

1 COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

2
3 STATED MEETING4 City Hall, Room 400
5 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
6 Thursday, February 19, 2026
7 10:00 a.m.

8 PRESENT:

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT KENYATTA JOHNSON
10 COUNCILWOMAN RUE LANDAU
11 COUNCILWOMAN NINA AHMAD
12 COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
13 COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
14 COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE-RICHARDSON
15 COUNCILWOMAN QUETCY M. LOZADA
16 COUNCILMAN MICHAEL DRISCOLL
17 COUNCILMAN CURTIS J. JONES, JR.
18 COUNCILMAN NICOLAS O'ROURKE
19 COUNCILMAN JEFFREY YOUNG, JR.
20 COUNCILMAN ANTHONY PHILLIPS21
22 ELIZABETH MCCOLLUM, Chief Clerk
23
24

P R O C E E D I N G S

COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

Members, please take your seats. I note that the hour has come and a quorum of this Council is present. This Council will now come to order.

All visitors will retire to the seats outside the rails. Please take all conversations outside of the Council chambers. I will ask all those present to please set your cell phones to silent and/or vibrate.

To give our invocation this morning, the Chair recognizes Rabbi Shawn Zevit of Mishkan Shalom Synagogue. He's here today as a guest of Minority Whip Councilmember Nicholas O'Rourke.

I will ask all members and guests to please rise. The floor is yours, sir.

RABBI ZEVIT: Good morning.

1 Hello. Shalom. Assalamu Alaikum,
2 everybody. It's a great honor to be
3 here as a repeat visit from a number
4 of years ago. Those of you may
5 compare the video in the past and
6 see I'm wearing the same jacket as a
7 number of years ago as well.

8 Woven into the fabric of
9 the Jewish calendar is a weekly
10 reading of the torah. And the fact
11 of this confluence of time being
12 invited here while we have just read
13 the exodus from oppression to
14 liberation. It's a lot to focus on,
15 miracles, pledges, walls of water
16 crossing the sea, revelation at
17 Sinai.

18 But often those peak
19 moments, you know, when the bill
20 passes, if you ever had that
21 experience, right, when you finally
22 get there. That's that moment, yes,
23 we crossed this weed sea. And you
24 turn around and there's 40 years of

1 desert left, actual implementation.

2 And right after the
3 revelation of death, the big 10 at
4 Sinai, the next chapter is filled
5 with minutiae of how we lived that
6 out in real time. How do we ensure
7 justice and affordability, equality
8 and the capacity to live out very
9 principles that we have aligned
10 ourselves with.

11 I don't need to tell you
12 that we are in a time of
13 intensifying challenges. To our
14 personal well-being and health,
15 social and political upheaval and
16 assault to the many utterances and
17 commandments in which our nations
18 democratic vision is based.

19 How do we continue to
20 gather, organize, claim and align
21 our own souls to core values and
22 actions our predecessors
23 experienced.

24 What roles and ways of

1 leading do we inhabit in our
2 families and professional lives and
3 lives of service. And what
4 structures do we need to adapt or
5 replace, so that we can support
6 ourselves and others to carry
7 dismantle of leadership.

8 I'll pray for all of your
9 souls and well-being. Moses set a
10 good example. He led in partnership
11 with his siblings and appointed
12 captains of thousands, tens and
13 hundreds knew he couldn't do it
14 alone. Every now and then plead and
15 said this is too much. I need to
16 call a lifeline or a friend. Show
17 me the essence, remind me of why I'm
18 here in the first place because it's
19 otherwise too great a burden to
20 bear, and that's why we have each
21 other.

22 So given the active
23 challenges to some of our national
24 structures and some of the choices

1 of leadership positions beyond our
2 fair city of Philadelphia here,
3 we're faced with these challenges of
4 core values. We must not abrogate
5 them to those whose views of
6 leadership or humanity do not honor
7 the most sacred and foundational
8 principles of life, liberty and the
9 pursuit of a meaningful life. That
10 will produces happiness.

11 And so in conclusion and in
12 my prayer for you and your well-
13 being and the success of everything
14 today, I want to end with a song
15 that a young Jewish composer with
16 connections to Philly shared just a
17 few years ago that is now sung in
18 many synagogues across North America
19 and the world.

20 We rise humbly hearted,
21 you're already risen. See if you
22 can touch base with your humble
23 heart.

24 Singing and clapping is

1 welcomed. Break dancing as well, if
2 you have for moved.

3 (Singing and clapping by
4 Rabbi ****.

5 Blessing for the work of
6 your hands today.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: The
8 Chair thanks the Rabbi for his
9 invocation. Now we see where
10 Nicholas O'Rourke gets his singing
11 chops from.

12 Great song for such a time
13 as this. Council will be at ease.

14 (Council at ease.)

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: The
16 next order of business is the
17 approval of the journal of the
18 committee of Thursday, February
19 12th, 2026.

20 The Chair recognizes
21 Councilmember Thomas.

22 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS:

23 Thank you, Mr. President.

24 I move that the journal of the

1 meeting of Thursday, February 12th,
2 2026 be approved.

3 (Seconded.)

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: It has
5 been moved and properly seconded
6 that the journal of February 12th,
7 2026 stand approved.

8 All in favor will indicate
9 by saying aye. Those opposed? The
10 ayes have it and the journal is
11 approved.

12 The next order of business
13 is request for leave of absence and
14 the Chair recognizes Majority Leader
15 Councilmember Katherine Gilmore-
16 Richardson.

17 COUNCILMEMBER GILMORE-
18 RICHARDSON: Thank you,
19 Mr. President. on behalf of City
20 Council, a leave is requested for
21 Councilmembers Bass and O'Neill.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: The
23 Chair grants the leave and thanks
24 the Majority Leader for the report.

1 the Chair recognizes
2 Minority Leader Councilmember Kendra
3 Brooks.

4 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS:
5 Thank you so much, Council
6 President. On behalf of the
7 minority, there are no request for
8 leave of absence today.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: The
10 Chair thanks the minority leader.

11 the Chair now recognizes
12 Majority Leader Katherine Gilmore-
13 Richardson for a motion regarding
14 certain legislative matters that may
15 arise during the course of today's
16 session of council and that were not
17 listed on the calendar circulated
18 prior to today's council session.

19 COUNCILMEMBER GILMORE-
20 RICHARDSON: Thank you,
21 Mr. President.

22 I move that any of the
23 following matters, if considered
24 today, may be added to the agenda

1 for this session of council and as
2 required by law subsequently
3 published on an amended agenda after
4 consideration of those matters:

5 Resolutions authorizing
6 hearing, amendments to bills on
7 first reading, the reconsideration
8 of a bill vetoed by or recalled from
9 the Mayor, amendments to bills
10 recalled from the Mayor, resolutions
11 taking substantive action to be
12 voted on in this session. A motion
13 to withdraw a bill or resolution
14 that is not on the calendar. And a
15 motion placing a bill or resolution
16 on or returning a bill or resolution
17 from the suspension calendar that is
18 not listed on today's calendar.

19 The purpose of this motion
20 is to provide the public with notice
21 concerning possible actions by
22 Council that arose too late to be
23 included on the calendar that was
24 published prior to today's session.

1 (Seconded.)

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: It has
3 been moved and properly seconded
4 that the legislative matters stated
5 by Councilmember Majority Leader
6 Katherine Gilmore-Richardson may be
7 added to the agenda for today should
8 those matters arise during this
9 course of Council session.

10 All favor will signify by
11 saying aye. Those opposed? The
12 ayes have it and the motion carries.

13 The Chair will dispense
14 with the regular order of business
15 to recognize the guests and visitors
16 joining us in chambers this morning.

17 On behalf of all members of
18 City Council, I'll welcome you to
19 our Council session. We appreciate
20 you taking the time to join us as we
21 attend to the legislative affairs of
22 our great city and certainly invite
23 you to come again.

24 the Chair recognizes

1 Majority Leader Katherine Gilmore-
2 Richardson.

3 COUNCILMEMBER GILMORE-

4 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
5 very much, Council President.

6 As many of you know, I'm a
7 very proud, two-time alumni of West
8 Chester University of Pennsylvania,
9 earning a bachelors of arts degree
10 and political science and a masters
11 of science degree in public
12 administration.

13 During my time there as a
14 student, I was actively engaged on
15 campus co-founding the organization
16 that at that time we called Sistas
17 United, which is now called Sisters
18 United. And further developing the
19 leadership skills and civic-minded
20 values that continue to guide me
21 today.

22 Today I am excited to
23 welcome a group of 17 students here,
24 representing my beloved alma mater

1 West Chester University. Our guest
2 are students of Professor Sally
3 Lawton's urban politics class, and
4 they are also joined by their
5 teaching assistant William Bosch.

6 I had the privilege of
7 meeting Professor Lawton when I
8 presented at the Ruby Jones
9 conference on race, social justice
10 and civic leadership at West Chester
11 University this fall.

12 And for your knowledge,
13 Ruby Jones was also a charter member
14 of Zeta Phi Beta, Incorporated,
15 Epsilon Omega Zeta Chapter of which
16 I enjoy membership.

17 Today they are here to
18 learn about politics and civics and
19 action. And I also want to take
20 special note of one of the students
21 in the class who is Councilman Juan
22 Tafolla. He's a councilmember from
23 the borough of Kenneth Square in
24 Chester County. He is the youngest

1 councilmember of the Commonwealth of
2 Pennsylvania.

3 So we welcome the
4 Councilmember and all of the
5 students, Professor Lawton and
6 teaching assisting Bosch to
7 Philadelphia City Council. Thank
8 you.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Welcome
10 to City Council. The Chair
11 recognizes Rue Landau.

12 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU:
13 Thank you so much, Council
14 President. I just wanted to take
15 one second to introduce people, two
16 special guest we have today. The
17 first is Iryna Mazur, the honorary
18 council of Ukraine. And the second
19 is the very own Mark Segal, the
20 publisher of PGN. Happy anniversary
21 PGN.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Welcome
23 to City Council. Always good to see
24 you, mark.

1 the Chair recognizes

2 Dr. Anthony Phillips.

3 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:

4 Council President, thank
5 you so much for recognizing me.

6 Also, good morning
7 everyone. I just wanted to quickly
8 welcome someone who just walked in
9 today. It is our director of Clean
10 & Green, Carlton Williams, for his
11 incredible service over the past
12 couple of weeks with our snow
13 emergency.

14 And I want Philadelphia to
15 know that it was a challenging
16 storm, but Carlton rose to the
17 occasion and he's going to keep
18 getting better and better years to
19 come. And I liken his department to
20 the Chicago Bulls. Every year they
21 find a way to get better and better,
22 and that's why to me they're the
23 best department in the city. So
24 thanks so much.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: I think
2 he's saying that because he's from
3 Northwest Philadelphia and we see
4 the Commissioner of Parks & Recs
5 here as well. So can we acknowledge
6 her as well? Sue Slawson, welcome
7 to Council. All the great things
8 you're doing out at Parks &
9 Recreation.

10 Thank you, Carlton
11 Williams. We appreciate your hard
12 work and dedication. And also for
13 always picking up the phone call,
14 answering the text messages. I
15 texted him last night, need some
16 help with snow removal. He
17 responded. Jumped on top of it. So
18 we thank you for your leadership as
19 well, sir.

20 The next order of business
21 at this time will be presentations.
22 And the Chair recognizes Majority
23 Leader Katherine Gilmore-Richardson
24 who will present a resolution on my

1 behalf, honoring and recognizing and
2 congratulating Irv Randolph for his
3 retirement after 31 years of
4 distinguished service to the oldest
5 Africa American newspaper in the
6 United States, the Philadelphia
7 Tribune and for his lasting
8 contribution to journalism and the
9 city of Philadelphia.

10 Will Irv Randolph and those
11 who accompanying him please join
12 Majority Leader Richardson at the
13 podium.

14 Joining him will be the
15 following individuals:

16 Councilmember Dr. Anthony
17 Phillips, Councilmember Jamie
18 Gauthier, Councilmember Rue Landau,
19 Councilmember Lozada, Councilmember
20 Kendra Brooks, Councilmember Jim
21 Harrity, Councilmember Nicholas
22 O'Rourke, Councilmember Mike
23 Driscoll and Councilmember Dr. Nina
24 Ahmad.

1 COUNCILMEMBER GILMORE -

2 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
3 very much, Council President. It is
4 certainly our humble honor and
5 privilege to present this resolution
6 on your behalf today honoring the
7 incomparable, Irv Randolph of the
8 Philadelphia Tribune. Let's give
9 him a round of applause.

10 So today we present a
11 resolution honoring and
12 congratulating Irv Randolph for his
13 requirement after 31 years of
14 distinguished service to the
15 Philadelphia Tribune and his lasting
16 contributions to journalism and the
17 entire city of Philadelphia.

18 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:

19 Whereas, the Philadelphia
20 was founded in 1884 and the oldest
21 continuously published African
22 American newspaper in the United
23 States, serving as a trusted and
24 vital voice of black communities in

1 Philadelphia and:

2 COUNCILMEMBER GAUTHIER:

3 Whereas, Irvin Randolph was
4 raised in North Philadelphia and
5 graduated from Franklin Learning
6 Center where founded the high
7 schools newspapers, laying the
8 foundation for his lifelong
9 dedication to reporting and:

10 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU:

11 Whereas, Mr. Randolph
12 pursued his passion for journalism
13 at Penn State before transferring to
14 Temple University, Go Owls, where he
15 earned his journalism degree and
16 help found the student magazine
17 Front Line and:

18 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA:

19 Whereas, in the early
20 1990s, Mr. Randolph joined the
21 Philadelphia Tribune as managing
22 editor bringing a clear editorial
23 mission to champion truth,
24 accountability and amplification of

1 black voices. A mission he upheld
2 with integrity for over three
3 decades and:

4 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS:

5 Whereas, throughout his
6 tenure, Mr. Randolph navigated the
7 evolving media landscape with vision
8 embracing digital first strategies
9 while strengthening the newspapers
10 print and online journalism,
11 ensuring his stories reached and
12 empowered a growing and diverse
13 audience and:

14 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY:

15 Whereas, under his
16 leadership the Philadelphia Tribune
17 continued to spotlight the real
18 lives and accomplishments of
19 everyday people in the black
20 community, challenged negative
21 portrayals and held those in power
22 accountable and:

23 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE,

24 Whereas, Mr. Randolph has

1 acted as a mentor and builder of
2 future generations of journalists
3 guiding countless young
4 professionals who have gone on to
5 distinguished careers at major
6 national outlets and:

7 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL:

8 Whereas, among the
9 remarkable moments in his career,
10 Mr. Randolph reported on
11 transformative global events
12 including traveling to South Africa
13 during Nelson Mandela's transition
14 from incarceration. And conducting
15 an extensive interview with then
16 Senator Barack Obama and:

17 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD:

18 Whereas, after 31 years of
19 exemplarily service, Mr. Randolph
20 will retire from his role as
21 managing editor of the Philadelphia
22 Tribune, effective January 30th,
23 2026, leaving behind a legacy of
24 excellence and commitment to

1 community journalism, now therefore
2 be it:

3 COUNCILMEMBER GILMORE-

4 RICHARDSON: Resolved by the Council
5 of the city of Philadelphia that we
6 hereby congratulate Irv Randolph on
7 his retirement and honor his
8 outstanding contributions to
9 journalism to the Philadelphia
10 Tribune and to the Philadelphia
11 community. Congratulations.

12 (Applause.)

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: The
14 Chair recognizes Mr. Irv Randolph for
15 remarks.

16 MR. RANDOLF: Oh, okay. I
17 wasn't expecting this in terms of
18 speaking. But I want to thank the
19 Council, Council President.
20 Kenyatta Johnson, all of the
21 council. I guess I won't getting
22 those Sunday night calls from
23 Councilman President Kenyatta
24 Johnson. He'll just call me, Irv, I

1 need you to look into this. I'm
2 like okay, Councilman.

3 But I'm just really
4 appreciative of this honor and thank
5 you. That's all I have to say.
6 Just thank you.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
8 you.

9 Council will be at ease.
10 (Council at ease.)

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: At next
12 order of business is communications.
13 The chair request that the sergeant-
14 at-arms deliver the messages from
15 the Mayor to the chief clerk.

16 Will the chief clerk read
17 the messages from the Mayor and any
18 other communications in her
19 possession.

20 CHIEF CLERK: To the
21 President and members of the Council
22 of the city of Philadelphia, I'm
23 submitting herewith for a
24 consideration for your honorable

1 body the following:

2 An ordinance authorizing
3 generally the continued issuance and
4 sale by the city of Philadelphia Gas
5 Works Revenue note of the city,
6 prescribing the forms of notes and
7 providing for their execution and
8 payment pledging certain revenues of
9 the gas works of security, adopting
10 a rate and covenant and directing
11 the imposition and collection of
12 rates and charges sufficient to
13 comply therewith, prescribing the
14 conditions precedent to the issuance
15 of specific series of notes
16 including a resolution passed by the
17 Bond Committee providing for the
18 establishment of credit support for
19 note, providing for the designation
20 of a fiscal agent and a sinking fund
21 depository, providing for
22 establishment of a sinking fund and
23 its management, providing remedies
24 upon default and providing for

1 amendments and modifications.

2 And an ordinance
3 authorizing the execution, delivery
4 and performance by the Philadelphia
5 Facilities Management Corporation on
6 behalf of the Philadelphia Gas Works
7 of an amended service agreement with
8 Transcontinental Pipeline Company,
9 LLC, for gas storage service under
10 the Transco, WSS open access rate
11 schedule.

12 And a resolution
13 authorizing the Philadelphia Land
14 Bank to dispose of 3902 and 3906
15 West Girard Avenue, 3911 through 15
16 Cambridge Street located in the 3rd
17 Councilmatic District in accordance
18 with the terms of Chapter 16-700 of
19 the Philadelphia code.

20 And a resolution
21 authorizing the Philadelphia Land
22 Bank to dispose of 515 through 33
23 West Cumberland Street, 2502, 2504,
24 2506, 2508, 2511 through 21, 2543

1 through 51 North Fairhill Street,
2 2506 through 22, 2524, 2526, 2534
3 through 42 North Reed Street located
4 the 7th Councilmatic District in
5 accordance with the terms of Chapter
6 16-700 of the Philadelphia code.

7 Council President, there
8 are no further communications in my
9 possession.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
11 you very much. The messages will be
12 printed in the journal.

13 The next order of business
14 is the introduction of bills and
15 resolutions.

16 The Chair recognizes
17 Dr. Anthony Phillips.

18 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:
19 Thank you, Council President. I
20 have no bills and resolutions for
21 today.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
23 you very much. The Chair recognizes
24 Majority Leader Councilmember

1 Katherine Gilmore-Richardson.

2 COUNCILMEMBER GILMORE-

3 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Council

4 President. Today I offer three

5 bills and three privileged

6 resolutions. Three bills and one

7 privileged resolution on your behalf

8 and two privileged resolutions on

9 behalf of Councilmember Bass.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank

11 you very much. Would the chief

12 clerk please read the titles of the

13 bills and resolutions.

14 CHIEF CLERK: An ordinance

15 authorizing generally the continued

16 issuance and sale by the city of

17 Philadelphia Gas Works revenue note

18 of the city, prescribing the forms

19 of note and providing for their

20 execution and payment pledging

21 certain revenue of Gas Works as

22 security, adopting a rate covenant

23 and directing the imposition and

24 collection of rates and charges

1 sufficient to comply therewith,
2 prescribing the conditions
3 precedents to the issuance of
4 specific series of notes, including
5 a resolution passed by the Bond
6 Committee providing for the
7 establishment of credit support for
8 notes, providing for designation of
9 fiscal agent and sinking fund
10 depository, providing for
11 establishment of a sinking fund and
12 its management, providing remedies
13 upon default and providing for
14 amendments and modifications.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
16 bill will be referred to the
17 appropriate committee.

18 CHIEF CLERK: And an
19 ordinance authorizing the execution,
20 delivery and performance by the
21 Philadelphia Facilities Management
22 Corporation on behalf of
23 Philadelphia Gas Works of an amended
24 service agreement with

1 Transcontinental Gas Pipeline
2 Company, LLC, for gas storage
3 services under trans code WSS open
4 access rate schedule.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
6 bill will be referred to the
7 appropriate committee.

8 CHIEF CLERK: And an
9 ordinance authorizing and directing
10 the changing of the name from
11 NovaCare Way to Eagles Way.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
13 bill will be referred to the
14 appropriate committee.

15 CHIEF CLERK: And a
16 privileged resolution recognizing
17 and celebrating the Philadelphia
18 Heritage and Phila-Montco branches
19 of the association for the study of
20 African American life and history.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
22 resolution will be placed on today's
23 final passage calendar.

24 CHIEF CLERK: And a

1 privileged resolution honoring the
2 leadership and service of Troy
3 Prichette for his unwavering
4 commitment to spiritual empowerment,
5 community outreach and restorative
6 justice in the city of Philadelphia
7 recognition of Black History Month.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
9 resolution will be placed on today's
10 final passage calendar.

11 CHIEF CLERK: And a
12 privileged resolution honoring
13 Pastor Rob Harrison of New Journey
14 Christian Center and celebrating the
15 vital role of faith leaders in
16 shaping, uplifting and strengthening
17 the Germantown community and the
18 city of Philadelphia in recognition
19 of Black History Month.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
21 resolution will be placed on today's
22 final passage calendar.

23 The Chair recognizes
24 Councilmember Jamie Gauthier.

1 COUNCILMEMBER GAUTHIER:

2 Good morning, Council President.

3 Today I have one bill and one
4 non-privileged resolution.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
6 you very much. Will the chief clerk
7 please read the title of the bill
8 and resolution.

9 CHIEF CLERK: An ordinance
10 authorizing Mukash Kumar Patel,
11 owner and operator of the news stand
12 at the northwest corner of 34th
13 Street and Convention Avenue and
14 Civic Center Boulevard, to
15 construct, use and maintain conduits
16 in, under and across the northwest
17 corner of 34th Street and Convention
18 Avenue and Civic Center Boulevard
19 for the purposes of supplying
20 electrical service to said news
21 stand, under certain terms and
22 conditions.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
24 bill will be referred to the

1 appropriate committee.

2 CHIEF CLERK: And a
3 non-privileged resolution
4 authorizing the Philadelphia Land
5 Bank to dispose of 3902 and 3906
6 West Girard Avenue. 3911 through 15
7 Cambridge Street, located in the 3rd
8 Councilmatic District, in accordance
9 with the term of Chapter 16-700 of
10 the Philadelphia code.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
12 resolution will be placed on the
13 final passage calendar for
14 consideration at the next session of
15 Council.

16 The Chair recognizes
17 Councilmember Isaiah Thomas.

18 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: Good
19 morning, Council President. Good
20 morning, colleagues. Good morning,
21 to the listening public. Nothing
22 today.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
24 you very much.

1 The Chair recognizes
2 Councilmember Jones.

3 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: Good
4 morning, Mr. President, colleagues.
5 I have no resolutions or bills
6 today.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
8 you the.

9 The Chair recognizes Rue
10 Landau.

11 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU:
12 Thanks again, Council President. I
13 have two privileged resolutions and
14 one non-privileged.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
16 you very much. Will the chief clerk
17 please read the titles of the
18 resolutions.

19 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
20 resolution honoring Ukrainian
21 organizations in Philadelphia for
22 their service to Ukrainian-
23 Americans, Ukrainian refugees and
24 the broader Philadelphia community.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
2 resolution will be placed on today's
3 final passage calendar.

4 CHIEF CLERK: And a
5 privileged resolution honoring and
6 congratulating Philadelphia Gay News
7 on the distinguished occasion of its
8 50th Anniversary in Philadelphia.
9 Serving as Philadelphia's longest
10 running LGBTQ+ publication and
11 serving as a vital independent voice
12 that advances equality, visibility
13 and community.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
15 resolution will be placed on today's
16 final passage calendar.

17 CHIEF CLERK: And a
18 non-privileged resolution calling on
19 the United States Department of
20 Housing and Urban Development, HUD,
21 to expand investments into evidenced
22 based solutions to address
23 homelessness that is permanent
24 supportive housing and condemning

1 the significant impact cuts to
2 funding will have on Philadelphia's
3 residents, municipal services and
4 exacerbate our ongoing housing
5 crisis.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
7 resolution will be placed on the
8 final passage calendar for
9 consideration at the next session of
10 Council.

11 The Chair recognizes
12 Councilmember Quetcy Lozada.

13 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA:
14 Thank you, Council President. I
15 have one non-privileged resolution
16 today.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
18 you very much. Will the chief clerk
19 please read the title of the
20 resolution.

21 CHIEF CLERK: A
22 non-privileged resolution
23 authorizing the Philadelphia Land
24 Bank to dispose of 515 to 33 West

1 Cumberland Street, 2502, 2504, 2506,
2 2508, 2511 through 21, 2543 through
3 51 North Fairhill Street, 2506
4 through 22, 2524, 2526, 2534 through
5 42 North Reed Street, located in the
6 7th Councilmatic District in
7 accordance of the terms of Chapter
8 16-700 of the Philadelphia code.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
10 resolution will be placed on the
11 final passage calendar for
12 consideration at the next session of
13 Council.

14 The Chair recognizes
15 Jeffrey J. Young.

16 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Good
17 morning, Mr. President. No bills or
18 resolution today.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
20 you very much.

21 The Chair recognizes
22 Councilmember Brooks.

23 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS:
24 Thank you, Council President. I

1 have one privileged and one
2 non-privileged resolution to read
3 today.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Will
5 the chief clerk please read the
6 title of the resolutions.

7 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
8 resolution celebrating and honoring
9 Vashti DuBois, Val Gay, Facetta
10 Garrison-Greene, and the black women
11 who are leaders of culture and art
12 in the city and devote their lives
13 to improving the arts and culture of
14 Philadelphia on the occasion of
15 Black History Month.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
17 resolution will be placed on today's
18 final passage calendar.

19 For a moment of personal
20 privilege, Member Brooks, could you
21 ask your guests to stand for a round
22 of applause, please, for joining us
23 today?

24 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS:

1 Yes. Can I ask the women
2 that have been honored today to
3 please stand so we can give you a
4 round of applause?

5 (Applause.)

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
7 you very much. Welcome to City
8 Council.

9 At this time I also want to
10 acknowledge Councilmember Jim.

11 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY:
12 Thank you, Council President. I
13 have nothing today.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
15 you very much.

16 The Chair recognizes chief
17 clerk.

18 CHIEF CLERK: And a
19 non-privileged resolution calling on
20 Governor Josh Shapiro and the
21 Pennsylvania General Assembly to
22 enact adult use cannabis
23 legalization in 2026.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This

1 resolution will be placed on the
2 final passage calendar for
3 consideration at our next session of
4 Council.

5 The Chair recognizes
6 Nicholas O'Rourke.

7 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE:
8 Good morning and thank you,
9 Mr. President I have two privileged
10 resolutions to introduce today.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
12 you very much. Will the chief clerk
13 please read the title of the
14 resolution.

15 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
16 resolution recognizing the beginning
17 of the Lenten season, a sacred
18 period of reflection, prayer,
19 fasting and service observed by
20 millions of Christians in
21 Philadelphia and throughout the
22 world.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
24 resolution will be placed on today's

1 final passage calendar.

2 CHIEF CLERK: And a
3 privileged resolution recognizing
4 and honoring the life of trail
5 blazing civil rights leader,
6 dedicated public servant and
7 honoring lifelong activist Reverend
8 Jessie Jackson.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
10 resolution will be placed on today's
11 final passage calendar and we will
12 take an official vote at the
13 appropriate time with a moment of
14 silence.

15 Councilman Mike Driscoll.

16 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL:
17 Good morning, Mr. President. No
18 bills or resolution for introduction
19 today.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT:
21 Councilman Mark Squilla.

22 COUNCILMEMBER SQUILLA:
23 Thank you, Mr. President. No bills
24 or resolution today.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

2 Dr. Nina Ahmad.

3 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Thank
4 you, Council President. I'm
5 introducing one privileged
6 resolution and one non-privileged
7 resolution.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
9 you very much. Will the chief clerk
10 please read the title of the
11 resolution.

12 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
13 resolution recognizing Saturday,
14 February 21st, 2026, as
15 International Mother Language Day to
16 honor the brave souls who on this
17 day in 1952 sacrificed their lives
18 to retain their right to use their
19 mother language Bangla, also known
20 as Bangali.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
22 resolution will be placed on today's
23 final passage calendar.

24 CHIEF CLERK: And a

1 non-privileged resolution urging
2 U.S. Senate meet to opposed the Save
3 Act and reject any additional
4 barriers to voter registration.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: This
6 resolution will be placed on a final
7 passage calendar for consideration
8 at the next session of Council.

9 As there are no reports
10 from committee today, the next order
11 of business is the consideration of
12 the calendar.

13 The Chair recognizes
14 Majority Leader Katherine Gilmore-
15 Richardson for a motion concerning
16 the bills and resolution on the
17 second reading and final passage
18 calendar.

19 COUNCILMEMBER GILMORE-
20 RICHARDSON: Thank you,
21 Mr. President.

22 The following bills and
23 resolutions are being called up from
24 the second reading and final passage

1 calendars today:

2 Nos. 251108, 260097,
3 260099, 250989-A, 251097 and 251098.

4 The following bills and
5 resolutions on the calendar are
6 being held:

7 241056, 250768, 250807,
8 250843, 250917, 2509820, 251025.
9 241070 is being amended.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Thank
11 you.

12 Before considering these
13 bills and resolutions we will
14 consider public comment as follows:

15 Your public comment must
16 concern matters on the second
17 reading and final passage calendars
18 for possible action at today's
19 Council session.

20 All speakers must sign up
21 in order to testify. If you have
22 not already signed up for today's
23 session, please do so now by giving
24 your name outside the rails to my

1 left.

2 Once you have signed up you
3 will be called in the order in which
4 your name appears on the sign up
5 sheet. Under I deal circumstances
6 public commenters each will have
7 three minutes to speak, however this
8 time limit may vary from session to
9 session. Today the time limit will
10 be two minutes.

11 In order to be fair to all
12 those wishing to speak, I intend to
13 hold faithfully to the two minute
14 limit. When you begin speaking you
15 will see a green light on the
16 podium. When there are 30 seconds
17 remaining to your time, the light
18 will turn yellow, which is your
19 reminder to conclude your remarks.

20 Once two minutes have past
21 the light will turn red and the
22 sergeant-at-arms will disconnect the
23 microphone. At that point please
24 yield the podium to the next speaker

1 if you haven't already done so.

2 I also reserve the right
3 pursuant to our rules of Council to
4 limit repetitious comment on the
5 same subject matter.

6 I will now ask the chief
7 clerk to please read the name of our
8 first speaker.

9 CHIEF CLERK: Will Iryna
10 Masur, Fernando Ramirez and Jeremy
11 Blatstein, please make your way
12 towards the podium.

13 MR. KOSYK: All right.
14 Good afternoon, Councilmembers,
15 distinguished guests, and members of
16 our community. My name is Kosyk.
17 I'm proud to stand before you as
18 second-generation Ukrainian-American
19 in Philadelphia as president of the
20 Ukrainian League of Philadelphia.
21 Philadelphia was founded by William
22 Penn on a powerful idea that this
23 city would be a place of refuge,
24 liberty, and opportunity for people

1 of all backgrounds.

2 For generations, Ukrainians
3 have followed that vision. They
4 came here seeking freedom and the
5 chance to build better lives. In
6 doing so, they helped create a
7 strong and vibrant Ukrainian
8 community that continues to
9 contribute to the culture, cultural
10 and civic life of the city.

11 Ukrainian names appear in
12 Philadelphia's history as far back
13 as the Revolutionary War. We are a
14 part of Philadelphia's story. Like
15 many immigrant families, my
16 grandparents took a leap of faith to
17 come here in search of opportunity.

18 When they arrived, Ukrainian
19 community organizations helped them
20 find connections, stability, and
21 belonging. Because of those
22 institutions, they were able to
23 achieve the American dream.

24 The Ukrainian League of

1 Philadelphia was founded in 1917 and
2 has served as a social, cultural,
3 and community hub for more than a
4 century. We celebrate Ukrainian
5 culture, support artists and
6 educators, help newcomers navigate
7 life here in America, and provide a
8 welcoming space for community and
9 mutual support. We also help
10 sustain the institutions built by
11 earlier generations, churches,
12 schools, cultural centers, banks,
13 and other social clubs. These
14 institutions reflect William Penn's
15 vision: communities helping
16 communities. Recognition from the
17 city of Philadelphia firms that this
18 work matters and helps ensure these
19 institutions remain strong for
20 generations to come. Philadelphia
21 welcomed our grandparents and
22 because of that, generations after
23 them have been able to contribute,
24 serve, and call the city home. We

1 are grateful to be part of
2 Philadelphia's past, committed to
3 its present, and hopeful for its
4 future. Thank you-all.

5 CHIEF CLERK: Thank you.

6 MS. MAZUR: Good morning.

7 My name is Iryna Mazur. I'm
8 Honorary Consul of Ukraine. I
9 represent Ukraine in Philadelphia
10 and in Pennsylvania. Honorable
11 Council President, Madam
12 Councilmember Landau, honorable
13 members of the City Council and
14 Philadelphia Public. It's a
15 privilege for me to be here today,
16 because as we are approaching the
17 force anniversary of the full-scale
18 invasion and actual anniversary of
19 the 12th years of the military
20 aggression against Ukraine, the
21 support of our public officials and
22 the support of Philadelphians is
23 extremely important to us. And as
24 you see on your desks, I brought

1 today special Ukrainian ribbons for
2 you. I ask you to have them in your
3 desk or on your bag as a sign of
4 continuous support of Ukraine
5 because I have to tell you, I'm
6 extremely grateful to have your
7 support over all those years. And
8 some of you, you know me for years.
9 Some of you met me today, but I just
10 want to tell you thank you.

11 Mykola did a great job
12 introducing the Ukraine --
13 information about the Ukrainian
14 community. And I'm glad you learn a
15 little bit about us, because mostly
16 you see us with Ukrainian and
17 American flags standing in support
18 for Ukrainian Philadelphia for at
19 least four years. And we will do
20 again another rally, another march
21 this Sunday, 22nd, we will begin
22 from the Arch Museum -- Art Museum
23 and we will march to the City Hall.
24 I invite you to join us.

1 And again, thank you
2 Councilmember for this resolution.
3 It means a lot to our community.
4 Your support means everything.
5 Thank you and God bless America.

6 MR. RAMIREZ: Good morning.
7 Good morning and thank you for the
8 opportunity to be here today.
9 1,457. 1,457.

10 CHIEF CLERK: You have to
11 state your name.

12 MR. RAMIREZ: Sorry.

13 Fernando Ramirez, Bridges
14 2030, nonprofit organization based
15 in Philadelphia. 1,457 days since
16 the invasion of Ukraine. A painful
17 reminder coming up this month of a
18 four-year anniversary since the
19 atrocities began in that country.
20 We as a nonprofit based in
21 Philadelphia, have been supporting
22 and assisting the Ukrainian
23 community, and have been benefiting
24 from the graciousness and support

1 from the Philadelphia community.
2 There are several families still
3 arriving, mostly women, children and
4 elderly, that have continue to come
5 to the city -- come to the greater
6 Philadelphia area, seeking freedom,
7 protection, safety.

8 I had the opportunity to
9 visit Ukraine this past August. I
10 wanted to go to the country and see
11 the people that are suffering, but
12 also that are showing us resilience,
13 courage, and the ability to sustain
14 their culture, the community, and
15 their heritage. We as a nonprofit,
16 unconditionally support and stand
17 with Ukraine. We thank the city of
18 Philadelphia, we thank the
19 community, the Ukrainians that have
20 supported us, but our challenges
21 continue and we encourage you to
22 learn more about what's -- not only
23 what's going on, but also how do we
24 engage in supporting our fellow

1 human beings. I thank you for your
2 time.

3 CHIEF CLERK: Will Jessica
4 Sullivan, Marta Rubel, Marguerite
5 Anglin, and Charles Hall, please
6 make your way toward the podium.

7 MR. BLATSTEIN: Hello, City
8 Council. My name is Jeremy
9 Blatstein. I'm here to talk about
10 three different bills today. One is
11 Cindy Bass's Protect the Dogs Bills.
12 Great bill, we need to pass it. Too
13 much back-yard breeding, protect the
14 dogs. Secondly, we're talking about
15 free speech 260097.

16 First Amendment is really
17 important. Supporting people's
18 First Amendment right is very
19 important. But when the First
20 Amendment free speech crosses the
21 line, we need to talk about that.
22 That's what happened in Rittenhouse
23 Square two weeks ago, right? And we
24 need to have a better conversation

1 about what the city of Philadelphia
2 does when that happens. Similarly,
3 we need to ban masks across the
4 board, right? Ban the masks on ICE
5 agents, on protesters, on everybody.
6 They -- it's dangerous for everybody
7 involved, so ban the masks.

8 When we're talking about
9 free speech, the First Amendment, I
10 don't think it's appropriate when a
11 member of Philadelphia City Council
12 says to me, shut the F up and listen
13 after I attended a community
14 meeting, right? I have every right
15 to go to a community meeting because
16 we're talking about the city of
17 Philadelphia land. So that rhetoric
18 and that energy towards me, I don't
19 think is in the spirit of the First
20 Amendment and is totally
21 inappropriate.

22 Last but not least, we're
23 talking about SEPTA. SEPTA
24 obviously is struggling this week.

1 I mean, I don't know if you've --
2 obviously, this body doesn't fully
3 understand because they're not
4 riding it, but your constituents
5 are, right, and it's not up to par.
6 It's late, late, late this week. So
7 SEPTA needs funding, SEPTA needs
8 support, and we need to call on
9 Harrisburg to properly give funding
10 to SEPTA. Ride the Ride. Grow
11 Philly to two-milli. Thank you.

12 MS. RUBEL: Good morning.
13 My name is Marta Rubel, and I'm the
14 Social Outreach Director for the
15 Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy. And
16 I speak on behalf here of the
17 resolution honoring Ukrainian
18 heritage, introduced by
19 Councilmember Landau.

20 Ukrainians have been
21 actively present in the Pennsylvania
22 and Philadelphia areas for almost
23 150 years. Arriving in the United
24 States in search of work and a

1 better life, these first immigrants
2 from what was then known as the
3 Austrian Empire, found work in the
4 mines of Shenandoah, Minersville,
5 Shamokin, and the steel mills of
6 Scranton and Wilkes-Barre. The City
7 of Brotherly Love also welcomed
8 them. They settled here, built
9 communities, established churches,
10 put down roots, and have --l that
11 lasted generations. Among them in
12 the fourth wave of Ukrainian
13 immigrants were my own parents, who
14 came to the United States after
15 World War II as displaced persons.

16 Here in Philadelphia, our
17 communities roots grow deep. The
18 Archeparchy is headquartered barely
19 two miles from City Hall in Northern
20 Liberties, a neighborhood that has
21 itself welcomed many ways of
22 immigrants throughout the centuries.
23 I dare anyone to drive through that
24 neighborhood without noticing the

1 gold dome of our cathedral rising
2 above the rooftops.

3 As it was 150 years ago and
4 as it was 80 years ago for my
5 parents, Ukrainians in Philadelphia
6 today are seeking that safety, that
7 opportunity, and that land, and city
8 have -- can offer them. They come
9 here with the same resilience, same
10 faith, same determination that
11 brought earlier generations here.
12 And through our work, we endeavor to
13 provide them with the security, that
14 prospect for dignified life, all the
15 while allowing them to maintain
16 their identity. I thank you for
17 your time. I thank Council
18 President, Councilmember Landau.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
20 Thank you.

21 MS. ANGLIN: Good morning,
22 Councilmembers. My name is
23 Marguerite Anglin. I'm the Public
24 Art Director with Creative

1 Philadelphia, the city's office of
2 Arts and Culture. And I'm honored
3 to speak on behalf of our office
4 today in support of our executive
5 director and chief cultural officer,
6 Val Gay, supporting the resolution
7 honoring Black women nurturing
8 culture by Councilmember Brooks.

9 In my role, I have the
10 privilege of working closely with
11 Val every day. Yes, she's my boss,
12 but more than that, she's a
13 colleague and a mentor. What
14 inspires me most about Val is her
15 extraordinary ability to connect
16 with people. She leads every
17 conversation with storytelling, with
18 encouragement, and a deep belief in
19 the power of culture to transform
20 lives. Val doesn't just nurture
21 culture, she nurtures people, and
22 she cultivates relationships. And
23 both are essential for culture to
24 flourish. Val is tireless, and I

1 mean tireless in pursuit of her
2 vision of a Philadelphia where every
3 person thrives through the arts.
4 Her passion for people, for the
5 city, and for creativity is
6 infectious.

7 Val understands the power
8 of the arts to heal, to unite, to
9 spark conversation, even around
10 difficult topics and to create real,
11 meaningful encounters that allow
12 people across our city to feel seen,
13 valued, and connected. I'm deeply
14 privileged to learn from her, to
15 collaborate with her, and to witness
16 the way she nurtures culture in
17 every space she touches.

18 On behalf of our office, we
19 thank you, Val, for leading and
20 inspiring us every day. We honor
21 and congratulate you on this well-
22 earned recognition from City
23 Council, a reflection of the
24 extraordinary care and vision you

1 bring to our city. Thank you.

2 CHIEF CLERK: Jessica
3 Sullivan, if you're still here,
4 please make your way toward the
5 podium. And could I also have Lynn
6 Landes, David Alexander Jenkins,
7 Susan Slawson, and Michelle Flamer.
8 Please make your way up.

9 MR. HALL: Good morning.
10 My name is Charlie Hall. I'm
11 representing the American Kennel
12 Club, responsible breeders, and the
13 concerns of the Kennel Club of
14 Philadelphia. I appreciate the
15 opportunity to comment on Bill
16 250989.

17 Some have suggested that
18 responsible breeders just get a
19 kennel license to be exempt, but
20 that is not a workable solution in
21 Philadelphia. First, small-hobby
22 breeders do not meet the state
23 licensing threshold, and the
24 framework was never designed for

1 small-home-based breeders. Second
2 and critically, it appears
3 Philadelphia zoning does not permit
4 kennels in any residential
5 districts. Under Section 146022(D)
6 uses not listed in the residential
7 use table are prohibited. Since
8 kennels are not listed in paragraph
9 3, they are automatically banned.
10 Additionally, that section confirms
11 that only listed principle uses are
12 permitted and unlisted uses like
13 kennels require zoning relief, which
14 is typically a variance.

15 To be clear, the American
16 Kennel Club is asking this bill to
17 be tabled, so a stakeholder work
18 group, which should have been step
19 one, may be established and created
20 to evaluate actual intake data,
21 zoning constraints, regulatory
22 capacity, and feasible alternatives
23 such as zoning exemptions for small-
24 home-based breeders and clear

1 appropriate state guidelines,
2 targeted expanded, low cost spay
3 neuter, and stronger enforcement of
4 existing cruelty negligent and
5 nuisance laws, to name a few. It
6 should be noted that cities such as
7 Los Angeles have passed similar bans
8 and have not seen significant
9 benefits in their shelters and
10 media's reports have highlighted
11 many irresponsible breeders still
12 operating in that city.

13 Working together, we can
14 stop the flow from irresponsible
15 breeders and improve animal welfare
16 and fewer dogs ending in
17 Philadelphia's shelters. The
18 question is how to achieve that goal
19 in a way that is effective, fair,
20 and legally sound. Philadelphia
21 deserves solutions that work in
22 practice, not on paper. Thank you
23 for this opportunity to provide
24 comment.

1 CHIEF CLERK: Thank you.

2 Quiet please.

3 MS. LANDES: Good morning.

4 I'm Lynn Landes of Phillies
5 Republican Network. And I oppose
6 the resolution that accuses the
7 Department of Justice of politically
8 persecuting Jerome Richardson and
9 violating his First Amendment
10 rights, because no right is
11 absolute. The Pennsylvania ACLU
12 states that we can exercise our
13 speech rights "On any private
14 property where the owner gives
15 permission, and in any areas open to
16 the public, such as streets,
17 sidewalks, town squares or parks."
18 No one, not protestors or members of
19 the press, has a First Amendment
20 right to barge into a church and
21 confront church members.

22 What if Mr. Richardson
23 barged into the City Council meeting
24 with a bunch of activists screaming

1 in your face? Would you hail him as
2 a hero then? I think not. So it is
3 discouraging that Philadelphia City
4 Council, once again is treating the
5 violators like victims. And it is
6 painful to see City Councilmembers,
7 some of whom have law degrees,
8 continue to support open borders and
9 Philadelphia as a sanctuary city,
10 while not once acknowledging that
11 immigration law and its enforcement
12 is a federal right, not the city's
13 or the state's, nor has City Council
14 expressed concern about the soaring
15 costs to taxpayers because of
16 illegal immigrants, or the untold
17 numbers of American citizens who've
18 lost their jobs to illegal
19 immigrants, or the people who have
20 been injured or killed at the hands
21 of illegal immigrants. Instead,
22 City Council seems to be stuck in
23 the clutches of some sort of reverse
24 victim psychology, where irrational

1 empathy for the perpetrator
2 prevails. Mr. Richardson is not
3 being politically persecuted; he's
4 being appropriately prosecuted by
5 the Department of Justice for
6 violating church members'
7 constitutional right to peacefully
8 exercise their religious freedom.
9 Thank you.

10 CHIEF CLERK: Thank you.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
12 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
13 Rue Landau.

14 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU:
15 Thank you, Council President. I
16 just wanted to say a quick note.
17 First of all, I think we could use a
18 constitutional law 101 class here,
19 because I think some people are
20 misrepresenting our First Amendment.
21 And second, I just want to tell our
22 guests here today, as I've continued
23 to hear week after week, we have
24 very few people who stand up and say

1 things that are very offensive to
2 many of us. But they -- it happens,
3 and because everyone has a right to
4 their free speech, we let them
5 speak. But I want the guests here
6 today to know that those -- the
7 message you just heard is not held
8 by those of us on Council. That
9 hateful speech is not something that
10 we carry or that we support, and
11 that's my message to you.

12 MR. JENKINS:

13 Mr. President, members and guests of
14 the chamber, I rise in strong
15 supportive Resolution 260097, as
16 presented by Councilmember Gauthier.

17 CHIEF CLERK: Quiet please.
18 Quiet please.

19 MR. JENKINS: We start
20 again? Sorry. I'll start again.

21 Mr. President, David
22 Alexander Jenkins, members in
23 Council and guests, I rise in strong
24 support of Resolution 260097, as

1 presented by Councilmember Gauthier.
2 Standing in a sort of pulpit that
3 exemplifies its very intent, we
4 gather in a Philadelphia, which is
5 for many accolades, is not known for
6 whispering particularly when it the
7 subject at hand is Liberty. Liberty
8 first spoken into existence in this
9 America and defined into law by a
10 body not so dissimilar to the one
11 before me. A body who declared and
12 demanded in fact chambers just seven
13 blocks away from here that
14 government would not, could not
15 silence the governed. The American
16 First Amendment was not on an
17 afterthought; it was not a mistake;
18 it was a foundation -- foundational
19 point to the more perfect union that
20 we are struggling at present to
21 keep.

22 Councilmember Landau,
23 please permit me, if I may, to
24 remind Ms. Landes and the body that

1 Congress shall make no law abridging
2 the freedom of speech or of the
3 press. It shall not remove the
4 right of the people peaceably to
5 assembly or to petition the
6 government for a redress of
7 grievances. Benjamin Franklin
8 reminds us that whoever would
9 overflow liberty in a nation must
10 begin by subduing the freeness of
11 speech. Subduing the freeness of
12 speech, that is the line in the
13 sand.

14 The First Amendment does
15 not protect comfortable speech; it
16 protects inconvenience speech. It
17 does not protect popular speech, but
18 rather that the unsettling of the
19 very bodies of power who
20 institutionalize sentiments into
21 law. It protects the lone voice,
22 the discerning voice, the
23 multilingual voice, the accented
24 voice, the abolitionists, the

1 suffragists, the labor organizer,
2 the civil rights marcher, the LGBTQ
3 protestor at Stonewall, even the
4 slightly verbose ramblings of one
5 David Alexander Jenkins before you
6 today.

7 My friends, it protects
8 Jerome Richardson. If the federal
9 government may target, intimidate,
10 or politically prosecute protesters
11 for exercising these rights, then we
12 are not merely debating policy, we
13 are testing whether the promise is
14 made here in Philadelphia stand.
15 This resolution is not written in
16 partnership, but rather in
17 principle. If we, if we the
18 birthplace of the Constitution
19 remain silent when the First
20 Amendment is threatened, then we
21 portray the very ink that was set to
22 parchment here 250 years ago. In
23 this city, that must not stand.

24 CHIEF CLERK: Thank you.

1 MS. SLAWSON: Good morning,
2 Esteem Council President Johnson,
3 and honorable Councilmembers, and
4 distinguished guests. It is with
5 immense pride and profound respect
6 that we convened this morning. And
7 I'm particularly honored to
8 celebrate the invaluable
9 contributions and extraordinary
10 achievements of Black women within
11 the city of Philadelphia. Thank
12 you, Councilmember Brooks, for this
13 important resolution, acknowledging
14 these powerful women.

15 Three Philadelphia Black
16 women making history in real time,
17 creative visionaries who I've had
18 the pleasure of working and
19 collaborating with under Mayor
20 Parker's administration: Vashti
21 DuBois, Val Gay, and Facetta Greene,
22 thank you for your hard work.

23 Their leadership,
24 resilience, and unwavering

1 dedication have enriched every facet
2 of our city. And what a moment, not
3 only just during Black History
4 month, but this is a historic year.
5 As the city prepares to welcome the
6 world, they have the responsibility
7 in their own respective areas to
8 ensure that the city's rich history
9 of culture, talent, and creativity
10 takes center stage. They have
11 devoted their lives to making sure
12 Philadelphia's arts, music, cultural
13 spirit are not only visible but
14 valued.

15 Val Gay, chief cultural
16 officer, Creative Philadelphia, is a
17 creative visionary who moves with
18 intention and understands the
19 importance of our culture. She has
20 broken barriers, champion progress.
21 Was that my time? Okay. And
22 inspires generations throughout her
23 tireless, effortless, and visionary
24 spirit. Philadelphia is preparing

1 to host more than a million visitors
2 and Val has helped ensure we are not
3 just event ready; we are culturally
4 grounded.

5 Facetta Greene. Facetta
6 Greene is the facilities director
7 for the Dell Music Center. Yeah.

8 President Johnson, can I
9 ask Facetta Greene to stand?

10 Facetta, would you stand,
11 please?

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

13 Yes.

14 MS. SLAWSON: So I was
15 charged in 2008 to revitalize the
16 Dell. Facetta Greene has been the
17 one person that has been there by my
18 side. She pointed out that we
19 didn't know what we were doing, and
20 she found classes. We went -- we
21 went to classes in another state to
22 figure out how to manage the Dell
23 Music Center. And Faye is we -- her
24 name's Facetta, we call her Faye.

1 I'm struggling saying Facetta. So
2 she is protecting the legacy at the
3 Dell Music Center as a director.
4 Yeah. She's protecting the legacy.
5 And we continue to do the work
6 together. The Dell community in its
7 own right is Black History,
8 Philadelphia Black history. The
9 experiences Faye and the team that
10 she has, they've created, and the
11 music, it's echoed throughout
12 generations.

13 Under Faye's direction, the
14 space has remained a home for
15 excellence, a stage for culture, and
16 a reminder that our stories deserve
17 amplification. Each of them in
18 their own -- her own right. She
19 shaped Philadelphia's culture,
20 heartbeat, and expanded space for
21 black stories and a historic year
22 with the world watching. Thank you
23 for being a remarkable leader, Faye,
24 and for paving the way for others to

1 follow. Just so you know, the Dell
2 Music Center is the only facility
3 run by Black women in this United
4 States. Faye and I have been doing
5 it since 2010. The only facility.
6 Thank you, Faye, for carrying the
7 torch.

8 CHIEF CLERK: Could Regina
9 Vaughn, Karen Williams, Ashley
10 Miskovich, and John McAuley, please
11 make your way toward the podium.

12 MS. FLAMER: Good morning,
13 Council President Johnson, and
14 esteemed members of City Council.
15 My name is Michelle Flamer, and I'm
16 a proud member of the Philadelphia
17 Heritage Branch of the Association
18 for the Study of African American
19 Life and History, also known as
20 ASALH. I express gratitude and
21 appreciation for City Council's
22 support of ASALH. America 250
23 cannot be celebrated in Philadelphia
24 unless we have a full and honest

1 retelling of our complex history,
2 which includes the stories of the
3 nine women, men and children,
4 enslaved by George and Martha
5 Washington, just a few blocks away
6 at 6th and Market.

7 Organizations like ASALH,
8 founded by Carter G. Woodson, more
9 than 100 years ago stand at the
10 forefront of truth telling. Your
11 continued support and vigilance is
12 deeply appreciated as we embrace the
13 entirety of American history. And I
14 can tell you right at this moment,
15 the panels are being put back up at
16 6th and Market.

17 MS. VAUGHN: Thank you,
18 everyone. I'm Regina Vaughn, the
19 president of the Philadelphia
20 Heritage Branch of ASALH, the
21 Association for the Study of African
22 American Life and History. We will
23 be celebrating our 99th year on
24 November the 11th, 2027. And I

1 wanted to start with my remarks.
2 This occasion marks the first time
3 that the Philadelphia solid branches
4 returns to City Council chambers
5 since 2026. At that time, we were
6 supported by former Councilwoman at
7 large, Blondell Reynolds Brown, and
8 our current Council Woman at large,
9 Katherine Gilmore-Richardson.

10 I would like to briefly
11 note that the longstanding support
12 for the Mayor's office, for the
13 Association for the Study of Negro
14 Life and History. In 1924, the
15 mayor at that time supported the
16 branch leadership during the early
17 years when we were known as Negro
18 History clubs. One of the leaders
19 was artist Laura Wheeler Waring, who
20 represented Philadelphia's
21 commitment to negro history
22 education. The mayor sent
23 Mrs. Waring to a meeting at
24 Pennsylvania Association of Teachers

1 of Colored Children. Let that
2 marinate. Since that time,
3 Philadelphia has hosted six of solid
4 national conferences, beginning in
5 1924 and most recently in 1995 when
6 the flagship Marriott opened, or
7 paying tribute to the Tribune that
8 was here. The 2016 was a supplement
9 in Sunday's Tribune, 100 years of
10 Negro history and 50 years of Negro
11 history week of 50 years of Black
12 History month.

13 Now Dr. Carl G. Woodson
14 said in March, 1950, before his
15 death, no study, consequently, no
16 celebration. His vision was never
17 limited to a month. He insisted
18 that Black history be studied year-
19 round because it's American history.
20 The principle still stands today.

21 MS. WILLIAMS: Good
22 morning, everyone. My name is Karen
23 Williams. I'm a school district
24 employee, a school administrator,

1 and I stand here today as the Phila-
2 Montco branch president of ASALH. I
3 first want to extend sincere
4 appreciation for the Council
5 President, as well as all the
6 Council co-sponsors for recognize
7 the importance of this work, and for
8 their continued leadership in
9 uplifting African American history
10 in our city.

11 At this time, when there
12 are federal efforts that threaten to
13 minimize or erase critical parts of
14 our shared history, Philadelphia
15 must stand firmly on the side of
16 truth. The preservation and
17 interpretation of the President's
18 house site reminds us that freedom
19 and enslavement coexisted at the
20 nation's founding, and that telling
21 the full story requires courage and
22 commitment. Organizations like ours
23 along with the ASALH Freedom School
24 that was in a collaboration with the

1 Mother Bethel AME Church, under the
2 historic leadership of Reverend
3 Carolyn Kavanis, who is by the way
4 the first female pastor, are
5 standing unapologetically for
6 historical truth and community
7 education and intergenerational
8 empowerment.

9 Our branches provide
10 genealogy resources, culturally-
11 grounding program, and professional
12 development, youth education, and
13 steadfast advocacy for preservation.
14 We urge City Hall to take bold and
15 meaningful action by this way:
16 Number one, formally commemorate the
17 Philadelphia's Heritage branch
18 upcoming centennial celebration as
19 you hear in 2027.

20 And we need to allocate
21 sustained funding for preservation
22 initiatives such as freedom schools
23 and community-based historical
24 programs. We should continue

1 expanding support for historical
2 markers, projects, and accurate
3 interpretation of sites like the
4 President's House, and establish an
5 ongoing advisory partnership with
6 both branches to safeguard African
7 American history in policy education
8 as well as public spaces. And
9 lastly, we need you to publicly
10 affirm the city's commitment to
11 protect truthful, comprehensive
12 historical narratives in the face of
13 efforts to distort or erase them.
14 Thank you for your support.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

16 Thank you.

17 MS. MISKOVICH: Good
18 afternoon, Council President,
19 members of Council. My name is
20 Ashley Miskovich. I'm here on
21 behalf of the Greater Philadelphia
22 Chamber of Commerce today in support
23 of Bill Number 251097. I first want
24 to thank Councilmember Phillips for

1 his thoughtful and measured
2 approach. This legislation does not
3 broadly penalize responsible
4 retailers, nor does it layer
5 unnecessary penalties or
6 requirements for businesses that are
7 already complying with existing
8 rules. Instead, it focuses on those
9 who consistently disregard the law.
10 That distinction is important. Law
11 abiding businesses should not be
12 placed at a competitive disadvantage
13 because others choose to ignore the
14 rules. This bill reinforces
15 accountability without imposing
16 undue burden on businesses that are
17 doing the right thing.

18 We also recognize the
19 broader community benefit,
20 addressing illegal sales to underage
21 youth supports healthier outcomes
22 for young people. In addition, the
23 education and training component
24 emphasizes correction and

1 prevention, giving businesses a
2 clear path to come back into
3 compliance rather than simply
4 punishing them. In our view, Bill
5 Number 251097 strikes the right
6 balance: protecting youth,
7 supporting neighborhood stability,
8 and ensuring fairness in the
9 marketplace without creating
10 unintended consequences for
11 responsible owners. And for those
12 reasons, we're happy to support this
13 bill today. Thank you.

14 CHIEF CLERK: Will Samantha
15 Craven, Jacob Zychick, Stephanie
16 Arbetina, and Penny Ellison, please
17 make your way toward the podium.

18 State your name for the
19 record. You got two minutes.

20 MR. MCAULEY: Good morning,
21 everybody. My name is John Allante
22 McAuley. I'm with a grassroots
23 organization called Flip Philly Red.
24 We are here to bring you something

1 different because you've been voting
2 Democrat for the Mayor's office for
3 the past 70 years. In regards to
4 Jerome Richardson, his First
5 Amendment right was not violated.
6 In fact, he committed a federal
7 crime, namely the Face Act, which
8 protects access to places of
9 religious places and from
10 interference and obstruction. He
11 also committed a conspiracy act,
12 which plot -- which he plotted to
13 deprive people of practicing
14 religion and church service. So his
15 First Amendment was not violated.
16 This conspiracy act is also called
17 the KKK Act. It deprived from the
18 Enforcement Act, which actually came
19 from a Republican president by the
20 name of Ulysses S. Grant. The
21 reason why he had to put this in
22 here is because the Ku Klux Klan,
23 which came from the Democrat party
24 was using force and intimidation to

1 stop Black Americans from voting.

2 You guys, every single one
3 of you, violated my First Amendment
4 two weeks ago when you-all cut my
5 mic short. And you-all want to sit
6 up here and cry for Jerome
7 Richardson. You guys are worried
8 about what's going on with Tampon
9 Tim in Minnesota, when we got
10 problems here in Philadelphia that
11 you need to be worried about. This
12 is a silly resolution. That I saw
13 names like co-sponsored on there,
14 President Kenyatta, Jamie Gauthier,
15 Kendra Brooks, goofy. Every single
16 one of you, goofy. We got a
17 Philadelphia school district that
18 ranks at the bottom 22 percent in
19 the entire Pennsylvania. Yeah, turn
20 your back.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

22 Thank you very much, sir.

23 Next speaker, please,
24 approach the podium.

1 MS. CRAVEN: Good morning,
2 Councilmembers. Thank you for the
3 opportunity to speak. My name is
4 Sammi Craven. I'm the advocate from
5 New Jersey that came to speak last
6 week on behalf of Bill 250989. I've
7 been helping Philadelphia animals
8 for years indirectly and directly.
9 I network in over 30 tri-state
10 online networking groups create free
11 shareable graphics highlighting ACCT
12 Philly's timestamp dogs. I have
13 transported and I've even adopted
14 from ACCT Philly myself. So when I
15 speak about the system, I speak
16 about lived involvement, not theory.

17 Philadelphia's current
18 animal welfare policy is ineffective
19 and infrastructure and prevention
20 have not kept pace with intake.
21 Despite what the Kennel Club
22 constituent stated earlier, which
23 reminder breeding equals money, the
24 city has vacant buildings and lots

1 that already meet zoning
2 requirements for lifesaving use,
3 including warehouse style properties
4 and areas in South and North
5 Philadelphia, yet those spaces
6 remain unused while ACCT Philly
7 operate -- operates beyond capacity,
8 which last year surpassed 20,000
9 intakes, which is one of the largest
10 intake numbers in the country.

11 Other districts where large
12 indoor spaces could be repurposed
13 for intake, diversion, foster
14 coordination, or community vet
15 clinics remain vacant despite city
16 codes that allow them to be used in
17 this crisis. I have a helpful
18 handout of zone-compliant properties
19 for the Council to explore in
20 parallel with preventative
21 legislation like Bill 250989
22 afterwards, if you would like that.
23 If the city cannot mobilize existing
24 zone compliance space to expand

1 lifesaving infrastructure, the least
2 the city can do is support Bill
3 250989, which directly addresses one
4 of the main drivers of shelter
5 overcrowding.

6 Zoo, Blue, Sky, Luna,
7 Christabel, John, Marston, King,
8 Cheese, Burrito, were the dogs that
9 were euthanized this week. And
10 Mr. Maximo, Stella, Tina, Storm,
11 Beans, Amelia, Keanu, Chi, Tally,
12 Clarabelle, and Muffin are also on
13 the timestamp list. So they don't
14 have a voice, but you do. So I
15 strongly suggest that you vote yes
16 on Bill 250989.

17 CHIEF CLERK: Thank you.

18 MR. ZYCHICK: Jacob Zychick
19 with the American Heart Association.
20 Heart disease remains the leading
21 cause of death in Philadelphia, and
22 smoking plays a significant role in
23 that. Nearly one-third of deaths
24 from coronary heart disease are

1 attributed to smoking and secondhand
2 smoke. Thanks to the great work
3 that a lot of us have done in this
4 city, the traditional cigarette use
5 has fallen to its lowest level in
6 decades, yet there are still many
7 challenges and concerns that remain.
8 The American Heart Association is
9 deeply concerned about the high
10 prevalence of e-cigarette use among
11 youth in Philadelphia. As 38
12 percent have tried e-cigarettes and
13 19 percent currently use.

14 Each year, the tobacco
15 industry sells more than \$300
16 million worth of their deadly
17 products in our city. And research
18 has shown that most teens initiate
19 tobacco use with flavored products,
20 which are intentionally designed to
21 appeal to young people and are often
22 mistakenly is perceived as less
23 harmful. Smoking remains the most
24 preventable cause of death and

1 disability in our country. The
2 Tobacco Retailer and Compliance
3 Ordinance, introduced by
4 Councilmember Phillips, will help in
5 strengthen Philadelphia's
6 enforcement efforts to curb tobacco
7 use, reduce use access to these
8 products, and improve retailer
9 accountability. We'd like to thank
10 Councilmember Phillips and all
11 Philadelphia City Council, and have
12 a great day and happy Heart Month.

13 MS. ARBETINA: Good
14 morning, Council President Johnson,
15 and members of City Council.
16 Stephanie Arbetina, Vulnerable Youth
17 Policy Director with Children First.
18 In support of Resolution 251108 and
19 Ordinance 251098 regarding the
20 permanent establishment of the
21 office of the Youth Ombudsperson.

22 Four years ago, Council
23 held hearings on the dangers faced
24 by children in institutional

1 settings, including years of
2 physical, emotional, and sexual
3 abuse. Existing oversight systems,
4 largely at the state level, failed
5 to recognize patterns of harm and
6 intervene in time to prevent inter
7 -- irreversible damage. Mayor Kenny
8 then established the Office of the
9 Youth Ombudsperson by executive
10 order, an important step toward
11 protecting Philadelphia youth. The
12 OIO provides children in residential
13 placements and their families with
14 an independent direct place to voice
15 concerns about their care. Since
16 its launch in 2023, the OIO has been
17 able to respond to youth complaints,
18 share information with city
19 agencies, and oversee
20 investigations, ensure youth and
21 parents understand their rights and
22 issue public reports on systemic
23 issues facing children in placement.
24 We hope to see the office expand its

1 impact in the coming years.

2 We're grateful that the
3 Parker Administration has supported
4 the continuation of the OIO's work,
5 but by their nature, executive
6 orders are temporary; our children's
7 safety should not be. That is why
8 we support efforts to make the OIO a
9 permanent office in the city of
10 Philadelphia. On any given day,
11 more than 430 Philadelphia youth are
12 residing in congregate facilities
13 across the child welfare, behavioral
14 health, and juvenile justice
15 systems. Most housed outside the
16 city, many of them far from their
17 families. The risks to them are
18 real and ongoing. Since 2024,
19 dozens of lawsuits have been filed
20 alleging abuse in Pennsylvania
21 facilities. Facilities have been
22 cited for failing to report
23 suspected abuse. Investigative
24 reporting has documented violence

1 against youth and care. Most of
2 these children are children of
3 color, meaning they are especially
4 vulnerable to harm. It is the
5 city's responsibility to ensure that
6 the children in its care are safe in
7 facilities, making the office of the
8 Youth Ombudsperson permanent, helps
9 the city fulfill that responsibility
10 regardless of who occupies the
11 mayor's office. I urge you all to
12 vote in favor of Resolution 251108
13 and ordinance 251098. Thank you.

14 CHIEF CLERK: Will Jordana
15 Greenwald, Marie Marinakis, Leslie
16 Wood, and Steven Edwards, please
17 make your way toward the podium.

18 MS. ELLISON: Okay. Good
19 morning, Councilmembers. My name is
20 Penny Ellison and I rise to speak in
21 strong support of Bill 250989: the
22 dog breeding moratorium. I've
23 taught animal law at the University
24 of Pennsylvania since 2006, I've sat

1 on the Department of Agriculture's
2 Dog Law Advisory Board for more than
3 10 years, and I've discussed this
4 bill directly with the state
5 Director of Dog Law on multiple
6 occasions.

7 Mr. Hall from the AKC has
8 spoken at all three hearings and
9 repeatedly made Councilmembers aware
10 of his arguments. I addressed some
11 of them at my testimony at the
12 committee hearing, and I'd like to
13 briefly put them all to rest today.
14 First, Mr. Hall says he represents
15 "hundreds of Philadelphia area
16 breeders." Note the word "area".
17 The vast majority of those breeders
18 are outside city limits. That
19 framing is designed to inflate the
20 impact of this bill. On a related
21 note, Mr. Hall speculates that the
22 Bureau of Dog Law Enforcement can't
23 handle any more licensed
24 applications, that is not the case.

1 They already license home-based
2 kennels routinely, as well as foster
3 homes for the many foster-based
4 rescues operating across the
5 commonwealth. This is not a novel
6 concept for them.

7 And his new argument, the
8 zoning argument is now the core of
9 his testimony, but he has it
10 backwards. Mr. Hall argues that
11 breeders can't get a kennel license
12 because Philadelphia zoning
13 prohibits kennels in residential
14 districts, but he's conflating two
15 separate legal concepts. Whether
16 your property use conforms to
17 zoning, it depends on the nature of
18 the use, not whether you have a
19 license. Under the ordinance, a
20 kennel is any property where 13 or
21 more dogs pass through in a year.
22 So if you meet that threshold,
23 you're already -- you're already
24 needed a zoning variance. The

1 license doesn't create the problem.

2 Mr. Hall also says

3 responsible breeders don't meet the

4 26-dog threshold for state licensing

5 and therefore aren't required to get

6 one, but they still can, as many do.

7 Finally, Mr. Hall asked Council to

8 table the bill and form a working

9 group instead, a moratorium and a

10 working group aren't competing

11 proposals, they're sequential. Pass

12 the moratorium and then if you want

13 to have a working group, we can do

14 that then. Thank you.

15 MS. MARINAKIS: Good

16 morning, everyone. My name is Marie

17 Marinakis and I'm a 12-year

18 volunteer at ACCT.

19 CHIEF CLERK: Closer to the

20 mic.

21 MS. MARINAKIS: ACCT held a

22 Valentine's Day adoption promotion

23 -- \$14 adoption promotion from

24 February 13th to the 16th. I was

1 there on February 15th, and I did a
2 head count of the large dogs, 119
3 large dogs. And this included 103
4 pit bulls. Does anybody have any
5 idea how hard it is to find a home
6 for 103 pit bulls? Pit bulls are
7 actually very loving dogs, but they
8 have a bad reputation from dog
9 fighting and some people are afraid
10 of them. Some landlords ban them.
11 I actually fostered a 70-pound pit
12 bull named Carter years ago, and he
13 loved riding in a car. And I had to
14 put a gate up between the front and
15 the back seat, because he wanted to
16 sit in my lap while I was driving,
17 which wasn't a good idea. But pit
18 bulls are generally large strong
19 dogs and may not be appropriate pets
20 for families with small children.
21 Some are high energy, some are not
22 good with cats or other dogs. Males
23 generally weigh 50-80 pounds and
24 females about 40 to 70 pounds.

1 Now, unlicensed backyard
2 breeders sell precious little pit
3 bull puppies when they are like four
4 weeks old and weigh six pounds. But
5 when that dog is fully grown, they
6 can easily weigh 65 pounds, then
7 they end up at ACCT because the
8 owners don't have time for them. I
9 actually have a full breakdown of
10 surrender reasons if anyone is
11 interested, see me afterwards. I
12 feel that ACCT takes extraordinary
13 measures to find homes for dogs in
14 their care. They have a foster
15 program, they work with rescue
16 groups, they place dogs at Doggie
17 Style Pets, they actually are
18 offering a free spay neuter program
19 in 25 of the poorest sections of the
20 city. My time is up. Thank you for
21 your time.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

23 Thank you.

24 MS. WOOD: Good morning,

1 everyone. My name is Leslie Wood.
2 I'm also a longtime volunteer at
3 ACCT Philly, and I'd like to zero in
4 on a specific example of what
5 happens with puppies at ACCT Philly
6 that come from breeders. Recently,
7 a man passed away in Philadelphia
8 who had been breeding a small breed
9 of dog, not pit bulls. And when the
10 animal control officers had to go to
11 his home, they brought eight dogs
12 into ACCT Philly. One of them was a
13 breeding female who had three small
14 puppies with her. And at that
15 point, the chaos begins for ACCT.
16 It's after hours, it's at night.
17 They need to get a rescue group to
18 come here now. And by 9:30, there
19 was a rescue group rolling into ACCT
20 to pick up that one: the mom and
21 the puppies. They took them home,
22 got them settled, and within two
23 days, those puppies started to
24 display illness, and of course they

1 were diagnosed with parvo, because
2 many of the puppies coming into ACCT
3 are not vaccinated and this is what
4 happens.

5 They went from there to an
6 emergency vet, it cost the rescue
7 group thousands of dollars to have
8 them treated because parvo was
9 expensive to treat, and ultimately,
10 two of those puppies died anyway.
11 So the rescue group becomes a victim
12 of the breeder, ACCT becomes a
13 victim of the breeder because they
14 have parvo puppies come in there all
15 the time and then have to go into a
16 scramble of disinfection, and the
17 puppies ultimately are the real
18 victim here. There have been
19 puppies dumped in a shopping cart
20 recently in a Target in South
21 Philadelphia that another -- they
22 were -- they were barely born, and
23 they ran out to another rescue. I
24 have seen puppies being sold out of

1 the trunk of the car at Home Depot
2 at Adams and the Boulevard. So
3 something needs to change. It's the
4 classic case of if nothing changes,
5 nothing changes. Please consider
6 supporting Bill 250989. Thank you.

7 MS. GREENWALD: Thank you.
8 Good morning to Council president,
9 members of Council, and guests. My
10 name is Jordana Greenwald, General
11 Counsel for the Board of Ethics.
12 I'm not here to talk about puppies,
13 but I am here on behalf of the Board
14 to restate its continued concerns
15 about Bill Number 241056 and the
16 accompanying Resolution 241070,
17 which would resign the -- would
18 revise the resign to run rule found
19 in the city's home rule charter.
20 For background, the Board
21 administers the rules of the charter
22 and code relating to government
23 ethics and transparency, including
24 these political activity

1 restrictions from this part of the
2 charter. The Board and its staff
3 are the sole source of legally
4 protective guidance on Section 10107
5 of the charter.

6 The code actually
7 specifically authorizes the Board to
8 make legislative recommendations to
9 the mayor and to City Council
10 regarding the standards of conduct
11 and rules of ethics that are under
12 the Board's jurisdiction.

13 Accordingly, at its December public
14 meeting in 2025, the Board adopted
15 legislative recommendations relating
16 to the proposed changes to resign to
17 run. These changes are really
18 designed to try to address and
19 offset the potential risks for
20 additional politicization of the
21 workplace that may result from the
22 increased opportunity for current-
23 elected officials to run for office.
24 And the asks were fairly

1 straightforward: only allowing one
2 campaign per ballot, which I
3 understand is part of an amendment
4 that will be introduced later on in
5 this session; additional
6 accountability for elected officials
7 and city employees, including some
8 additional restrictions and
9 clarified restrictions on current
10 elected officials and on the ability
11 of political committees to solicit
12 funds from city employees; clarified
13 applicability to the mayor, which we
14 believe is unclear in the current
15 ballot question as proposed and
16 strengthened penalty provisions.

17 The board's issuance of
18 formal legislative recommendations
19 reflects the seriousness, which they
20 review the proposed changes to this
21 part of the charter that the
22 drafters saw as a core element of a
23 reformed city government. And the
24 Board really does appreciate the

1 time that was taken by
2 Councilmembers Gilmore-Richardson
3 and Councilmember Thomas and their
4 staff to try to work with us to move
5 this forward. It's our
6 understanding the law department has
7 said that certain of these
8 amendments cannot be included for
9 legal reasons, but it does remain
10 the power with Council to decide
11 whether this is the appropriate time
12 to move forward without the
13 recommendations from the Board.
14 Thank you.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

16 The Chair recognizes Councilman
17 Isaiah Thomas.

18 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS:

19 Thank you, Council president. And I
20 want to say thank you for your
21 testimony, and I want to say thank
22 you to all of the people at the
23 Board of Ethics who've been working
24 with us. Just to provide a little

1 bit of context, the bill -- the bill
2 was ready to be passed in December.
3 When the Board of Ethics came and
4 communicated concerns in December,
5 we decided to hold the bill and work
6 with the Board of Ethics to address
7 those concerns. I want to say thank
8 you to Majority Leader Gilmore-
9 Richardson, and her staff for their
10 expertise in helping us think
11 through this. And the hurdle that
12 we ran into for the listening public
13 is the recommendations that the
14 Board of Ethics won. We actually
15 agree with 98 percent of those
16 recommendations. The problem we now
17 ran into is that those
18 recommendations require a second
19 charter change.

20 State law does not allow us
21 to do two charter changes on the
22 same topic at one time. So if we're
23 fortunate enough to win the voters
24 in the City of Philadelphia as it

1 relates to the resign and run
2 legislation, which we're hoping will
3 be on the ballot this may, we in
4 turn will have to do a second ballot
5 measure to address the amendments
6 that the Board of Ethics have
7 communicated and then ask the
8 constituents of Philadelphia to in
9 turn, vote yes for them again. I
10 just want to say for the public, as
11 well as for my colleagues, I am
12 committed to multiple rounds of
13 charter changes in ballot measures
14 in order to put us in a position to
15 get this done in a way that the
16 Board of Ethics is supportive of, as
17 long as the members of City Council,
18 as well as the general public, are
19 supportive of that as well too.

20 I know most people are
21 wondering what the heck am I talking
22 about, and I do apologize for that.
23 But for the people who are paying
24 attention to this legislation, I

1 just wanted folks to be clear as it
2 relates to where we are, what we
3 still need to do, and what my
4 intention is as the bill sponsor.
5 Thank you, Council President. Thank
6 you, colleagues.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
8 Yes.

9 CHIEF CLERK: Once again,
10 Stephen Edwards, if you are here,
11 please approach the podium. Also,
12 Coreline Lipinski, Robert Rudnitsky,
13 Rachel Handis, and Sharon Carter,
14 please make your way to the podium.

15 MR. EDWARDS: Good morning,
16 everyone. Steven David Edwards. A
17 lot of people here know me as David.
18 This is my first time speaking at
19 City Council, so don't beat me up
20 too bad. Okay?

21 First and foremost, as far
22 as the bill that I seen that I like
23 that I wanted to talk about is the
24 resign or run bill by Councilman

1 Member Thomas, 241070. My daytime
2 job as a recruiting manager, I work
3 for billion-dollar companies like
4 Tyson, Perdue Chicken, Welch's Grape
5 Juice, so this makes sense. You
6 shouldn't have to resign from
7 office, you know, in order to run
8 for public office. So I do agree
9 with that, and then I do also agree
10 with Councilman Jones resolution for
11 Joyce Hill way. She was a very
12 special lady and she should have a
13 something named after.

14 So what I do want to talk
15 about to this Council is this.
16 First and foremost, I've gotten a
17 chance to tour with you
18 Councilmember Lozada, when we --
19 when we did the touring of
20 Kensington. Just so you guys know
21 who I am, I'm the CEO of a lot of
22 entertainment brands here in the --
23 in the city of Philadelphia. The
24 one that everyone knows me most

1 about is Silent Philly. So what
2 Silent Philly is, if Mayor Parker is
3 Ms. One Philly, I'm Mr. One Philly.
4 Because Silent Philly has been
5 bringing districts together for 11
6 years. I have a party right here
7 inside the City Hall, where I bring
8 all people from all districts,
9 white, Black, Asian, Spanish
10 together through music, the
11 universal language. We have three
12 DJs. They do pop, rock and roll,
13 EDM, top 40, rap, hip hop, whatever
14 you like, they do it. So that's who
15 I -- who I am. I'm a person that
16 historically, it has the proven
17 results of uniting the city of
18 Philadelphia.

19 So what I wanted to say to
20 the Councilmembers and to everybody
21 here, these people up here, they
22 have some of the hardest jobs in the
23 world. I wouldn't pay for -- I
24 wouldn't -- if you offered me 10

1 million, I wouldn't take their jobs.
2 And the reason is, is despite what
3 they do, there's always somebody
4 that's got something to say, right?
5 No matter what -- how good you-all
6 do, they got something to say. And
7 the reason why I know is because I
8 look in the comments, right? I look
9 and I see the people who say bad
10 things about you guys, but you guys
11 are doing a good job. And I go into
12 you-all offices, and these people
13 are in there working. I've been in
14 these people's offices and they
15 working.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
17 You got a job, bro? You looking for
18 work?

19 MR. EDWARDS: So I just
20 wanted to tell you-all first and
21 foremost, man, you-all doing a good
22 job. I appreciate you-all hard
23 work, and I want to get in a fight
24 with you-all if you-all let me, I

1 got some good stuff to get in a
2 fight, so to do without the
3 taxpayer's money. How do that
4 sound? All right. Thank you, guys.

5 MS. LIPINSKI: Okay. Good
6 morning. My name is Caroline
7 Lipinski, and I am the co-president
8 of Underdogs of Philly, the Outside
9 Dog Initiative. I am here to talk
10 about puppies. We are here in
11 strong support of Bill Number
12 250989. Our mission is to improve
13 the lives of dogs living outdoors.
14 Our organization witnesses
15 Philadelphia's dog overpopulation
16 crisis from a unique ground-level
17 perspective. This work requires
18 patience and a willingness to accept
19 a difficult reality. Even with
20 support, many dogs assisted by our
21 organization will live outdoors for
22 their entire lives, often in
23 concrete backyards with limited
24 interaction or enrichment.

1 In many cases, dogs we
2 encounter entered their homes as a
3 puppy through a family member's
4 accidental litter, or a local-
5 neighborhood breeder. Many owners
6 we encounter are facing significant
7 challenges, including health issues,
8 unstable income, and lack of
9 transportation. Too often, owners
10 respond to these compounding
11 pressures by moving a dog outdoors.

12 Through our community
13 outreach, we know that many dog
14 owners do not have bad intentions.
15 Instead, they lack access to
16 accurate information, resources, and
17 long-term support. We see this most
18 clearly when we offer spay and
19 neuter services. Our organization
20 covers all associated costs,
21 including transportation, a week of
22 medical boarding during recovery.
23 Despite removing these financial and
24 logistical barriers, we still

1 frequently encounter resistance.
2 Common reasons include the dog is
3 too young, I want them to have a
4 family of their own, they have such
5 a good temperament, they should have
6 puppies.

7 Simply put the belief that
8 having puppies is what dogs are
9 meant to do is deeply ingrained,
10 often passed down through families
11 or learned early in life. However,
12 our organization sees the direct and
13 preventable consequences of
14 continued breeding and the failure
15 to spay our neuter dogs. This is
16 the reality of Philadelphia's dog
17 overpopulation crisis. It is shaped
18 by both unregulated breeding and
19 human hardship, addressing one
20 without acknowledging the other
21 limits the ability to create lasting
22 change in animal welfare. By
23 curbing indiscriminate breeding,
24 Bill number 250989 helps prevent the

1 daily pressures facing many
2 Philadelphia residents resulting in
3 irreversible outcomes for dogs.

4 Thank you.

5 CHIEF CLERK: Thank you.

6 MR. RUDNITSKY: Thank you,
7 Council. I appreciate your time.
8 My name is Robert Rudnitsky, and I
9 am here today to discuss the tobacco
10 shop regulation bill: Bill Number
11 251097. Again, for more than a
12 decade, I have served as a civic
13 association president and zoning
14 chair for our organization, Take
15 Back Your Neighborhood. During that
16 time, if any change in store use,
17 whether a check cashing facility, or
18 a small establishment, the -- the
19 variance will be brought before our
20 registered community organization
21 for review and approval.

22 Over the past five years,
23 however, we have seen a significant
24 shift. Pop-up grocery and tobacco

1 shops have opened throughout the
2 Castor, Cottman, Bustleton, and
3 Rising Sun corridors without any
4 community review. There is now a
5 retail smoke shop on every block,
6 some are open 24 hours a day. These
7 businesses appear to have bypassed
8 the variance process and are
9 operating outside the oversight of
10 once was considered standard
11 practice.

12 In addition to my civic
13 leadership, I serve as executive
14 director of the Philadelphia chapter
15 of the reformation of the marijuana
16 laws that's known as NORML. I have
17 worked with former Councilman Kenny
18 during the city's decriminalization
19 efforts in 2013 and advocated for
20 state-level medical cannabis
21 legalization in 2015, which faced
22 very strong opposition from the
23 corporate administration. I have
24 been an educator of both cannabis

1 business practices and ethics for
2 nearly two decades. I have also
3 been working closely with the office
4 of Senator Street for nearly a
5 decade. Our chapter provides free
6 medical cannabis card registration,
7 public interaction, and education.
8 Our recent efforts have been in
9 helping those who've reentered
10 society and giving medical cannabis
11 cards.

12 I realize that my time is
13 getting close, and so I'm going to
14 ask that I am in support of the
15 bill, and what I am asking for in
16 support of this bill is that there
17 be retroactive zoning required so
18 that all the RCOs can decide in
19 their neighborhood what's best used
20 for their neighborhood. Thank you
21 very much.

22 CHIEF CLERK: Thank you.

23 MS. HANDIS: Good morning.

24 My name is Rachel Handis, and I'm a

1 content creator in Philadelphia.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 Excuse me. One second. Rachel,
4 just one second. The Chair
5 recognizes Councilmember Curtis
6 Jones, Jr.

7 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: Sorry
8 to interrupt, Mr. President and
9 Rachel, but I'll be damned, if I
10 give a blank check to any
11 neighborhood to bring marijuana on
12 our commercial carters. It is -- it
13 is inconceivable that a kid can walk
14 out a door and if he has an
15 opportunity to get a vegetable, a
16 book, or a gun, or weed, the
17 probability is that he'll run into
18 weed first. Weed -- I don't know
19 where you live, but it is damn sure
20 not on one of my caters, where you
21 can go and at 7:00 a.m. Get a
22 loosie, get liquor by the drink, get
23 all kinds of cannabis-based
24 products, and you think that's okay.

1 When we decriminalized it,
2 and I was a part of that with Jim
3 Kenney, a lot of young people took
4 it as a memo that they could go out
5 and smoke weed. Never forget. I'm
6 coming from SLA, coming through and
7 it was a kid -- bunch of kids coming
8 out of a corner store, and they were
9 rolling marijuana. How do I know?
10 I know the smell, right?

11 And they were sitting
12 there, and they looked at me and
13 said, those dreaded words, "Old
14 head, why are you looking at us?
15 It's legal now." No, it is not
16 legal; it's decriminalized. I'd
17 rather put a vegetable; I'd rather
18 put a book in their hands than fog
19 their brains as they pursue a life
20 through education. Oh, no, not in
21 the 4th district, keep it moving.
22 Thank you, Mr. President.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
24 Thank you, Member Jones and Jim

1 Harrity.

2 MS. HANDIS: Good morning.

3 My name is Rachel Handis, and I'm a
4 content creator in Philadelphia who
5 shares stories of animals in the
6 shelter who do not have a voice.
7 I'm here today to support Bill
8 Number 250989. Last year I decided
9 to volunteer at ACCT Philly. At
10 first, I was hesitant because I
11 didn't know if I could handle it.
12 Thinking about them sleeping their
13 last night in the kennel, then the
14 next morning instead of going to the
15 front door to be adopted, they're
16 going to the back room to be
17 euthanized. Some dogs are wagging
18 their tails and others are frozen in
19 fear. Do you know how I know that?
20 I saw a dog being walked back there
21 because not one person applied to
22 adopt her. Seeing her face looking
23 down at the ground like she did
24 something wrong is something you can

1 never forget. And do you know what?
2 Not one staff member or volunteer
3 wanted this to happen? The staff
4 members give them love before they
5 take their last breath. Goodbye.

6 And if you look around,
7 you'll see who showed up: it's
8 staff, volunteers, vets, rescue
9 groups who want to see less dogs
10 being put down for space. If you're
11 wondering whose fault, it is, it's
12 our fault. We do not have enough
13 laws that protect our animals, and
14 that is why today is the day that we
15 take a step in the right direction.
16 I started posting their stories on
17 my social media platform because I
18 couldn't stand to see healthy dogs
19 being euthanized for space anymore.
20 Someone just wrote last night, "I
21 will never understand euthanizing a
22 perfectly healthy, friendly, loving
23 dog. Something has to change." I
24 agree. That change is this bill.

1 Thank you for your time and
2 consideration.

3 CHIEF CLERK: Could Sharon
4 Pritchett, Ogbonna Hagins, and Kate
5 Allen, please approach the podium.

6 CHIEF CLERK: You can
7 begin.

8 MS. CARTER: Good morning,
9 Council president and all the
10 Councilmembers.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
12 Morning.

13 MS. CARTER: First, I would
14 like to say that there was an error
15 in the name. His name is Tony
16 Pritchett and not Troy, and I would
17 like to thank Councilwoman Kathy
18 Gilmore-Richardson for stepping in
19 for Councilwoman Bass for she's Not
20 feeling well. So we appreciate you
21 much for that.

22 We just want to -- she just
23 wanted to honor, because this is
24 Black History Month, some members in

1 -- in the community that are doing
2 well. So I'm here to speak on
3 behalf of my pastor and cousin,
4 Pastor Tony Pritchett. And I want
5 to start with a verse from Timothy
6 5:17. "Let the elders who rule be
7 counted worthy." I'm sorry, I don't
8 have on my glasses.

9 "Let the elders who rule
10 will be counted worthy of double
11 honor, especially they who labor in
12 the word and doctrine."

13 Today, we honor Pastor Tony
14 Pritchett, my cousin, a faithful
15 servant of God, who knows
16 leadership, wisdom, and compassion.
17 Continue to impact so many lives.
18 As President of the 35th Police
19 chaplains, he stands as a bridge
20 between faith and service, working
21 all denominations to bring unity,
22 prayer, and spiritual guidance to
23 those who proceed to protect and
24 serve our communities. In his role

1 as advisor of the Northwest
2 Division, pastor Tony exemplifies
3 integrity, humility, and dedication.
4 He offers counsel and moments of
5 crisis, comfort and times of sorrow
6 and encouragement when strength is
7 most needed. His commitment
8 reflects the heart of a true
9 shepherd, caring for both the flock
10 and the community at large. With
11 pride and gratitude, we celebrate
12 with you.

13 CHIEF CLERK: Thank you.

14 MS. PRITCHETT: Let's first
15 address the elephant in the room. I
16 am not Mayor Cherelle Parker.

17 MS. CARTER: I'm sorry. My
18 name is Sharon Carter, and I'm the
19 director of constituent service for
20 Councilwoman Bass.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 Thank you. Sorry.

23 MS. PRITCHETT: Not to take
24 up any more time, but I want to say

1 greetings to president,
2 Councilmembers, and all the guests.
3 My name is Sharon Pritchett. I am
4 the wife of the recipient of the
5 resolution for Pastor Tony
6 Pritchett.

7 Pastor Tony Pritchett is
8 the founder and senior pastor of
9 Provision of Grace World Mission
10 Church for 26 years, a church that's
11 located in the West Logan section of
12 Philadelphia, serving with a
13 holistic approach to ministry, mind,
14 body, and soul. It is also the
15 location of the West Logan CDC,
16 where Pastor Tony is the CEO. It is
17 dedicated to revitalizing our
18 community by addressing critical
19 issue needs, such as housing
20 initiatives, educational programs,
21 health and wellness services, job
22 training opportunity, parenting, and
23 mental-health support. For over 20
24 years, pastor Tony has served as the

1 president of the 35th -- I'm sorry,
2 I'm getting a call. Of the 35th
3 Police District chaplaincy. Due to
4 his unwavering commitment, he was
5 appointed advisor of the Northwest
6 Division of the Philadelphia Police
7 Chaplaincy Program. This program
8 bridges the gap between Philadelphia
9 police officers and the community,
10 as well as supporting officers with
11 counsel and prayers.

12 Alongside the leadership of
13 Pastor Tony, the 35th District
14 Police chaplaincy initiated the
15 Heroes of the Community event, is a
16 celebration where we honor and award
17 police officers, civic leaders, and
18 grassroots individuals who go above
19 and beyond the call of duty for the
20 past several years, seven years. I
21 congratulate my husband, Pastor Tony
22 Pritchett on this well-deserved
23 recognition for all that he has done
24 and all that he is doing for our

1 community, our city, and our church
2 in the name of Christ. Amen.

3 MR. HAGINS: Before you
4 start my time, could I just thank
5 the chairman and the -- of the
6 Public Safety Committee and the
7 committee at large for the hearing
8 yesterday, and I thank all of the
9 Councilmembers who are not a part of
10 the committee who came down the --
11 to check out the history that we
12 made. I'd like to thank Councilman
13 O'Rourke for showing up and actually
14 sitting up there on the panel and
15 thanks for inviting him.

16 As we consider amendments
17 to Title 17 under Bill 250768,
18 remember this, our procurement code
19 is one of the most powerful tools to
20 ensure city contracting reflects our
21 values and constitutional
22 responsibilities. We amend Title 17
23 regularly for wages, environmental
24 standards, workplace protections,

1 and now, through Councilmember
2 Gauthier's audience -- through
3 Councilmember Gauthier's Ordinance,
4 responsible waste handling
5 practices, it is a living framework
6 shaping how Philadelphia spends its
7 dollars and what standards we demand
8 from those doing business with our
9 city. But there is a deeper
10 obligation. The 13th Amendment does
11 not, or the 13th Amendment does more
12 than prohibit slavery. It does more
13 than prohibit slavery. It imposes a
14 duty to identify and dismantle the
15 badges, vestiges and incidents of
16 slavery. The structural systems
17 that perpetuate racial
18 subordination, the same -- the
19 Supreme Court has affirmed this:
20 Jones v. Alfred H. Mayer
21 Company government can eliminate all
22 badges and incidents of slavery,
23 including structural discrimination
24 and contracting.

1 Griffin v. Breckenridge,
2 the amendment empowers government to
3 remedy private systemic inequities.
4 Economic exclusion and inequity
5 contracting are not neutral; they
6 are part of the modern legacy of
7 slavery. Bill 250768 gives us a
8 chance to act. Adding findings and
9 equity compliance requirements
10 ensures contractors providing
11 essential services, waste recycling,
12 composting do not reinforce
13 structural inequalities historically
14 tied to the badges and incidents of
15 slavery. This is not a new law. It
16 aligns procurement with obligations
17 under federal law. Section 171004
18 already acknowledges our authority
19 and responsibility to address
20 slavery-related harms strengthening
21 it, continues that work.

22 Colleagues, we have the
23 authority, we have the
24 constitutional grounding, and we

1 have the responsibility. Let us
2 embed equality, accountability, and
3 constitutional integrity directly
4 into Title 17. The Philadelphia
5 Reparations Coalition for America
6 Freeman provide amendment language
7 if you need it. Ogbonna Hagins over
8 and out.

9 MS. ALLEN: My name is Kate
10 Allen, and I'm the president of the
11 Queen Village Neighbors Association.
12 President Johnson, Councilmember
13 Phillips, members of Council, thank
14 you for me -- allowing me to testify
15 once again on behalf of my community
16 and children across the city. I'm
17 here today to support Bill Number
18 251097 that will designate illegal
19 sales of tobacco products to minors
20 and unlicensed tobacco retailing as
21 nuisance behaviors. This bill is a
22 welcome addition to the other recent
23 legislation that Council has enacted
24 to curb the proliferation of these

1 dangerous nuisances. We know that
2 the vast majority of smoke shops are
3 not paying their rent by selling
4 legal products to legal customers.
5 We know that some of these shops are
6 openly selling unregulated,
7 mislabeled products. We know that
8 some of these shops are selling
9 ghost guns. We know that some of
10 these shops are intentionally
11 selling dangerous addictive
12 substances to children. None of
13 that is in question. Yet, every
14 time someone raises a new concern
15 about a smoke shop, it seems like
16 each story is so much worse than the
17 last that people are in some
18 perverse race to the bottom.

19 A mother recently told me
20 about a smoke shop that was
21 knowingly selling vape pens to her
22 13-year-old daughter, eight years
23 below the minimum age. How did her
24 mother discover this? She found

1 multiple vape pens in the girl's
2 backpack that she was planning to
3 sell to other children in her
4 neighborhood, some as young as
5 seven. A 13-year-old child was
6 selling tobacco products to 1st
7 graders. Imagine what this poor kid
8 is going to be doing when she grows
9 up. Whenever we talk about juvenile
10 crime and how important it is to
11 look back at what happened in their
12 lives leading up to this event, it's
13 this. And this is not on this girl.
14 She's so young that she can't even
15 get a learner's permit anywhere.
16 This is on the store owner who cares
17 more about making a profit than
18 protecting our children's physical
19 and mental wellbeing.

20 I understand the state
21 preemption issues and have been
22 working with civic associations
23 across the city to get the changes
24 we need in Harrisburg to address

1 them, but using them as an excuse to
2 do nothing is unacceptable. It just
3 means we have to get creative in the
4 interim. There are a lot of words
5 that you could use to describe
6 knowingly selling tobacco products
7 to a child, the most polite of which
8 is nuisance behavior. I applaud
9 Councilman Phillips for taking this
10 very necessary step to protect our
11 children. Thank you.

12 CHIEF CLERK: There are no
13 further names for public comment,
14 Council President.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 Thank you very much. That concludes
17 today's public comment period. We
18 will now consider the bills and
19 resolutions on the second reading
20 and final passage calendars.

21 Would the clerk please read
22 the title of Resolution No. 241040,
23 241070.

24 CHIEF CLERK: A resolution

1 proposing an amendment to the
2 Philadelphia Homeroom Charter to
3 eliminate the requirement that city
4 officers and employees resign from
5 their city office or employment
6 before becoming candidates for
7 public office and providing for the
8 submission of the amendment of the
9 qualified electors.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

11 Thank you very much. The Chair
12 recognizes Councilman Isaiah Thomas
13 for a motion.

14 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS:

15 Thank you, Council President. I
16 move for the adoption of the
17 amendments.

18 COUNCILMEMBER: Second.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

20 Do you here like to offer an
21 amendment, sir, on Resolution No.
22 241070?

23 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: Yes.

24 Council President, I move for the

1 adoption of the amendments.

2 COUNCILMEMBERS: Second.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

4 That amendment has been properly
5 served to everyone in City Council.

6 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: I'm
7 sorry, Council president. Thank
8 you, Council president. I would
9 like to offer an amendment to
10 Resolution No. 241070. A copy of
11 the amendment has been circulated to
12 all members of Council and I move
13 for the adoption of the amendment.

14 COUNCILMEMBER Second.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

16 It has been moved and properly
17 seconded. Then amendment to
18 Resolution No. 241070 will be
19 adopted. All those in favor,
20 signify by saying aye.

21 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

23 Those opposed? The ayes have it,
24 and the resolution has been amended.

1 This resolution will be placed on
2 the final passage calendar for our
3 next session of Council.

4 Would the clerk please read
5 the title of Resolution No. 251108.

6 CHIEF CLERK: A resolution
7 proposing an amendment to the
8 Philadelphia Home Rule Charter,
9 providing for the creation of the
10 Office of Youth Ombudsperson and
11 providing for the submission of the
12 proposed amendment to the electors
13 of Philadelphia.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
15 The Chair recognized Councilmember
16 Jamie Gauthier for a motion
17 regarding Resolution No. 251108.

18 COUNCILMEMBER GAUTHIER:
19 Thank you, Council President. I
20 move for the adoption of the
21 resolution.

22 COUNCILMEMBER: Second.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
24 It has been moved and property

1 seconded. The Resolution No. 251108
2 be adopted. All those in favor will
3 signify by saying aye.

4 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

6 Those opposed? The ayes have it.

7 The motion carries. The resolution
8 is adopted.

9 Will the clerk please read
10 the title of Resolution No. 260097?

11 COUNCILMEMBER GAUTHIER: A
12 resolution expressing support for
13 Jerome Richardson and our First
14 Amendment rights in the face of
15 political persecution against
16 protestors by the Trump
17 administration.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

19 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
20 Jamie Gauthier for a motion
21 regarding Resolution No. 260097.

22 COUNCILMEMBER GAUTHIER:

23 Thank you, Council President. I
24 move for the adoption of the

1 resolution.

2 COUNCILMEMBER Second.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

4 It has been moved and properly
5 seconded. The Resolution No. 260097
6 be adopted. All those in favor of
7 the motion will signify by saying
8 aye.

9 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

11 Those opposed? The ayes have it.
12 The motion carries. The resolution
13 is adopted.

14 Will the clerk please read
15 the title of Resolution No. 260099?

16 CHIEF CLERK: A resolution
17 renaming the 3000 block of West
18 Harper Street Jill Hoyce's way to
19 honor the life and legacy of Joyce
20 Hill.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

22 The Chair recognizes Councilman
23 Jones for a motion regarding
24 Resolution No. 260099.

1 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: Thank
2 you, Mr. President in conjunction
3 with Jeffrey Young, a member of this
4 body. I'll move for the adoption.

5 COUNCILMEMBER: Second.

6 COUNCILMEMBER: Second.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
8 It has been moved and properly
9 seconded. The Resolution No. 260099
10 be adopted. All those in favor of
11 the motion will signify by saying
12 aye.

13 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
15 Those opposed? The ayes have it.
16 The motion carries. The resolution
17 is adopted.

18 Will the clerk please read
19 the title of Bill Number 25989-a.

20 CHIEF CLERK: An ordinance
21 amending Title 10 of the
22 Philadelphia code entitled
23 Regulation of Individual Conduct and
24 Activity by adding a new section to

1 impose a temporary moratorium on the
2 breeding and transfer of puppies all
3 under certain terms and conditions.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

5 This bill had been read on two
6 different days. The question now is
7 shall a bill pass finally?

8 Chief Clerk, please call
9 the roll.

10 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
11 Phillips?

12 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:
13 Aye.

14 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
15 Gilmore-Richardson?

16 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
17 Aye.

18 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
19 Gauthier?

20 COUNCILMEMBER GAUTHIER:
21 Aye.

22 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
23 Thomas?

24 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: Aye.

1 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

2 Jones?

3 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: Aye.

4 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

5 Landau?

6 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Aye.

7 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

8 Lozada?

9 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Aye.

10 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

11 Young?

12 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Aye.

13 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

14 Brooks?

15 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS: Aye.

16 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

17 Harrity?

18 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY:

19 Aye.

20 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

21 O'Rourke?

22 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE:

23 Aye.

24 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

1 Driscoll?

2 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL:

3 Aye.

4 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

5 Squilla?

6 COUNCILMEMBER SQUILLA:

7 Aye.

8 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

9 Ahmad?

10 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Aye.

11 CHIEF CLERK: And Council

12 President Johnson?

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

14 Aye. The ayes are 15 and nays are
15 zero. The majority of all members
16 having voted in the affirmative, the
17 bill passes.

18 Will the clerk please read
19 the title of Bill Number 251097?

20 Congratulations Team Bass.

21 If you're watching, Councilwoman,
22 and I'm sure you are. Get well
23 soon, and congratulations.

24 Clerk, please read the

1 title of Bill Number 251097.

2 CHIEF CLERK: An ordinance
3 amending Chapter 9-4400 of the
4 Philadelphia Code entitled
5 Responsible Business Operations to
6 add illegal sales of tobacco
7 products to minors and unlicensed
8 tobacco retailing as nuisance
9 behaviors and require completion of
10 a department approved tobacco
11 retailer education and compliance
12 training as a condition of lifting a
13 cease operations order, all under
14 certain terms and conditions.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
16 This bill had been read on two
17 different days. The question now
18 is, shall a bill pass finally?

19 Chief Clerk, please call
20 the roll.

21 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
22 Phillips?

23 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:
24 Aye.

1 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
2 Gilmore-Richardson?

3 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
4 Aye.

5 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
6 Gauthier?

7 COUNCILMEMBER GAUTHIER:
8 Aye.

9 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
10 Thomas?

11 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: Aye.

12 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
13 Jones?

14 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: Aye.

15 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
16 Landau?

17 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Aye.

18 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
19 Lozada?

20 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Aye.

21 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
22 Young?

23 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Aye.

24 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

1 Brooks?

2 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS: Aye.

3 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

4 Harrity?

5 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY:

6 Aye.

7 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

8 O'Rourke?

9 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE:

10 Aye.

11 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

12 Driscoll?

13 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL:

14 Aye.

15 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

16 Squilla?

17 COUNCILMEMBER SQUILLA:

18 Aye.

19 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

20 Ahmad?

21 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Aye.

22 CHIEF CLERK: And Council

23 President Johnson?

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

1 Aye. The ayes are 15, the nays are
2 zero. The majority of all members
3 having voted in the affirmative, the
4 bill passes.

5 Will the Chief Clerk please
6 read the title of Bill Number
7 251098.

8 CHIEF CLERK: An ordinance
9 providing for the submission to the
10 qualified electors of the City of
11 Philadelphia of a proposal set forth
12 in a resolution approved by Council,
13 proposing an amendment to the
14 Philadelphia Home Rule Charter
15 relating to the creation of the
16 Office of Youth Ombudsperson and
17 authorizing and directing the
18 appropriate officers to publish
19 notice and to make arrangements for
20 the special election.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 This bill had been read on two
23 different days. The question now is
24 shall the bill pass finally?

1 Chief Clerk, please call
2 the roll.

3 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
4 Phillips?

5 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:
6 Aye.

7 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
8 Gilmore-Richardson?

9 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
10 Aye.

11 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
12 Gauthier?

13 COUNCILMEMBER GAUTHIER:
14 Aye.

15 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
16 Thomas?

17 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS: Aye.

18 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
19 Jones?

20 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: Aye.

21 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
22 Landau?

23 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU: Aye.

24 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

1 Lozada?

2 COUNCILMEMBER LOZADA: Aye.

3 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

4 Young?

5 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Aye.

6 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

7 Brooks?

8 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS: Aye.

9 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

10 Harrity?

11 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY:

12 Aye.

13 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

14 O'Rourke?

15 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE:

16 Aye.

17 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

18 Driscoll?

19 COUNCILMEMBER DRISCOLL:

20 Aye.

21 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember

22 Squilla?

23 COUNCILMEMBER SQUILLA:

24 Aye.

1 CHIEF CLERK: Councilmember
2 Ahmad?

3 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Aye.

4 CHIEF CLERK: And Council
5 President Johnson?

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 Aye. The ayes are 15, and nays are
8 zero. The majority of all members
9 having voted in the affirmative, the
10 bill passes.

11 Will the clerk please read
12 any additional resolution on today's
13 calendar?

14 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
15 resolution, recognizing and
16 celebrating the Philadelphia
17 heritage and Phila-Montco branches
18 of the Association for the Study of
19 African American Life and History,
20 introduced by Councilmember Gilmore-
21 Richardson on behalf of Council
22 President Johnson.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
24 The Chair recognizes Majority Leader

1 Katherine Gilmore-Richardson for a
2 motion.

3 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:

4 Thank you, Council President. On
5 your behalf, I move for the adoption
6 of the resolution.

7 COUNCILMEMBER Second.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 It has been moved and properly
10 seconded, that the resolution be
11 adopted. All those in favor will
12 signify by saying aye.

13 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

15 Anyone opposed? The ayes have it.
16 The resolution is adopted.

17 Will the Chief Clerk please
18 read the title of the next
19 resolution?

20 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
21 resolution honoring the leadership
22 and service of Reverend Tony
23 Pritchett for his unwavering
24 commitment to spiritual empowerment,

1 community outreach, and restorative
2 justice in the city of Philadelphia
3 in recognition of Black History
4 Month, introduced by Councilmember
5 Gilmore-Richardson on behalf of
6 Councilmember Bass.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
8 The Chair recognizes Majority Leader
9 Katherine Gilmore-Richardson for a
10 motion.

11 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
12 Thank you, Mr. President. On behalf
13 of Councilmember Bass, I move the
14 adoption of the resolution.

15 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS:
16 Second.

17 COUNCILMEMBER Second.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
19 It has been moved and properly
20 seconded that the resolution be
21 adopted. All those in favor signify
22 by saying aye.

23 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

1 Anyone opposed? The ayes have it,
2 and the resolution is adopted.

3 Will the Chief Clerk please
4 read the title of the resolution --
5 next resolution.

6 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
7 resolution honoring Pastor Rob
8 Harrison of New Journey Christian
9 Center and celebrating the vital
10 role of faith leaders in shaping,
11 uplifting, and strengthening the
12 Germantown community, and the city
13 of Philadelphia in recognition of
14 Black History Month, introduced by
15 Councilmember Gilmore-Richardson on
16 behalf of Councilmember Bass.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
18 The Chair recognizes Majority Leader
19 Katherine Gilmore-Richardson for
20 motion.

21 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
22 Thank you, Mr. President. On behalf
23 of Councilmember Bass and all of the
24 members of the Church of God in

1 Christ, I move for the adoption of
2 the resolution.

3 COUNCILMEMBERS: Second.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

5 It has been moved and properly
6 seconded that the resolution will be
7 adopted. All those in favor will
8 signify by saying aye.

9 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

11 Anyone opposed? The ayes have it,
12 and the resolution is adopted.

13 Will the clerk please read
14 the title of the next resolution?

15 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
16 resolution honoring Ukrainian
17 organizations in Philadelphia for
18 their service to Ukrainian
19 Americans, Ukrainian refugees, and
20 the broader Philadelphia community,
21 introduced by Councilmember Landau.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

23 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
24 Rue Landau for a motion and a

1 resolution.

2 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU:

3 Thank you. I move for the adoption
4 of the resolution.

5 Councilmember JONES:

6 Second.

7 COUNCILMEMBER Second.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 It has been moved and properly
10 seconded that the resolution be
11 adopted. All those in favor will
12 signify by saying aye.

13 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

15 Anyone opposed? The ayes have it,
16 and the resolution is adopted.

17 Will the clerk please read
18 the title of the next resolution?

19 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
20 resolution honoring and
21 congratulating Philadelphia Gay News
22 on the distinguished occasion of its
23 50th anniversary in Philadelphia,
24 serving as Philadelphia's longest

1 running LGBTQ plus publication and
2 serving as a vital independent voice
3 that advances equality, visibility,
4 and community, introduced by
5 Councilmember Landau.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
8 Rue Landau for a motion on the
9 resolution.

10 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU:
11 Thank you. I move for the adoption
12 of the resolution.

13 COUNCILMEMBER Second.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
15 It has been moved and properly
16 seconded, that the resolution be
17 adopted. All those in favor will
18 signify by saying aye.

19 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
21 Anyone opposed? The ayes have it.
22 And the resolution is adopted.

23 Will the Chief Clerk please
24 read the title of the next

1 resolution?

2 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
3 resolution, celebrating and honoring
4 Vashti DuBois, Val Gay, Facetta
5 Garrison Greene, and the Black women
6 who are leaders of culture and arts
7 in the city and devote their lives
8 to improving the arts and culture of
9 Philadelphia on the occasion of
10 Black History Month, introduced by
11 Councilmember Brooks.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
13 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
14 Brooks for a motion and a
15 resolution.

16 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS:
17 Thank you, Council President. I
18 move for the adoption of the
19 resolution.

20 COUNCILMEMBER: Second.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 It has been moved and properly
23 seconded that the resolution be
24 adopted. All those in favor will

1 signify by saying aye.

2 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

4 Anyone opposed? The ayes have it.

5 The resolution is adopted.

6 Will the Chief Clerk please
7 read the title of the next
8 resolution?

9 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
10 resolution, recognizing the
11 beginning of the Latin season. A
12 sacred period of reflection, prayer,
13 fasting and service observed by
14 millions of Christians in
15 Philadelphia and throughout the
16 world, introduced by Councilmember
17 O'Rourke.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
19 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
20 O'Rourke for a motion and a
21 resolution.

22 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE:
23 Thank you, Mr. President. I move
24 for the adoption of the resolution.

1 COUNCILMEMBERS: Second.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 It has been moved and properly
4 seconded, that the resolution shall
5 be adopted. All those in favor,
6 signify by saying aye.

7 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

9 Anyone opposed? The ayes have it,
10 and the resolution is adopted.

11 Will the Chief Clerk please
12 read the title of the next
13 resolution?

14 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
15 resolution, recognizing and honoring
16 the life of trailblazing civil
17 rights leader, dedicated public
18 servant, and lifelong activist,
19 Reverend Jesse Jackson, introduced
20 by Councilmember O'Rourke.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

22 I going to ask for everybody to
23 stand. I'm going to recognize
24 Councilman Nicholas O'Rourke for a

1 motional and a resolution.

2 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE:

3 Thank you, Mr. President. In honor
4 of the late Reverend Jesse Jackson,
5 I do move for the adoption of that
6 resolution.

7 COUNCILMEMBERS: Second.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
9 We'll have a silent vote.

10 Will the Chief Clerk please
11 read the title of the next
12 resolution?

13 CHIEF CLERK: A privileged
14 resolution recognizing Saturday,
15 February 21st, 2026 as International
16 Mother Language Day to honor the
17 brave whole souls who on this day in
18 1952, sacrificed their lives to
19 retain the right to use their mother
20 language Bangla, also known as
21 Bengali, introduced by Councilmember
22 Dr. Nina Ahmad.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
24 The Chair recognize Councilmember

1 Dr. Nina Ahmad for a motion on the
2 resolution.

3 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Thank
4 you, Council President. I move for
5 the adoption of the resolution.

6 COUNCILMEMBERS: Second.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
8 It has been moved and properly
9 seconded, that the resolution should
10 be adopted. All in favor will
11 signify by saying aye.

12 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
14 Those opposed? The ayes have it,
15 and the resolution is adopted.

16 Will the Chief Clerk please
17 read the title of the next
18 resolution.

19 CHIEF CLERK: Council
20 President, there are no further
21 resolutions in my possession.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 That completes our calendar for
24 today. Are there -- did you

1 recognize Councilmember Jamie
2 Gauthier? Okay. You are waiting
3 for the speeches? Okay. Let's see
4 what Curtis Jones done started with
5 the young folks.

6 The Chair recognizes
7 Councilmember Katherine Gilmore-
8 Richardson.

9 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
10 Thank you. Thank you very much,
11 Council president. I must be
12 excused for Council business. I'm
13 respectfully requesting a leave.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
15 Leave is granted. Thank you very
16 much. Majority Leader.

17 COUNCILMEMBER RICHARDSON:
18 Thank you.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
20 The Chair also recognizes Councilman
21 Curtis Jones, Jr.

22 COUNCILMEMBER JONES: Thank
23 you, Mr. President. I have business
24 in City Hall that I must attend to.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

2 Leave is granted, sir.

3 Anybody else need to make a
4 leave?

5 All right. The Chair
6 recognizes -- the Chair -- I'll need
7 a speech on behalf of the minority.
8 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
9 Kendra, Minority Leader Brooks.

10 COUNCILMEMBER BROOKS:

11 Thank you, Council President. This
12 Black History Month with the removal
13 of the slavery memorial at the
14 President's house, we are facing new
15 and vicious attacks on our history
16 and culture. Here in Philadelphia
17 with the upcoming celebrations of
18 2026, it's more important than ever
19 that we show our joy, our pride, our
20 strength as Black Philadelphians.
21 Our art and culture have helped to
22 define what it means to be American.
23 And they have made Philadelphia a
24 global destination for art and

1 culture.

2 So today I am proud to
3 introduce a resolution, celebrating
4 and honoring Vashti DuBois, Val Gay,
5 and Facetta Garrison Greene, and the
6 Black women who are leaders of
7 culture and arts in our city. As
8 the Chief Cultural Officer of
9 Creative Philadelphia, Val Gay is
10 preparing our city to show off our
11 art and culture for many visitors
12 during 2026. Facetta Garrison Green
13 has led the way for generations of
14 Philadelphia is to enjoy black music
15 and culture at the Dell and across
16 our city.

17 And as the founder of The
18 Colored Girls Museum in Germantown,
19 Vashti DuBois has created a unique
20 space for black women and girls to
21 hold on to our history and celebrate
22 each other. And I'm deeply grateful
23 to these black women for their
24 visionary leadership, and their

1 heroic efforts to protect and uplift
2 black culture in our city.

3 I also want to take a
4 minute as well to honor the legacy
5 and life of the Reverend Jesse
6 Jackson. Reverend Jesse Jackson was
7 a liberal I -- a living icon in
8 civil rights, and somebody that
9 people of my age could touch and
10 see. You know, we are entering a
11 time where many of our elders and
12 are moving on into the next day of
13 life. And it's important that we
14 continue that work. And, you know,
15 it means supporting younger
16 activists today, like our Black
17 Lives Matter movements, who are too
18 often dismissed by politicians who
19 don't like their tactics.

20 Politicians from years ago,
21 and the same about Jesse Jackson,
22 Reverend, Martin Luther King,
23 Malcolm X, Shirley Chisholm, they
24 were fighting for the morality of

1 civil rights. It was never popular
2 back then. But today, youth
3 organized on the shoulder of giants
4 like the Reverend, and we must
5 remember this as members of City
6 Council, the next time we find
7 ourself frustrated by the work of
8 activists, but also, it's important
9 to me to mention that Jesse
10 Jackson's historic presidential
11 campaign is one of the foundations
12 of the Working Families Party, and
13 it was built on that. And Rainbow
14 Coalition still endures today and
15 was only -- and has only grown
16 stronger. And I have my fond
17 memories of Reverend Jackson growing
18 up in Triumph Baptist Church. He
19 was like a staple with Reverend
20 James S. Hall, and it is just, we
21 lost a true hero.

22 And even working on Mayor
23 Brandon Johnson's campaign in
24 Chicago, being able to stand side by

1 side with Jesse Jackson to make sure
2 that Brandon Johnson was elected for
3 the Chicago Mayor, I am deeply
4 grounded. And I just want to say,
5 may he rest in power, and may we
6 continue to organize in the honor of
7 his legacy.

8 And finally, I want to
9 extend an invitation to all of my
10 colleagues and everyone here to
11 attend the people's hearing on
12 reproductive health. The hearing is
13 a collective effort from over 25
14 local organizations and office that
15 make up the reproductive freedom
16 task force. It will take place on
17 Thursday, March the 5th at the
18 Friend's Center around the corner
19 from City Hall. We will be
20 discussing what it means for
21 everyday Philadelphians, and how it
22 could impact the city's public
23 health -- how it could impact the
24 city's public health in our -- in

1 areas like cancer prevention, rates
2 of HIV, and sexually transmitted
3 infections, including access to
4 birth control and menstrual hygiene
5 products. This event will be held
6 in the evening and it will be
7 childcare available to those who
8 attend. Thank you so much, Council
9 President.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

11 Thank you very much. The Chair
12 recognizes Councilman Nicholas
13 O'Rourke.

14 COUNCILMEMBER O'ROURKE:

15 Thank you, Mr. President. Indeed, a
16 few more words from the minority,
17 starting with move to higher ground.
18 That's the word for today. Move to
19 higher ground, which I think is
20 apropos considering the convergence
21 this week, really on the same day of
22 two of the great discipline, and
23 reflection, and repentance
24 traditions that come out of the

1 world's great religions. That
2 having been said though, that kind
3 of spirit isn't just to be found
4 within those traditions, but also in
5 the mouth of who Minority Leader
6 Kendra Brooks just lifted, the late
7 Reverend Jesse Jackson. He said in
8 his speech in '88, the one that was
9 historic. He said, "We meet tonight
10 at the crossroads, a point of
11 decision. Shall we expand, be
12 inclusive, find unity and power, or
13 suffer division and impotence?" He
14 said, "We've come to Atlanta, the
15 cradle of the old South, the
16 crucible of the new South. Tonight,
17 there is a sense of celebration
18 because we are moved. Fundamentally
19 moved from racial battlegrounds by
20 law to economic common ground.
21 Tomorrow, we will challenge to move
22 to higher ground," common ground, he
23 said. "Think of Jerusalem, the
24 intersection where many trails meet,

1 a small village that became the
2 birthplace for three religions:
3 Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
4 Why was this village so blessed?" He
5 said. "Because it provided the
6 crossroads. There different people
7 met, different cultures, different
8 civilizations could meet and find
9 common ground. When people come
10 together, flowers always flourish.
11 The air is rich with the aroma of a
12 new spring." He'd go on to say later
13 on in the speech to all of us and to
14 be emblazoned in our memory, to keep
15 hope alive. Keep hope alive.
16 Spoken like someone grounded and
17 formed by the Black church, in the
18 Black church tradition. Think about
19 it in terms of what he produced to
20 name an organization, PUSH, which
21 means people united to save
22 humanity, is an explicit admission
23 that we are in a profound social and
24 political crisis.

1 To insist that we keep hope
2 alive acknowledges that someone or
3 something is trying to snuff hope
4 out. Jesse Jackson never played
5 down the stakes of our politics. He
6 named them. He confronted them. As
7 the reason why the stakes were high,
8 he even named poverty, right? And
9 why we needed to turn, and
10 reconsider our choices and our way,
11 he called us essentially to turn
12 around and to repent. He carried on
13 and transmuted the best traditions
14 of the Black church, of its
15 proclamation, of the social gospel,
16 and cooperative economics, and
17 economic activism in our
18 communities. He was one of the
19 global faces of Black America in an
20 era when Black America became a
21 global factor, becoming one of the
22 most important unofficial diplomats
23 in the country, unofficial only in
24 terms of appointment. He walked and

1 operated with the stature and
2 influence of government actors.

3 Those who have been around
4 DC know that he was known as the
5 shadow senator. That was the man
6 who would be able to go and get
7 folks who were hostages and bring
8 them back when other elected
9 officials couldn't do it. That was
10 the Reverend Jesse Jackson. He
11 cultivated fierce, Black,
12 progressive, independent political
13 leaders in and out of office for his
14 entire life. He often backed
15 insurgent left-wing campaigns.
16 Maybe it sounds familiar to you.
17 This ethos has directly informed the
18 politics and the practice as the
19 leader has already mentioned of the
20 Working Families Party, which was
21 born out of the end of his 1988
22 presidential campaign. Dan Cantor,
23 who was the previous executive
24 director of the -- of the -- of the

1 National Working Families Party, was
2 the labor coordinator on that
3 campaign and co-created what now
4 becomes the Working Families Party,
5 originally called the New Party.
6 This is the work of the Reverend
7 Jesse Jackson.

8 His -- as I said, he was
9 part of the Black church. He was a
10 griot, as it were, a prophet to the
11 people. He was also an actual
12 co-pastor. He was the co-pastor of
13 the Fellowship Missionary Baptist
14 Church in Chicago. Chicago was on
15 fire right now in light of the
16 transition of one of their leaders,
17 and the current pastor of that
18 church, the Reverend Reginald Sharpe
19 actually had this to say about him.
20 He said, "Few men become symbols.
21 Over time, Reverend Jackson
22 transcended flesh and was
23 transformed into a symbol, a symbol
24 of hope, a symbol of resilience, a

1 symbol of compassion." Symbols
2 demand more than our commemoration;
3 they demand our commitment. They
4 demand our commitment. That is so
5 important for us to recognize that
6 we see that at the start of this
7 Lenten and Ramadan season, a symbol
8 has died. And a reminder of what we
9 must do when that happens is this:
10 When there is death amidst our
11 ideals and our symbols, we bring
12 life back to our ideals and our
13 symbols when we rethink them. That
14 is the logic behind repentance. To
15 rethink, to reconsider, to think
16 again.

17 My late mentor, the Bishop
18 Carlton Pearson, was always
19 particularly pricked by Donald
20 Trump's resistance to repentance,
21 because it means that you're not
22 even willing to rethink, which is
23 deadly for anybody, let alone
24 leaders. We should all be willing

1 to think, to rethink, and to think
2 again. Pope Leo just said yesterday
3 in his Ash Wednesday reflection,
4 "How rare it is to find adults who
5 repent?" People, businesses, and
6 institutions who admit they were
7 wrong. How refreshing it would be
8 if we would allow what this season
9 offers us? Time for reflection,
10 time for devotion, time for
11 reconsideration of our way, and how
12 we might go about and live another
13 way, I think we would be much better
14 forward. Between Christians and
15 Muslims, today I had the honor of
16 offer -- of having Rabbi Shawn Zevit
17 of Mishkan Shalom Synagogue offer
18 our invocation. We have all these
19 great traditions converging at this
20 time, and I think we're feeling that
21 energy.

22 But I think between
23 Christians and Muslims, there are
24 hundreds of thousands of

1 Philadelphiaans who have, this week,
2 determined to adhere to this
3 particular spiritual discipline, a
4 particular turn away from ourselves,
5 and towards those higher things,
6 those pure practices, those higher
7 hopes and deeper devotions to find
8 and refine oneself from the inside
9 out. So to those adherence, those
10 observance, and to those who aren't,
11 for that matter, every morning when
12 I wake up, I say a little prayer for
13 you, and I hope you pray for me.
14 Let this season be one where we can
15 rethink, reconsider, repent, and in
16 doing so, do what the Reverend
17 Jackson called us to do: Go a
18 little bit higher. May it be so of
19 all of us. Thank you,
20 Mr. President.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
22 I want to take a moment to
23 acknowledge the head of 332, who's
24 just quietly joining us today is Sam

1 Staton, Jr. As well as the CEO of
2 Big Bloc Entertainment, Mr. Walt
3 Reeder, Jr. quietly joining us
4 today. Thank you very much, sir.

5 Any speeches on behalf of
6 the majority? The Chair recognizes
7 Councilmember Jamie Gauthier.

8 COUNCILMEMBER GAUTHIER:

9 Thank you, Council President. Today
10 we enacted a ballot question that if
11 approved by voters would make the
12 Office of the Youth Ombudsperson
13 permanent. The Office of the Youth
14 Ombudsperson promotes the health,
15 welfare, education, safety,
16 wellbeing, and reentry of
17 Philadelphia youth placed in
18 juvenile justice, child welfare, or
19 behavioral health residential care
20 facilities. A study found that
21 between 2010 and 2018, children in
22 PA residential facilities were
23 physically maltreated 156 times,
24 exposed to inappropriate sexual

1 contacts 73 times, and suffered at
2 least 43 incidents of verbal
3 maltreatment by staff. 44 percent
4 of the facilities reviewed had
5 repeated violations of physical or
6 sexual maltreatment of children.

7 It is not surprising that
8 abuse persist when in many cases
9 juvenile justice placements require
10 young people to report abuse to the
11 same staff at the same placement
12 facility, which has been abusing
13 them. Who would trust that process?
14 Contrast this with the thoughtful
15 approach the City of Philadelphia's
16 office of the Youth Ombudsperson
17 takes. They develop materials and
18 educate young people about their
19 rights. They build trusting
20 relationships with young people and
21 act as an independent entity to
22 receive complaints. They review
23 facility policies and data to ensure
24 that systems and policies set up

1 staff and young people for success.
2 And of course, they contact
3 appropriate authorities to address
4 urgent safety concerns.

5 Studies and horrifying
6 accounts we've heard from young
7 people prove we cannot leave this
8 function to the State. No one cares
9 for our kids as much as we do. We
10 need an office dedicated to
11 monitoring the conditions in all
12 youth congregate care facilities.
13 We need the office of the Youth
14 Ombudsperson, and we need it
15 permanently.

16 I want to thank the city of
17 Philadelphia's youth Ombudsperson,
18 Tracy Johnson, for her steadfast
19 leadership. Thank you as well to
20 every young person, parent,
21 advocate, and expert who was a part
22 of this work. Children First, the
23 Defender Association of
24 Philadelphia, the Juvenile Law

1 Center, the Youth Sentencing and
2 Reentry Project, the Education Law
3 Center, and so many others. And on
4 a completely different note, I want
5 to wish the West Philly High Boys
6 basketball team good luck in this
7 week's public league championship
8 game.

9 Can we get a round of
10 applause for West Philly High?

11 Imhotep may be the reigning
12 champions, but Philly loves an
13 underdog, so we're rooting for our
14 speed boys to bring the trophy home
15 to West Philly. Thank you so much.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
17 She is handling your business, sir.
18 The Chair recognizes Councilmember
19 Dr. Nina Ahmad.

20 COUNCILMEMBER AHMAD: Thank
21 you, Council President. I want to
22 start by recognizing the real public
23 health milestone that happened
24 yesterday. I joined Council

1 President and the mayor yesterday at
2 a press conference, and that's where
3 the Department of Public Health and
4 Department of Air Management
5 Services announced Philadelphia's
6 expanded network of ground-level air
7 pollution monitors. So residents
8 can access real-time neighborhood-
9 level air quality data. That
10 matters because air quality isn't
11 theoretical; it's asthma, it's
12 missed school, it's emergency room
13 visits, it's long-term heart and
14 lung disease. And when the data is
15 public and local, it helps residents
16 protect themselves and it helps
17 government act with precision and
18 accountability. But public health
19 doesn't work if people can't access
20 information, trust it, and
21 understand it.

22 Philadelphia is one of the
23 most diverse cities in the country,
24 and our residents speak more than 85

1 native languages and dialects.
2 That's why I introduced a resolution
3 recognizing International Mother
4 Language Day to honor linguistic
5 diversity and reaffirm that language
6 access is part of dignity, justice,
7 and opportunity. Because in
8 healthcare, language can be -- make
9 the difference between prevention
10 and crisis.

11 And I also wanted to talk
12 about what this means to me,
13 particularly this Mother Language
14 Day that UNESCO has designated as to
15 be February 21st. When I was young,
16 and in Bangladesh, we commemorated
17 that day and the lives that were
18 sacrificed for young students whose
19 lives were sacrificed in that fight
20 to be able to speak and practice our
21 -- speak our language and practice
22 our culture. So it is a very -- it
23 is a very significant moment for me
24 because my childhood was shaped by

1 watching people fight and fight for
2 their freedom and fight for their
3 freedom to practice their culture.

4 I also wanted to talk about
5 the other resolution that I
6 introduced. We are looking at
7 efforts at the federal level that
8 would make it harder for people to
9 exercise basic rights, like the
10 right to vote. The US House has
11 passed the Save Act, and it would
12 add new paperwork barriers to voter
13 registration and actually voting.
14 Those burdens would fall hardest on
15 people who already face obstacles.
16 And that includes women who change
17 their names due to marriage or
18 divorce because their birth
19 certificates may not match current
20 identification, creating a risk of
21 delay or denial. It also
22 disproportionately impacts seniors,
23 people with disabilities, low-income
24 voters, and naturalized citizens.

1 That is why I introduced this
2 resolution, urging the Senate to
3 oppose this harmful bill.

4 You know, this common
5 thread of barriers befalling
6 communities who are hardest hit,
7 particularly women and marginalized
8 residents, and we have a
9 responsibility as a government to
10 address these things. And in that
11 vein, I also wanted to invite
12 everyone to a hearing on Monday,
13 February 23rd, the Committee of
14 Health and Human Services will hold
15 a public hearing to examine the
16 current state of reproductive
17 healthcare in Philadelphia. And I'm
18 really pleased that we are going to
19 have another hearing, the people's
20 hearing that my colleague Kendra
21 Books is hosting soon after, and we
22 are going to -- Philadelphia is
23 going to pay attention to these
24 issues. We will cover a wide range

1 of issues: menstruation, fibroids,
2 PCOS, menopause, STI prevention,
3 maternal health, abortion care,
4 LGBTQ plus health, and how access is
5 shaped by funding cuts, facility
6 closures, and provide safety --
7 provider safety concerns.

8 So -- and before I end, I
9 don't see this young man here, who
10 was sitting right here. I wanted to
11 congratulate Ray Johnson, who is
12 moving from my office to
13 Councilmember Jay's office and
14 getting promoted from policy advisor
15 to legislative director. So we wish
16 him well, and I was hoping he was
17 going to be here. And I also want
18 to tell him, make sure you send me
19 all the information we need, Ray, to
20 -- for the next person to pick up.
21 But we are very proud of Ray for
22 many of the much of the work he's
23 done in our office, and we're
24 looking to see him moving on up.

1 Thank you, Council President.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

3 Thank you. The Chair recognizes
4 Councilman Jim Harrity.

5 COUNCILMEMBER HARRITY:

6 Thank you, Council president. I'd
7 like to start off by first saying
8 happy Ramadan to all my Muslim
9 brothers and sisters. It's kind of
10 funny, I'm an Irish Catholic, and my
11 best friend is an African American
12 Muslim, very devout. And because of
13 our friendship, I got the pleasure
14 of learning so much about that
15 culture, especially when it comes to
16 Ramadan. You know, one of the
17 traditions during Ramadan is to
18 fast, and that is to make sacrifices
19 for all of the blessings that you
20 have been granted throughout the
21 years. So this is your sacrifice to
22 give back, and that's the simple
23 version as it was explained to me.
24 But it was also explained to me that

1 if for any reason you are unable to
2 fast, that their tradition is, for
3 medical or whatever, the tradition
4 is that you would feed somebody
5 instead.

6 So when that in mind, when
7 I worked for Senator Street, I was
8 proud that we started feeding free
9 food for the whole month of Ramadan.
10 Every day we give out 200 to 400
11 meals for the whole 30 days of
12 Ramadan. So today, they will be at
13 58th Street Campus, 2000 South, 58th
14 Street. You can drive on by on your
15 way home, pick up a meal so that
16 when it's time to break fast, you're
17 prepared. it's rough when you don't
18 go without eating all day, I learned
19 that from being around Senator
20 Street. So you want to break fast
21 as soon as you're able to break
22 fast.

23 So, you know, this is our
24 way of giving back and it's also my

1 way of helping and giving back, even
2 though I am an Irish Catholic,
3 during this time. I always say,
4 people that know me know that I say
5 all the time that if we would just
6 learn a little bit more about each
7 other's culture, we'd have a lot
8 less problems. So God bless
9 everyone. And the only other thing
10 I will say is that after this, there
11 will be a meeting across the hall
12 for I'm hosting a briefing for
13 immediately following counsel for
14 Friends of the Children. This
15 organization is a mentor pair -- a
16 mentor program pairing students with
17 mentors from middle school through
18 high school. Please come get some
19 information, and of course, there
20 will be food provided. Thank you,
21 Council President.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
23 Thank you. The chair recognizes
24 Councilman Jeffrey J. Young.

1 COUNCILMEMBER YOUNG: Thank
2 you, Mr. President. First, I --in
3 the spirit of some of my colleagues,
4 I just want to mention the season
5 that we're in right now. And I want
6 to first wish, you know, the
7 residents of the city of
8 Philadelphia, the constituents, my
9 family, yeah, Ramadan Mubarak. You
10 know, this is a time where, you
11 know, families gather, right? And
12 you look at Philadelphia, you look
13 at the Black population here in the
14 city of Philadelphia, this is going
15 to be a great time for some of our
16 families to get back in touch with
17 one another, right? That's how we
18 grow our community, that's how we
19 ensure our community thrives, is by
20 just staying together as a family.
21 And I hope that this Ramadan, our
22 community gets together as a family.

23 And on that note, we are --
24 our toy drive is live, and so for

1 those who would like to participate,
2 we have several locations where you
3 can drop off toys for those who will
4 be celebrating Ramadan throughout
5 the month at my office, Room 586
6 City Hall, at our district office,
7 2815 Ridge Avenue. I'm at the City
8 Commissioner's office at Broad and
9 Dauphin, and also at Penrose Rec
10 Center. We will be collecting toys
11 throughout the month of Ramadan.

12 And, you know, yesterday
13 was Ash Wednesday for those in the
14 Christian faith. You know,
15 celebrating a time where, you know,
16 it is time to maybe let go of some
17 things that we don't necessarily
18 need. You know, so you think about
19 that, then you also think about a
20 couple days ago, it's Lunar New
21 Year, and of those who know what the
22 -- what season we're in, it's the
23 Fire Horse. So just look that up
24 and just know I'm with all of that

1 energy right now. So just know what
2 that is. Just know what that is.

3 But on a more serious
4 topic, I want to let the community
5 know that we have an RFP out for
6 development right now, and around
7 19th and 20th at Norris for about
8 over 20 properties for development
9 for Turn the Key. So if you are
10 interested and you want to
11 participate in a development of your
12 community, please visit the
13 phillylandbank.org, there's a
14 pre-submission Zoom conference
15 tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. The RFP
16 closes on April the 8th. So if you
17 want to be a part of the development
18 of your community, please apply for
19 this RFP. There will be meetings --
20 community meetings to discuss this
21 and other projects as well
22 throughout the 5th Council District.
23 On the same note, Love Park. I'm
24 excited for its revitalization of

1 the saucer building. There was a
2 pre-RFP meeting yesterday with some
3 vendors who are eager to apply to
4 help us revitalize that space that
5 has been abandoned for some time
6 here in Center City. Looking
7 forward to those responses as well.
8 And that's all I have for today,
9 Mr. President. Thank you.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

11 Thank you. The Chair recognizes
12 Councilman Dr. Anthony Phillips.

13 COUNCILMEMBER PHILLIPS:

14 Thank you, Council President. I
15 rise today to say that we must
16 protect our children at all costs.
17 That is why today we were -- thanks
18 to the support of our colleagues, I
19 was able to have a bill that was so
20 important to protecting our children
21 passed today. Quite frankly, in the
22 city of Philadelphia, we have so
23 many individual stores that sell
24 tobacco products to our children.

1 And as a result of our -- these
2 tobacco products being sold to our
3 children, at times, these businesses
4 are caught and they're shut down,
5 but they're reopened again, and
6 oftentimes, they end up doing it
7 again because they know that they
8 can keep having this happen over and
9 over again.

10 Today's bill that was
11 passed by members of City Council,
12 and I'm thankful that we had their
13 support. "Provide established
14 mandatory education and compliance
15 training for retailers who violate
16 the law. Business owners who are
17 cited must complete education
18 training within 60 days and provide
19 proof of compliance before they're
20 able to receive a permit or
21 renew their operations and have the
22 ability to resume their business.
23 It's not punitive; it's about
24 responsible governance, and we want

1 to make sure that young people are
2 protected. We also know that young
3 people are affected by tobacco. And
4 it's a preventable illness. And we
5 got to -- early exposure can really
6 cause long-term addiction. So we
7 have to protect them. So what we're
8 saying here is, if you violate the
9 law, you will be required to
10 understand the law. If you put
11 young people at risk, you will be
12 held accountable. So I'm thankful
13 for all of our colleagues who are
14 supporting this initiative in
15 providing safeguards for young
16 people in the city of Philadelphia.

17 And lastly, I just wanted
18 to note that we lost a giant. One
19 of the reasons why I decided to
20 enter the world of service at a
21 young age was because of leaders
22 like Reverend Jesse Jackson. I am
23 beyond -- at a loss of words,
24 because Jesse Jackson meant a lot to

1 me growing up. I -- people used to
2 say, you're just like Jesse Jackson,
3 or you're connected to Jesse
4 Jackson. You talk like Jesse
5 Jackson. I mean, I always wanted to
6 be an agent of social change. I
7 didn't know what that looked like as
8 a young person, but I remember
9 having watched Eyes on the Prize
10 films, and, you know, reading books
11 about the Civil Rights Movement, and
12 Jesse Jackson was always at the
13 forefront. He challenged systems
14 that profited from harm, and he
15 demanded accountability from
16 institutions that failed the people
17 they serve. His work reminds us
18 that policy is a moral work and we
19 have to protect our young people.

20 So the bill that I did
21 today protects children from illegal
22 tobacco sales. That is justice, and
23 it's in the spirit of Jesse Jackson
24 who was always concerned about our

1 young people. So with that being
2 said, Council President, let's
3 continue to work in the spirit of
4 Jesse Jackson, let's continue to be
5 thoughtful, and let's continue to
6 fight because his work carries on
7 through our legacy. Thank you so
8 much.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:

10 Thank you very much. The Chair
11 recognizes Councilmember Rue Landau.

12 COUNCILMEMBER LANDAU:

13 Thank you, Council President. I was
14 so proud to host Ukrainian Council
15 and honor Ukrainian organizations in
16 Philadelphia today for their service
17 to Ukrainian Americans, Ukrainian
18 refugees in the broader Philadelphia
19 community. The broader Philadelphia
20 region is home to more than 15,000
21 Ukrainian immigrants, and as I
22 learned today, 100, 000 people when
23 count their descendants, many of
24 whom have helped build and maintain

1 small businesses, faith
2 institutions, and nonprofit
3 organizations. Philadelphia is not
4 Philadelphia without our thriving
5 immigrant communities. It was an
6 honor to lift up one of those
7 communities this morning.

8 Today, I also proudly
9 recognize Philadelphia Gay News on
10 the 50th anniversary of this media
11 powerhouse. Thank you so much to
12 Stonewall Legend and PGN publisher,
13 Mark Segal, for joining us today to
14 help recognize this anniversary.
15 PGN is one of the country's longest
16 running LGBTQ plus publications and
17 serves as a vital, independent voice
18 that contributes to the ongoing
19 legacy of queer representation here
20 in Philadelphia. As a longtime
21 reader at PGN, I am extremely proud
22 to recognize them with this honor
23 today. And I look forward to
24 another 50 years of reading some

1 Philly Gay News.

2 Finally, alongside
3 Councilmember Gauthier introduced a
4 resolution urging the US Department
5 of Housing and Urban Development,
6 HUD, to expand investments in
7 permanent supportive housing, an
8 evidence-based solution to
9 homelessness. These funds support
10 local housing authorities, social
11 service providers, and community-
12 based organizations that deliver
13 services critical to keeping those
14 most in need with a place to stay.
15 The consequences of losing this
16 funding are severe, harming
17 Philadelphia residents, straining
18 municipal services and worsening our
19 ongoing housing crisis. It will
20 increase rates of homelessness and
21 housing instability and place
22 additional strain on city resources.

23 To Pennsylvania
24 Congressional delegation, the

1 administration of the City of
2 Philadelphia and relevant federal
3 agencies, we urge you to take action
4 to ensure that this support service
5 remains funded and responsive to
6 Philadelphians. And finally, I want
7 to take a moment of personal
8 privilege to wish a happy birthday
9 to my twin sister tomorrow, which
10 means it's my birthday, too. Happy
11 birthday, Suzanne. I love you.
12 Thank you.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
14 Well, in the spirit of Councilmember
15 Jamie Gauthier, let me spin the
16 block and say, members of Council,
17 let's wish Rue a happy birthday. So
18 we won't see her tomorrow. Happy
19 birthday, Rue.

20 Hearing no more speeches.
21 The Chair recognizes Councilman
22 Isaiah Thomas for a motion to
23 adjourn.

24 COUNCILMEMBER THOMAS:

1 Thank you, Council President. I
2 move that Council stands adjourned
3 until Thursday, February 26th, 2026
4 at 10:00 a.m.

5 COUNCILMEMBERS: Second.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
7 All those in favor will signify by
8 saying aye.

9 COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT JOHNSON:
11 Anyone opposed? The ayes have it.
12 Thank you very much.

13 We will see you next
14 Thursday, February the 26th. Thank
15 you very much.

16 (State meeting concluded at 12:45 p.m.)
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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me of the above case, and this copy is a correct transcript of the same.

Samanda J. Rios

Samanda J. Rios

Court Reporter
Notary Public of PA & DE

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