter is the
3 designated liaison between the Department
4 and the Asian community. So she meets
5 regularly with the different elements
6 of -- there's always people in our office
7 meeting with her. So she's actually the
8 Department liaison, but that
9 responsibility filters all the way down
10 to the captain and to the lieutenant as
11 well as to the individual officer on the
12 street.

13 So we take it important. I
14 mean, and we have for several other
15 Commissioners prior, but Commissioner
16 Ross has made it a very big point.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And is she
18 here today?

19 CAPTAIN HEALY: Commissioner
20 Ross is not here. He can't be here.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: No.

22 CAPTAIN HEALY: I'm sorry. No,
23 Christine Coulter. Both of them have
24 other engagements, so that's why I'm
25 here.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yes. I know
3 that Commissioner Ross isn't here. I
4 meant that your Deputy Commissioner who
5 is responsible for liaising with the
6 Asian American community, is she here
7 today?

8 CAPTAIN HEALY: She's not here,
9 no.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So that's
11 helpful to know, that she's there, and
12 I'm sure that it will be important for
13 other people to know that she's the
14 person to contact, but I appreciate it.

15 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
17 Councilwoman.

18 Councilwoman Blackwell.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to thank
21 these three individuals with whom we
22 work. You know, it's amazing, in days
23 past when we came up with the whole
24 stop-and-go name and we had so many
25 positive meetings together and with the

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2 communities, who would have thought that
3 we would come this far and that we would
4 have these kind of fights, because we
5 have worked together so long and with the
6 communities so long. So I want to thank
7 them, because they were there. In fact,
8 Lieutenant Walker I talk with whenever, I
9 must be ashamed to say, and the others
10 get a little more respect, but, I mean,
11 he might talk to me at 11:00 at night,
12 and I'll try to do better.

13 But I wanted to say thank you.

14 I know these are the right people, the
15 committed people, and if we are to do our
16 part to turn this issue around and to
17 make life better, it would be with their
18 leadership. Thank you.

19 Thank you.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
21 Councilwoman.

22 Two quick things before we let
23 you go. One, we appreciate the fact that
24 there is multi-tiered collaboration
25 between departments, agencies, both at

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2 the federal -- that gives us comfort.

3 Number two, I appreciate the
4 comments about diversity, language
5 barriers, including in the workforce,
6 people who can relate culturally, not
7 that -- I mean, not that you're not doing
8 that, but that is something that we look
9 to as a solution.

10 The third thing, which I've
11 conferred with my Co-Chair about, is
12 that -- and the reason why I asked about
13 commercial corridors is because geography
14 plays a part in this too, that if they
15 know these are targets of opportunity and
16 where they are, they can be followed and
17 things like that, and critical clues can
18 be picked up if we know that geography.

19 So what I'm going to confer
20 with my colleagues about is introducing a
21 resolution on Thursday calling for
22 surveillance cameras on all of the 100
23 commercial corridors we have, not all at
24 once. Budgetarily maybe we can't do it
25 that way, but over a finite period of

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2 time, because it protects everyone, not
3 just the merchant but the customers that
4 patronize the stores. It protects people
5 and gives a better clue to law
6 enforcement about who these perpetrators
7 are, and hopefully it will also not only
8 serve as a silent witness but also a
9 deterrent in some degrees.

10 These are bold people, and you
11 mentioned how they disable security
12 systems, but if we have them in our
13 commercial corridors run by our law
14 enforcement agencies, that might be a
15 redundancy in surveillance that might be
16 helpful.

17 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes. At this
18 time, Chairman, I know that Councilman
19 Derek Green has a question. I'd just
20 like to remind everybody this is the
21 first half of the panel. We have the
22 FBI, the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the
23 Delaware County DA's Office to go before
24 we get to our victims and then community
25 witnesses. So I'll be the bad guy and

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2 try to keep us on time.

3 Councilman.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
5 Chairman Oh.

6 I just have some questions. I
7 wanted to follow up on the line of
8 questioning that Councilwoman Gym raised
9 regarding language access. Many people
10 in this room know that I previously
11 served as a prosecutor both here in
12 Philadelphia and also in Delaware, and so
13 one of the questions I have when you talk
14 about language access and you also talked
15 about community meetings between the
16 Police Department, District Attorney's
17 Office, and merchants, especially in the
18 Asian American community, what type of
19 information has been provided to inform
20 merchants who possibly could be victims
21 of crime how they should report
22 information through 911 and that language
23 access is available, not only education
24 of merchants but also educating people on
25 Police Radio that if you have someone

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2 calling in that may have a dialect that
3 may have an accent, that they should
4 provide information to them regarding the
5 accessibility to language access?

6 CAPTAIN HEALY: Well, what I
7 will say is our language access, we have
8 a very, very strong policy. Now, what
9 I'll say is if there's something falling
10 between the cracks there, I'll look into
11 that this afternoon as soon as I leave
12 here. But the issue is Language Line is
13 actually very effective. As soon as the
14 call takers that receive the call, they
15 can't understand, it's a one-button call
16 to Language Line, which creates a
17 three-person call, and then that person
18 from Language Line can actually kind of
19 figure out the language, because
20 oftentimes we may not even know the type
21 of language that an individual is
22 speaking. So we have that in place. We
23 use it effectively, but like I said, if
24 individuals are not getting the service
25 they believe they should from Police

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2 Radio, that is something I'll definitely
3 look into. Like I said, it's as quick as
4 a button. It's a one-button push-in.

5 That's what we installed in Police Radio.
6 So it's a very small period of time for
7 that delay, seconds we're talking about.

8 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So in your
9 meetings with representatives of the
10 community, are you letting people know
11 that that language access information is
12 available if they do call 911? Because
13 the information is a two-way street, not
14 only making sure that people in Police
15 Radio have that information but also the
16 people in the community know that if I
17 need to call, I can call and the people
18 have access to language translators.

19 CAPTAIN HEALY: What I will say
20 is, I deal with different groups, PICC
21 being one of them. So I spread that
22 message out through them and I ask for
23 their help to spread that message, but if
24 we can do a better job relaying that --
25 you know, we have language identification

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2 cards for individuals that we hand out
3 and they point to their language, and it
4 helps expedite getting them the services
5 they need, but it's always something I
6 can revisit. I mean, there's a lot of
7 people that get frustrated and then will
8 just hang up or whatever the case, and
9 that's not acceptable. So I'll look into
10 it, see how we can do it better. We have
11 a good policy. I just need to make sure
12 it's being done correctly, and I will
13 look into that.

14 The language access cards are
15 actually very good for the officer on the
16 street, because they actually -- if you
17 can't understand, you hand the card and
18 the individual can actually -- a list of
19 statements in a whole bunch of different
20 languages and the individual can point to
21 a line and at least we know the language
22 that they speak. That helps to expedite
23 a lot of the services through Police
24 Radio and actually through the Police
25 Department as well. But we do our best

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2 to try to accommodate. It's not
3 something we've ignored.

4 We actually took the reins,
5 quite frankly, several years back to make
6 sure that we did have one of the
7 strongest Police Department policies.
8 When Global Philadelphia had initiated
9 several years back, we were the
10 frontrunners out there making sure that
11 we did all the changes, because we
12 understand this is not just -- I don't
13 mean to say this in a harsh way. This is
14 not just a community relations issue.
15 This is a civil rights issue. People
16 have a civil right to access to
17 government services. So it's not just
18 something that we should do. It's
19 something we have to do, and we do it
20 when -- we're happy to do it, but we need
21 to make sure we do it right and we're
22 constantly evolving to make sure we do it
23 better.

24 So I will look into those
25 issues. I'm concerned that people call

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2 Radio and they're not getting the
3 service. That upsets me. So I will look
4 into Radio and see how we can look into
5 that and make sure that doesn't happen,
6 quite frankly.

7 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Also in your
8 testimony you talked about safety tips
9 that you provide to the community, and
10 I'm curious of what are some of those
11 tips? Because there's certain patterns I
12 see occurring based on the testimony from
13 some of the witnesses.

14 For example, when I was in
15 banking, especially when I was focused on
16 retail banking, and when we had
17 robberies, we trained our branch managers
18 that when you open the branch in the
19 morning, don't use the same routine every
20 day. They usually have certain signals
21 in the branch that if the first person
22 comes into the branch, they know that the
23 signal for that week is the shades are
24 turned a certain way, and if you don't
25 see the shades turned a certain way, to

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2 not come into the branch, and to not
3 always close or open the branch at the
4 same time.

5 What are some of the safety
6 tips that you're providing to merchants
7 so they know they should be changing
8 their patterns of operation so that --
9 people who are engaging in these type of
10 criminal activities tend to stalk and
11 watch people based on their activities.
12 So what type of information and tips are
13 you providing merchants on how to change
14 the operations so they're not more likely
15 to be engaged or be victims of crime?

16 LIEUTENANT WALKER: Councilman,
17 again, a lot of these things we've done
18 at these meetings, we've learned. In '08
19 when the first pattern we saw of people
20 being followed home, we realized that our
21 investigators, especially in the
22 townships, weren't asking that question,
23 do you own a business somewhere. So we
24 caught that in the Radnor meeting in '08.
25 We had 31 different police agencies there

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2 to discuss that, and through the
3 Department, I started talking to the
4 investigators and saying, Make sure you
5 ask that question when someone becomes a
6 victim, do you own a business, could you
7 have been followed home.

8 So those things are evolving,
9 and the outreach programs that we've done
10 throughout the different counties are
11 exactly doing that. We're talking to
12 people about don't do the same thing
13 every day. Using banks, maybe using
14 different branches, don't go to the same
15 bank every day at the same time.

16 Unfortunately, it's a struggle. I mean,
17 I come from a family, we had a business
18 in Southwest Philadelphia for 33 years, a
19 small business, and I understand the
20 struggles. I mean, you're working 14
21 hours a day. It's tough to tell people
22 to change their times and ways of doing
23 things.

24 But there are other ways we can
25 do things. The Police Department has a

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2 roll call complaint board where every
3 officer every tour gets information on
4 checks they should make. So you can call
5 a district and ask to be part of that
6 roll call complaint procedure where your
7 business is checked at opening, closing,
8 maybe one time during the day.

9 The Commerce Department has
10 been partnered with us during this
11 program offering ways for people to
12 offset the cost of surveillance
13 equipment. They pay up to \$1,800 for
14 that, facade improvements, lighting
15 improvements, and then being engaged with
16 our Police District Advisory Council and
17 our PSA lieutenants to make sure that
18 those issues are being brought forward.

19 A lot of these things are
20 nuisance type crimes that be could dealt
21 with at that local level, and if they're
22 bigger than that, let us know.
23 Councilman Oh just provided us with
24 information on some service that didn't
25 happen. We need to know that, and we

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2 need to know that right away so that we
3 can improve upon that. And if we know
4 it, we can improve. If we can work
5 together, we can resolve these issues,
6 but we need to clearly work with the
7 community, be engaged, and make sure the
8 expectations are right, but make sure
9 we're doing the right thing by doing our
10 checks and balances. I think we're on
11 the right path. It's just we need to
12 continue to improve this.

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So are you
14 also using like police logs where you're
15 encouraging officers, especially in the
16 local patrol, to come into stores, to
17 sign up to log to say that they've been
18 in that store, those types of things as
19 well?

20 LIEUTENANT WALKER: And that's
21 another option. If anyone in the room
22 has a business, you do have an
23 opportunity to contact your local
24 district and ask the captain to put a
25 police log in your place of business. We

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2 have a community relations officer, crime
3 prevention officer in every district in
4 the City. So we will do that as part of
5 a strategy to try to get out there, but
6 we hope that people will make those calls
7 also to put that police log in there,
8 which requires an officer at least twice
9 a tour to sign it. And also if you feel
10 something is going on, you got a crowd
11 out there that's unruly on a daily basis,
12 call and ask for a roll call complaint
13 and you'll get more checks on your
14 business.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And also
16 looking at the witness list from the
17 Chair, it seems we're having Delaware
18 County DA's Office involved in this
19 conversation and I'm assuming you're
20 collaborating with other law enforcement
21 jurisdictions around the City. Typically
22 when you have these type of crimes, it's
23 a certain pattern, because criminals have
24 a certain pattern they try to engage in.
25 I know you can't talk about an open

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2 investigation, but my question is, in
3 your conversations with neighboring law
4 enforcement jurisdictions, are you able
5 to see certain patterns and you identify
6 certain crews you think that may be
7 involved in this process?

8 LIEUTENANT WALKER: No doubt
9 about it. I mean, early on in '08 when
10 we first started this, we had
11 Pennsylvania State Police, their PaCIC
12 unit was engaged in this. So if they
13 were seeing cars being stopped in the
14 community, they would forward it. So the
15 FBI is engaged with us clearly in this
16 task force. So patterns in this
17 particular situation were easy to see.

18 In the most recent one that
19 started in May, we saw the corner store
20 pattern. It was in Southwest Philly,
21 predominantly in West Philly, but it
22 moved into Northwest. So my peer up
23 there, I spoke with him immediately. We
24 talked with our Detective Bureau. We put
25 it out to every patrol car that

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2 information, so they were alerted to the

3 types of places. And it was pretty

4 tight. It was 4:00 to 6:00 a.m. where

5 they were going into these businesses to

6 commit the burglaries, obviously because

7 the businesses were closed. So we were

8 very fortunate to get a tip pretty

9 quickly and to take these people into

10 custody. And, again, in my seven, eight

11 years of dealing with this now, you

12 clearly could see that the education,

13 working with the community piece of

14 information, it's definitely improving,

15 because the first series and method of

16 operation, which was the follow-homes,

17 seemed to have subsided now. Most of

18 those people are in custody serving long

19 sentence terms, and I think that's the

20 important part of this. It's not only

21 the community and the police, but then

22 it's the DA's Office and the U.S.

23 Attorney's Office who are taking this and

24 prosecuting these cases and sending clear

25 messages to people, you will not do this,

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2 you will not target people, because it's
3 a clear, in our minds, a civil rights
4 violation and we're just not going to
5 have people target people in the City.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Last
7 question. Typically when you have these
8 types of specific criminal activities
9 that are targeting a specific community,
10 there's a certain pattern. Resources are
11 dedicated, targeted to address this
12 issue. Has that occurred in this
13 situation?

14 LIEUTENANT WALKER: Yes. We
15 dedicated immediately detectives from
16 both Northwest, Southwest. We brought in
17 Percy Giles from the FBI to engage with
18 our team. In the '15 case that we talked
19 about, it was actually in Southwest
20 Philly. Store owner, beer distributor,
21 Southwest Philly. It turns out his
22 brother actually works for him. He's
23 Korean. His brother owns the store. We
24 got information that they put a tracker
25 on his car, and he lives out in Chester

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2 County. Percy Giles was with me at the
3 time in our office at 12 o'clock at
4 night. We checked his car. We didn't
5 find a tracker. Well, lo and behold, he
6 goes home at just after midnight and
7 they're in his house. Thank God we were
8 in touch with him. He doesn't go in.
9 State Police are out there working with
10 us. They're engaged with us. They're at
11 the house. The car gets away, but at 3
12 o'clock in the morning we catch the car
13 coming back, Percy Giles, myself, and my
14 group of detectives that were all
15 assembled that quickly, and caught the
16 guy going into his house with the goods
17 that were taken in the burglary.

18 So we feel we have a good group
19 of people who are working hard. In this
20 case on 2/27 of '15, it clearly showed
21 how the FBI was with us in that building
22 at midnight and how the State Police
23 worked with us, how they got the
24 information back, and how we made an
25 arrest within hours of the incident

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2 occurring.

3 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. Thank
4 you very much.

5 We have one more question.
6 What I'm going to say, it's 11 o'clock
7 and we're on the first half of our first
8 panel. So I will, with my colleagues'
9 consent, because we're all equals here,
10 make the questions quicker and your
11 answers shorter so we could get through
12 everybody.

13 Councilwoman Gym.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you so
15 much, Councilman Oh, because I know we
16 want to move quickly.

17 But, Mr. Healy, and especially
18 to the Police Department, I just wanted
19 to give you a chance to just basically
20 respond a little bit to a story in which
21 a Police Department spokesperson was
22 quoted as talking about Asian businesses
23 moving into different neighborhoods. You
24 know, it raised a lot of concerns within
25 a lot of the Asian communities, because

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2 the Police Department spokesperson said
3 that when an Asian business comes in, you
4 know the neighborhood is going down the
5 wrong path. And that was in the
6 Inquirer, and I wanted to make sure that
7 for a lot of communities who saw that and
8 read that in the paper, it raises up
9 additional concerns about making sure
10 that there's a fair and equal response
11 when they call and that there are urgent
12 issues at play.

13 So I just wanted to give you a
14 chance to respond to it. We certainly
15 sent the letter, but I know that this is
16 a more public forum.

17 CAPTAIN HEALY: Well, from the
18 Police Department's perspective, I mean,
19 we respond to all crimes and we care
20 about all victims regardless of where you
21 live. The issue I believe that was said,
22 I can't speak for the Lieutenant, but in
23 certain areas these certain businesses
24 are the only things that are out there.
25 In certain parts of the City you won't

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2 see a Wawa, you won't see a 7-Eleven, but
3 you'll see small merchants out there
4 trying to make a living in some very hard
5 areas of the City. Regrettably, as a
6 result of that, they become magnets, not
7 that they're creating anything, but since
8 they're oftentimes the only place to go
9 to get food at certain points of the day
10 or I'll say the night, that they can be a
11 magnet for some criminal activity.

12 That's, I believe, the intent of what he
13 was trying to say. But we're not saying
14 any way, shape or form that this
15 community or this business community is
16 the source of the criminal activity.
17 That's not what we were meaning to say,
18 if that's where you were going with that.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I wasn't
20 going with it. I was saying that the
21 Police Department spokesperson very
22 clearly said that it was Asian businesses
23 coming into a neighborhood, the
24 neighborhood goes down the wrong path.
25 That's totally different from saying that

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2 there are certain businesses that become
3 focuses of crime. My issue was was that
4 the Police Department spokesperson, not
5 an individual or random person, made a
6 very clear racialized statement about a
7 pretty serious situation that has -- it
8 impacts how we frame up the Police
9 Department's response, and I just wanted
10 to give you a chance to clarify that.
11 But I certainly hope -- you know, again,
12 the concern is is that I assume that that
13 person did not -- was not going to say
14 that it is Asian businesses specifically
15 that mean when they come in, the
16 neighborhood goes down the wrong turn,
17 right?

18 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm going to
19 interrupt, but what I'd like to do is,
20 would you contact whomever that person
21 was or their supervisor and provide some
22 type of response. We don't know if that
23 was an accurate quote, or if it was, I'm
24 not trying to excuse it, but we'd like to
25 understand. I don't think you're the

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2 right person to answer that question, but
3 we would like to get an answer, and I
4 will distribute that.

5 CAPTAIN HEALY: Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you.

7 Clerk, would you call the next
8 witness list.

9 THE CLERK: Percy Giles,
10 Special Agent, FBI, Philadelphia
11 Division; Robert Reed, Executive
12 Assistant United States Attorney, U.S.
13 Attorney's Office for the Eastern
14 District of Pennsylvania.

15 (Witnesses approached witness
16 table.)

17 COUNCILMAN OH: All right.
18 Could we start from my left to your
19 right, and we'll just go down, starting
20 with the FBI. And I think the Assistant
21 DA might as well sit in there. Thank
22 you.

23 MR. GILES: Good morning,
24 Council. My name is Percy Giles, Special
25 Agent with the FBI assigned to the

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2 Violent Crimes Task Force here in
3 Philadelphia, and I'd just like to thank
4 you all for having me. I'm honored to be
5 here.

6 I would say -- and I'll keep my
7 comments pretty brief -- over the last
8 several years, I've been involved
9 specifically investigating crimes of this
10 nature, because when a particular group
11 targets a certain nationality, we take it
12 very seriously. So we bring federal
13 resources to eradicate these crimes.

14 So over the last couple years,
15 we've been able to successfully disrupt
16 and dismantle these groups with various
17 techniques. I won't get into those
18 techniques, but I will say that it was --
19 the number one thing that we use is
20 collaborative efforts between state and
21 local partners. We've got these groups
22 together. We shared information, state,
23 local, and federal, and we've used all of
24 our resources to combat this problem.

25 So with that being said, I

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2 would just say we need to continue our
3 effort to bring everyone together from
4 different communities and make sure that
5 they understand that this is being
6 addressed, we are looking into it, and we
7 are investigating these crimes and
8 bringing a lot of resources in time and
9 energy to these investigations.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you.

11 MS. KIM: Good morning,
12 Council. My name is Pearl Kim. I'm an
13 Assistant District Attorney out in
14 Delaware County. I am just here to
15 support and facilitate any questions.
16 The only comment that I would like to
17 make is that I would like Council to know
18 that I'm also a Commissioner on the
19 Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian
20 American Affairs. It is a priority of
21 the Commission to work on language access
22 issues. I'm also on the Executive
23 Committee for the Asian Pacific American
24 Bar Association. We as an Association
25 and our Community Outreach is also

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2 working on language access issues. I'm
3 also on several language access working
4 groups, and fortunately I will be able to
5 bring the language access issue to our
6 next meeting for the Pennsylvania
7 Commission on Crime and Delinquency. I'm
8 going to bring it to their attention as
9 well.

10 So thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
12 much. And I will say that you have been
13 involved in many of these cross-county
14 issues with the FBI, U.S. Attorney's
15 Office, the DA's Office here in
16 Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia
17 Police. So thank you for being here.

18 MS. KIM: Thank you.

19 MR. REED: Good morning. My
20 name again is Robert Reed. I'm the
21 Executive Assistant U.S. Attorney, and
22 thank you for inviting me to speak.

23 Let me just say that having
24 spent more than 30 years in law
25 enforcement with the U.S. Attorney's

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2 Office, I have seen much violence, as you
3 can imagine, but these particular types
4 of crimes are truly reprehensible,
5 because they are targeting an individual
6 group based on their nationality, their
7 culture, and it's just outrageous. Let
8 me just say that we take it very
9 seriously.

10 I just want to speak very
11 briefly about what we've done. In 2003,
12 our office as U.S. Attorney's Office
13 working very closely with the FBI and the
14 Police Department started something
15 called the Hobbs Act Robbery Task Force.
16 What that means is, we have federal
17 jurisdiction to prosecute people who
18 commit armed robberies of commercial
19 establishments. From 2003 through 2016,
20 we have continued to do that.

21 In 2008, we saw that there was
22 a number of crimes committed against the
23 Asian community, particularly in the
24 Upper Darby area, Southwest Philadelphia,
25 and they included home invasions. We

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2 worked again very closely with the FBI --
3 they're always our partners -- with John
4 Walker, the Lieutenant from Southwest,
5 who I've got to tell you is fantastic.
6 Is he here? Well, I hope he heard the
7 compliment. Anyway, and Pearl Kim, who
8 has really done an amazing job being
9 essentially a great collaborator and
10 partner in these efforts.

11 What we did see at that time
12 was that there was some reluctance of
13 people from the community to come
14 forward, and it didn't really relate to
15 language access. In fact, there was one
16 case that was brought into federal court
17 where because the victims did not show up
18 for sentencing, Pearl Kim and myself, we
19 testified really on behalf of the
20 community, because we wanted the judge to
21 know -- the federal judge to understand
22 how serious we took this and why we
23 believed a substantial sentence was
24 appropriate.

25 In the course of the time that

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2 we've done this task force, this Hobbs
3 Act Robbery Task Force, we prosecuted
4 about 500 people. The average sentence
5 is about 15 years without parole. That
6 is unlike what you would get in the state
7 system.

8 We prosecuted 25 to 30 people
9 who have been involved in Asian armed
10 robberies. The average sentence there is
11 similarly about 15 years. Some people
12 have gotten as many as 60 years in jail;
13 that is, 6-0. They have to do 58 percent
14 of their sentence. And I don't know how
15 many people who are out there
16 contemplating committing crimes against
17 the Asian community, but I will say if it
18 comes into federal court, they face
19 certain conviction, because we convict
20 almost 95 percent or more of the people
21 who commit these crimes.

22 Number two, their choices are
23 pretty daunting. They're going to go to
24 jail for a long period of time or they
25 have to cooperate.

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2 What we find as a result of our
3 investigations is that many of the people
4 who commit these crimes, while we may
5 have only originally known that they did
6 one or two or three, ultimately confess
7 to doing many others. And so that's a
8 very important device that we have or
9 tool that we have to investigate and
10 prosecute other cases. We actually
11 oftentimes, and I will say over the
12 years, have been able to obtain evidence
13 that's led to solving homicides and other
14 very serious crimes, which we turn over
15 to the District Attorney's Office.

16 So we will continue to work
17 very closely with the Asian community.
18 We have excellent partnerships. We have
19 done a lot of outreach to the Asian
20 community over the years. And I will say
21 it is very exciting for me to see all of
22 the people here from the community. I
23 think it's fantastic. I just want them
24 to know that in addition to the Police
25 Department and the District Attorney's

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2 Office, the people in the federal
3 government are totally supportive of
4 them. We will seek every -- we will make
5 every effort to make sure that these
6 crimes do not continue. They can contact
7 us directly. They can contact me
8 directly, and we'll do everything we can
9 to stop them.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
11 much.

12 Are there any questions?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. I've
15 discouraged everyone enough. I'm sorry.

16 But thank you very much. If
17 you could stick around a little bit. I
18 know you're all busy. If you got to go,
19 you have to go, but if you could stick
20 around a little bit, we will be bringing
21 up some of our victims at this point in
22 time. Thank you.

23 Clerk, would you call the next
24 panel.

25 THE CLERK: Yongzhen Yu;

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2 Witness X, who wishes to remain anonymous
3 and whose statement will be read into the
4 record by Stephanie Sun, Outreach
5 Specialist for Small Business Development
6 of the Welcoming Center for New
7 Pennsylvanians; Lifang Li; Yuming Wang.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: As they
9 approach, I will note that, number one,
10 in case anyone did not know, your
11 testimony is being televised at this
12 point in time. Those cameras are live.
13 So in addition to the news, right now as
14 you testify, there are our City folks,
15 many of our Council staff are watching.

16 Secondly, we do have
17 translation, because some of our
18 witnesses cannot speak English.

19 And, finally, we have witnesses
20 who don't want to come forward because
21 they don't want to be victimized when
22 they get back to their neighborhood.
23 That is a concern, and so we do have one
24 witness that asked to be anonymous. She
25 will testify. However, we are not going

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2 to provide her name. She will be Witness
3 X.

4 (Witnesses approached witness
5 table.)

6 COUNCILMAN OH: So with that,
7 I'll ask the first witness to testify.

8 (Ms. Sun translating for Ms.
9 Yu.)

10 MS. SUN: Good morning,
11 Councilmembers. Good morning, everyone.

12 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm sorry.
13 Stephanie, would you move the mic closer
14 to your --

15 MS. SUN: Okay. Is that okay?

16 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes. Thank
17 you.

18 MS. SUN: Okay. Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN OH: And speak
20 loudly.

21 MS. SUN: Good morning,
22 Councilmembers. Good morning, everyone.
23 My name is Yongzhen Yu. Me and my
24 husband own and run a Chinese take-out
25 restaurant, China Garden, at 1023 West

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2 Ruscomb Street, Philadelphia. I'm also a
3 mother of two children, and this is my
4 10-year-old daughter Gina. This is my
5 8-year-old son Eric. Our restaurant is
6 on the first floor and our family lives
7 on the second floor.

8 This past June 9th about 4:45
9 a.m., our family was victim of an armed
10 burglary by two masked men. The robbers
11 entered our bedroom on the second floor
12 through the window when our family were
13 all in deep sleep. I was suddenly
14 wakened up by a strong light, and when I
15 opened my eyes, I just saw a flashlight
16 blinding me and a gun pointed at my
17 forehead. A masked man said, "Robbery."
18 Another pointed my husband with a gun and
19 asked my husband to face the wall with
20 hands up.

21 They robbed our bedroom for
22 about ten minutes, stealing mobile
23 phones, a laptop, and over \$3,000 cash.
24 One of them continued to point the gun at
25 me and my husband and the other opened

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2 the door to my children's bedroom. He
3 pulled out my half-asleep son, tugging at
4 his pajamas collar, dragged him to our
5 room. I hurriedly went forward to
6 embrace my son and covered him with my
7 blanket.

8 At this moment, I heard
9 pounding on the walls. Then the robber
10 with one hand holding a gun pointed at my
11 daughter's temple and the other hand
12 ruthlessly tugging at my daughter's
13 pajamas dragged her into our room.

14 Afterwards we got to know that the hard
15 wall sounds we heard were the sounds made
16 by the robber by strongly hitting my
17 daughter's head over and over again
18 against the wall. If you are a parent in
19 this room, I believe you know how much my
20 heart ached.

21 The robber pointed at my
22 daughter's temple with a gun, yelled at
23 us, "More money." I begged them to let
24 go of my children and told them the
25 location of more cash. When they went to

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2 get the cash, which was over 7,000 U.S.

3 dollars, I quickly grabbed my daughter

4 and hugged her. My daughter's whole body

5 was shaking and she said, "Mom, I'm so

6 scared. They are so scary." I told her,

7 "Don't be afraid. Let's pray to God to

8 protect us, and let them go soon."

9 The two robbed our house for

10 around 25 minutes. When we heard the car

11 drive away, we went downstairs to call

12 the police with our restaurant's phone

13 since our cell phones were all stolen.

14 Me and my husband's English is not so

15 good, so we let our daughter to call the

16 police.

17 We were very surprised that the

18 police arrived after only ten minutes,

19 because I also called 911 so many times,

20 but every time we have to wait at least

21 for a couple of hours. Even sometimes we

22 wait for one whole day. We don't know if

23 the reason for this difference is because

24 my daughter is a native speaker of

25 English sounding exactly the same as the

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2 local American, but my accent always

3 tells them we are Chinese or Asian once

4 we open our mouth. Our Chinese American

5 friends all experience the same as us.

6 Even for very serious harassment and

7 burglary, they also have to wait for the

8 police to come for a couple of hours and

9 even a whole day after calling 911, but

10 as long as the call is made by other

11 ethnic people, like our customers

12 standing right in front of us, even just

13 for much less serious issues like

14 arguments, the police always arrive

15 within only a few minutes. I really hope

16 to communicate well with the police.

17 Several times when I called the police, I

18 asked for a Mandarin interpreter, but the

19 911 operators told me each time that they

20 don't have an interpreter.

21 Compared to other Chinese

22 immigrant business owners that suffered

23 from armed robberies, our family was very

24 lucky. After the security meeting in

25 Chinatown on August 8th, many media

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2 reported this issue. An audience
3 reported the suspect to the police
4 according to the clues in the news. In
5 September, we actively cooperated with
6 the police to identify the suspect, went
7 to the court for testimony, and sent the
8 criminal to jail already. But many
9 criminals robbing Chinese businesses
10 still have not been caught. So I really
11 hope other Chinese immigrant business
12 owners can be as lucky as me to let the
13 criminals know that we, Chinese
14 immigrants, Asian immigrants, are also
15 protected by the police, by the
16 government, and by the law.

17 During the first two weeks
18 after the armed robbery, my daughter
19 couldn't sleep and cried every night.
20 Now she must hold very tightly the doll,
21 with a flashlight next to the pillow when
22 she sleeps and is very easily wakened up
23 easily by any gentle touching. At least
24 once or twice a week she has violent
25 nightmares during which she kicks and

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2 blows. I ask her what she dreams about.

3 She always cry and say, "That masked man

4 was coming up to me. So scary." Then we

5 realized that she has been repeating the

6 same nightmare, which is the

7 psychological scar made by the armed

8 robbery.

9 After the armed robbery, my

10 daughter had to see the psychiatrist

11 several times every week, and I am also

12 taking sleeping pills and

13 anti-depressants continuously. We don't

14 know how many years it will take us to

15 heal from the trauma of the heart of our

16 family. Although the two robbers have

17 been caught, we are still often violently

18 harassed and abused at our store like

19 before, like most small Chinese business

20 owners. My husband doesn't call the

21 police because he feels it is useless to

22 call and the police always arrive a long

23 time after the suspect leave, without any

24 follow-up afterwards. Unless the

25 business conditions and the living

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2 conditions change, it's hard for us to
3 see the hope of recovering from the
4 trauma.

5 Having gone through a lot of
6 communication with Ms. Stephanie Sun, who
7 is seated beside me, I finally decided to
8 come and bring my two children to the
9 hearing today to let my children see they
10 are not alone. There are so many people
11 together with them by their side. There
12 are so many government officials and
13 police want to protect them, and there is
14 hope for happiness and for a bright
15 future.

16 Thank you for everyone.

17 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
18 much.

19 We will let the whole panel
20 testify. I do have to interrupt that
21 just because we have young children here,
22 I think it's important to let them know
23 that we appreciate them coming here and
24 they certainly are brave to do that, and
25 this is part of, as Councilman Derek

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2 Green knows as a former prosecutor, this
3 is the part where they begin to take back
4 their lives by taking a stand, and they
5 are doing something today to address this
6 problem for everybody. So thank you.

7 MS. SUN: Thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: Could we have
9 the next witness testify, please. Thank
10 you. Can you provide her the microphone
11 and you'll take the other one. There's
12 only two. There's three of you but only
13 two mics. So if you could move the
14 microphone over.

15 MS. SUN: Okay. So our second
16 victim, she would like to read through
17 the whole testimony in Chinese and I will
18 read the whole English version.

19 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay.

20 MS. SUN: Thank you.

21 (Ms. Li read her statement in
22 Chinese.)

23 (Applause.)

24 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
25 much.

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2 Would you translate that for
3 us, Stephanie. Thank you.

4 MS. SUN: Yes.

5 Good morning, Councilmembers.
6 My name is Lifang Li. My husband and I
7 are small business owners and residents
8 of Philadelphia. We own and run a
9 Chinese take-out restaurant in North
10 Philadelphia. We have two daughters, one
11 19 years old, now attending Temple
12 University, and a 9-year-old. We live
13 upstairs from our business.

14 Since opening the restaurant in
15 2012, we have been the victims of
16 numerous attacks, insults, damages to
17 property, including broken windows, and
18 robbery.

19 We called the police as soon as
20 these events happen, but often the police
21 arrive well past the incident and the
22 perpetrators were long gone. Sometimes
23 we have waited for close to 24 hours
24 before the police respond. I believe I
25 have called the police at least 100 times

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2 during the four years to report these
3 attacks at the restaurant. In very few
4 instances, the police took notes about
5 the complaints or incidents.

6 My husband is now telling not
7 to call the police when things happen,
8 because he feels it is useless. However,
9 we see people arguing out loud in the
10 street and someone calls the police and
11 they just arrive quickly to diffuse the
12 situation.

13 We are told that Philadelphia
14 is a welcoming city to immigrants.
15 However, we are often abused and feels
16 the victims of racial discrimination in
17 our store. We are yelled "Chinese
18 bitch," "go back to China," and some
19 people spit at us. These unfortunate
20 events have created deep psychological
21 scars in our daughters.

22 My 9-year-old daughter is often
23 asked by my friend and her friends if she
24 is Chinese American. She answers that
25 she is American, not a Chinese American.

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2 I ask why she denies her identity, and
3 she told me, "If people know that I'm
4 Chinese American, they will make fun of
5 me, they will bully me."

6 Last September I watched a
7 music video on YouTube teaching the
8 public how to rob Chinese families. The
9 wrap video is named "Meet the Flockers"
10 by YG. It reminds me of my oldest
11 daughter suffering. I am shocked by
12 this, extremely indignant and distressed.

13 One afternoon in August 2012 at
14 around 5:00 p.m., my oldest daughter was
15 using her iPad behind the counter at the
16 store when a male entered in and stole it
17 from her hands, pushing me to the ground
18 as well and injuring my legs. I couldn't
19 walk for a couple of weeks as a result.

20 About 30 minutes later, the
21 police arrived after calling 911. My
22 daughter explained to the police that the
23 iPad is equipped with GPS tracking, which
24 could locate the exact location of the
25 device and could help them to catch the

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2 thief, but the police replied they could
3 not do that.

4 After the robbery my daughter
5 became very reserved. She used to stop
6 by after school to help out at the
7 restaurant, but she stopped doing it.
8 When she graduated from high school -- by
9 the way, she was number one in her
10 class -- she wanted to leave Philadelphia
11 to go to college, because in her heart,
12 she feels the City is too dangerous, but
13 also because of the constant harassment
14 she feels as a Chinese American. This
15 became a point of contention in our
16 house, and only after much pressure she
17 decided to attend Temple University here
18 in Philadelphia but only if we let her
19 live on campus, away from our house.
20 Even now she seldom visits, making her
21 younger sister especially sad, but we
22 never told my youngest about the robbery
23 as the reason her sister feels the way
24 she does.

25 I ask in earnest to the City of

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2 Philadelphia government and the Police
3 Department, please protect us and provide
4 for us a safe living environment so that
5 our daughter will choose to stay in
6 Philadelphia with her family.

7 We did not share these attacks
8 with our relatives in China. We don't
9 want them to worry about us. But my
10 family in China called me and asked if we
11 had been robbed, because there have been
12 many news stories in China about the
13 targeting of Chinese families. This is a
14 topic there in China now.

15 As you can understand, I did
16 not want to go public with my story.
17 However, today I summoned my courage to
18 come before you since you hold in your
19 hands our children's future and that of
20 all Chinese Americans and other Asians
21 for all immigrants in this city. We
22 sincerely want to communicate with the
23 government to make Philadelphia an
24 immigrant-welcoming city and a
25 business-friendly city, not a violent

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2 city where people want to escape from.

3 Thank you for hearing my
4 testimony.

5 (Applause.)

6 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
7 much.

8 Is Yuming Wang here?

9 Okay. Would you step forward
10 to testify.

11 (Witness approached witness
12 table.)

13 MR. WANG: Good morning,
14 Chairman Oh and other Councilmembers.
15 Thank you so much for sitting here
16 listening to us.

17 My name is Michael Wang. I am
18 an attorney and also a small business
19 owner in Philadelphia. Thank you for
20 giving me this opportunity to speak
21 today.

22 In about the last three years,
23 my rental properties were burglarized
24 about 22 times on about 20 real
25 properties in the Wynnefield section of

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2 Philadelphia. I reported about 19 of the
3 burglaries out of 22.

4 The most recent burglary
5 happened on October 3rd, 2016 at 1711
6 Georges Lane and a washer and a dryer
7 were stolen. I called 911 and an officer
8 came. I offered her suspect's
9 information, but she refused to take the
10 information for the reason that I did not
11 personally see the suspect burglarizing
12 my property. I asked her if I could talk
13 to her supervisor. She went outside
14 sitting in her car for about 30 minutes.
15 Then two more police officers came, who
16 took the suspect information and also
17 told me that they would at least
18 interview the suspects.

19 At about 8:50 the next morning,
20 I found out the same well-secured
21 property was burglarized again and some
22 furniture was stolen. I immediately
23 called 911, and I was told that police
24 officers would come soon. About one hour
25 passed and nobody came. I called 911

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2 again and I was told to wait. About
3 another one or two hours passed and
4 nobody came. I called 911 again, and I
5 was told the 19th District was informed
6 and they would send police officers to my
7 house soon. I waited for a while and
8 nobody came. I called 911 again, and I
9 was told again that it was the 19th
10 District handling this matter.

11 When finished talking with the
12 911 operator, I called the 19th District
13 immediately, and I was told that they
14 would send someone to my house soon.
15 Some time passed and nobody came. My
16 worker who was working inside my house
17 became angry, so he also called 911
18 explaining what happened. However, his
19 call did not help. I called the 19th
20 District again, and I was told that
21 police officers were ready to be
22 dispatched. Some time passed and nobody
23 came. Now I keep calling, calling.
24 Eventually at 5 o'clock they came. Both
25 my worker and I told police officer that

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2 a neighbor is suspect, because my
3 furniture was just laying outside the
4 neighbor's door, and the one officer told
5 me that she will leave this matter to a
6 detective to handle. The next day I met
7 the detective at my property and also
8 pointed out to him the furniture was
9 still laying outside the neighbor's door.
10 However, I have not heard anything since.

11 As an attorney, I often receive
12 calls from my clients asking me for
13 advice on similar situations. When they
14 repeatedly told me that they had to wait
15 a few hours for police to come, I just
16 thought that it could have been a
17 language problem or my clients did not
18 state the problem clearly. However, when
19 the same problem happened to me this
20 time, I felt shocked, disappointed, and
21 even helpless.

22 Within the last few days, I had
23 two clients call me from China. One
24 asked me if it is still safe for him to
25 purchase some properties worth \$2 million

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2 in Philadelphia. The other one asked me
3 if she should send her children to school
4 in a city other than Philadelphia,
5 because she just heard that Philadelphia
6 is becoming more and more unsafe.

7 I am here not to blame the
8 police officers, because it seems to me
9 that police officer cannot solve this
10 problem alone, but I really want to ask
11 the City Council a few questions.

12 Number one, these burglaries
13 are happening so often. Are there not
14 enough police officers in Philadelphia to
15 handle these criminal activities or is
16 the matter of burglary just too small to
17 handle?

18 Number two, Chinese restaurant
19 owners often face daily problems such as
20 robberies, vandalization, drug dealings,
21 fighting, and even urination in the
22 restaurant. What can the City do to
23 eliminate these problems?

24 Third, YG song "Meet the
25 Flockers" openly encourages people to rob

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2 the Chinese, and the fear of the Chinese
3 being robbed was elevated dramatically.
4 Can you do something to combat these
5 activities, especially against the
6 Chinese, and what measures are you going
7 to take to solve these problems?

8 Number four, among all the
9 measures you do choose to take, do you
10 believe that the City government, police,
11 and community network are extremely
12 important to combat the crimes? If so,
13 can we do it together?

14 You know, I will say another
15 few words. I just told a young worker
16 when he was here and he told me the
17 robbery, burglary in Philadelphia, the
18 national rate the case being solved is 12
19 percent. Philadelphia is 14 percent. So
20 it seems to the Police Department,
21 Philadelphia is well done. So this is
22 not problem, you know, seems to him. But
23 I see daily, you know, robberies and also
24 burglaries. I feel very unsafe.

25 And another one is that this

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2 burglary, the police seldom solve the
3 problem. You report; they take the
4 information. That's it, you know. All
5 of the 20 cases I reported, none of them
6 solved. It's no information further at
7 all. If Police Department cannot do it,
8 who else can do it, you know? I really
9 need City Council to figure out how can
10 we do it.

11 Thank you so much.

12 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you. We
13 are going to try to answer those very
14 questions. At this time, I'd like to
15 move on, however, to our last witness,
16 who unfortunately was very reluctant to
17 come forward because of fear of
18 retaliation. So we're going to read in
19 her written testimony. We only identify
20 her as Witness X.

21 MS. SUN: Good morning,
22 Councilmembers. My husband and I are
23 small business owners and residents of
24 Philadelphia. We own and run a Chinese
25 restaurant in Germantown. We have three

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2 daughters and live upstairs from our
3 business.

4 On August 16, 2016 at around
5 10:30 p.m., the restaurant was still open
6 and I was working alone in the restaurant
7 and my husband was sleeping upstairs.

8 Three men masked with towels and T-shirts
9 entered my restaurant. One of them
10 jumped quickly onto the counter, pointing
11 the gun at me and tried to enter the
12 window of the bulletproof glass to get to
13 the cash register. I closed the window
14 and simultaneously reached the phone and
15 called 911. The robbers could not enter
16 through the window, so tried to break in
17 through the door next to the window.

18 They quickly broke the door and the door
19 frame and was able to get inside. They
20 pushed me down onto the ground. When I
21 got up, one of them pointed the gun to my
22 head, and during that time, they quickly
23 took all the cash from the cash register,
24 which was around 500 U.S. dollars. They
25 ran away very quickly.

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2 Everything happened in a matter
3 of minutes. The robbers left before my
4 husband came down from the third floor of
5 the restaurant. The police arrived five
6 minutes after the robbers left.

7 Two days after the armed
8 robbery, we decided to sell the business
9 and so we posted an advertisement. My
10 family wants to leave this dangerous
11 neighborhood. However, nobody is showing
12 interest in purchasing our restaurant.

13 This was not our first armed
14 robbery. Last October there was another
15 armed robbery in the restaurant. The
16 robbery also happened around 10:00 p.m.
17 while the restaurant was still open. At
18 that time, my husband was alone at the
19 restaurant. Two robbers entered and
20 pointed a gun to my husband. They robbed
21 all the cash from the register, which was
22 around several hundred dollars, a laptop,
23 and a cell phone. After the robbery, we
24 called the police immediately and they
25 arrived in half an hour, which I believe

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2 allows the criminals to leave and make it
3 difficult for the police to catch them.

4 The police just simply asked several
5 questions and took notes and left. There
6 has not been a follow-up from the police.

7 These two armed robberies have
8 left psychological scars. Now every day
9 at around 10:00 p.m. I am scared to be at
10 the restaurant, causing anxiety. I
11 repeatedly check the locks of the door.

12 Now Halloween is not fun anymore, but has
13 become a scary experience for me, because
14 people with masks all remind me of the
15 masked robbers. Because of the
16 robberies, I am often sad, and it becomes
17 hard for me to smile at my customers,
18 which lowers my service quality at the
19 restaurant. And I even become easily
20 upset at my children, although my husband
21 and I have never told my children about
22 the robberies.

23 Another Chinese restaurant one
24 block from our restaurant was robbed
25 twice within three months this year, once

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2 in April and the other in June. The
3 owner was struck in the head with a gun
4 and bled severely.

5 I believe that we are closely
6 being watched by the criminals who are
7 robbing us. They're knowledgeable about
8 our restaurant operation and facility, so
9 they are able to enter and rob us in just
10 short few minutes.

11 The owner of the restaurant one
12 block from us and I both reported the
13 armed robberies to the police right away.
14 However, we are not aware of the status
15 of catching the robbers. Therefore, we
16 are scared every day that they may come
17 back to rob us again.

18 Currently, there are people in
19 the Chinese community purchasing guns to
20 protect themselves. This is very
21 dangerous situation, and it is opposite
22 to Chinese culture and personality. The
23 protection we are seeking is from the
24 government. Please protect us. We do
25 hope to work with the police, work with

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2 the government to build a safe community
3 and a safe city.

4 Thank you very much.

5 (Applause.)

6 COUNCILMAN OH: All right.

7 Thank you very much.

8 At this time, I will ask my
9 colleagues if they have any questions.
10 Just a reminder that we are on a tight
11 time schedule. I have six community
12 witnesses that we have asked to keep it
13 to two minutes, but still there is just a
14 short period of time. But if there's any
15 questions, please let me know.

16 Councilman Squilla.

17 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
18 Mr. Chairman.

19 I just want to say I appreciate
20 the efforts of the people who came out to
21 testify, because I know that's not easy
22 for you to do that. And to have your
23 voice heard, it's so important to send a
24 message out, not only to us in Council
25 but to the people of the City of

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2 Philadelphia and to our Police
3 Department, and knowing that we as a
4 Council will do what we can working with
5 all our agencies, working with Commerce
6 for our camera programs, working to make
7 sure that the businesses and the City
8 Council and also the Police Department
9 are all on the same page moving forward
10 from this. But this does not happen
11 without your advocacy, without your
12 voice, and it really is so important for
13 you to do this, and we really appreciate
14 and thank you for it.

15 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you,
16 Councilman Squilla.
17 Councilman Green.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. Very
19 quickly.

20 Mr. Wang, you talked about the
21 robberies that you faced and you also
22 talked about robberies that your clients
23 have faced. Have any of them
24 participated in any community meetings
25 with the police?

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2 MR. WANG: Excuse me?

3 COUNCILMAN OH: Have you or any
4 of the clients who told you about being
5 robbed or burglarized, have they been
6 involved with any of these community
7 meetings with the Police Department, DA's
8 Office? Have they been actively engaged
9 in communicating to law enforcement,
10 cooperating about these robberies and
11 burglaries?

12 MR. WANG: Yes. Sure. You
13 know, more and more time he's coming
14 forward to cooperate with law enforcement
15 and also go to the court to testify, you
16 know. Right now more and more time he's
17 waiting to come forward for whatever they
18 can do.

19 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
20 much.

21 Clerk, would you read the next
22 panel of -- let's do three and three
23 witnesses.

24 Thank you very much.

25 MR. WANG: Thank you.

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2 THE CLERK: Lifeng "Lili" Liao,
3 Mandarin Bilingual Victim Advocate,
4 Center City Victim Services Philadelphia;
5 Yingzhang Lin, President, Chinese
6 Take-Out Restaurant Association of
7 Greater Philadelphia, joined by Steven
8 Zhu; Peter Gonzales, President, Welcoming
9 Center for New Philadelphians, joined by
10 Stephanie Sun.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: As the
12 witnesses step forward, I'll remind
13 everybody that we're going to try to end
14 this hearing on -- we're running a little
15 after, but we will take questions at the
16 end, and there may be some statements by
17 my colleagues. So please try to make
18 your statements two minutes. Thank you.

19 (Witnesses approached witness
20 table.)

21 MS. LIAO: Good morning,
22 everyone. My name is Lifeng Liao and I
23 work for Center City Crime Victim
24 Services. I speak Mandarin Chinese and I
25 work as a victim advocate and liaison

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2 between the DA's Office, Police
3 Department, and the Chinese American
4 crime victims. Over the past six years,
5 I have assisted over 200 Chinese American
6 victims of violent crimes, including five
7 homicides. The majority of my victims
8 are small business owners at Chinese food
9 take-outs, corner stores, and laundromats
10 or immigrants with limited English
11 speaking ability. To better understand
12 the safety issue facing Chinese American
13 small business owners in Philadelphia,
14 with assistance from the Office of
15 Councilman at-large David Oh, we
16 conducted a survey from October 17 to 29,
17 and we received a total of 240 responses.

18 The key results were out of 216
19 responses, 65.8 percent, or 142 owners of
20 small business, indicate in the surveys
21 that they do not feel safe running the
22 store in their neighborhood and 53
23 business owners responded that they fear
24 to report crime to the police, with the
25 major reason being the language barrier.

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Out of 185 business owners' responses, 44.8 percent responded that they did not get connected to the language line after calling 911.

And out of 186 business owners' responses, 51.6 percent of them disagree with the following statement: The police came to the crime scene in time in accordance with the priority when your life was in danger and the crime just happened is the first priority.

Out of 184 responses, 24.4 percent disagreed with the following statement: The police treated them fairly.

Out of 187 responses, 8.6 percent disagreed with the following statement: The police listened to them.

I urge and hope the City Council to hear and understand the voices from nearly 200 Chinese American business owners, who are also the fathers and mothers of 200 immigrant families and take proactive actions addressing their

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2 needs.

3 Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very

5 much.

6 Would the next witness please

7 testify.

8 (Applause.)

9 DR. LIN: I wanted to thank

10 Councilman at-large David Oh and all

11 Councilmen for holding this hearing

12 today. Thank you for holding today's

13 historic hearing, which I believe is the

14 first Philadelphia City Council hearing

15 regarding the safety of the Asian

16 community.

17 My name is Yingzhang Lin. I'm

18 the current President of the Greater

19 Philadelphia Chinese Restaurant

20 Association. We currently have over 340

21 members in our Association. Most of them

22 are restaurant and business owners. I

23 have been involved in the Chinese

24 community activity for the past 15 years.

25 I have personally helped the families of

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2 more than 12 murdered Chinese restaurant
3 owners in Philadelphia. I witnessed the
4 pain and suffering that the families feel
5 after losing their loved one.

6 In 2016, the crime against the
7 Chinese community alone has dramatically
8 increased compared to the year before.
9 Over 50 Chinese Americans became victims
10 of armed robbery in their business and
11 residence. Some restaurants were even
12 robbed multiple times within one year.

13 Just three weeks ago, my
14 Vietnamese friend and business partner
15 was beaten and robbed in her home by two
16 men. Thankfully her two young children
17 were not harmed.

18 I would like to find a
19 non-violent solution for all of the Asian
20 business owners and people in
21 Philadelphia to this problem before more
22 people are harmed. I would like to find
23 a solution that let's everyone feel safe
24 in their own homes and businesses,
25 because I am concerned that if they feel

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2 unsafe and feel that they are unable to
3 receive help, they will look for
4 solutions on their own, which including
5 becoming armed with guns. I don't
6 believe more guns to be the safest and
7 best solution for our community.

8 Over the last decade, our
9 Association has been working together
10 with the Philadelphia Police Department,
11 local African American and Spanish
12 American communities to improve
13 relationships, to raise awareness, and to
14 have crime prevention seminars. I feel
15 that today's public hearing is the next
16 step, and it's my hope that we can
17 continue to all work together to find a
18 permanent and non-violent solution.

19 Thank you.

20 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
21 much.

22 Dr. Zhu, just before you begin,
23 I'll just note Lieutenant John Walker is
24 here.

25 If you could stick around,

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2 there is a question from a Councilmember
3 at the end of all our testimonies on this
4 panel and questions. Thank you.

5 Dr. Zhu.

6 DR. ZHU: Okay. Honorable
7 Councilmen and Honorable Councilwomen,
8 thank you for holding today's meeting.
9 My name is Steven Zhu. I'm the Greater
10 Philadelphia Food Association President
11 currently. I serve this community for 15
12 years, as Lili Liao just emotionally, she
13 crying, because I also sit on the Center
14 City Crime Service as their Board member
15 for service, I think it's over four
16 years. There is very many, many same
17 story repeated day by day, year by year.
18 That's the reason she take care. We work
19 together to service over 250 victim.
20 Therefore, she's so emotional. There's
21 very many same story always happening.

22 I don't have so much to say. I
23 just want to comment. We ask Police
24 Department to improve their job and
25 really to pay high attention for minority

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2 service. Yes, like police always
3 mention, 911 system have Chinese language
4 translator service. In reality, I get so
5 many our member call back. This is very
6 unfortunate. They're always telling we
7 don't have Chinese language translator
8 right now. And also call, as Dr. Wang
9 just mentioned, Dr. Lin just mentioned,
10 many call without response in a timely
11 manner, because they look like they're
12 feeling -- because you talk about English
13 as an issue. We not necessary to give
14 you right away service. That's member
15 feeling that way. And also if other
16 people call, they get a response right
17 away. That's not only Chinese take-out
18 restaurant, also some other business,
19 include like laundromat and so many
20 others, many like small business,
21 including like grocery store, small
22 corner store. They call police. Police
23 always (unintelligible) at least a long
24 hour to show up, and many things already
25 damaged, harassment, so many things

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2 happen, already gone. And the police
3 just show up, even there (unintelligible)
4 from my understanding. They even don't
5 want filing the case. As Dr. Wang just
6 mentioned, a 19th District issue.
7 They're waiting for whole day to ask
8 police to come in. Even the second day,
9 they check out and call back the 19th
10 District. Even they don't have any
11 fighting case. Just totally ignore the
12 issue.

13 And also we just friend --
14 other time I tried to ask friend, police,
15 to know Council, but unfortunately he's
16 not in here right now and I don't have a
17 chance to ask question. Because my main
18 worry is this year a lot of armed robbery
19 in the past 15 years. Yes, every year we
20 have a bunch of owners get hurt, but this
21 year in the two months period of time, we
22 have over four business owner get armed
23 burglary in their home. That's very
24 serious issue. I'm not sure that he
25 mentioned 143 case for Asian American,

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2 15.7 percent, and this year also saying
3 look like more -- look like crime has
4 reduced, but I'm not sure how many armed
5 robbery inside.

6 We need to pay high attention.
7 We ask -- I expect police headquarter to
8 have one Chinese speaker for community
9 officer. That's very serious issue. We
10 become a very bad name, just like people
11 mention. We are not a world-class city
12 who look like -- people have images that
13 Philadelphia is a very dangerous city.
14 People don't want to living here.

15 Most business owner tell me if
16 their kid grow up, after 18 years they
17 are waiting to out of the City. As
18 Councilmen, all of you sitting here, we
19 need a change.

20 I think David Oh always try --
21 I sometime went to Councilman David Oh
22 office, talk about the issue. David Oh,
23 Okay, we're going to change, we're going
24 to bring high attention to it. We hope
25 we need to start action today, not in the

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2 near future, not in the future. I hope
3 that's my personal expectation.

4 Okay. Thank all of you for
5 this comment for me.

6 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
7 much. I'll ask you to just move to those
8 seats. We have two questions, I know,
9 but I will have the other four witnesses
10 testify, then we'll take the Council
11 questions, because I forgot to mention we
12 have five public comment witnesses,
13 including a police captain. So I want to
14 get to that as well.

15 So could the other witnesses
16 step forward to testify. And then if
17 you'll stick around, I know we have a
18 question from Councilwoman Gym and
19 Councilman Domb.

20 (Witnesses approached witness
21 table.)

22 COUNCILMAN OH: Would you
23 please begin your testimony. Thank you.

24 MR. GONZALES: Certainly. Good
25 afternoon. My name is Peter Gonzales.

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I'm the President and CEO of the Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians, here with my colleague Stephanie Sun, who is an outreach specialist for our Small Business Development and Civic Engagement programs.

Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians is a private non-profit organization that was founded in 2003 by an immigrant to serve as a resource for our growing immigrant population. There are now over 200,000 immigrants living in Philadelphia, and our mission is to accelerate immigrant integration and economic advancement through education and training, job placement and entrepreneurship.

Welcoming Center serves over 1,500 people each year from more than 100 different countries. We provide free English and citizenship classes. We help newcomers with all levels of experience build the skills needed to enter the workforce. We also provide technical

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2 assistance to entrepreneurs as they
3 launch and grow their businesses in
4 neighborhoods and along commercial
5 corridors throughout the City.

6 With a staff of 28 people, many
7 of whom speak multiple languages and have
8 lived and worked in other countries, we
9 are able to provide culturally competent
10 training to institutions, employers, and
11 our city's growing immigrant population.
12 My colleague Stephanie Sun specialized in
13 business communications in China, in
14 South Korea before moving to
15 Philadelphia. She's been leading our
16 outreach and engagement efforts to the
17 Chinese and Asian communities, helping
18 business owners comply with legal and
19 regulatory requirements and learn about
20 City-funded initiatives to support
21 neighborhood businesses.

22 The Welcoming Center is deeply
23 concerned about the home invasions and
24 armed robberies targeting Chinese
25 businesses. For the past several months,

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we have participated in community meetings to address this issue with law enforcement agencies. We published and circulated a guide to protect -- to provide practical information on how City store owners can protect themselves from violence and harassment and improve customer relations. The Merchant Safety Guide is printed in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

Unfortunately, this is not a new dilemma. Ethnic communities have been targets of violence and crime throughout the history of our country, in part because they are vulnerable, still learning the language and culture of their new country, and they are still building their social networks. Feeling safe is key to being part of any community, and creating a sense of belonging is crucial to their successful integration into Philadelphia. No group should be made to feel unwelcome, let alone unsafe.

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The targeting of a specific ethnic group is particularly troubling. We must come together as a community to stop this. Engaging with the City is a positive step forward. When faced with challenges, it is easy to think that self-help might be the only alternative, but there are resources in place to help ensure the safety of our families and communities. Government and law enforcement agencies should work together with business associations, community organizations, neighborhood residents, and entrepreneurs. In fact, they must work together to solve this problem. It starts with trust - trust that all parties are doing their part to make sure that all people are safe regardless of where they were born, how well they communicate or how different they may be. We stand together with anyone made to feel unsafe or unwelcome, and we look forward to participating in the process of making sure the Chinese immigrant

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2 community feels protected and valued. We
3 offer ourselves as another resource to
4 help build trust and share practical
5 solutions. It is the right thing to do.
6 We must do it to make Philadelphia more
7 welcoming.

8 I'd like to add I will submit
9 these written comments, but I would like
10 to add that it is common for people to
11 blame victims in situations like this,
12 and I can assure you that there are no
13 entrepreneurs, there are no immigrants
14 that have arrived in this city to create
15 a business to support their families and
16 thought that it would be a good idea to
17 welcome this crime into their stores or
18 into their homes. To suggest that they
19 are in any way encouraging this violence
20 and crime, bringing it upon themselves is
21 insulting, it is wrong, and if we are to
22 go down that path, we are not looking at
23 the solutions to this issue. We must
24 invest in supporting learning of the
25 language, the culture, access to the

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2 resources that are available, and the
3 Welcoming Center is very proud to be part
4 of looking at that solution.

5 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
6 much.

7 May I just also publicly thank
8 Stephanie Sun from the Welcoming Center.
9 She spent hours and hours preparing and
10 working on this matter. Would everybody
11 give her a round of applause.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. SUN: Thank you. Thank you
14 so much.

15 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you.

16 Mr. Duran.

17 MR. DURAN: Yes. Thank you,
18 and good morning. Thank you for having
19 me. My name is Jimmy Duran and I am
20 Director of Programs at the Greater
21 Philadelphia Hispanic Chamber of
22 Commerce. Thank you for the opportunity
23 to testify in front of you this morning.
24 Some of the circumstances resonate in the
25 Hispanic community as well. And I serve

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2 at our membership to include the small
3 businesses such as the grocery store
4 owners and have found the following
5 observations in regards to safety and
6 neighborhood security as the top three
7 concerns:

8 Grocery store owners do not
9 receive adequate support when calling for
10 assistance with quality of life issues
11 such as loiterers in front of their
12 stores and at times doing illegal
13 activity. They ask to be placed on roll
14 call and have a sign-in book like it is
15 done with state liquor stores. They also
16 say their sentiments are that the
17 non-English speaking merchants feel
18 dismissed when interacting with the
19 police on site, in addition to on the
20 phone, but on site when interacting with
21 the police as though they are not part of
22 the process. Perhaps utilizing the
23 language access services provided will
24 help bridge the gap between law
25 enforcement and the non-English speaking

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2 merchants while interacting with them on
3 site.

4 Thank you very much for your
5 time.

6 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
7 much.

8 We'll ask the next two
9 witnesses to come forward. That would be
10 Bilal Qayyum and Reverend Robert Shine.
11 Thank you.

12 (Witnesses approached witness
13 table.)

14 COUNCILMAN OH: I'll ask our
15 witnesses to remain seated, as I know we
16 have actually three Councilmembers that
17 have questions.

18 Mr. Qayyum, would you begin by
19 identifying yourself for the record.
20 Thank you.

21 MR. QAYYUM: Good afternoon,
22 Councilmen. My name is Bilal Qayyum.
23 I'm President of the Father's Day Rally
24 Committee. I was asked to come here by
25 Councilman Oh to give my testimony.

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2 I quickly listened to all the
3 other testimonies that were given from
4 the Asian community and other
5 individuals, and I want to go right to
6 what I think one of the or some of the
7 solutions that we need to address.

8 As always, the hidden elephant
9 in the room is racism, and nobody wants
10 to talk about it. Unfortunately, a lot
11 of the Asian business owners in the City
12 of Philadelphia are located in African
13 American communities. There is a big
14 disconnect between the Asian community
15 and the African American community. So
16 we must -- one of the things I want to
17 suggest, Councilman Oh, is that today we
18 look at establishing a task force made up
19 of leadership from the black community
20 and leadership from the Asian community,
21 particularly the Chinese Asian community.

22 A lot of the businesses are
23 targeted because of that disconnection.
24 Chinese don't hire African Americans in
25 the neighborhoods. They operate in their

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2 neighborhoods, take the black money, but
3 don't hire any black workers. That's a
4 problem. Chinese businesses also allow
5 drug dealing and other negative
6 activities taking place in front of their
7 businesses. That's a problem. So there
8 is this, once again, this big disconnect
9 that we have to work on.

10 I remember almost nine years
11 ago when I was working very -- spending
12 almost all my time in the streets trying
13 to reduce violence in the City of
14 Philadelphia, we were out in West
15 Philadelphia on 52nd Street and we were
16 canvassing the neighborhood talking to
17 folks about what they could do to
18 organize Town Watch and other groups and
19 also trying to interact with young men
20 standing on corners. A lot of the
21 neighborhoods we were in, the young men
22 standing on corners was standing in front
23 of Chinese stores, Chinese take-out
24 stores. And one of the stores on 52nd
25 Street we have asked the businesses -- a

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2 lot of the stores on 52nd Street, we
3 asked the businesses to hang up a poster
4 talking about -- it was a sign about
5 reducing violence. This one store on
6 52nd, around 52nd and Larchwood, one of
7 our young men who was involved with
8 organizing with us went in the store and
9 there was an exchange between the
10 owner -- or we found out later it wasn't
11 an owner. It was a worker of the store
12 with this young man about not putting the
13 poster in, and she actually called --
14 told the young man to get out of her
15 store and called him by the N word. We
16 immediately did a protest of that store
17 and we closed that store.

18 From that meeting -- I mean,
19 from that action we had a meeting with
20 the business association in Chinatown
21 about that incident, how we could work
22 together. Unfortunately, nothing really
23 developed out of that meeting. So I
24 would once again suggest that we look at
25 doing or a joint effort between City

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2 Council, the communities, and
3 particularly the Asian community about a
4 task force and see how we can have some
5 real dialogue about this problem.

6 This problem is not going to be
7 solved by City Council. And I want my
8 Asian -- and I'll refer to them today as
9 my brothers and sisters -- to understand
10 this is a problem that's been built up
11 over years. Government is not going to
12 solve this problem. We have to figure
13 out how we have to have more interaction
14 with the store owners if they're going to
15 operate in the black community.

16 The Asian community has to
17 understand that because of institutional
18 racism in this country, you are now
19 suffering what we suffered every day and
20 have for years been suffering in this
21 country, discrimination, because of our
22 skin color. Unfortunately because of the
23 institutional white racism in this
24 country, now they have blacks fighting
25 against whites, whites fighting against

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2 Asians, Asians fighting against blacks,
3 the Latino community. We in the City of
4 Philadelphia, we keep hearing about this.
5 We're a city, a great city, and the
6 immigrants coming in, but 54 percent of
7 the City of Philadelphia are black folks.
8 Fifty percent of black males in the City
9 of Philadelphia are jobless, that have no
10 money, that have no hope. They don't see
11 anything. So anybody that comes to that
12 neighborhood, if it's Asians or Latinos,
13 they operate, there's no connection
14 between these communities, we will
15 continue to see the violence that's
16 taking place in the City of Philadelphia.

17 So I'd once again, Council and
18 Councilman Oh, since you're taking the
19 leadership, plead with you that we don't
20 let this just be a hearing of frustration
21 from the Asian community and frustration
22 from other folks, that we really take
23 some action, establish a task force, get
24 the right leadership. Let's sit in the
25 room and talk about how we can resolve

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2 this problem so that next year, the two
3 years, three years down the line you're
4 not having a hearing about conflicts.

5 And I will say once again, this
6 is an issue that's very important to us
7 in the black community, because the
8 stores -- we don't want to see those
9 stores closing down. They become vacant.
10 The services that they provide are good
11 services. We don't want to see that, but
12 there is this big disconnect. We got to
13 figure out how to work together to close
14 that disconnect.

15 Thank you very much.

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
18 much.

19 Reverend Shine.

20 REVEREND SHINE: Yes. My name
21 is Reverend Robert Shine. I've pastored
22 in Philadelphia for 45 years, and as I
23 entered the Chambers here, I read the
24 language on the certs. It says we want
25 safety. It brought to my mind the

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2 feeling in the African American community
3 and, that is, black life matters. That
4 does not resonate well in the white
5 community across this nation, but black
6 life does matter.

7 As a result of my relationship
8 with the Chinese community, it has grown
9 tremendously. There's been many
10 difficult issues with which they have
11 been confronted with, and what I've heard
12 today is reprehensible and egregious,
13 that they have been found to be the
14 victims. African Americans have been
15 victimized in America due to racism,
16 bigotry, prejudice. We have been called
17 many a name.

18 As far as the police are
19 concerned, we have worked with the Police
20 Department in the City of Philadelphia.
21 As a matter of fact, it was I who wrote
22 the 10.2 program for Commissioner Ramsey
23 that was submitted to the President for
24 his policing task force.

25 But there have been issues. I

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2 have been severely victimized by the
3 police in Philadelphia on one occasion,
4 for an example. I was stopped by the
5 police, racial profiling, and they patted
6 me down, and then they said I had
7 something in my pants. They made me take
8 my pants down on a Sunday morning in
9 route to my church. The officer came out
10 of the van, dragged me by the pants that
11 was at my ankles and drug me and threw me
12 in the paddywagon. I never got to my
13 church. That was a Sunday.

14 So we have been victimized. We
15 understand the victimization that our
16 friends in the Chinese community have
17 gone through. We understand it deeply.
18 We are very concerned about it. We have
19 been there to support their issues and
20 support their causes for at least 15,
21 maybe as many as 20 years that we have
22 been there to support them. We've gone
23 to court with them. I've buried their
24 dead. I've preached their funerals.
25 I've performed their weddings. I've gone

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2 to New York on an issue that was
3 reprehensible. When ICE was deporting a
4 young lady, I was there with them when
5 she lost her twins. I was there, and we
6 boycotted. We also had rallies in
7 numerous so that we could support them,
8 the African American community at-large.

9 What I don't want to see happen
10 is that the black community -- the
11 African American community is painted
12 with a broad brush so that it appears
13 that African Americans are
14 criminal-minded. We must avoid that kind
15 of language, and at the same time, we
16 must be supportive. And I agree with
17 what my brother Bilal has just said about
18 we are brothers and sisters in the human
19 family, and as a result of that, I would
20 support any. I've supported Chinese
21 American candidates for City Council.
22 I've supported Chinese Americans across
23 this nation. And so we have gone on the
24 front at the risk of even when a police
25 officer in New York, a Chinese American,

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2 was found guilty of a charge that I did
3 not agree with, still do not agree with,
4 and supported him in that issue, contrary
5 to a lot of what others have said to me
6 about what position I had taken. But I
7 believe in righteousness. I believe in
8 justice, fair justice, equal justice for
9 all.

10 I believe that the Chinese
11 Americans who have suffered these
12 egregious crimes, that they need to be
13 defended, protected. Surely they need
14 safety, but we all need safety and we all
15 need safety to live in this land
16 together, to live in this City together.

17 I love Philadelphia. I love
18 every person in Philadelphia, and I
19 believe that when these, my brothers and
20 sisters in the Chinese American, suffer
21 injuries, suffer wrong, and suffer these
22 invasions in their stores and under
23 threat of violence, I believe that
24 whatever I can do to bring a halt to
25 that, I'm about doing it. I'm about

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2 doing it so that they can live in peace
3 and safety and harmony, they can earn
4 their living, they can earn a right to be
5 respected, so that they are not victims
6 of racial discrimination.

7 What we suffered as African
8 Americans, they're now suffering. So why
9 should I turn on them when I suffered the
10 same indignities?

11 So I want to support them, will
12 support them. It doesn't matter what
13 anyone else says. I believe in the right
14 for all and I stand by that, and I
15 welcome the opportunity to be here.

16 Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
18 much, Reverend Shine.

19 (Applause.)

20 COUNCILMAN OH: At this time,
21 I'm going to open it up for my
22 colleagues' questions. I know we have
23 five witnesses for public comment.
24 Anyone who would like to make public
25 comment, it is a legal right that you

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2 have, but you have to go sign up over
3 there. I will say, however, that the
4 main point is to express to us, your City
5 Council and to the public, the issues and
6 concerns, and I tried to make a broad
7 perspective. I don't agree with every
8 perspective presented. Maybe my
9 colleagues do. That's not the important
10 point. But as was pointed out, we should
11 get a broad view of how things are if
12 we're going to address it.

13 So I believe the first question
14 was actually Councilman Domb and then
15 Councilwoman Gym and then Councilman
16 Green.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

18 My question is for Mr. Lin, the
19 President of the Take-Out Association.

20 COUNCILMAN OH: Dr. Lin, would
21 you step up, please.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I think it's
23 good afternoon, Dr. Lin.

24 DR. LIN: Good afternoon.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Just a quick

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2 question. I'm looking at this and
3 hearing the problems, and I'm just trying
4 to come from a practical standpoint, if
5 that's possible. I'm coming from
6 preventive versus cure. A lot of the
7 other issues I'm hearing is what you do
8 after the crime happens. I'm trying to
9 get to the point of preventing the crime.

10 When you look at the District
11 Attorney's testimony under motivations,
12 three out of the six motivations -- I'm
13 just going to read this to you. Of the
14 people they interviewed that committed
15 these crimes, Asian businesses do
16 business in cash, Asian business owners
17 do not use banks, and Asian business
18 owners keep large amounts of cash in
19 their homes in close proximity to where
20 they sleep.

21 Do you think there's a way to
22 change that whole equation? Do you think
23 there's a way that we can educate our
24 restaurant members, our associates that
25 own restaurants to help them to change

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2 that so that doesn't happen, so they're
3 not targeted, so we can prevent it versus
4 giving in to the cure?

5 DR. LIN: Thank you for your
6 question. Personally I didn't run a
7 restaurant business. I run other
8 business, but I agree with you. You
9 should not allow a lot of cash at the
10 home. Like Councilwoman David Oh always
11 say, this is -- if you have cash, you
12 become a target. They do use the bank,
13 but the business nature usually they have
14 cash, you know. They are -- they collect
15 their cash from their customer and then
16 they go shopping. You cannot avoid that.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Here's the
18 question: Do the customers coming to the
19 take-out restaurants and restaurants have
20 the ability to pay in a form other than
21 cash, credit card or a bank card or
22 whatever? Do they have that? Do you
23 know if they can accomplish that?

24 DR. LIN: Who can -- can you
25 answer the question?

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2 DR. ZHU: Let me answer the
3 question.

4 It's my understanding on the
5 certain area, especially on take-out
6 restaurant, the reason they don't take
7 credit card, because most of the time
8 they don't have -- even some people do
9 not have a bank account. They always use
10 cash. And sometimes it's out of -- I
11 don't know. Most look like they have no
12 way to pay like debit card. More favor
13 always use cash. That's why Chinese
14 business owner collect cash. It's
15 not they want it or they don't want it.
16 They are waiting to have -- you can have
17 a credit card, debit card or stuff.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Let me ask
19 you another question then, because you
20 seem knowledgeable about this. In other
21 restaurants there are different types of,
22 Wells Fargo and other companies, that
23 collect cash from restaurants at night.
24 Is that an option for you to collect --
25 (Microphone turned off.)

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2 DR. ZHU: I'm sorry. Can you
3 repeat?

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yeah. Is it
5 an option to have an outside service
6 collect the cash at night before the
7 restaurant closes so they don't have the
8 cash on them and we post a notice there's
9 no cash?

10 DR. ZHU: The owners tell you
11 just mentioned, Bilal also mention why we
12 don't hire African American and local,
13 because it's very, very small business.
14 Some people only do maybe business whole
15 day 200, 300. They don't need to put it
16 in a bank. It's a very small amount.
17 Most of things husband and wife business.
18 They cannot -- do not have ability to
19 hire additional manpower to work for the
20 restaurant.

21 COUNCILMAN OH: So I'm going to
22 end the question, because I know we have
23 two more. I'll just summarize, because I
24 am knowledgeable, that many of these
25 businesses are what we call very low

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margin businesses. They operate in cash. They're rather poor. They don't use a lot of heat. They have the kids living upstairs for the reason that they don't have a lot of money. And one of the problems is when a robber goes in with a gun and they want money, sometimes the people just don't have any money, and then they are subject to being beaten and other terrible things and there is no money there. It's a myth that they all have cash. It's not true. But anyway, it leads to some terrible things, but that's why they can't hire, they don't have jobs, and they don't have credit and services.

Councilwoman Gym.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you very much.

I also want to make sure that the focus really needs to be on ourselves as a city and as an agency how are we doing our work. Our victims, they didn't ask to be put in that situation. People

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2 deal with lots of different

3 circumstances, particularly when we're

4 kind of at the margins, and it's

5 important for us right now to focus in on

6 what our central responsibilities are as

7 a city. So thank you, Councilman Oh.

8 And also thank you very much,

9 Reverend Shine, for being here and for

10 your comments today and, Mr. Qayyum, for

11 your comments today as well. I

12 appreciate it. I think it is very

13 important that we are fully aware that

14 people suffer crime and justice in very

15 different ways, and I think part of the

16 purpose of this hearing is to understand

17 the ways in which one particular

18 community is experiencing both crime and

19 justice. It certainly does not reflect

20 on how other communities of color are

21 experiencing crime and justice. I think

22 that's part of the injustices of that

23 system, that we all experience it in such

24 dramatically different ways, and as we're

25 looking for solutions on one end, we have

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to make sure that we don't exacerbate
problems on another.

But it is particularly
important that we are seeing like a very
targeted focus on a relatively small
population of people, and there's a lot
of questions that we have to get at to
understand like how are people
experiencing it, what are the problems
that we've got, and what can we do to do
better on that. And we'll continue on
other broader issues as well.

But Dr. Lin and Dr. Zhu --
Mr. Zhu in particular, so the Police
Department said that they have a liaison
to the Asian community, Deputy
Commissioner Christine -- I didn't catch
her last name, but have you -- Coulter.
Deputy Commissioner Coulter. Have you
met with her regularly?

DR. ZHU: No.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Were you
aware that she was the assigned liaison
for the Asian American community?

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2 DR. ZHU: I'm sorry. I don't
3 know.

4 COUNCILMAN OH: Well, I'm going
5 to have to interrupt, because I've been
6 to, as Reverend Shine has, many of the
7 Chinatown dinners and actually Deputy
8 Commissioner Coulter is there oftentimes.
9 She's got blond hair and she's a -- she's
10 been to many, many of the meetings. And
11 so it used to be a different
12 Commissioner, but she does appear. I
13 believe that Dr. Zhu would recognize her
14 if you saw her.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And just to
16 be really clear, I think my line of
17 questioning wasn't whether she's been
18 present at any place, but in particular
19 that Mr. Healy said that she was the
20 assigned person to be the liaison for the
21 Asian American community. So what I'm
22 trying to get clarity on is whether
23 actually the people who are experiencing
24 the problems who should be liaisoning
25 directly with the Police Department are

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2 actually not just aware that she's
3 present but that she is the liaison, and
4 that we need to make it clear from the
5 Police Department's side that the Deputy
6 Commissioner needs to be -- that there
7 needs to be a little bit more clarity
8 about that.

9 Mr. Zhu.

10 DR. ZHU: Thank you,
11 Councilwoman, for your concern. Thank
12 you, Chairman David Oh. We expect police
13 headquarter have one maybe at least Asian
14 officer who work for the communication
15 unit. On the past as my service 15 years
16 for community beginning on Reverend
17 Shine, who is sitting here, he give a lot
18 of connection with our community with
19 Police Department. We have very well
20 worked for many years through Reverend
21 Shine, get their support, get police
22 support. But since the change of
23 Commissioner, they're always changing
24 people. Therefore, who is we know --
25 right now we don't have so much

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2 (unintelligible) to work with them.

3 That's the big issue here. We really
4 based on language barrier issue, we
5 really expect police headquarter to have
6 someone can speak Chinese.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Yeah. I
8 appreciate that and I think that that's
9 helpful.

10 Dr. Lin, I didn't know if you
11 wanted to add anything else to that.

12 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm going to
13 just interrupt. I appreciate the
14 question and the correction,
15 Councilwoman. I apologize for the
16 interruption, but I'd like to go to
17 Councilman Green, because we have only
18 about like 12 minutes for the rest of the
19 witnesses.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Could I just
21 finish up with the last statement.

22 COUNCILMAN OH: Yes.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So I would
24 love to work with you a little bit on
25 that. I think we heard you loud and

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clear that the Police Department needs a liaison who actually speaks another either Mandarin or Cantonese or one of the languages in which to have a better dialogue.

I think we're also going to follow up in terms of the Police Department's meetings with victims advocates groups that represent LEP communities. I think that's also really important. We want to kind of get to the crux of why we have so much problems with the language access. But I think your conversations around that are going to be particularly important in that regard, and the more advice that you give to us about what you need in the situation, I think that would also be extremely helpful. So thank you both.

Thank you.

(Thank you.)

COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very much. Thank you, Councilwoman.

Councilman Green.

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2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Yes. I
3 actually had another question for
4 Lieutenant Walker, but I'll defer that
5 question to the next panel.

6 COUNCILMAN OH: Lieutenant
7 Walker is here. Would you come up,
8 Lieutenant Walker, because Councilman
9 Green had his question from before, so we
10 can answer his question.

11 (Witness approached witness
12 table.)

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Lieutenant
14 Walker, I know you're the only
15 representative here from the Police
16 Department. This actually is a question
17 you actually should take back to Mr.
18 Healy and also Commissioner Ross.

19 You talked about access
20 availability both from people calling
21 from 911 and also there's been a number
22 of meetings in the community regarding
23 this issue. However, just based on the
24 testimony, there clearly is a perception
25 of a language challenge, and I think in

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2 order to change that perception, there
3 needs to be some type of more engaged
4 conversation, possibly with the
5 Commissioner and members of the Asian
6 community, especially Chinese merchants,
7 to let people know that although there
8 has been some meetings in the past, we're
9 trying to make that change, and change
10 that perception that clearly is
11 represented by the testimony that people
12 do not feel safe in contacting the Police
13 Department and how we can change that
14 perception.

15 So do you have any thoughts? I
16 don't think you can speak totally on
17 behalf of the Police Department, but I
18 think there definitely needs for some
19 type of larger meeting with the
20 Commissioner to talk about moving forward
21 and then the ongoing group that comes
22 together with some of the merchants that
23 are represented here about these issues.

24 LIEUTENANT WALKER: I agree. I
25 mean, obviously there are some issues

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2 that clearly need to be put out there to
3 people to understand that the language
4 lines are available and how to access
5 those. I think Captain Healy has made
6 that clear, he's going back to discuss
7 with Radio what our issues are, and then
8 discussing that with this community here.
9 Obviously there's a great number of
10 people that we have here and as we did in
11 Chinatown. So it's good to see people
12 engaged, involved to hear these issues,
13 because if we don't know them, we can't
14 fix them. And even though we can sit
15 here and say, yeah, we have a system in
16 place, if it's not working, then we got
17 to fix it, period.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And even
19 from the process of having maybe
20 representatives from some of the
21 merchants that are represented here to
22 see how the process works of actually how
23 a 911 call comes in, how to -- being a
24 former prosecutor and having worked in
25 various communities, I know how to

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2 prioritize certain calls, but I don't
3 think merchants here have that same
4 information, and that's why I think it's
5 really incumbent on the Police Department
6 to reach out in a more engaged
7 conversation, not just saying access is
8 available, but really showing how
9 people -- how access is available to make
10 that change in perception. I think it
11 will take some time to do that, but
12 having that larger meeting with the
13 Commissioner I think is very important
14 considering that a number of merchants
15 feel very targeted based on the crime
16 that's been going on in the City.

17 LIEUTENANT WALKER: Agreed
18 upon. And we will -- we have 911 people
19 come out to communities, and we'll work
20 on that.

21 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
22 much.

23 I'm going to rush through now.
24 I will ask our public comment -- that
25 will be Quang Mac, Allan Wong, Lindy Li,

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2 Arterian Vives, and Captain John
3 Morney -- to come forward. The Captain
4 left? Okay. I'm sorry.

5 (Witnesses approached witness
6 table.)

7 COUNCILMAN OH: Because we have
8 a hearing at 1 o'clock, which is why I'm
9 trying to press this forward, I will ask
10 you to please make your comments to less
11 than two minutes. I know that's unfair,
12 but I'd like to get also Han Pan and
13 Bihong -- I can't read it, but it looks
14 like Guan, to come after the witnesses
15 that I stated.

16 So, Mr. Wong, would you start
17 and then Mr. Mac.

18 MR. WONG: My name is Allan
19 Wong and I am the Vice Chair of the
20 Philadelphia Police Asian American
21 Advisory Committee. I have testimony,
22 but I want to drop that because a lot of
23 it has been covered already. But I just
24 first want to answer the question from
25 Councilwoman Gym. She asked whether

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2 there is a liaison organization between
3 the Police Department, and Mr. Mac Quang
4 and I are the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
5 So it does exist.

6 And I also wanted to say that
7 unfortunately some of the members of the
8 community, Chinese community, have not
9 made good use of it, and I have urged
10 Mr. Zhu and Dr. Lin to work with us more
11 closely, because there's a lot of
12 information that we can provide to the
13 association to help improve the safety
14 among the business people.

15 Second thing I want to say is
16 that I want to express my deepest regret
17 in hearing what the comments from
18 Mr. Bilal. His comment about the
19 disconnect between the black and Chinese
20 community people, he was implying that
21 the disconnect was part of a cause of the
22 problem. Unfortunately, I strongly
23 object that, because when a robber, a
24 burglar comes in your home, what he sees
25 is green color, the dollar bill. He does

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not care what the color of the victim is.

So the implication that the disconnect between the two communities is a problem, I find it very offensive. As a matter of fact, I'm not too sure that is actually the problem. Whether there's a disconnect, there may be a different -- there might be an issue there, but there are many, many reason. And under no circumstances should anybody use that as an excuse to go and rob a Chinese business owner's business.

COUNCILMAN OH: Well, I will certainly appreciate your point of view. I want to just say that it's important to get these different perspectives. Today we hear about wanting to ban all Muslims from the United States. I mean, I don't know why we have that, but we can certainly identify that broad brushes of people is not generally a good idea, but it's important to hear those perspectives if we're going to address this issue and not discount respected people.

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2 But anyway, Mr. Mac.

3 MR. MAC: Okay. Thank you,
4 Honorable David Oh, Honorable Councilmen
5 and Councilwomen. My name Quang Mac,
6 Chairman of Philadelphia Police Advisory
7 Committee. The reason I was here,
8 because I am a former Chairman of the
9 Asian Association, that umbrella on Asian
10 in Philadelphia since 1995. Right now
11 I'm working with the law enforcement for
12 many year, and I know the reason why more
13 robbery on Asian people. Because the
14 Asian people, they have not touched the
15 bank in USA, in their country, because
16 they don't trust. That's why they keep
17 money at home. And the robbery, the
18 intruder, and the home invasion, that's
19 the -- they come follow the owner of
20 restaurant, laundromat, nail salon and so
21 on. They come to their house and they
22 know some money inside the house. That's
23 one reason, and that's why I recommend
24 that on the Chinese restaurant, they have
25 to close earlier than later at night,

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2 because that is target for the people
3 that want to get money.

4 Two weeks ago, on October 16,
5 not far from my house, the owner of
6 barber shop, they go shopping, but the
7 suspect mother, they follow up his car
8 and come to his house and shot and killed
9 him about 10:45 p.m. at that night. And
10 I know that if something happening and
11 when I contact with the 2nd District and
12 I ask them and they said they will follow
13 up that one, but until now I don't know
14 they arrested the suspect mother or not.

15 The second thing, I want to let
16 all of you know we love to see more
17 immigration come to USA. But they have
18 to come with the background check,
19 because I have many year in my country
20 before I come over here and I work for
21 the law enforcement on most of the 20
22 year. I know the intelligence, how we
23 prevent the intruder come to your house
24 or they follow up your working shop to
25 your house to get money from you.

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And all you know that I know that the City a couple years ago, the Honorable David Oh and myself would testify when the grocery owner in the North Philadelphia that they shot and killed, and after that, the Chinese community rally and the Administration in Love Park before, and that's why -- because someone, they works in the prison, but I don't know why they release earlier and that they come back to the grocery and they killed the owner.

That's why I recommend we have to keep some dangerous people in the prison, cannot release soon. Because something happening in Upper Darby a couple years ago when the guy just released prisoner and they intrude in their house and they killed her husband and raped the wife, and nobody happened -- nobody can relate to that guy.

And that's why I love to say that -- I will have to say that high crime that is happening in the City

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2 because many people have not a job. Many
3 people are drug addict and they do not
4 want going to the habilitation institute
5 for treatment. This is a big problem for
6 the USA if we do not have a tough
7 punishment for the armed robbery and
8 intruder to kill innocent people.

9 In addition, we love to see
10 more refugees to enter USA with
11 background check to prevent a terrorist,
12 not of all Muslim terrorist, be every
13 Muslim should be a terrorist. The
14 shattered Europe is the same lesson for
15 the US people. In Australia, a Muslim
16 refugee turned terrorists that cost \$8
17 million a year for security watchdog.

18 Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
20 much, Mr. Mac.

21 I'll ask Lindy Li and Arterian
22 Vives to step forward, and then we'll
23 have one more panel after that. Thank
24 you very much, and then we may have some
25 questions and comments afterwards.

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2 (Witnesses approached witness
3 table.)

4 COUNCILMAN OH: So Arterian
5 Vives, would you begin your testimony,
6 followed by Lindy Li. Then we'll have
7 Han Pan and Bihong Guan, and that's it
8 for public comment.

9 MS. VIVES: Good afternoon.
10 It's actually Asteria Vives.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Asteria Vives.
12 I'm sorry.

13 MS. VIVES: Buenos tardes.
14 I am Latina, dedicated
15 community advocate. I'll get to the
16 point.

17 I'm in administration, create
18 community meetings, workshops, events,
19 prayer, and peace walks and clean-ups.

20 I do have a clear FBI criminal
21 child abuse background. I am with the
22 25th Police District Advisory Council,
23 Hispanic Association of Contractors and
24 Enterprises, Hunting Park United,
25 (unintelligible), the Ray of Hope

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2 Project, as well as many religious
3 institutions. I work with them very
4 well.

5 For years, Asian businesses,
6 including the Greater Philadelphia
7 Chinese Restaurant Association, has
8 attended and supported community meetings
9 and events in our 25th Police District,
10 and they have worked closely with me too.
11 They have sponsored what they believe to
12 be true community advocates such as
13 myself. We see eye to eye. Because as
14 we do know that there are people out
15 there that just want to be recognized,
16 not really to help the community.

17 Recently they attended less
18 meetings at the 25th Police District
19 area, only to find out that this past
20 summer extensive robberies were taking
21 place in their own Asian community. And
22 I'm sorry about that for all of you.
23 Many of our community leaders never came
24 across this agreements. I know I haven't
25 in the 25th District, especially there,

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2 with the Asian community members. I've
3 personally learned that they are very
4 family oriented, work as a team, respect
5 their community members, and don't bother
6 anyone and they tend to themselves. I
7 say that's something good and at the same
8 time maybe not so good, because usually
9 when they close the store, they tend to
10 their own selves. Me as a community
11 member, I believe that they're safe since
12 they tend to their own selves when
13 they're not. As they say, they're being
14 monitored.

15 My suggestion, which is
16 probably what was already shared, and I
17 say like this, because I don't have a
18 television in my home too, is make more
19 business bank deposits and then set up a
20 surveillance camera program with the
21 police district to better have prompt
22 solutions, which is of no charge, and we
23 can talk about that at a later time.
24 Just as police focus also on businesses
25 curfew to make sure that they close at

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2 11, they can also focus more after
3 midnight what's going on with these
4 businesses too. And then maybe possibly
5 proceed with Asian classes where teaching
6 English as a second language.

7 I'm sure each side, the Asian
8 and the police districts, have done
9 whatever they possibly can, and they can
10 and they will do more. We just need more
11 support from community supporters,
12 advocates, and leaders such as myself.
13 We need to alert all areas, though, of
14 the communities, because they are
15 shifting from one area to another. Let's
16 avoid robbery or having robbery turn into
17 murder.

18 So I just want to leave by
19 saying I am serious about my service as a
20 community advocate, and I would like to
21 receive updates, and that would be at
22 homequartersandfriends@gmail.com,
23 homequartersandfriends@gmail.com.

24 Thank you for your time.

25 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very

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2 much. You are being recorded and

3 transcribed.

4 Ms. Li, would you testify,

5 please.

6 MS. LI: Thank you, Councilman

7 David Oh, Mark Squilla, Helen Gym, and

8 Derek Green for your tremendous

9 leadership. It's an honor to be here

10 today. I'll be extremely brief, don't

11 worry.

12 Look at all the people who have

13 gathered here today, republicans and

14 democrats, black, white, and Asian. What

15 binds us all together is that we are all

16 American, and all Americans deserve to

17 live free from fear.

18 I grew up in a Chinese American

19 family. Sacrifice, hard work, and

20 education are the pillars of my heritage.

21 We are largely peaceful. Confrontation

22 and conflict are not so much who we are.

23 Indeed even politics is an extremely new

24 phenomenon for us. That Chinese

25 Americans have come out in droves over

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2 the armed robberies is a testament to
3 just how hurtful these incidents have
4 been. More than 100 people have been
5 burglarized in 2016 alone.

6 Do you know the pain of being
7 an "other"? Because I do. Do you know
8 the gratitude that one feels when one is
9 finally treated and accepted like other
10 Americans? Because I do.

11 When I went before a judge
12 earlier this year in a ballot challenge,
13 the judge said that my family embodies
14 the immigrant success story. Today my
15 mom is sitting in the audience. My
16 parents live the American dream, which
17 wouldn't have been possible without the
18 promise of security and safety.

19 Small businesses need the
20 protection of law in order to prosper and
21 contribute to Philadelphia's success.
22 But victims have a responsibility as well
23 and, that is, to fully recognize that the
24 sins of a few should not stain the many.
25 The acts of a few should not tarnish

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2 everyone else in his group or race.

3 Race is a characteristic that
4 one has no control over. It's
5 heartbreaking to suffer because of
6 something one can never change about
7 one's self.

8 To hold a hearing and then to
9 do nothing would be to allow deep
10 emotional wounds to fester and grow into
11 resentment. More resentment, especially
12 of the poisonous racial kind, is exactly
13 what we do not need more of in our
14 country. Let us give all Philadelphians
15 the insurance of security. What is life
16 when you aren't even safe in your own
17 home? What is existence when you have to
18 look over your shoulder when walking down
19 the streets of your own city? Surely the
20 students of the greatest country in the
21 world can live free from fear. This is
22 not a matter of capacity, but of
23 willpower.

24 Every night before I sleep I
25 read a single verse from the Bible. Last

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2 night I read the following words: For
3 God did not give us the spirit of fear,
4 but of power and of love.

5 Thank you.

6 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
7 much.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILMAN OH: Mr. Han Pan,
10 would you please testify and, Mr. Bihong
11 Guan, would you take a seat. You will be
12 the next and last witness.

13 MR. PAN: Thank you, Councilman
14 Oh. Thank you, Councilwoman Gym and
15 Councilman Mark Squilla. Sorry. I
16 didn't know the other Councilman's name.

17 COUNCILMAN OH: Green.

18 MR. PAN: We have heard enough
19 of the sufferings. My heart goes to
20 those families, but remember we live in
21 Philadelphia. My heart also goes to the
22 African American families. I think this
23 is a social issue. It's not just Chinese
24 Americans suffering.

25 I really wish that Councilman

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David Oh that -- and also with a lot of the people today, know Chinese Americans are really targeted by violent crimes. But I think there should be a way how we should solve this problem. We cannot just only discuss the sufferings. We should also discuss solutions.

I'm a graduate of criminal justice and sociology. So my suggestion is look at Philadelphia. We have more than 50 percent of African Americans live in poverty. So to solve this problem, we have to work together, Chinese Americans, African American communities, City Council, Police Department. We cannot just lay the blame to one particular group. We have to work together.

I think the Police Department, they have a lot on their shoulder and a lot of the crimes that's like nuisance, like the harassment, so the police, they are overwhelmed. If we can have community support groups, community town watch, and community connection networks

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2 so we can solve some minor crimes like
3 harassment, you know, right away from the
4 community. So I really wish that --

5 Reverend Shine and the other gentleman
6 said we need to build the connections
7 between Chinese Americans and African
8 Americans and a community to the
9 government, to the Police Department. We
10 are here to work together. We're not
11 here to blame each other.

12 So I hope Philadelphia will be
13 better. I have confidence in
14 Philadelphia. I'm still encouraging
15 people from China to invest in
16 Philadelphia. So I very appreciate,
17 Councilman Oh, your initiative. I think
18 Philadelphia -- I don't think
19 Philadelphia is Iraq. Philadelphia is
20 Philadelphia. We should have hope, but
21 also we have to pay real attention to the
22 sufferings, to the victims, to the
23 incidents of burglaries and robberies,
24 and the Police Department should pay real
25 attention and we work together. That's

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2 what I want to say.

3 Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
5 much.

6 (Applause.)

7 COUNCILMAN OH: And, finally,
8 Mr. Guan.

9 MR. GUAN: Thank you. My name
10 is Bihong Guan, President of Greater
11 Philadelphia Chinese Association of
12 Protecting Rights.

13 Here I think as a Chinese
14 community leader, we should give David Oh
15 applause, because he create our history,
16 because this hearing, public hearing, is
17 in the history, I think is the first time
18 in Philadelphia. So let's give him
19 applause.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. GUAN: Thank you, David Oh.
22 And also I appreciate some Councilmen and
23 Councilwomen stay here. I think all of
24 you are very hungry. Thank you very
25 much.

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But for today's hearing, I have two suggestions. First, yes, we have so many vacant seats and some Councilmen and Councilwomen left already. Why not they stay here to listen to that voice of our Chinese community?

(Applause.)

MR. GUAN: This is the first.

The second, we need interpreter. We need translation. I see here 75 percent Chinese cannot understand the testimony of the law enforcement, representative from law enforcement. So for this kind of hearing, we need the interpreter to translate, otherwise so many Chinese people cannot understand. So this is the first suggestion.

The second, for the solution of no more violence -- our target is no more violence -- I think here more police presence, less crime. This is the first suggestion. So we need more police presence, less crime.

The second, I think we need

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2 more bilingual policemen, because most of
3 the Chinese have a language barrier. So
4 we need the City hire more bilingual
5 policemen.

6 That's all. Thank you.

7 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
8 much.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
11 much. We were scheduled for a two-hour
12 hearing. I know we've gone to three
13 hours, because we have a 1 o'clock
14 hearing. We're running a little bit
15 over. I appreciate everyone staying.

16 At this time, let me ask my
17 colleagues if they have any comments to
18 make in closing.

19 Councilwoman Gym.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
21 very much, Councilman Oh, and thank you
22 so much for sponsoring the hearings today
23 and to my fellow Council colleagues who
24 are here, and thank you very much to all
25 the witnesses who came forward,

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2 especially the victims families. It was
3 heartbreaking and heart-wrenching to hear
4 and read about their stories of crime.
5 They happen all over the City. It's
6 extraordinarily painful to read and
7 listen to people testify when it actually
8 happens to them.

9 You know, one of the things
10 that I think we -- that I certainly heard
11 out of the hearings is a real need for
12 communities to become organized and to
13 work through solutions. I think one of
14 the things that we are grappling with
15 right now is differences of opinion about
16 how safety is created. And while for
17 many of us I think we're looking at
18 increased surveillance cameras and other
19 types of efforts, other communities
20 worry, and worry justly, about increased
21 police presence that may lead to
22 unnecessary stop and frisk or civil
23 rights infringements that other people
24 have testified to. But what I want you
25 to know is that we on City Council are

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2 going to try and work through those
3 conversations. We just need you to be
4 with us as we go through that.

5 The other thing is is that I
6 heard you loud and clear, Mr. Guan, about
7 the issue of language access in City
8 Council Chambers. It is very important
9 and it is actually a civil right for you
10 to have language access here. We're
11 working on that right now to make sure
12 that it happens, and I'm sorry it didn't
13 happen in enough time for us today.

14 And then, finally, I hope that
15 what you have is a continued effort at
16 organizing and working on a lot of these
17 issues in combination with many of us on
18 City Council who are really incredibly
19 dedicated to seeing significant advances
20 and progress in the ways we're working
21 with language access across the City,
22 with our Police Department, especially
23 with 911, and with victims advocate
24 services as you move forward through
25 this.

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All of us are opposed to crime.
Every single person in this city is
opposed to crime. I don't think that
that is anything. What we're trying to
figure out is when this does happen, how
can people feel validated, heard, and how
can we organize for change. But I feel
like this was an important first step.
I'm very grateful to everybody who came
out and especially to individuals in the
City department who are here who are
working to make it better.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
much, Councilwoman Gym.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN OH: And next we'll
have Councilman Derek Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
Chairman Oh. Thank you for this hearing,
and thank you for everyone who was here
to testify. I think one of the
challenges that we have and we've often
discussed in this hearing is the lack of

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information, access, and communication,
communication from business owners who
feel that when they reach out to the
police, their call is not being answered
and also communication from the police in
not understanding the best way to
communicate. That's why earlier in the
hearing I talked about having a meeting
with the Commissioner, Commissioner Ross,
because I think the perception is from
the business owner perspective -- and
this is sometimes shared in other
communities -- that when they call the
police, the police are not coming in a
responsive fashion. And in that vital
time when a crime occurs, that's when the
information needs to be gathered, and
when you have a language barrier,
information that could be gathered is not
being gathered and it leads to a
perception that why should I call the
police at all. That's why I think it's
so very important that there is a meeting
with the Commissioner, especially

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2 considering there seems to be an epidemic
3 going on where specific criminal elements
4 are targeting Asian businesses. And
5 that's why I think it's very important to
6 change the perception of how the police
7 are interacting with business owners by
8 having that meeting with the
9 Commissioner, and that way, out of that
10 meeting there could be specific
11 opportunities to have a conversation
12 between business owners, people in the
13 community, with the police on an ongoing
14 basis to address that language barrier
15 and dialogue and concern.

16 So I look forward to working
17 with my colleagues on that issue and
18 especially as we go into January, we go
19 through the budget process, that's the
20 time when this body as a legislative body
21 can ask the executive body for those
22 resources.

23 So thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
25 much, Councilman Derek Green.

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2 And Councilman Mark Squilla.

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
4 Mr. Chairman. I appreciate your efforts
5 here, and I really want to applaud you on
6 bringing this to light and having the
7 opportunity for everybody to come in here
8 and speak. But like Councilman Green had
9 said, this is going to be like a
10 five-pronged process. It's not one
11 answer is going to be able to fix the
12 situation, whether it's enforcement,
13 police response, communication, community
14 empowerment, City Council legislation.
15 It's a whole bunch of different things
16 that we need to do to keep us together on
17 this, but not forget what is going on
18 until we get results that we are all
19 happy with.

20 So, again, Councilman Oh, thank
21 you for bringing this to the table today,
22 and looking forward to continue working
23 with everybody to make this a reality.

24 Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very

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2 much, Councilman Squilla.

3 And, Councilwoman Blackwell, do
4 you have any comments to make?

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I sure
6 do.

7 You know, so many of these
8 folks and I and Lucien before me go back
9 so many years. It's a pleasure to see
10 them, and look forward to working with
11 them. I'm sorry that it's under these
12 circumstances. But you can count on us
13 and you can count on the Council to do
14 what we can to ameliorate this situation
15 and certainly work with you moving
16 forward. Thank you.

17 And thank you both for
18 introducing this legislation and for all
19 of you here for working on it.

20 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
21 much, Councilwoman Blackwell.

22 And so let me conclude on
23 behalf of my Chairman, Co-Chairman,
24 Curtis Jones, Jr. First of all, thank
25 you for coming out today. It is really

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not us but you through your rallies, your advocacy, your continuous meetings that we got to learn about the crimes that were being committed. We know that there's many more crimes. We know that they have existed for a long time, but people did not speak up. For whatever reason, they did not step forward. By stepping forward today, by stepping forward before today, by coming out in so many different ways, you are telling your story. The story you've told us today is one that you're here among us in Philadelphia, in our region and that you're being victimized and targeted because you are Chinese, because there are perceptions, myths, blame that is being targeted at you.

Secondly, that we have City services. We have an excellent Police Department. Our police are working with our DA's Office, our counties, our FBI, our U.S. Attorney's Office. Yet it's not enough. And when you call the Language

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2 Line and when you look for help, you are
3 not getting the kind of service that you
4 should be getting in comparison to the
5 numerous times that you call, the many
6 times that you have been robbed and
7 burglarized, your lives threatened, your
8 children threatened, people being beaten.

9 Listen, I live in Southwest
10 Philadelphia. If somebody came to my
11 house, that would be a big problem for
12 me, because we have no cash. If they
13 think they're going to beat it out of me
14 and my family, they're not going to.
15 They're just going to beat us, because we
16 don't have any cash in our house.

17 I know that many merchants are
18 very thin. That means they don't have
19 money, and we have had instances in the
20 past where families have been victimized
21 tragically. They did not come up with
22 the money. And so there were horrendous
23 consequences.

24 And so I thank my colleagues.
25 I could not do anything without my

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2 colleagues. And I want to let people
3 know that although you don't see all the
4 Councilmembers here, this resolution was
5 passed unanimously, and many
6 Councilpeople have prior commitments and
7 they are listening, their staff is
8 listening. The most important thing is
9 what are we going to do next.

10 We have heard you. We have
11 heard our police, who are doing a great
12 job, but we know we have a lot more to
13 do.

14 Finally, to our overall
15 community, I think it is an important
16 point to bring different perspectives. I
17 don't agree with every testimony given,
18 and not everybody agrees with me. That's
19 how democracy is. We have to take
20 different opinions and make it work.

21 A lot of people do not put this
22 into context. However, whether we're
23 talking about issues involving women,
24 whether we're talking about issues
25 involving African Americans, we have to

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2 put it within historical context. And so
3 when we have issues that may seem very
4 simple to me, I have to look at it within
5 the history of the people of our country.

6 In particular, with the Chinese
7 and with Asians, the Chinese Exclusion
8 Act of 1882 excluded Chinese
9 specifically, the only group of people
10 excluded. That was not changed until
11 1943, and yet that law and many other
12 laws that discriminated against the
13 Chinese existed until 1968. The
14 Immigration and Naturalization Act of
15 1965 was not enacted until 1968. I tell
16 people on my staff, you're probably here
17 because of the Immigration Act of 1965.
18 Before that, your father and mother could
19 not have come here.

20 And so the issues that surround
21 discrimination and targeting of Chinese
22 Americans, as it has with African
23 Americans and other people in our
24 country, is rooted in our history. It is
25 important to take up the opportunity to

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2 work with everyone in our city. And we
3 have a wonderful city where there are so
4 many people that support you, support
5 your families, white, black, Asian,
6 Hispanic. There are far more people who
7 stand with you in your problems and
8 issues than stand against you.

9 We certainly have a lot of work
10 to do. This Council represents the
11 broadest group of people in our city, ten
12 districts, seven at-large, and we will do
13 our job to address this problem for you.
14 You keep doing what you do.

15 Thank you very much.

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILMAN OH: This hearing is
18 going to be recessed to the call of the
19 Chairs.

20 Thank you for coming, and we'll
21 be in touch with you.

22 (Committees on Public Safety,
23 Commerce & Economic Development and
24 Global Opportunities and
25 Creative/Innovative Economy concluded at

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2 1:25 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY that the

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proceedings, evidence and objections are

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contained fully and accurately in the

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stenographic notes taken by me upon the

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foregoing matter, and that this is a true and

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correct transcript of same.

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MICHELE L. MURPHY

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RPR-Notary Public

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