

1

2

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

3

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

4

- - -

5

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, January 30, 2007
1:30 p.m.

6

7

- - -

8

9

PRESENT:

10

COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED MILLER, CHAIR

11

COUNCILMAN WILLIAM GREENLEE

12

COUNCILMAN JAMES F. KENNEY

13

COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO

14

COUNCILMAN DARRELL L. CLARKE

15

COUNCILMAN JUAN RAMOS

16

COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN

17

RESOLUTION 060971 - Resolution authorizing
City Council's Committee on Public Safety to
hold public hearings focusing primarily on
testimony of Philadelphia youth and young
adults regarding gun related and violent crime
in our communities, so as to include their
experiences and views in developing plans,
actions and policy to reduce or eliminate
these occurrences and their horrific impact on
our young citizens and communities.

18

19

20

21

- - -

22

23

24

V A R A L L O Incorporated
Litigation Support Services
Eleven Penn Center
1835 Market Street, Suite 600
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103
215.561.2220 215.567.2670

25

26

1

2

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Good

3

afternoon, everyone. The Committee on

4

Public Safety is now in session.

5

Would the Clerk please read the

6

title of the resolution.

7

THE CLERK: Resolution 060971,

8

resolution authorizing City Council's

9

Committee on Public Safety to hold public

10

hearings focusing primarily on testimony

11

of Philadelphia youth and young adults

12

regarding gun related and violent crime

13

in our communities, so as to include

14

their experiences and views in developing

15

plans, actions and policy to reduce or

16

eliminate these occurrences and their

17

horrific impact on our young citizens and

18

communities.

19

COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank

20

you. Let the record reflect that in

21

attendance are Committee members

22

Councilman Frank Rizzo, Councilman Jim

23

Kenney to my right and Councilman Bill

24

Greenlee also to my right.

25

I have a brief opening

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 statement.

3 Please come in and have a seat
4 and try to be as quiet as you can. We
5 also have seats on the left-hand side of
6 the room.

7 Before we start, I'd just like
8 to welcome everyone that has come today
9 to this afternoon's hearing.

10 Our youth are not only the
11 children of their parents but the sons
12 and daughters of all of us, and for that
13 reason, we have a collective and communal
14 obligation to do the very best that we
15 can to provide for them a safe and secure
16 environment in which to grow and learn.
17 Franklin Delano Roosevelt said at his
18 speech at the University of Penn in 1940,
19 "We cannot always build a future for your
20 youth, but we can build our youth for the
21 future."

22 This is an official City
23 Council hearing and I'd like to begin by
24 thanking those who have taken an interest
25 in Philadelphia and its problems with

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 violence in the City of Philadelphia.
3 Resolution 060971 was introduced on
4 December 14th, 2006 to hear from our
5 youth and young adults who are most
6 affected by this horrific plague of gun
7 related and violent crime. To date, we
8 have not given our young citizens enough
9 of an opportunity to speak about how they
10 experience these tragedies and what they
11 believe would help prevent them from
12 becoming involved in the first place.

13 We have been informed by
14 leaders and participants in programs like
15 Don't Fall Down in the Hood, Blueprint
16 for a Safer Philadelphia, Youth Services
17 Violence Reduction Program, PAAN and many
18 more that this type of forum is long
19 overdue. We have to let our youth, their
20 families and communities know the
21 strength of our commitment by allowing
22 their voices to be a part of our search
23 for solutions to this devastating
24 problem.

25 Are there any members of this

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 bring Dr. Leacock up.

3 We've also been joined by

4 Councilman Darrell Clarke.

5 Dr. Leacock, actually the
6 program Don't Fall Down in the Hood is
7 under one of his programs.

8 So, Dr. Leacock, if you just
9 give us a brief description about the
10 program, and then we'll allow the youth
11 and the others to introduce themselves.
12 And the way we're going to do this, we're
13 going to probably take one program at a
14 time. So we'll do Don't Fall Down in the
15 Hood, young people will introduce
16 themselves, and then those that you've
17 said are going to sit at the table and
18 speak, we'll do that. And then we're
19 going to have the video and then we'll go
20 to probably PAAN, AVRIP and Integrated
21 Town Watch and any other group that's
22 here.

23 You can begin by identifying
24 yourself, speak directly into the mike
25 and identify yourself for the record and

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 spell your name. Thank you.

3 DR. LEACOCK: Okay. Well, I do
4 want to say a real generous thanks to
5 City Council and the Public Safety
6 Committee and particularly Donna Reed
7 Miller for organizing this entire event.
8 I understand it has been about 13 years
9 since the Public Safety and City Council
10 have heard from young people themselves.

11 I think the times have been
12 such over the past few years that it is
13 really critical that young people come to
14 the Council Chambers and sort of talk
15 about what's going on in their lives,
16 what's going on in their communities,
17 what's going on in their schools, what
18 are some of their aspirations, what might
19 be holding them back, and see how we can
20 together as their mentors, the elected
21 officials, the folks who care about them
22 with them work together in making
23 Philadelphia a safer place.

24 Don't Fall Down in the Hood is
25 a program, one of eight programs, a part

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 of the Institute for the Development of
3 African American Youth. We're all over
4 the City. Young people come to Don't
5 Fall Down in the Hood on the Temple
6 University campus and work with us for,
7 on average, three to four months. Many
8 of our young people, as you will hear
9 from them themselves, have been arrested
10 for using or carrying a gun, aggravated
11 assault, theft, narcotics. But these are
12 young people who have turned themselves
13 around with the care of the staff and
14 together with their families.

15 These are tremendous young
16 people, as you will hear when they talk.
17 They have great potential and, for
18 whatever reason at the moment, they got
19 caught up in the moment or made choices
20 that weren't positive choices. But we
21 say to them all the time at Don't Fall
22 Down in the Hood, We're glad you're at
23 Don't Fall Down in the Hood, because we
24 can really mentor you and work with you
25 and point you to a future where you can

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 really be a productive citizen in our
3 city and in the United States.

4 Violence is great, as we all
5 know, but the young people who are here
6 today are clearly, without a doubt, a
7 part of the solution. And Councilwoman
8 and all of the Council folks here, thanks
9 so much for having us here, and we're
10 looking forward to joining you all the
11 way to make Philadelphia a safer place
12 and to reduce crime and young people's
13 input in making that a real possibility.

14 I want to introduce our
15 fearless leader, Aaron Spence, who is our
16 Interim Board President, so he can say a
17 few words, and then we will open it up to
18 our young people, who will then introduce
19 themselves with the staff, Andre Chin and
20 Phil Harris and others who are here
21 today.

22 Aaron Spence.

23 MR. SPENCE: Thank you, Archye.

24 I'd also like to thank
25 everybody for coming out and also thank

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 our young ones. It takes a lot for them
3 to come up and stand before you, Council.
4 A lot of them expressed some of their
5 anxieties, but I assured them that
6 everybody here is because they want to
7 help. So I encourage our young people --

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Excuse
9 me. You have to identify yourself for
10 the record.

11 MR. SPENCE: I'm sorry. Aaron,
12 A-A-R-O-N, Spence, S-P-E-N-C-E.

13 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
14 you.

15 MR. SPENCE: So I just
16 encourage our young people to speak up,
17 let everybody know that everybody is here
18 to help to be part of the solution.

19 Also, I want to encourage
20 everybody here that if they get an
21 opportunity, IDAAY does wonderful work
22 with the youth. Archye has been involved
23 for the last 15 or 16 years. But we
24 encourage you to talk to the youth, come
25 down and visit us, come down and visit

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 our programs. This program here is
3 really renowned, but we also have seven
4 or eight other programs that are just as
5 successful, and we are really dedicated
6 to helping our youth.

7 I want to thank the youth also
8 for coming out and just telling them to
9 speak up, be fearless and understand that
10 everybody here wants to be part of the
11 solution and help you.

12 Thanks again.

13 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
14 you.

15 DR. LEACOCK: Andre Chin, can I
16 call upon you to have the students
17 announce themselves?

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Do they
19 want to come up to the mike?

20 DR. LEACOCK: Yes.

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: The mike
22 here in the middle is where they can
23 come.

24 Also, for the record,
25 Councilman Juan Ramos has also joined

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 this hearing. He's also a member of
3 Public Safety.

4 When you state your name -- can
5 you pull that up? Can that go up? Okay.
6 Good. That's great.

7 MR. STALWORTH: How ya'll
8 doing? My name Lamar Stalworth,
9 L-A-M-A-R, S-T-A-L-W-O-R-T-H. I'm in
10 Don't Fall Down in the Hood for
11 possession of a firearm.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
13 you.

14 MR. WOODS: My name is Tyrell
15 Woods, T-Y-R-E-L-L, W-O-O-D-S, and I'm in
16 Don't Fall Down in the Hood for
17 possession of a firearm.

18 MR. CARTER: My name is Tom
19 Carter. I'm in the Don't Fall Down in
20 the Hood program for possession of a
21 firearm.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
23 you.

24 MR. MURRAY: My name is Devin
25 Murray, D-E-V-I-N, M-U-R-R-A-Y.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. ULMER: My name Harum
3 Ulmer, H-A-R-U-M, U-L-M-E-R. I'm in the
4 Don't Fall Down in the Hood program
5 because I was caught with possession of
6 narcotics.

7 MR. PARKS: How you doing? My
8 name is Lonelle Parks, L-O-N-E-L-L-E,
9 P-A-R-K-S. I'm in this program, Don't
10 Fall Down in the Hood, for possession of
11 narcotics.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

13 MR. HAWTHORNE: How ya'll
14 doing? My name Bryce Hawthorne,
15 B-R-Y-C-E, H-A-W-T-H-O-R-N-E. I'm in
16 Don't Fall Down in the Hood because of
17 robbery.

18 MR. NORAH: My name is Michal
19 Norha. M-I-C-H-A-L, N-O-R-H-A. I'm in
20 the program Don't Fall Down in the Hood
21 for possession of a firearm.

22 MR. TUTTINO: My name is Lloyd,
23 L-L-O-Y-D, T-U-T-T-I-N-O, Tuttino. I'm
24 here for aggravated assault.

25 MR. RODAN: My name is Adan

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 Rodan, A-D-A-N, R-O-D-A-N. I'm here in
3 the program Don't Fall Down in the Hood.
4 I'm here for robbery.

5 MR. YATES: My name Rahfea
6 Yates, R-A-H-F-E-A. I'm here for
7 possession of a firearm.

8 KEVIN: My name Kevin,
9 K-E-V-I-N. I'm here for possession of
10 narcotics.

11 DUNTAE: My name Duntae,
12 D-U-N-T-A-E. I'm here for a firearm.

13 SHERON: My name Sheron. You
14 spell that S-H-E-R-O-N. I'm in Don't
15 Fall Down in the Hood for robbery.

16 LATEEF: My name Lateef,
17 L-A-T-E-E-F. I'm in Don't Fall Down in
18 the Hood for robbery.

19 TERENCE: My name Terence,
20 T-E-R-E-N-C-E. I'm in Don't Fall Down in
21 the Hood for gun and narcotics.

22 AARON: My name Aaron,
23 A-A-R-O-N. I'm here for assault.

24 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
25 you. Thank you. Don't we have about --

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 Dr. Leacock, I don't see you. Okay.

3 There you are. I see you. Hold on one
4 second. We have -- I don't know how many
5 are going to be up there with you.

6 Councilman Kenney.

7 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
8 very much. Before you get started, I
9 just wanted to take the opportunity to
10 thank you for your courage coming in here
11 in a public way and speaking to us and
12 showing us that you've changed.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I think it
15 takes a lot of courage to face people and
16 to talk about things that you've done in
17 your past that you may not be proud of,
18 but I want to let you know that we
19 appreciate the fact that you come in here
20 today, and wish you all the luck in the
21 future. And I think this is good because
22 we can kind of get an idea what you may
23 need to help you continue on the right
24 path. It also is frightening to see the
25 number of firearms that people have

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 available to them, and we got to figure
3 out a way not only to get them out of
4 your hands, which you've done on your
5 own, but to find out the people who are
6 putting them in your hands, because
7 they're the real criminals.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I, too,
10 want to just thank you, too, for your
11 courage in coming in here today. You
12 didn't have to, and I know some people
13 were a little bit nervous. But when I
14 was out at one of the hearings that we
15 had out in the neighborhoods and when I
16 saw and heard young people and how many
17 of those said that they had a weapons
18 offense, to tell you the truth, I almost
19 fell out of my chair. I couldn't believe
20 it was so many. But we can read about
21 the problem, we can hear about it, but
22 when I saw it in my face, then it was
23 real to me.

24 So I really want to thank you
25 guys for coming in. I'm just saying

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 "guys." I mean also the young ladies
3 that we'll get to a little bit later.
4 Okay. Thank you.

5 We can begin. And don't
6 forget, state your name clearly, speak
7 into the mike so we can hear you good.
8 Okay? So let's get started. Who is
9 going first?

10 MR. CHIN: Good afternoon. My
11 name Andre Chin, A-N-D-R-E, C-H-I-N. I
12 just want to thank you for the
13 opportunity to have the young people
14 speak in front of you today. I think
15 these young men have prepared very well.
16 Had a difficult time with them in the
17 beginning, and when we saw a big,
18 positive adjustment in their change and
19 they're on a positive path right now and
20 they're trying to stay out of trouble.

21 I'm going to introduce to you
22 at first to my right Lamar Stalworth.

23 MR. STALWORTH: How you doing?
24 My name Lamar Stalworth, L-A-M-A-R,
25 S-T-A-L-W-O-R-T-H. And I'm thanking

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 ya'll for giving me the opportunity to
3 come speak with ya'll today.

4 One of the things I wanted to
5 bring up was about opportunities for job
6 sites in the neighborhood. We came up
7 with the name Our New Deal. It was about
8 Philadelphia workshops in the
9 neighborhood as far as people like
10 ex-cons and high school dropouts, people
11 that's on the corner, for like jobs
12 that's in the neighborhood, jobs that --
13 I mean, work that's in the neighborhood
14 that need to be done that nobody do,
15 stuff like that.

16 As far as smaller classrooms
17 and stuff in schools, workshops for
18 schools, so whereas though if you want to
19 be in high school and if you don't think
20 you can go all the way through college,
21 you can be able to come straight out of
22 high school with like a certificate to be
23 a carpenter, plumber, something like
24 that. That's about it.

25 I will introduce my fellow

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 program person, Devin.

3 MR. MURRAY: Hi. My name is
4 Devin Murray, D-E-V-I-N, M-U-R-R-A-Y.
5 I'm here to talk about recreation centers
6 in the neighborhoods. As far as like --
7 talk about recreation centers like
8 putting more hours into the community,
9 show the people that they're here to make
10 a change, not just for the money and, you
11 know, put more effort into what they do.
12 And recreation centers need to be
13 available 24 hours a day. There has been
14 violence at the recreation centers, so
15 security is always an issue. We need
16 competent and caring staff that will go
17 the extra mile. Recreation centers need
18 to meet the interests of the youth. In
19 order to do this, we need input from the
20 youth. Young people end up on corners
21 because some recreation centers are just
22 as unsafe in some areas as being on the
23 corners. We need regular programming
24 that is consistent, exciting and also
25 safe. Overall, the recreation centers

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 need to provide us with things we are
3 missing at home and cater to our needs.
4 The recreation centers should reflect the
5 needs of the community. As of now, the
6 recreation centers are lacking. They're
7 lacking the ability to comprehensively
8 serve the community.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. STALWORTH: How you doing?
11 I'm Lamar Stalworth again. I wanted to
12 sit and tell ya'll about the time and
13 what caused me to get to Don't Fall Down
14 in the Hood, to be in this program. One
15 day I was in North Philly at the area at
16 31st and Montgomery and I was just
17 hanging out in my neighborhood, when a
18 cop was chasing a little boy. Well, I
19 know a person that was running past and
20 the cop was chasing him. The cop dropped
21 his firearm. I picked it up. Me being a
22 person who I was, ain't have no job,
23 ain't have no money, being out on the
24 corner hustling and everything, I knew I
25 could sell the gun on the streets. So I

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 took the gun home, concealed it.

3 The cop who dropped his
4 firearm, they recently grabbed the
5 whole -- they locked the neighborhood
6 down. They grabbed people. People told
7 them who had the gun and where I lived at
8 and everything. They came in there,
9 handcuffed me. They beat me up and
10 everything, took me to jail. They didn't
11 find the gun in my possession. They
12 found the gun around the corner on
13 another block. And that's how I got in
14 the program.

15 I got on probation, went to
16 court, tried to fight it, civil suit.
17 That didn't work, so we just got it on
18 regular probation. Then they sent me to
19 the Don't Fall Down in the Hood program.
20 I got released from that program, got off
21 probation. Then like I couldn't find no
22 job, still couldn't find no job, so I
23 felt myself falling back down in the
24 hood. I was going to go back out on the
25 streets to hustle, to try and make money

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 to support me and my daughter or
3 whatever. And like it was just like I
4 just started thinking, like something
5 ain't right, like everything don't go
6 right for me like it used to be when I
7 was back then hustling. So I called up
8 Mr. Chin right here and I told him I just
9 had to talk with him. I was letting him
10 know like I feel as though I'm falling
11 back down in the hood. So he told me to
12 come into the program, and ever since
13 then, I've just been coming to the
14 program back and forth to stop from
15 falling down in the hood.

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: How old
17 are you?

18 MR. STALWORTH: 19.

19 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Did you
20 want to say something?

21 MR. MURRAY: Devin Murray. I'm
22 here to say the reason why I'm in Don't
23 Fall Down in the Hood is because I was
24 caught in school with a knife. And how
25 that goes, I was at my step dad house on

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 the weekend down in West Philly Saturday
3 evening. My nephew had a knife that fell
4 off my mom's key chain, and he threw the
5 knife at me. And I took the knife from
6 him and put it in my pocket. Later on
7 that evening, I go home, changed my
8 clothes, come back down West Philly.
9 Monday morning I had woke up late as I
10 was down West Philly, so by me waking up
11 late, I had to rush home. I didn't have
12 the time to actually get myself prepared
13 for that day, so I just threw the same
14 clothes I had on Saturday and went to
15 school, and the knife was in my pocket.
16 I walked through the metal detectors and
17 set off the alarms. And that's why I'm
18 here in Don't Fall Down in the Hood.

19 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So you
20 were put on probation because you had a
21 knife on your person?

22 MR. MURRAY: Say that again.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: You were
24 put on probation because you had a knife
25 in your pocket or wherever?

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. MURRAY: Yes.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

4 But you didn't use it?

5 MR. MURRAY: No.

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

7 Great. Well, I think what I heard
8 between both of you say is that if we had
9 employment opportunities or training,
10 recreation, education and maybe if the
11 rec centers' hours were a little bit more
12 expanded. Isn't that what you said?

13 MR. STALWORTH: Right. And
14 workshops.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: What do
16 we need in rec centers? One of the two
17 said rec centers should meet your needs
18 better or meet the needs --

19 MR. MURRAY: Yes. As in to
20 cater and actually be there for them, not
21 just for the money, to actually take the
22 time and effort to get to know that
23 person and help them as a neighbor.

24 MR. STALWORTH: Hands-on.

25 MR. MURRAY: Right.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. STALWORTH: Any questions?

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER:

4 Councilman Kenney.

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

6 For the program itself, is
7 there a job referral component or
8 educational training component to the
9 program? How does it work?

10 MR. CHIN: We do have
11 educational training. Myself and Philip
12 Harris, the other case manager, the young
13 men who are able to work because of
14 school, we take them out and fill out
15 applications or find jobs. But I think
16 their main purpose the reason why I think
17 they have a hard time finding jobs is
18 because of their charges.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Right.

20 MR. CHIN: And also because of
21 their age. But I think what they cry for
22 a lot is an opportunity for someone their
23 age to actually find a job. It's very
24 difficult for 16- and 17-year-old kids to
25 find a job. When they're filling out an

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 application, they have to tell the
3 employer that they were arrested and they
4 were carrying a gun. And I think the
5 employers kind of shy away from that
6 because they think that they're thugs and
7 they're not going to be a help.

8 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: There's
9 been some discussion in Council and I
10 don't know whether this is Councilman
11 Goode's bill or -- Councilwoman Miller's
12 bill to eliminate that question from the
13 initial round of interview. If you can
14 get to the second or third round of an
15 interview and then that information needs
16 to come forward, then it may make more
17 sense then than eliminating somebody
18 immediately out of the box. Because I
19 mean, if I want them to get right and
20 they're not working, I don't know how
21 they could ever do it. I mean, it's a
22 total catch 22.

23 So we've been having that
24 discussion. I don't know what the status
25 of the bill is, but certainly we're

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 supportive of it in trying to figure out
3 a way to get people at least in the door
4 and through the first round of interview.
5 And then if there's a job of sensitivity,
6 if you work at a bank or somewhere that
7 they need to know about your past, at
8 that point in time it should come forward
9 as opposed to the initial entry into it.

10 Do you deal with any agencies
11 or any organizations as far as job
12 referral itself?

13 MR. CHIN: None in particular.

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What
15 happens when they fill out -- do you give
16 them leads?

17 MR. CHIN: Right. We take them
18 to job sites. We take them to K-Mart,
19 Wal-Mart, Best Buy, Home Depot, the
20 different sites, take them on the
21 Internet. We use Temple University a
22 lot, so we have access to the computers.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Have the
24 universities been -- I know Temple must
25 be helpful in having your program there,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 but have they been helpful in trying to
3 bring on some young people as far as
4 employees?

5 MR. CHIN: At this time, we are
6 working on something with Temple.
7 Professor Leacock has been dealing with
8 Temple for a long time, so they're trying
9 to assist us as much as they can as well.
10 So that's something that's in the works
11 right now.

12 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: One of my
13 suggestions -- and I'd be happy to offer
14 my assistance, and I'm sure anybody here
15 would do the same thing -- is to talk to
16 the other institutions. I mean,
17 University of Pennsylvania and we have
18 Drexel, we have large campuses in the
19 city that may be interested in doing
20 something like this and at least giving
21 people a chance to redeem themselves and
22 become productive.

23 So I'd be happy through the
24 Chair to have some contact with you and
25 to make some calls relative to the other

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 institutions, hospitals, universities and
3 see if there's some -- I mean, for every
4 one person that you get employed, that's
5 going to be a success story probably in
6 the end.

7 MR. CHIN: That will be great.
8 Because they need to build confidence.
9 If they're going and filling out
10 applications and they're not getting any
11 jobs, they're filling out six and seven
12 applications and they're not getting a
13 job, they lose confidence.

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I mean, if
15 these two men are indicative of the
16 program, they're well spoken, they come
17 in, they look like they could be
18 employable very easily.

19 MR. CHIN: They can do it.

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So it's
21 just, I think, the opportunities to come
22 about, and the only way to do that is by
23 the Committee making connections. So I'd
24 be happy to -- we'd all be happy to help
25 in that.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Yes. I
3 think we'd all be happy to help.

4 I just have a question here.
5 Now, what age does Don't Fall Down in the
6 Hood go up to?

7 MR. CHIN: 13 to 18.

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: 13 to 18.
9 Okay. So now let me ask you this,
10 because I just don't know: If there's a
11 16-year-old who has committed a crime,
12 does that necessarily have to go down on
13 the job application?

14 MR. STALWORTH: No.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Because
16 it's not a part of your record, correct?

17 MR. CHIN: Right.

18 MR. STALWORTH: What about what
19 Devin was saying, the inner city like as
20 far as the neighborhood recreation
21 centers and stuff like that? Besides the
22 16-year-old working, he could be
23 somewhere in like a recreation center on
24 a computer, playing basketball or
25 something like that.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 And another thing, like what
3 about the people that's not in our
4 program, the kid that's on the streets
5 hustling and the adults that need jobs
6 that can't get jobs?

7 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well,
8 there are programs that are around, but,
9 you know, one of my questions actually
10 today is going to be how can we get more
11 of those young people that are on the
12 streets into places like rec centers,
13 into more structured environments. I go
14 by, drive by rec centers sometimes and
15 they're kind of empty. I'm like, Where
16 are the children?

17 I mean, don't get me wrong, I
18 know we're from two completely different
19 generations, but when we were kids, every
20 day after school we went to the rec
21 center, at night after dinner we went to
22 the rec center or the Y or the Boys Club.
23 Now many of those buildings are empty or
24 you hear that children are afraid to go
25 because of some of the types of

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 activities, nuisance types I'll call it,
3 activities that are around some of our
4 rec centers. And then up in the area not
5 far from me we just had three people shot
6 at a recreation center. So what is that
7 going to do to the center? People are
8 going to stay away.

9 One of the things we want to
10 hear from young people today is how can
11 we find solutions, how can we deal. Even
12 if we have midnight basketball. You
13 know, there was a time -- you may be too
14 young, I don't know, but there was a time
15 that Philadelphia was doing midnight
16 basketball and keeping rec centers open a
17 little later. Would people actually come
18 out?

19 MR. MURRAY: I say the reason
20 why I brought this recreation center up,
21 because it's like the kids do need a
22 place where they need to go and do their
23 homework and just be safe. And by doing
24 that, they need to invest by, again,
25 something that would attract the young

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 kids. That's what they're not doing,
3 they're not attracting any young kids.
4 So if they get, you know, a game system,
5 more computers, doing more fun activities
6 and, you know, fundraisers that advertise
7 what they're doing to bring more young
8 people in, that's what they need to do to
9 enhance their ability in what they're
10 doing.

11 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right.
12 We probably need to make sure that all of
13 the rec centers' advisory boards have
14 young people as a part of that advisory
15 council so you guys can make the
16 recommendation.

17 MR. MURRAY: Thank you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
19 you.

20 MR. HARRIS: Hello. How you
21 doing?

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Hi.

23 MR. HARRIS: My name is Philip
24 Harris. I'm a case manager at Don't Fall
25 Down in the Hood.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 We have two more youth who will
3 speak and also give their testimonial and
4 some solutions and answer some of your
5 questions.

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Good.

7 MR. HARRIS: The first youth
8 that will speak is Tyrell.

9 MR. WOODS: My name is Tyrell
10 Woods. I'm in Don't Fall Down in the
11 Hood for possession of a gun, and I'm
12 here to talk about police brutality and
13 how we can kind of curve police brutality
14 and we can come up with hotlines that
15 youth could go to to talk about police
16 brutality, because a lot of times when
17 police brutality go on, it just get
18 overlooked and nobody knows where to go
19 to or who to go to to see about the
20 problem.

21 My story and the reason why I'm
22 in Don't Fall Down in the Hood, because
23 one evening I was walking down the block
24 and I had a gun on me and it was past
25 curfew and I got pulled over by the cops

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 and I got searched and they found a gun
3 in my pocket, so...

4 MR. HARRIS: Why did you have
5 the gun on you?

6 MR. WOODS: I had the gun on me
7 because me and my friends, we had got
8 into a problem and words got exchanged
9 and it was...

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Words got
11 exchanged and you thought you needed the
12 gun to --

13 MR. WOODS: To protect myself.

14 MR. HARRIS: And I think that's
15 what a lot of the youth go to, because
16 seemingly they're taking things into
17 their own hands, because I don't know if
18 it's they feel comfortable going to the
19 police and talking about their problems,
20 but they're going out and getting guns on
21 like -- and doing it themselves. So I
22 think we need to open up that type of
23 dialogue or communication with the police
24 and facilitate some type of training
25 where these young people feel comfortable

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 actually going into a police station and
3 talking about what's happening instead of
4 going out to the corners and picking up
5 guns.

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So just
7 to be real clear, you're saying that you
8 had a gun to protect yourself because you
9 had a conflict with a friend?

10 MR. WOODS: No. It wasn't one
11 of my friends. It was me and my friends
12 and another group.

13 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I'm
14 sorry. Say that again.

15 MR. WOODS: It was me and my
16 friends, but we had a conflict with
17 another group of people.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: But what
19 could have helped was if they were
20 comfortable enough to go into the police
21 station or somewhere to talk about their
22 problem?

23 MR. HARRIS: Yeah, I think so.
24 As far as some type of prevention in the
25 schools, a type of program to where they

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 talk about violence in the communities
3 and also have counselors that cater
4 towards those types of things as far as
5 violence, youth violence, that like a
6 class that's actually taking place in the
7 high schools that will actually inform
8 the youth on the consequences of violence
9 and also be that listening ear where they
10 can talk to. Because many of the youth
11 don't have that at home. They don't have
12 that support. So somewhere it has to be
13 like kind of like a surrogate family that
14 has to be put in place for these youth.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
16 Councilman Greenlee.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
18 you, Madam Chair.

19 To follow up on something, the
20 first statement that Councilman Kenney
21 made to the young man that just spoke, he
22 said when he had this problem, he felt he
23 had to go out and get a gun. Am I right
24 to assume it was not hard to find that
25 weapon?

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. WOODS: No, it's not hard
3 at all.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: You got
5 it in your own neighborhood from
6 somewhere?

7 MR. WOODS: Yeah.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And I
9 assume that probably most of the young
10 people in here can say that they could
11 get a gun pretty easily, correct?

12 MR. WOODS: Yeah.

13 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I
14 actually heard that you can rent a gun
15 for an hour. Is that true?

16 MR. WOODS: I never heard of
17 that.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: You never
19 heard of that one? Okay.

20 MR. WOODS: No.

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER:
22 Councilman Ramos.

23 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thank you
24 for being here today to take part in a
25 very, very troubling and the number one

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 issue facing Philadelphia, crime,
3 violence and drugs. My line of
4 questioning was along the same lines as
5 my colleague, Councilman Greenlee.

6 If I ask you today to find me a
7 gun, that I wanted to buy a gun, would
8 you have a hard time getting a gun for
9 me? Would you know where to go to
10 purchase a gun?

11 MR. WOODS: Yeah, I think so.
12 I don't think it would be a problem for
13 any youth now.

14 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I'm sorry?

15 MR. WOODS: I don't think it
16 would be a problem for any youth to find
17 a gun for you now, how crazy guns is in
18 the neighborhoods. It's like going to
19 the store and getting some chips or
20 something.

21 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: If I -- this
22 is hypothetical, and please don't
23 interpret this wrong. And if you went to
24 a place that came to mind to you right
25 now and you couldn't find one there for

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 me, would you think of another place
3 where you can go and get it?

4 MR. WOODS: Yeah, you could.

5 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: And if you
6 couldn't get it in that second place,
7 would there be a third place?

8 MR. WOODS: There's always
9 somebody to call for a gun.

10 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: If I was to
11 tell you I need a gun, do you think that
12 you might be able to go five, six, seven
13 different places until you got it for me
14 at the price that I was willing to pay
15 for it?

16 MR. WOODS: I'm not sure if
17 it's that many, but I don't think --

18 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: You say at
19 least two or three?

20 MR. WOODS: At least two or
21 three.

22 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Okay. You
23 know why? Because I spend a lot of time
24 out in the street, and I live in North
25 Philly, and I was cruising around a part

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 of North Philly during the summer, right?
3 And I see this guy on the corner,
4 happened to be a guy that looked like a
5 friend of mine from back in the day,
6 right? So I pull up and I said,
7 So-and-so. And he looked at me. He
8 said, Juan, right? Comes over -- and it
9 was a hot corner. We all know what I
10 mean by a "hot corner." It was a real
11 hot corner. And he walks over to the car
12 and we -- how is your father, my mother
13 died, and we're into that talk. And then
14 I said to him, What are you doing on this
15 corner?

16 And he says to me, It's not
17 what you think I'm doing on the corner.

18 I said, Okay. So what are you
19 doing on the corner?

20 And he said, Somebody has got
21 to sell these guys the guns. And he kind
22 of like caught himself. He says, Juan, I
23 got to get away. I got to go. And he
24 just went away. And what I have picked
25 up is that just as we have the selling of

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 drugs in certain parts of the city,
3 indoors, outdoors, that we also have
4 people out there that are selling guns
5 like people selling drugs. Is that the
6 way -- is it that real out there?

7 MR. WOODS: I think it is that
8 real, but I think it's going to get worse
9 because there's not a lot of stuff that
10 young people have to do.

11 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: How could it
12 get worse?

13 MR. HARRIS: Pardon me,
14 Councilman. I hate to interrupt, but we
15 have one more speaker that could give his
16 testimonial and then if we could --

17 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Can I get
18 the answer to that last question, if you
19 don't mind?

20 MR. HARRIS: Okay.

21 MR. WOODS: It could get worse
22 because young people now, it seems like
23 they're restless. There's nothing to do
24 but go outside and get into stuff. Like
25 they said before, the group before us,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 there's no recreation centers, there's
3 nothing for us to do but go outside and
4 do the wrong thing, because there's not
5 more like programs like Don't Fall Down
6 in the Hood like to prevent stuff. And I
7 think it should be a lot of stuff to
8 prevent stuff like this from happening so
9 we don't have to go to a program like
10 this before we get locked up. So if we
11 had stuff like that, I think it prevents
12 stuff. If not prevent it, it could slow
13 the gun violence down a lot, by telling
14 people the type of consequences you could
15 get from being locked up for a gun and
16 having a gun, because a lot of people
17 don't know.

18 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I appreciate
19 your candor and your insight on this, on
20 how we can do more to tackle this problem
21 of crime, violence and drugs. Thank you.

22 Thank you, Madam Chair.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

24 MR. ULMER: My name Harum Ulmer
25 and the reason why I'm in Don't Fall Down

22 At this point in time, I was
23 not going to school because I felt as
24 though there was no reason for me to go
25 to school because it was a lot of things

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 happening, you ain't get no teacher. But
3 the reason I was not going to school,
4 because it was less books in the
5 classroom, too many people trying to get
6 the teacher attention. I seen no reason
7 to be in school. Our classroom, the
8 hallways was dirty, broke computers. In
9 CEP, the classrooms in the community, but
10 in reality -- they call it a community,
11 but in reality, it's really like a glass
12 cage, when people is not animals. But
13 after awhile, I put in an effort to get
14 where I needed to go. Now I'm in Bartram
15 Annex. We have cleaner classrooms. We
16 can walk around every day. I really feel
17 free. We have better computers and
18 everything is updated.

19 The way I feel about it is,
20 every young person in Philadelphia needs
21 smaller classrooms, more resources,
22 better teachers, cleaner schools, plus in
23 the main problem that all of us need to
24 get is equal education, no matter your
25 class, your gender or your race, because

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 when it come down to it, we all the same
3 Americans.

4 I think they need to shut down
5 CEPs all over the world, not just in
6 Philadelphia, and put more LAA programs
7 out there and just better schools,
8 period.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Did you
12 mention you were in CEP?

13 MR. ULMER: Yes, before I went
14 to Bartram.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: The one
16 in West Philadelphia?

17 MR. ULMER: Yes, green shirts.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Where is
19 that?

20 MR. ULMER: 43rd and
21 Westminster.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So your
23 recommendation -- you know what I think
24 we should say, too? If anybody wants to
25 send a copy of their recommendations, it

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 would be most appreciated. I mean, the
3 stenographer is actually writing down
4 what everyone is saying, but it would be
5 good if we could sort of classify them
6 and send them in.

7 MR. HARRIS: We'll put it
8 together and send it to your office.

9 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
10 Thank you. We have two more?

11 One question.

12 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Just one
13 quick question relative to the program.
14 What relationship do you have with the
15 churches in the neighborhoods? Is there
16 any cooperation or is there any input
17 from church to church with your program?

18 MR. HARRIS: Yeah. We meet
19 frequently as far as with like pastors
20 and things of that nature.

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: You're
22 talking about surrogate kind of families.
23 That's kind of the place I would think
24 you could find --

25 MR. HARRIS: Exactly. And I

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 understand where you're going with that,
3 but it seems that a lot of our youth
4 aren't going to the churches. So I don't
5 know what could be put in place or how we
6 can talk to them about that, but religion
7 is not seeming to actually draw them in.

8 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I wasn't
9 actually thinking about going to
10 services, although that would be great,
11 too, but my point is that they have halls
12 and they have social stuff. I mean,
13 there's other things, as you know, that
14 the churches provide other than just the
15 Sunday service, and I'm wondering whether
16 or not -- and even the possibility of
17 employment through a maintenance person
18 or that kind of thing and -- I'll wait
19 for the other ones.

20 MR. HARRIS: That's something
21 to look into.

22 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Okay.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
24 you. You have more young people back
25 there?

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. HARRIS: Yes, ma'am.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

4 Hi. Just state your name for
5 the record.

6 MR. WHITEN: Good afternoon,
7 everyone. My name is Frederick Whiten,
8 F-R-E-D-E-R-I-C-K, W-H-I-T-E-N.

9 MR. CARTER: Hello, City
10 Council. My name is Tom Carter,
11 C-A-R-T-E-R.

12 MR. PARKS: My name is Lonelle
13 Parks, L-O-N-E-L-L-E, P-A-R-K-S.

14 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
15 You can begin wherever, however you're
16 going to begin.

17 MR. WHITEN: I guess I should
18 begin by first thanking everyone for
19 allowing us to be here today. My boys
20 are sitting here, and I call them "my
21 boys" because I couldn't love them any
22 more than if I was their father. That is
23 the kind of love that purveys throughout
24 the program in Don't Fall Down in the
25 Hood.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 These young men will probably
3 share their stories with you and give as
4 much detail as possible in the short time
5 that we have. So you don't need to hear
6 from me; you need to hear from them.

7 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All
8 right.

9 MR. CARTER: Like I said
10 before, my name is Tom Carter and I'm in
11 the Don't Fall Down in the Hood program
12 for possession of a firearm. I am here
13 today because I want to be a success and
14 part of the solution.

15 How I got the gun charge is
16 because there was a fight because my
17 friend robbed somebody. After the fight,
18 everyone left. Me and my two friends and
19 four girls were sitting on my dad's house
20 on the steps. They got about 20 more
21 people and were walking down the block
22 towards my dad's house. I took my little
23 cousin in the house and grabbed a
24 20-gauge shotgun. When I came out of the
25 house, at first I said, What's up now?

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 And they ran around the block. As I went
3 around the block after them, an
4 undercover cop put a gun to my head and
5 arrested me. I stayed in the 15th
6 District for about a day, the Youth Study
7 Center for about two days and St.
8 Gabriel's for about two months.

9 When I got out, they put me on
10 house arrest and gave me 30 days to
11 straighten up. During them 30 days, I
12 was smoking marijuana. And once I went
13 back to court, they put me in the Don't
14 Fall Down in the Hood program and kept me
15 on house arrest.

16 My topic I would like to talk
17 about today is, I think we need more
18 choices, because not everybody is made
19 for college. Some solutions that can be
20 put in place are things like apprentice
21 programs, co-ops and other training and
22 certifications in schools that will get
23 us better prepared to have successful
24 lives. If we had options like these, it
25 would keep young males like us off the

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 streets. If these programs were already
3 available, I probably would have never
4 been in the Don't Fall Down in the Hood
5 program. I don't think I would be in the
6 Don't Fall Down in the Hood program
7 because I probably would have been at my
8 job instead of in that fight or with that
9 gun.

10 MR. PARKS: I'm Lonelle Parks
11 and I'm here today because I want to be a
12 success and part of the solution.

13 The reason I'm here today is
14 because I was caught with narcotics and a
15 switchblade on school grounds. It was
16 about 8:30 in the morning and I was
17 cracking a dutch and the security guard
18 walked up on me while I was sitting in
19 the stairway. He took me down to the
20 room and searched me. He found the
21 narcotics in my pocket after I already
22 emptied my pockets and I took my jacket
23 off and put it on the chair. So they
24 searched my jacket and found the knife.

25 And my topic is, I think they

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 need to build more recreational centers
3 for the youths. In our community we need
4 more rec centers to come out to our
5 communities all throughout Philadelphia
6 to make sure younger children, 9, 10, 11
7 and 12 and so forth, would not be drawn
8 to the streets, gangs and drugs. Also,
9 it would see to it that the recreational
10 centers don't limit children to what they
11 want to do and let them act out showing
12 how artistic they can be in whatever
13 hobbies, interests, sports, performing
14 arts and video games. Also to help them
15 with school work when they don't have
16 anyone else to turn to.

17 I think rec centers should talk
18 to these communities, take them out on
19 trips, picnics, have meetings to show
20 families of these communities that they
21 really do care about making a difference
22 for our future's youth so that families
23 and people of the communities can come
24 together to build a better Philadelphia,
25 meaning knock down vacant houses to

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 restore them so that other families can
3 move into the communities, having
4 families put up their own murals in their
5 own neighborhood to show the pride and
6 the neighborhood's true colors.

7 Thank you.

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So when
9 you said that if we have more rec centers
10 and we can attract 9, 10, 11-year-old
11 young people, you think that that's a key
12 age to really kind of grab young people
13 and do prevention?

14 MR. PARKS: Yes, because around
15 that age, a lot of the youths, like they
16 look to the streets because they don't
17 see anything else, because a lot of these
18 people have so many broken households
19 that when they see other people doing it
20 and they don't see any positivity going
21 on in the streets, they just turn to the
22 streets, because that's all that's out
23 there for them.

24 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: What part
25 of the city, where do you live?

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. PARKS: West Philly.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Do you
4 have a recreation center near you?

5 MR. PARKS: Well, we have two
6 recreational centers. Well, Tustin's
7 Playground and Haddington's, but, of
8 course, Haddington's had a lot of murders
9 around there lately, and Tustin's
10 Playground recreational center is not
11 open but seasonal.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. So
13 you'd like to see that open year round,
14 then?

15 MR. PARKS: Right.

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
17 Why do you think young people don't use
18 recreation centers?

19 MR. PARKS: They don't use
20 recreational centers, of course, because
21 they don't think that it's safe there,
22 because, you know, when they get in
23 conflicts with people in school and in
24 the communities, people, you know, they
25 come to those recreational centers, they

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 go there just to find the same people,
3 and the same thing goes on with what
4 happened in the streets with them.

5 MR. CARTER: Excuse me. I can
6 say something on that?

7 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Yes.

8 MR. CARTER: Like they think
9 it's a waste of time to go to the rec
10 centers because they're out like -- say
11 they're hustling, they're making the
12 money, they don't want to be in the rec
13 centers.

14 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: What can
15 we do to get them off the street from
16 hustling and making their money?

17 MR. CARTER: Like I said, like
18 the co-ops, because then they're going to
19 want to like -- like Devin said, he said
20 there ain't enough jobs. So the co-op,
21 it gets them ready for the job. So if
22 they're going to school, they're going to
23 be ready for the job and then they'll
24 have like more qualities that you need
25 for that job.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: You mean
3 like the co-op education they have in
4 schools?

5 MR. CARTER: Yeah. Like
6 they'll have certain classes for learning
7 about -- if you want to be a carpenter,
8 you can learn about carpenter in the high
9 schools.

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Like
11 trades?

12 MR. CARTER: Yeah.

13 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
14 How old are you, Tom?

15 MR. CARTER: I'm 15.

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: 15?

17 MR. CARTER: Yeah.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And how
19 old are you, Lonelle?

20 MR. PARKS: I'm 17.

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: What
22 school do you go to?

23 MR. PARKS: I was attending
24 University City High School.

25 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Do you

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 still go?

3 MR. PARKS: No. After --

4 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Did you
5 graduate?

6 MR. PARKS: No.

7 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Are you
8 in GED?

9 MR. PARKS: Well, I'm thinking
10 about getting into the Job Corps since I
11 got kicked out of University City.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

13 And, Tom, what school do you go
14 to?

15 MR. CARTER: I go to Delaware
16 Valley High School.

17 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: The
18 charter school?

19 MR. CARTER: Yeah, it's a
20 charter school.

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: In
22 Germantown?

23 MR. CARTER: No. It's not in
24 Germantown. I'm not even sure where it
25 is.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

3 MR. CARTER: It's up near the
4 Boulevard.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER:
6 Councilman Ramos.

7 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I'm sorry.
8 The young man in the middle, what's your
9 name again?

10 MR. CARTER: Thomas.

11 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Thomas.
12 Thomas, how hard was it for you to get
13 this 20-gauge shotgun?

14 MR. CARTER: It wasn't hard at
15 all.

16 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: I'm not
17 asking you where you got it. How did you
18 get it?

19 MR. CARTER: No. The 20-gauge
20 actually wasn't mine; it was my dad's.

21 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Okay.

22 MR. CARTER: But I had a gun
23 before that anyway.

24 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: What are you
25 saying?

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. CARTER: I said I had a gun
3 before that anyway. I had a few guns
4 before. But they're easy to get.

5 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Even
6 shotguns are easy to get?

7 MR. CARTER: Yes.

8 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Where would
9 you get -- if I asked you to get me one,
10 will you be able to get me one today?

11 MR. CARTER: I could get you
12 one. I know a few spots, like two or
13 three, like he said.

14 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: You think
15 that part of the problem -- it's a very
16 complex problem and all the things that
17 the young men here have stated is so
18 true, but these guns are available. This
19 is the second time I've asked the same
20 question, and both you and the young man
21 before you said yes, they could probably
22 find two or three places where you can go
23 get me a gun. There's guns everywhere.

24 Do you think if we had stricter
25 laws on guns that this would also -- and

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 more access to safer playgrounds,
3 according to some of the statements you
4 guys have made, that this can help us
5 eliminate the gun violence in our
6 streets?

7 MR. CARTER: Yeah, I think.
8 Yeah, I think it would.

9 COUNCILMAN RAMOS: Okay. Thank
10 you, Madam Chair.

11 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: You know,
12 it's one thing to know that you can get a
13 gun, but it's also another to have the
14 mindset that you want to get a gun. I
15 was talking to a young man who is
16 incarcerated and I asked him what are
17 some of the young people saying that are
18 already in prison, and he says that they
19 all think they have to carry a gun. And
20 one of the young men up here did say he
21 had a gun on him because he felt like he
22 needed it for protection.

23 I guess at some point we need
24 to move -- even when we have laws, it
25 would be good if we could live in a

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 society where people didn't feel like
3 they had to have a gun for protection,
4 because then that means everybody is
5 carrying a gun. And when you sit and
6 watch a western and you see everybody has
7 a gun on their hip and this town becomes
8 calmer when the sheriff makes them put
9 the guns away.

10 So we got to move -- I don't
11 know what happened as to why young people
12 think they have to have a gun or a
13 license to carry. We don't want to live
14 in that kind of society. I don't know
15 what we need to do to turn it around, and
16 that's why we want to talk to young
17 people, so you guys can tell us or young
18 ladies can tell us what we need to do,
19 how can we make a difference.

20 DR. LEACOCK: Can I add a few
21 things?

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Sure.
23 And don't forget to state your name.

24 DR. LEACOCK: Councilmembers,
25 these are just a few of our young people

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 who actually we can go through the 900
3 young men that we have worked with over
4 the last nine years. Right now we have
5 served 122 and our referral list is ever
6 growing, and for us the real challenge is
7 not that young people are picking guns up
8 but the choices we put in front of them.
9 For example, here's a good example:
10 Five, six years ago there were 20,000
11 youth jobs. This past summer there were
12 only 5,000 youth jobs. So when you have
13 15 more thousand young people who don't
14 have summer jobs and you go and allocate
15 a million more dollars for police
16 officers and you put police officers --
17 more police officers and more unemployed
18 youth, that's a bad mixture. And you
19 have unsafe recreation centers and you
20 don't have internships and you don't have
21 quality things for our young people to
22 do, you're putting a bad mixture
23 together. Therefore, police officers are
24 going to harass our young people, going
25 to be frisking them for all kinds of odd

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 reasons. They don't know their rights,
3 young people, so they don't know how to
4 report -- put police unusual behavior
5 with them, and, therefore, you really get
6 young people doing inappropriate things
7 because there aren't quality
8 opportunities for them. And this is what
9 you are hearing with all our young
10 people, six of them who spoke to you. I
11 could have put up all of the others to
12 address you today.

13 And I think what we really need
14 to focus on, as Lamar was saying, you
15 know, we always say there are no jobs.
16 Well, we have to reallocate some of those
17 dollars and create employment. There are
18 things to do in our neighborhoods, clean
19 streets, clean lots. The abandoned
20 houses are doing nothing. I mean, we're
21 really talking about taxpayers' dollars
22 coming back. We really need to look
23 constructively on how to do some of these
24 things so there are quality choices in
25 front of our young people and not guns.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 The last thing I'll say,
3 because I know there's some other young
4 people who would like to come up to the
5 microphone. Those students are not part
6 of Don't Fall Down in the Hood. But the
7 last thing I would like to say is for all
8 our young people, when we address them on
9 a regular basis and I say to them, If I
10 let you out of this room right now, how
11 quickly can you come back with a gun,
12 they all tell me half hour to 45 minutes.

13 It's all over the place, but
14 the choices aren't where can you go get a
15 gun. The choices for us is where can we
16 find you a quality alternative choice so
17 you won't go get a gun and you will have
18 skills to do things other than fighting
19 and looking for guns to do what our young
20 people need to do.

21 And the last point is, Don't
22 Fall Down in the Hood is the only such
23 program in the State of Pennsylvania. As
24 you heard, our young people are saying
25 they have to get in trouble to get to

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 Don't Fall Down in the Hood. We need
3 more programs like Don't Fall Down in the
4 Hood, whether or not we call it Don't
5 Fall Down in the Hood or not, and we need
6 to do more of this so young people are
7 not getting smeared with criminal records
8 and then we have to ask employers not to
9 ask that favorite question, have you been
10 arrested. It will be null and void if we
11 put quality choices in front of them.

12 So I really am here to say --
13 that's why I didn't sit up front, because
14 I didn't want to talk too much. I wanted
15 our young people to really express their
16 thoughts to you. But I feel passionately
17 about this work that we do with young
18 people. We are wasting our young
19 people's lives. And I know you as our
20 leaders, elected leaders, are here to
21 help in tandem work. We need more
22 quality choices, employment, better
23 schools, safer playgrounds and certainly
24 safer streets, and police is just not the
25 answer.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
4 you. Thank you very much.

5 I'm sorry. Councilman Rizzo.

6 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you,
7 Madam Chair.

8 Thanks for coming in to share
9 your thoughts with us. I heard some of
10 the things that you described that could
11 help alleviate the need for a gun, jobs
12 and all the things that you've discussed
13 today, but if you were the Police Chief
14 and you had to solve the problem of all
15 the guns, how easy they are to get, what
16 would you do, if you were the Police
17 Commissioner for a day and someone asked
18 you what you think you could do? Now,
19 you described and a couple of the other
20 panelists described how easy it is to get
21 a gun. If you were in charge of the
22 police, what would you do to stop such an
23 easy availability of guns? What would
24 you do?

25 MR. CARTER: I really don't

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 know, but like we said with the jobs, if
3 people had jobs, they wouldn't be on the
4 street with guns. And like Mr. Archye
5 said how you spend money on all them
6 police officers to get us arrested for
7 having guns, if you put that into jobs
8 and co-op, things like we said, like you
9 wouldn't need all them police officers.
10 You may need less. So I'm really not
11 sure.

12 DR. LEACOCK: I think the
13 police officers is reactionary, is after
14 the fact. It's post a negative situation
15 that have smeared and created
16 difficulties for families and our young
17 people. I think we need to obviously
18 deal with the current situation, but we
19 also need to begin to put in place
20 choices for young people so over time
21 coming from both angles we will be able
22 to solve this problem.

23 We think this is doable, by the
24 way, at Don't Fall Down in the Hood,
25 because we deal with the most difficult

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 young people, and when they first come to
3 us, they're quite challenging. When they
4 leave us, they are a typical 16-year-old,
5 smiling, having fun, wanting to have a
6 great opportunity.

7 I think the police officer --
8 and I know him. We meet and sit in his
9 office often -- needs to do events like
10 this, talk to young people. We all want
11 arrests and talk negative about young
12 people, but infinitely we need many more
13 forums like this where we are talking and
14 listening to young people. They know
15 where the trouble spots are in the
16 neighborhood. They know it. We don't
17 need to send police to harass them and to
18 arrest them. Let's do a little less of
19 that and more of listening and talking
20 and providing choices.

21 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The young
22 man wanted to say something.

23 MR. PARKS: Yeah. I was going
24 to say like half of the people on the
25 streets that sell drugs and carry guns,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 like they don't even want to do it
3 themselves, but they do it because
4 there's not many alternatives out there
5 for them. And I know this from
6 experience.

7 (Applause.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
9 Thank you. You know, I do agree,
10 Dr. Leacock. I think when I was younger,
11 there was probably more opportunities.
12 If we didn't have school, we had a rec
13 center, we had a church, we had some
14 way -- the Boys Club -- where there was
15 some facility that we could go to to talk
16 to someone. And I agree that I think we
17 probably need more programs that are
18 available for young people to go to,
19 because I think they get a lot of
20 attention, support and counseling from
21 programs such as yours, and we need to
22 figure out how they can still get those
23 same services prior to coming to Don't
24 Fall Down in the Hood. And I think with
25 like AVRP and some of those other

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 preventive type programs, maybe some of
3 that can happen. But I agree.

4 Oh, one thing. I do want to
5 recognize that Councilwoman Brown has
6 joined this hearing.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Sure.
8 Thank you, Madam Chairperson. I have
9 just a few words and a question.

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: First I
12 need to commend you, Madam Chairperson,
13 for yet another opportunity that forces
14 us to look closely at violence, but this
15 may be one of the rare instances where I
16 have seen us hear from young people,
17 young people what you believe -- you tell
18 us how we can better serve you with the
19 challenges that you face. And quality
20 opportunities we hear clearly.

21 One alternative I want to see
22 if you are aware of -- and if you are,
23 what your perspective or opinion is --
24 our Recreation Commissioner realized
25 shortly after coming here that programs

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 for young people between the ages of 13
3 and 17 were basically non-existent.
4 There were a lot of structured programs
5 for children younger than 13, but for
6 teenagers they just were not there. So a
7 number of teen centers have been opened
8 at various rec centers around the City,
9 and it appears that the response has been
10 favorable. Have you been in them? What
11 is your view of them? Do you think they
12 serve a purpose in providing what one of
13 you called which was a safe playground
14 and the like? What is your perspective
15 about that alternative means to providing
16 recreation to young people between the
17 ages of 13 and 17?

18 MR. PARKS: I've been in the
19 recreational centers and a lot of them,
20 like they have boxing, basketball, pool
21 and also homework programs or whatever,
22 but a lot of kids when they go to those
23 recreational centers, like I said, they
24 don't feel safe all the time. And I
25 think if you can put like guards at

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 7-Elevens and Rite-Aids and, you know,
3 stores, just regular convenience stores,
4 then you can also put people to guard the
5 youths of the recreational centers that
6 go there that shouldn't feel threatened
7 to go there. You know what I'm saying?
8 The people from their own community.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Sure. So
10 what I hear you saying is that the
11 programs are good, but they serve no
12 purpose if you can't be safe while there.

13 MR. PARKS: Right.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So still
15 the issue of feeling safe and secure to
16 first get in and then while you're there
17 and probably while you're on your way
18 home as well.

19 MR. PARKS: Exactly.

20 DR. LEACOCK: I just want to
21 say one last thing -- one more thing, not
22 one last thing. I mean, the Institute
23 has a program at one of the rec centers
24 in Southwest and we were having our
25 Thanksgiving dinner for about 200 young

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 people at the location and there was a
3 shooting. They had to lock all the doors
4 while the kids stayed inside.

5 So, yeah, there might be a teen
6 center, but security is vitally
7 important. We need police officers or we
8 need security guards or somebody to
9 really make sure those facilities are
10 secure. And it drives people away.
11 People often tell my staff at the
12 Southwest program they don't want their
13 kids coming there because they heard of a
14 shooting last week.

15 So, you know, a teen center is
16 a great idea, but you got to be able to
17 come and go safely.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Is there
19 any bigger role or broader role for
20 clergy as it relates to the issues we're
21 talking about today, for the faith-based
22 community, period? Is there any
23 interface with clergy in the community
24 where you come from?

25 MR. PARKS: Well, yeah. Like a

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 lot of things happen in my community, and
3 some things that happen is still going on
4 in my community. Like around the area of
5 Lansdowne Avenue, like they don't really
6 have a recreational center to go to.
7 They have to go through Master Street,
8 toward Callowhill Street, and, you know,
9 those blocks all have some type of
10 larceny against each other. You know
11 what I mean?

12 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Sure.

13 MR. PARKS: Because of whatever
14 neighborhood violence that goes on
15 between those neighborhoods. You know
16 what I mean? And the recreational center
17 is all the way down on Haverford Avenue,
18 which is right in the middle of all of
19 that.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: What and
21 Haverford?

22 MR. PARKS: 57th and Haverford.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So
24 to the question, is there a role for the
25 faith-based, the church, clergy

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 community?

3 MR. PARKS: Yes.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And what
5 do you think that role could be or should
6 be?

7 DR. LEACOCK: My take in
8 working a lot with the faith-based
9 organizations -- and we had a couple
10 years ago put together a faith-based
11 conference up at the Bright Hope Baptist
12 Church -- I think a lot of time the
13 faith-based organizations have a
14 particular challenge. They work within
15 certain sectors and it's -- someone needs
16 to be able to get them to talk beyond and
17 across boundaries.

18 I know one pastor said to me,
19 you know, I don't have anyone truant in
20 my church, why should I get involved in
21 truancy? Well, guess what? Your church
22 is in North Philly. Kids are truant.

23 So I think it's a certain kind
24 of education needs to equally happen and
25 churches need to go beyond just serving

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 their congregation. And I think although
3 it's a good idea that we get faith-based
4 organizations involved, very often they
5 don't go across the boundaries to see
6 kids as a whole. They want to work with
7 who is in their congregation rather than
8 kids, period. Even if you don't go to
9 the congregation, there is a role for you
10 to play.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Indeed.
12 Indeed.

13 MR. PARKS: I think they need
14 to go out to all the communities, because
15 a lot of these people from these
16 communities that go at it with each
17 other, they really don't know each other.
18 You know what I mean? And that's why
19 that they do these things, because they
20 don't know each other and they don't want
21 to get to know each other. And, you
22 know, people, they look at you and think
23 that you look grimy per se and, you know,
24 they want to start yapping off at the
25 mouth and pulling out guns and shooting

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 at each other just because you from 59th
3 Street, 60th Street, 61st Street.
4 Because a lot of these things is block
5 based. And it's different in other
6 cities and other states, but right here
7 and right now, it's going on everywhere.
8 You know what I mean? In West Philly,
9 South Philly, Southwest Philly, North
10 Philly, Northeast Philly, it's all the
11 same.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Are you
13 talking about gangs when you say "block
14 based"?

15 MR. PARKS: Block based, gangs,
16 the whole nine. It's all the same.
17 Well, but in Philadelphia now, it's a
18 migration point, like I said before in
19 another meeting we had with the Mayor,
20 and it's gangs coming from other states,
21 like New York, Boston, Baltimore, New
22 Jersey and Delaware, you know. And those
23 people are, you know, a lot of the
24 reasons that the city is the way it is
25 right now.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Talk that
3 through. So they move here from other
4 states, they move to certain blocks and
5 then they recruit?

6 MR. PARKS: Yes. It's not that
7 they move here, but either they come and
8 go.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

10 MR. PARKS: They come, recruit
11 and go. And like I said, I could speak
12 from experience myself, because I wasn't
13 always in Philadelphia my whole life. I
14 was in New York and I was, you know, in
15 tune with the gang situation. And being
16 a part of that, I found out a lot of the
17 things that gangs do, it's different.
18 Like people look at it like it's all
19 about negativity when it's not really
20 about that. But the people that do it
21 now, they look at it because it's being
22 televised and they don't know what
23 they're doing because they think it's a
24 fad now, and everybody just wants to pick
25 up bandanas and pick up guns and start

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 shooting at colors when they really don't
3 know what it's about. So basically they
4 just blowing everything out of
5 proportion.

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So are we
7 talking Bloods and Crips?

8 MR. PARKS: Blood, Crips, Latin
9 Kings, Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords,
10 you know, Imperial Gangsters, any gang
11 that you can think of from the midwest to
12 the west coast, all the way back over
13 here to the east coast.

14 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Are they
15 all here in Philly?

16 MR. PARKS: Yes, they're here
17 in Philly.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: My God.
19 Okay. This is sure an education today
20 for me, that's for sure.

21 We have a group that I really
22 need to get on because they have to
23 leave. We don't want you to go anywhere,
24 but we have to -- we're still going to
25 bring you on, but we have to bring the

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 other group on, too.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you,
4 Madam Chair.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And I
6 really do thank all you guys for coming
7 in. You don't have to leave, but we
8 have --

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. PARKS: Thank you.

11 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We have
12 Shawn "Frogg" Banks and Rick Kennedy.
13 Shawn is Philly-Wood and Rick is Alpha
14 Media Entertainment Films and David
15 Foster that has a film, a short version
16 of their film called "Close to Death."

17 You can just go on and just
18 begin to talk, and don't forget to state
19 your name and whatnot for the record.

20 MR. KENNEDY: My name is Rick
21 Kennedy, R-I-C-K, K-E-N-N-E-D-Y. I'm CEO
22 of Alpha Media Entertainment.

23 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: Yes. And
24 I'm Shawn, S-H-A-W-N, Frogg, F-R-O-G-G,
25 Banks, B-A-N-K-S, and I'm CEO of

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 Philly-Wood Entertainment. And my
3 partner and I, Rick Kennedy, in 2005 when
4 we had 380 murders here in the City of
5 Philadelphia, we merged our companies and
6 decided to do a film based on the
7 life-style of not just gangs but gun
8 violence, period. And it was a heartfelt
9 film from when my partner created it, and
10 he came to me because I was in a drug
11 gang real heavy in the early '90s through
12 the JBM era and I was with a gang called
13 the Zooloo Nation, and it took me -- I
14 was kidnapped March 27, 1995. And the
15 thing is, I hear a whole lot of people
16 saying where these guns come from. I'm
17 here to straighten the point, straighten
18 the face with it. It's coming from the
19 government. The government continue to
20 bring these guns in these hoods.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: The thing
23 is, of course, it's a big business in the
24 United States. You can see with the war
25 going on over there, they're not going to

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 stop making these guns.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: I had in
5 the possession, I actually had grenades,
6 silences and so forth coming from 3rd and
7 Norris, 5th and Susquehanna. And, of
8 course, we don't make them down there,
9 but I was dealing with business people
10 that was coming into the hood selling
11 these guns.

12 And what we try to portray to
13 these kids, you got to make the right
14 choice. Since we can't stop them from
15 making the guns, we got to get you the
16 mindset not to pick these guns up and
17 show the consequences what a bullet can
18 do to you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. KENNEDY: Also, I just want
21 to say that when we was out in the field
22 and talking to a lot of young guys, a lot
23 of the problems come from a lot of
24 arguments, social arguments, being, you
25 know, girlfriend, boyfriend and people

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 not getting along. And the problem is
3 also that kids of today do not respect
4 each other nor do they respect authority,
5 as well parents or what-have-you. So
6 also they do not have the knack to strive
7 for something better. You understand
8 what I'm saying? They already settling
9 for less.

10 So the film definitely goes
11 right in your face to tell you the
12 repercussions of what's going on being
13 shot and everything. So you watch the
14 news, you watch the news and somebody had
15 been fatally shot or have gotten shot and
16 you haven't seen the after effects of it.
17 And also, I mean, it plays on him
18 mentally as well as physically, and you
19 have to live through the life after being
20 shot.

21 So, I mean, from that part and
22 from what my partner was saying, there
23 was times that when we was out there
24 filming this film, there was guys pulling
25 up in a car asking if we wanted to buy

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 real guns when we was filming it.

3 So guns are definitely there.

4 The gangs are definitely there. And I
5 remember from my time that, like he said,
6 a gang was from like South Philly, West
7 Philly. And I'm from West Philadelphia.
8 There was the Moon gang back then. Young
9 guy that was here talking about Tustin
10 Playground and Haddington. I know them
11 very well. Now you got block to block
12 fighting each other. And they can't get
13 into an argument and say, Okay, I had an
14 argument, to be that. They got to go out
15 and get a gun and now somebody is fatally
16 shot.

17 So the film definitely comes
18 right to you in your face to let you know
19 the problems that we have on the streets,
20 because I think most of the time City
21 Council and the state, they don't know
22 what's going on in these streets, and the
23 young people are definitely crying out
24 and needing help. So that's what we did
25 with the film.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All
3 right. Good. So we're going to get
4 started?

5 David, did you want to say
6 anything?

7 MR. FOSTER: My name is David
8 Foster. I play a big role in the movie.
9 I'm also a convicted felon. I was
10 convicted of a firearms charge. But one
11 thing I learned, that I didn't have to
12 carry a gun to protect myself because I
13 believed in God, so I left the guns
14 alone. I tried to do something
15 productive.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. FOSTER: I went back to
18 college. At the end of this semester
19 I'll be obtaining an Associate's degree
20 in business. And I'm willing to talk to
21 any of the kids behind me if they want to
22 talk to me about their situation or try
23 to find out the roads that I took and
24 steps that I took to be where I'm at
25 today.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. FOSTER: You're welcome.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Great.

6 So we're going to see the film.

7 ("Close to Death" film shown.)

8 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: Basically
9 right there, this was just a sample. In
10 the movie, of course, the whole movie, we
11 get into -- we show gunshot victims,
12 former drug dealers, showing their
13 wounds, telling these kids why it's not
14 cool to come to these streets, the
15 consequences of selling drugs and picking
16 up guns. And what I try to tell the
17 youths these days, instead of ya'll being
18 out on them corners thinking ya'll
19 hustling, we're the one getting hustled,
20 because when you go back to prison, it's
21 modern day slavery. For every time they
22 lock one of us up, they make money off
23 it. So you can fall. Weak to the
24 street, be a follower, gang banging,
25 following the red or the blue, because

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 now you fall into the system. It's
3 always a way out. Excuse ain't but an
4 excuse.

5 I was born in a single-parent
6 home. My mother did what she had to do.
7 My father was a hustler. So when I made
8 those choices, I didn't have to -- my
9 grandmother set a good foundation for
10 what we had in North Philly. And that
11 was just an excuse for me to run and look
12 up to the guy on the corner with the big
13 rims, the big money and all these girls.
14 But on the blind side, a gang is a
15 falsified family. They fed me, they
16 clothed me, they gave me money, but when
17 I was incarcerated and I was in that cell
18 all day, none of my friends was there no
19 more.

20 So the bottom line, if ya'll
21 don't wake up right now and hanging on
22 them Chinese stores, take them hoodies
23 off ya'll head, pull your pants up, look
24 another man in the eye and stop falling
25 for these streets, man.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: Because
4 it's a dead issue. And tomorrow I've
5 been blessed with "Close to Death" to go
6 speak on Capitol Hill with the Exodus
7 Tour with Bill Cosby to speak for the
8 streets, to speak for the youth and my
9 black community and saying we got to help
10 each other, man. It's nobody fault.

11 When I'm walking down the
12 street, I'm not looking for no other race
13 but my own brother trying to rob me these
14 days, and we got to settle our problem
15 ourselves, because right now the jail
16 doors are open, the schools are closing,
17 we got to use this. This got to be our
18 ammunition to our black males. We got to
19 use this. When you're smoking that
20 whack, smoking that weed and you're
21 putting that gun in your hand, you got a
22 falsified power. You think you could
23 rule the world, but that same gun is
24 going to get you locked up. And when you
25 look at that judge, when he smack that

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 mallet and give you 50, 60, 70 years and
3 you're away from your family, don't call
4 home ask for no commissary, don't say you
5 need help, because there's so many
6 programs out here right now that we got
7 for ya'll, man, ya'll just got to make a
8 call, ya'll got to be willing. You can't
9 be no followers.

10 And I was in the struggle.
11 I've been there, so I know it's a lot of
12 peer pressure and it's hard for our
13 youth, but we also need the City of
14 Philadelphia, the Councilwoman, just like
15 these young kids just said today, we need
16 recreation centers. We need to be secure
17 where they need somewhere to go where
18 they could play with computers, play
19 ball, whatever. We need a 24-hour
20 hotline where a lot of these kids don't
21 look up to authority, the cops, because
22 like he said, some of the authority are
23 abusing these kids, taking advantage of
24 their position. So we need like a safe
25 house for these kids need to go to where

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 they can also come and express their
3 feelings and learn something. And we got
4 to step up as adults and not only tell
5 them but like we did today, listen to
6 them, and we come to a conclusion where
7 we can't give up on one another, because
8 we're all going to lose this battle. And
9 why we did "Close to Death," because
10 we're all one bullet away from close to
11 death. A bullet don't have no names on
12 it. We could walk out here today or
13 tomorrow and without God, who knows, the
14 next step we take just might be our last.

15 So I just hope and pray that
16 ya'll listen to these organizations,
17 these young guys really take heed and not
18 just use this to say we listening, but do
19 something for them, because they are
20 lost. They're stuck. I mean, this is
21 not like when we grew up. This
22 generation is Generation X. A lot of
23 people is counting them out already
24 before they even get a chance to get
25 started. So I'm going to try to be a

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 voice for them and through music and
3 entertainment. And I'd like to thank you
4 and commend you, Councilman Donna Reed,
5 for helping fund --

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: -- a "Stop
8 the Violence" video that we will be doing
9 in February throughout the whole City of
10 Philadelphia with all the hottest rappers
11 in Philly. And we finally challenged
12 these rappers and say, Well, can you
13 please change your lyrics for one song,
14 one song. Because rap music and movies
15 are a big influence on this young
16 generation. They look up to these
17 rappers. They listen to what they say.
18 This music brainwash them. And what we
19 trying to do is, we finally did a "Stop
20 the Violence" song where we could talk
21 their language where they can listen
22 to -- you still can bob your head and
23 dance to something positive and make it
24 happen. And I commend you, Donna Reed
25 Miller, for one of the first

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 Councilmembers to recognize what we was
3 doing. When we came to you, you
4 commended your hand, you put that ink on
5 that paper, and you definitely a lady of
6 your word, and we need more people of
7 your stature. And we can't just blame
8 the Commissioner.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: But get
11 together and help these kids, because
12 we're all crying out and we definitely
13 losing this war. It is not Iraq right
14 now. These young guys are carrying guns,
15 man, and they're wearing bullet-proof
16 vests, and over that hoodie, they are
17 nice, smooth gentlemen, but we just got
18 to clean them up, the outside image, who
19 they really are, and make something
20 happen for them.

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
22 you.

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. FOSTER: I believe one of
25 the things that can help the youth for

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 today is education and job opportunities.
3 When I came home from prison, I went to
4 maybe 50, 60 interviews and always got
5 the door shut in my face. I never gave
6 up. I say, Okay, if I can't get a job,
7 then I'm going to go back to school so I
8 can obtain more education and maybe I'll
9 be more marketable as far as the job
10 market.

11 Training programs is something
12 that can help. I have younger cousins
13 and they seem to be coming of age where
14 they want to hang out in the street, and
15 I talk to them a lot. I say, you know,
16 If you don't want to go to college,
17 because a lot of people is not college
18 material, a trade. If you want to be a
19 carpenter, okay, be the best carpenter
20 you can and try to learn as much as
21 possible, so when you do one day have
22 kids, that you can support your family,
23 you won't have to turn back to the
24 streets. Because it's very easy to
25 obtain a gun or get a package of drugs

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 and go out there and hit the block. And
3 it's a dead-end road.

4 So I think education and job
5 placement and job training is one way of
6 helping the youths of today.

7 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
8 you.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I agree.
11 I think we're all strong advocates of
12 education and employment and job
13 training. We got to keep young people in
14 school long enough, though, to acquire
15 skills and some competency. And I don't
16 think we have the trades in the public
17 schools anymore, do we? Not what we used
18 to, right.

19 MR. FOSTER: I would like to
20 introduce a program that me and my
21 partner has been talking about. It's
22 Alpha Media and Philly-Wood. We would
23 like to bring some of the kids in to
24 teach them that it's not always that you
25 have to be a rapper, because I don't know

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 if these fellows know, but the rapper is
3 the one that get the lowest paycheck.
4 The executive producer, the director,
5 okay, you have a cameraman, you have a
6 script writer, you have so many
7 opportunities besides just being a rapper
8 or a basketball player or a star drug
9 dealer, as they think they are.

10 So we would like to introduce a
11 program to City Council that we're
12 willing to work to bring some of them
13 kids in and let them know, Okay, here's a
14 camera, you have different types of
15 cameras. There's more opportunities in
16 the entertainment business than just
17 being in front of the camera.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well,
19 you, David, you may not know -- I know
20 Frogg knows, the Recreation Commissioner
21 in the back knows.

22 Actually, Commissioner, these
23 are the young people that I spoke about
24 that said they wanted to help us with the
25 recording studio that we want to put over

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 at one of the rec centers and to teach
3 the entire business, not just to be able
4 to record on a disc or a CD or whatever
5 it is, DVD, but the entire business, as
6 you said.

7 So the Recreation Commissioner
8 is on the back row, and I told him about
9 you guys, Frogg, in a meeting, I believe
10 it may have been, last week. So we can
11 work on that project and get that
12 recording studio up and running. And
13 we're hoping that that's something -- let
14 me ask the audience.

15 If we put a recording studio in
16 a rec center, I'm talking about something
17 professional, is that something young
18 people are interested in?

19 AUDIENCE: Yes.

20 (Applause.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I want to
22 hear from the young people, though. See,
23 most people that clapped were adults.
24 Because we don't want to waste our money.
25 So what do you think? Tell me. Is that

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 a good idea?

3 (Some people yelling "yes,
4 that's a good thing.")

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All
6 right. Okay. It's not like we have a
7 whole bunch of money that we can just
8 throw away.

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: That's my
10 question. Just one question.

11 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER:
12 Councilman Kenney.

13 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Have you
14 guys been able to cost out that kind of
15 facility as far as a budget and what it
16 would take in equipment and set-up? I'm
17 trying to get an idea of what the number
18 is or what the number would be.

19 MR. FOSTER: With technology
20 today, you can get a big studio recording
21 budget with a small budget, because you
22 don't have to have the adetts (ph).
23 Everything can be ran through the
24 computers or digital. And the same is
25 for film-making. You don't have to have

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 a big \$20, \$30 thousand camera. You can
3 spend \$5,000 to get 24-P technology,
4 which looks great when you put it on the
5 screen.

6 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But is
7 there some way either you or people that
8 you work with could cost out --

9 MR. FOSTER: That would be no
10 problem.

11 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And then
12 get back to Councilwoman Miller, and
13 we'll try to figure out a way to get some
14 outside resources.

15 MR. FOSTER: Yes, sir.

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: The only
17 thing that concerns me about a rec
18 center -- and I guess Commissioner
19 Richard would have to talk about it --
20 is, it's kind of expensive equipment and
21 we'd have to secure it in a way that we
22 wouldn't want to make that investment and
23 have it either stolen or vandalized. You
24 know how rec centers get vandalized from
25 time to time, and if people know it's

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 there -- or do you think that people
3 knowing it in the neighborhood and being
4 active in it would keep it protected?

5 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: Well,
6 definitely. If you get them something in
7 each one of them rec centers in their
8 community and like the gentleman said, if
9 we took some of that money that we
10 spending on these officers, extra cops,
11 and all they doing is locking these kids
12 up and not getting rehabilitated, if you
13 put these same amount of funds, because
14 you are talking about saving lives --
15 it's no value on one person life -- and
16 if you put security around each one of
17 these rec centers in each one of these
18 neighborhoods, you will have a dramatic
19 drop in crime, because for one, you're
20 giving the kids what they look up to,
21 what they listen to and they could feel a
22 part of something. If you secure that
23 place and take care of each rec centers
24 like we take care of our homes, we will
25 have a whole lot of reduction in this

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 crime out here.

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: If you
4 could just do us a favor and try to get
5 that costed out and get it to Chairman
6 Miller, we'd be happy to try to find some
7 other resources.

8 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: No problem.
9 Okay.

10 MR. FOSTER: Not only that, I
11 think it would be a great opportunity
12 because if the kids are learning, like
13 engineer, an engineer can make easy
14 50,000 a year. So if there's a child who
15 came through the community center and
16 learn how to do engineering and then took
17 it and went and got a job placement,
18 that's even good.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And
20 engineering and architecture, it's so
21 difficult to find minority engineers and
22 architects, because of all the work
23 that's done now requires some type of
24 set-aside, which is a good thing, it's
25 very difficult to find local minority

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 engineers and architects. So that's a
3 void that really needs to be filled from
4 a professional standpoint, because firms
5 are going out seeking those professionals
6 all the time and just can't find them.
7 So that's something else --

8 MR. FOSTER: It would be a
9 great way to bring back also the sound of
10 Philadelphia as far as Philly being
11 such -- there's so much talent here,
12 where it will be, okay, we took some
13 guys -- these guys back here basically --
14 and we gave them an opportunity, okay, to
15 learn all these different trades, and it
16 would be more attractive for artists to
17 come to Philadelphia to record as far as
18 all audio or visual.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: If you
20 could get that budget. Thank you.

21 MR. FOSTER: No problem.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
23 you. And I want you to introduce
24 yourself to the Commissioner. He's on
25 the back row. He'll put his hand up.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 Thank you. Thank you so much
3 for coming in and showing the video.

4 MR. "FROGG" BANKS: Thank you.
5 I'd like to praise and commend, I thank
6 all the young guys out here, man. I know
7 ya'll can do it. Don't give up. Take
8 heed to everything ya'll heard today and
9 let's make it happen, man.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. SPENCE: Aaron Spence
12 again. IDAAY is also deeply involved in
13 our community, and these two young ladies
14 came from King and they wanted to
15 represent their school and the issue
16 that's been a topic that concerns them.
17 And we wanted to give them an opportunity
18 to really voice their concerns that's
19 going on in their school.

20 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Martin
21 Luther King High?

22 MS. ROBINSON: Yes. My name is
23 Teena, T-E-E-N-A, Robinson,
24 R-O-B-I-N-S-O-N.

25 MS. BOND: Takia, T-A-K-I-A,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 Bond, B-O-N-D.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I'm
4 sorry. What's your first name?

5 MS. BOND: Takia, T-A-K-I-A.

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
7 You can start. Don't forget to speak
8 directly into the mike. Okay?

9 MS. ROBINSON: We are here to
10 address the problem that we're having at
11 Martin Luther King High School with the
12 school police and to be a part of the
13 solution. The problem that we've been
14 having apparently for the past couple
15 years is the brutality and the excessive
16 force used by our school police
17 officials. We went around the school and
18 got a petition. Two hundred and
19 ninety-eight students feel the same way
20 as we do, that maybe we could get the
21 officers to go through more training or
22 sensitivity training or take out the
23 officers who are abusing the students and
24 who are using that excessive force.

25 We went through a couple of

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 steps in making this happen. We didn't
3 really know what to do to make this
4 happen actually, but we started with this
5 petition. And the last situation that we
6 thought we wanted to let happen was with
7 a young man who was beaten, was falsely
8 accused. He was beaten by school police.

9 Go ahead.

10 MS. BOND: Basically what she
11 was saying. Like we just, you know, want
12 the solution. We just want things to
13 change in Martin Luther King and every
14 high school. It's probably not just
15 going on in King.

16 There were a couple of students
17 that felt as though, you know, we
18 wouldn't have any type of outcome if we
19 just stayed in school. So we put
20 together a student walkout. It wasn't to
21 cause any wreckage. It was just to get
22 our point across so that the public will
23 also understand where we was coming from
24 and how we felt. We had a walkout, I
25 believe it was, Friday morning at 9

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 o'clock, 9:30 where over 200 students
3 participated. It was maybe seen in the
4 newspaper.

5 MS. ROBINSON: The school
6 officials at Martin Luther King, like the
7 administrators, the principal said that
8 this would not work. So we risked a lot
9 of stuff by pursuing this. And we made
10 the walkout very successful, and that was
11 basically just to get our point across,
12 and now we're just trying to get the
13 solution.

14 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
15 How many children go to Martin Luther
16 King? How many students are enrolled at
17 Martin Luther King High?

18 MS. ROBINSON: 1,500, I think.

19 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Do you
20 have copies of the petition?

21 MS. ROBINSON: Yes, right here.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I'd like
23 to get a copy.

24 Actually, Martin Luther King is
25 in my district. I didn't know anything

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 about it, anything, until I read it in
3 the paper on Friday. So I'm glad you
4 showed up here. In fact, I sent one of
5 my staff people out to Martin Luther King
6 this morning so we could kind of find out
7 what's going on up there.

8 So you want to make sure you
9 give William all your identifying
10 information -- he works for me -- and a
11 copy of the petition. Do you want to
12 give that to us? Do you have your own
13 copy?

14 MS. ROBINSON: Yes.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
16 I'm glad you're here, because as I said,
17 I sent someone to your school this
18 morning, because no one had reached out
19 to us. I had no idea really what was
20 going on other than what we read in the
21 paper. So we're very interested in
22 talking to you further about this.

23 MS. ROBINSON: Okay.

24 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

25 Thank you for coming.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 Councilman Greenlee.

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Just
4 quickly. And I, too, did not know much
5 about this or anything about this until I
6 saw it in the paper. I take it you have
7 at some point in time or maybe not you
8 two, but there's been complaints to the
9 principal, to the administration? What
10 has been, if any, answer that you've
11 gotten?

12 MS. ROBINSON: About the most
13 recent situation?

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Yes.

15 MS. ROBINSON: Friday -- I'm
16 sorry. Wednesday there was a situation,
17 and me and another young lady went to the
18 principal and asked her what could we do
19 and what were our rights as far as how
20 far can the school police go with us, and
21 she said just -- she asked me to get
22 proof for her, maybe a statement or
23 actual physical proof that the students
24 were being abused.

25 I then went to someone who I'm

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 close to, a teacher that I've known for a
3 couple years that I found to come really
4 close to him, and he told me to fill out
5 a complaint form or something. Basically
6 I went to a couple of people, and it just
7 seemed like it wasn't going to get
8 anywhere. And I wanted this problem to
9 be addressed immediately for the students
10 at King today and the students for the
11 future who will be at King, who will be
12 attending King.

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
14 you.

15 Thank you, Madam Chair.

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So
17 William is going to get your information
18 and we're going to figure out what are
19 our next steps.

20 MS. BOND: Ma'am, we also just
21 wanted to let you know that our -- the
22 person that we're talking about was not
23 the only person that this has happened
24 to. It's been a lot of students, and
25 many students that's here with us today

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 has been through it with the police at
3 our school, including the two that's up
4 here, us two.

5 It's a lot going on at King,
6 but it's not -- we're not sitting here
7 saying that it's the principal or how the
8 school is being ran. Just to let you
9 know that. It's not how the school is
10 being ran. It's just an issue that just
11 need to be solved and resolved.

12 MS. ROBINSON: I think part of
13 the situation is how the school is being
14 ran, because I think when the student --
15 that when you ask who the principal is at
16 Martin Luther King, half the students
17 don't know. I think the principal should
18 make herself be known, go in the police
19 office when people are being detained or
20 arrested or something and observe what
21 the school officials are actually doing
22 inside there. Because no one goes inside
23 there except for the other school police.
24 And I told our principal that I think
25 that she should show up every once in a

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 while to observe what's going on, what's
3 really going on inside that control room.

4 MS. BOND: Also, along with
5 what she was saying, she also said
6 something about sensitivity training,
7 which I agree with. And if it's
8 possible, we believe that it should be
9 another camera inside of control, because
10 like she was saying, after you close
11 those doors inside the police control
12 room, students and no one else can see
13 what else is going on. So it's like it's
14 our word against theirs. What can we do
15 about it if we can't prove it?

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. So
17 you're saying you have an actual room in
18 your school that you call the police
19 control room?

20 MS. BOND: Yes, ma'am.

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: With a
22 camera, you said?

23 MS. BOND: Yes, the -- oh, no.
24 The control room does not have cameras in
25 it. It's just where they sit and watch

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 the rest of the cameras that's around the
3 school.

4 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All
5 right. Well, we are going to get the
6 information and move forward. As I said,
7 I sent someone up to your school this
8 morning because we hadn't heard anything
9 more than what we read in the newspaper,
10 and we are interested. And I understand
11 your issues around administration,
12 training of security officers. And I'm
13 not clear yet on this camera piece, but
14 we'll talk about it. Okay?

15 MS. BOND: Okay.

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you
17 for coming in.

18 MS. ROBINSON: Thank you.

19 MS. BOND: Thank you.

20 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: You're
21 welcome.

22 (Applause.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We have
24 some other people that need to get up
25 here to testify. We have Kelly Leggett,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 and Kelly is from -- you can name your
3 organization. I know you have something
4 to do with Oxford Street.

5 MR. LEGGETT: Yes. My name is
6 Kelly Leggett. I'm from Oxford Street
7 Committee. And I was wishing that
8 Councilman Ramos was to stay because our
9 area is his district, him and Darrell
10 Clarke, and I seen them leaving.

11 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, he
12 can probably hear you up in the office.
13 We have a system where we can hear the
14 hearings in our offices.

15 MR. LEGGETT: Okay. My
16 organization consists of like a third
17 generation of ex-gang members that never
18 moved from down in the same neighborhood.
19 But it was in July of 2006 that we seen
20 that it was a necessity that some of the
21 people that's from the community who the
22 kids -- who we know it's the kids that
23 are doing the violence, we know their
24 parents. We grew up with their parents.
25 So we seen it sufficient enough for us as

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 a group to come back together and form
3 some type of unity in the community. And
4 what had happened, we went to the 8th and
5 Diamond area and down in our area, which
6 is Oxford Street, and we communicated
7 with the parents from up in that area and
8 the guys from down in our area, and it
9 kind of stopped. It's been one shooting
10 since that time, and that's been more of
11 a racial shooting over like the pill
12 seller and the drug seller, you know, and
13 crossing territory.

14 But all the same, I wanted to
15 start off by saying that like we know
16 that God didn't make no junk. See, the
17 young men that I'm here to represent,
18 when I asked them today, Did ya'll want
19 to come so that the Council can hear
20 ya'll out, their look was like -- they
21 call me "Leg." They was like, Look, we
22 ain't going down there, they got
23 warrants, they carry guns on the regular,
24 you know.

25 The question you was asking

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 some of these young men about could I get
3 a gun after six tries, you know, these
4 guys -- ain't no six tries. You know
5 what I'm saying? And they are really
6 like a group of young adults, not really
7 kids, that's out there. And they not out
8 there like -- I heard some of the young
9 men identify themselves that they got
10 caught with a gun, he was carrying a
11 knife to school. These guys is out there
12 for real. They are really out there
13 trying to survive and doing what they
14 doing.

15 I overheard them in the barber
16 shop talking to each other, and one of
17 them was saying, you know, when it come
18 between us, I'm just going to wait until
19 I get you in jail, because it ain't going
20 to be no guns in jail. And that's how
21 their conversation -- because they was
22 getting a hair cut, they was like
23 neutral, but they were saying, you know,
24 yeah, you big with guns, but I'm going to
25 see you in jail, because they know they

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 going. You know what I'm saying?

3 So I just came to try to kind
4 of come to terms with the Council to let
5 them know that like -- there's another
6 group that's not in no programs. I asked
7 the one young man, I said, When I go down
8 there, what could I tell them that you
9 would want from them that could help you
10 change to come out the life-style?

11 He said, You know what? He
12 said, Man, the way that they got the
13 system, I didn't have TB when I got
14 arrested and went to jail, but now that I
15 came home after doing my time, I got
16 tuberculosis and I can't even get
17 medical. I can't even get medical on
18 something that I caught in the state
19 penitentiary, and now I'm back out here
20 and I can't even get medical. I can't
21 get food stamps.

22 The way that they have the laws
23 rigged, if you got a drug violation,
24 there's certain stuff that you don't
25 qualify. So he's saying, How are they

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 expecting us to live? We can't fill out
3 applications because when we put it on
4 the application so just to get some
5 relief. I try to get some medical and
6 some stamps. They don't have to give me
7 the money, just some stamps. Because he
8 will work the stamps himself. You see
9 what I'm saying? He said, And I can't
10 even get that. So what direction do that
11 send me to? I'm going back to what I
12 know.

13 He said -- like the young man
14 said, that some of them don't want to be
15 out no more. Some of them don't want to
16 have to wear a bullet-proof vest, don't
17 want to have to do that every day, every
18 morning, you know.

19 So there's a lot to be done.
20 And I'm going to sit here and say that
21 like my life hasn't been perfect, but I
22 know God didn't make no junk. So the
23 ones that like we able -- in my group we
24 have an entrepreneurship class. We put
25 on cabarets. We're putting on a bowling

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 affair right now to raise money. Know
3 what we allow them to do? We allow them
4 to come to our affairs and take pictures,
5 you know. It's like being in a drug life
6 and making money every day. To go and
7 get a job at McDonald's and have to work
8 a whole week to get a paycheck, it just
9 don't register to them. So they might
10 only make a hundred dollars or a hundred
11 and fifty dollars, but to come and take
12 pictures, like to go to the Sixers arena
13 at the game for the Sixers and take
14 pictures and be able to offer people
15 that's there to take a picture, you know,
16 at the Sixers game, that's a way of a
17 source of income for them where they
18 still having cash on hand. They really
19 don't have to -- and the atmosphere is
20 something that they're able to adept to,
21 because that's like drug life, that's
22 like that whole life-style. And
23 eventually, you know, then we have to get
24 them to go over to like programs. Okay,
25 now if you want to go down to the game,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 you know, you're going to have to go to
3 some schooling for us a couple hours a
4 day.

5 That's how we're trying to
6 design it. We're just a new organization
7 that just got tired and said enough was
8 enough, so we got to do something.

9 But when I talk to them and I
10 hear them, this is what they're saying,
11 you know. It's a whole catch 22.

12 They have an apprenticeship --
13 the City of Philadelphia has an
14 apprenticeship program with the Housing
15 Authority. These guys live in Housing
16 Authority houses, but they're not on no
17 lease. How could their mom or their
18 auntie put them on the lease knowing that
19 he's selling drugs? If you get caught,
20 she's going to lose her house. So he
21 can't qualify for the program because
22 he's in the Housing Authority house but
23 he's not on the lease.

24 Right in our community we have
25 like so much construction. It's like

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 between 7th Street on Montgomery to
3 Berks, it's like 53 houses being built
4 from the ground up. On Marshall Street,
5 they built houses all on Marshall Street.
6 It's not one member from our community
7 work there. It's only three African
8 American men and one Spanish man in the
9 whole site that works there. Half the
10 guys is from New Jersey working on the
11 site.

12 So I go to the site. I said,
13 Man, why you can't hire -- I got the
14 company name. The lady tells me that the
15 agreement with the City was six percent
16 female, but because she's the owner of
17 the construction company, she filled that
18 void.

19 I said, How could you fill the
20 void when you the owner of the
21 construction company?

22 She told me this to my face.
23 It's supposed to be ten percent minority.
24 I mean, come on.

25 When you look in your own

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 community where you grew up at, right --
3 I'm putting myself as one of them guys --
4 and they go and try to ask the men, Look,
5 man, I don't know too much, but I'll do
6 whatever you tell me to do, and the guy
7 say, Well, you got to go to the union
8 hall, and you go to the union hall and
9 the union hall say, We don't got no union
10 book for you because you got to give us
11 \$700-and-something to get a union book,
12 man, I'm going back to the street. You
13 know what I'm saying?

14 So I don't know what it is
15 exactly ya'll need, because I seem to
16 feel that not just myself up to the point
17 where I really got involved, some other
18 people in this building is in denial. We
19 know what's going on. I'm going to tell
20 you exactly what's going on. They
21 watching the wire, playing the
22 PlayStation in the basement, smoking
23 blunts, and then when they come out, you,
24 me, whoever is in the way, you better not
25 get smart with them.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 My time era growing up, if it
3 was three of us, the police will get out
4 the car, put us on the wall and shake us
5 down, just search us. If they would just
6 search them with them big hoodies and big
7 sweaters on, then at least they have to
8 hide their drugs. At least they have to
9 hide their gun. And by the time they go
10 to run to get a gun to shoot me, at least
11 I got a chance to run away. But if they
12 carrying them guns on them and say
13 something smart to me -- this is my last
14 and I'm going to shut up: One day I was
15 at 30th and Berks. It's a Chinese store.
16 And I came out -- I ordered my sandwich,
17 I paid for it and I sitting on the steps
18 smoking a cigarette. Two young guys,
19 look like about maybe 14 to 12, turned
20 the corner. He said, Old head, give me
21 one of them cigarettes. And for the life
22 of me, I said -- I wanted to say, Boy,
23 what's wrong? But something just came
24 over me. I just said, Here you go,
25 youngie, and gave him a cigarette.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 Maybe three minutes after that,
3 another guy turned the corner and took a
4 bottle, he like threw it at their feet
5 playing with them. Both of them pulled
6 out guns. When I seen them boys pull
7 them guns out, I said, Thank you, God. I
8 left the food and I just went on home.

9 I'm telling you, something came
10 over me, because I wanted to say
11 something to them, but when I seen them
12 pull them guns out on that guy, I just
13 said, Thank you, God, and I walked on. I
14 didn't even pick up the food. I didn't
15 care about the money or nothing.

16 There's something that we have
17 to do and we're going to have to do it
18 collectively. Not no individual group
19 going to be a miracle, but in our
20 neighborhood, I'm going to tell you, it's
21 been one shooting. We don't know -- I
22 can't take them home. We can't take them
23 home with us, but we got to get them out
24 of the basement.

25 We had a recreation center at

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 RW Brown Boys Club. When Katrina hit New
3 Orleans, our community sacrificed our
4 recreation center. When they left, they
5 condemned the building. They took it
6 from us. We had RW Brown Boys and Girls
7 Club on 8th and Cecil B. Moore. It's a
8 familiar recreation center in our
9 community. No one in the community
10 attends there.

11 We have had -- we done a survey
12 for Curtis Thomas. We had 22 recreation
13 centers between Broad Street to Front
14 Street, Lehigh and Girard. We only have
15 three of them that's actively open right
16 now. The same one when you talked about
17 where the three people got shot up there
18 in West Oak Lane, it's 17 recreation
19 centers up there, and that particular one
20 has an ice skating rink right there. And
21 if the City could pay for an ice skating
22 rink for them to skate on, we can't even
23 get our doors open.

24 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well,
25 that's something that I'm not really

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 familiar with. I do know RW Brown Boys
3 Club, though, which is not a City
4 facility, that's private. But that's a
5 good point. And I think that those are
6 things you should talk to those people,
7 like your Councilmembers, about, the
8 specific rec centers. I can speak about
9 the ones in my district that either are
10 open or closed.

11 But I think you touched a lot
12 of excellent points. I also believe that
13 you and your committee of volunteers
14 working with the guys down there on
15 Oxford Street are doing a good job, any
16 time you brought the number of shootings
17 down to just one, and that really wasn't
18 over a personal dispute.

19 But do you really think those
20 two kids would have shot you if you said
21 no to a cigarette? We don't want you to
22 find out. But anyway --

23 MR. LEGGETT: I told you that
24 I'm not in denial. I'm up here. They
25 shooting them for less than that.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well,
3 that's true. And I think part of it,
4 too, is, you know, adults just don't
5 challenge anymore. When we were younger,
6 you know how the adults in the
7 neighborhood would boss you around like
8 crazy, and what you did was obey whatever
9 they said.

10 MR. LEGGETT: In the time when
11 you're particularly talking about, I
12 remember hearing them say that like it
13 take a village to raise a child. That
14 has never changed, but it's like the gaps
15 that we're creating by even bringing like
16 that type of, you know, stuff to the
17 table, that's when we creating those
18 loopholes.

19 I'm sure that the whole city
20 really means well. I heard the young man
21 mention Bill Cosby. And I remember in
22 the summer it was like when we really got
23 started, I think it might have been like
24 272 murders, and Will Smith and them came
25 right on time. But at the same

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 particular time, we had offered -- they
3 had offered an invitation to somebody
4 else that I hear them talk about, and
5 they didn't show up until like 400. You
6 know what I'm saying? That's like saying
7 like how can we ask them to like talk it
8 out, to like try to do it a different
9 way, when our City Council people really
10 can't sit down together and talk it out
11 and iron it out and they be going at it?
12 You know, it's like a trickle down, like
13 you dropped something in the water and it
14 just kind of like continuously run.

15 I don't know, man. We have to
16 do it collectively, and I believe it's
17 going to get done.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: It is a
19 collective and it's a collective of
20 everybody. It's not just your elected
21 officials. It's everybody. Parents, the
22 schools, the community, it's everybody.
23 That's the collective, because too many
24 times people think it's just elected
25 officials, but it's -- when I heard a

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 woman say to me she blamed me for her
3 son's death, I said, Wow, something is
4 wrong here, you know.

5 We have to do it as a
6 collective. That's one of the reasons
7 why we're having these hearings, because
8 we want to hear what people are saying.
9 And today won't be our last day of
10 hearings. This is just the beginning, or
11 one of the beginnings. We wanted to hear
12 from young people and people representing
13 young people.

14 The issues about diversity,
15 diversified workforce on construction
16 projects, the issue of recidivism, people
17 coming out of prison and they can't
18 qualify for food stamps, for housing, for
19 all those kind of assistance, a lot of
20 that came from the state, it didn't come
21 from the city -- or really it came from
22 the federal government, a lot of those
23 rules. If someone is not on a lease in
24 public housing, that's also a federal
25 rule about the public housing issue and

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 the funding of those programs. And we
3 thought it's a good program for people
4 that reside in public housing when they
5 can enter those apprenticeship training
6 programs and then they get work on those
7 projects that are happening in -- like on
8 the rehabilitation projects that are
9 happening in a lot of the public housing
10 developments.

11 MR. LEGGETT: Maybe could I say
12 it like this, then? There's no program
13 that's not a good program, but when ya'll
14 sign off, do you check back to see like
15 how -- like the program that you just
16 brought up, the public housing, when you
17 signed off on it -- because I'm saying
18 like we came here and said a whole bunch
19 of riff-raff to get you to just give me
20 the paper, but I'm talking about what I'm
21 doing with it after I get it. That's
22 what we need, the follow-up from City
23 Council to make sure that these funds is
24 being used at exactly what they said they
25 was going to be used for.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well,
3 I've referred people to -- are you
4 talking about PHA apprenticeship, as an
5 example?

6 MR. LEGGETT: Right.

7 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I've
8 referred many people to that program, and
9 it works for some. It worked for all of
10 those that stuck with the program. A
11 number of the people that we referred got
12 in and then they dropped out. But it's
13 an okay program. When you say "ya'll,"
14 I'm taking it that you mean all the
15 governmental entities?

16 MR. LEGGETT: Right, as a
17 whole.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right, as
19 a whole. We're not just talking City
20 Council.

21 MR. LEGGETT: No. When you
22 broke it down to feds, you know, I'm
23 saying me, my parents, some of those
24 decisions are the things that we don't
25 have no -- we empower you to look over

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 that for us.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right.

4 MR. LEGGETT: That's the part.

5 But I just thank you for this
6 opportunity.

7 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We thank
8 you.

9 MR. LEGGETT: I have other
10 people that want to have a turn. And I'm
11 going to contact your friend, because I
12 tell you, they want to sit down, but they
13 wasn't coming here.

14 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I know.
15 We weren't going to get them arrested.

16 MR. LEGGETT: Well, they --

17 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Each one
18 of them could have said their name was
19 Donna, it would have been fine. We
20 wouldn't have known the difference.

21 MR. LEGGETT: Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
23 you. Make sure William has your
24 information.

25 MR. LEGGETT: I'll give it to

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 him.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank

4 you.

5 Hi. Good afternoon.

6 MR. RYAN: Good afternoon. I'd

7 like to introduce myself. I'm Ronald

8 Ryan from the Philadelphia

9 Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Network, formerly

10 with the AVRP initiative that was started

11 by the Mayor of Philadelphia.

12 MR. GASS: My name Tyrk Gass,

13 T-Y-R-K, G-A-S-S.

14 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Tyrk,

15 you're a member of AVRP?

16 MR. GASS: The AVRP program.

17 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

18 MR. RYAN: I'd first like to

19 start off by saying I'm humbled by this

20 opportunity to sit here in front of City

21 Council and speak on behalf of an

22 initiative that I'm very passionate about

23 and that I truly believe in. I brought

24 this young man with me today because he

25 was one of the very first members that I

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 took into -- that I was assigned to and
3 is on my caseload.

4 There's been quite a few issues
5 about the gun violence in our
6 neighborhoods, and what I've learned
7 firsthand is that, you know, a lot of
8 what we do and what we say and how we
9 teach and how we raise our kids, it just
10 starts at home. And because this
11 initiative that the Mayor started, this
12 AVRP program, it has allowed me to not
13 only to monitor this young man in his
14 community but in his home, in his school
15 as well. And there's so many different
16 attributes to why the mentality of these
17 young people have diminished to the point
18 where they feel as though they need to
19 act out on violence at every turn.
20 There's a lot of different contributions
21 to that, and I've heard a lot of them
22 today.

23 I have to say that, you know,
24 because I do go out and make home visits
25 with these young people, that I'm finding

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 out that like the services that's needed
3 in the home is like of grave necessity
4 right now. There are a lot of missing
5 services in the home. There are a lot of
6 things that the parents don't have at
7 their disposal, either because they don't
8 know how to access it or because of the
9 other social issues that might be
10 plaguing that household, you know.

11 These kids are coming out of
12 the homes with survival mentalities.
13 They're going out into the streets, into
14 the schools feeling as though like, you
15 know what I mean, they got to survive,
16 because they not getting what they need
17 at home. And then, you know, I come from
18 a background where I had two parents, but
19 at the same time, you know what I mean,
20 there's a level of dysfunctionality I
21 think in every situation. It's all about
22 how you view it.

23 But I can benefit from the fact
24 of knowing that like I made some bad
25 choices, and when I made these choices,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 you know, instead of me being on the road
3 to where I could consider myself a
4 success by society's standpoint, I turned
5 out being a success in another way,
6 because my experience has allowed me to
7 work with these youth. My on-the-street
8 experience has allowed me to understand
9 and have my finger on the pulse of what
10 these young people are really needing
11 today. And that's why I said I'm humbled
12 by this experience.

13 There's a lot of things I
14 didn't know about when I got this job,
15 but I knew I just had a passion to see
16 some people make it. I didn't want to
17 leave no child behind, and I was tired of
18 seeing kids dying out here in the
19 streets. So I didn't have a whole lot of
20 experience and no degrees and all that,
21 but I had a degree in the streets. So I
22 could talk to these kids and I could
23 address some of these issues that they're
24 going through and I can help their
25 parents and understand like I'm the link

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 that's going to have to put you with the
3 sources that you need in the community,
4 and my job at PAAN had gave me the
5 opportunity.

6 So Tyrk is one of the kids that
7 I'm so proud to have been able to have
8 helped, because -- well, he can tell you
9 his story, how he came to AVRP. And
10 Adolescence Violence Reduction
11 Partnership is what the initials stand
12 for, because we felt the need and the
13 Mayor, along with other agencies, felt
14 the need to address the kids at an
15 earlier age, which I heard was mentioned
16 earlier. And between the ages of 10 and
17 16 are the kids that I'm directly dealing
18 with. These kids were targeted. This
19 age group was targeted because we found
20 out that like if we catch them early,
21 then we can prevent some of these kids
22 being adults turning up into the system.
23 We feel like if we could catch these kids
24 early and put their mindsets in a
25 different frame of mind, give them

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 alternatives to negative behavior, that
3 we could possibly like just put a stop to
4 them becoming adult perpetrators and
5 adult victims.

6 So that's all I really wanted
7 to add. I'm a little -- I sat here and
8 absorbed a lot of things today, and I'm
9 grateful that we had this opportunity and
10 I feel good about it, and it's a lot I
11 want to say, but it's not my forum today.
12 It's for them. So I'm going to let him
13 talk. And thank you for listening.

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you
15 for your testimony. Please before you
16 start just identify yourself for the
17 record.

18 MR. GASS: My name Tyrk.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

20 MR. GASS: Well, the way I got
21 to AVRP was, I used to go a military high
22 school, and when I was going there, me
23 and a couple of my friends, like when I
24 was coming in through the door like
25 security, I ain't have nothing with me,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 but I knew I couldn't get myself on
3 there, so I gave it to one of my mans to
4 get through the front door. So he had
5 stopped myself on that. They thought it
6 was something else. So I get to the
7 lunchroom and like one of my other mans,
8 he gave me his book bag. I forgot --
9 well, I never knew it was a gun in there.
10 So when he passed it to me --

11 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: How did it
12 get in? How did it get through --

13 MR. GASS: I don't know how he
14 got it in.

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Was there
16 metal detectors, or no?

17 MR. GASS: Yeah.

18 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And it got
19 through the detectors?

20 MR. GASS: Yeah.

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And you
22 took the bag back in the cafeteria?

23 MR. GASS: Yeah. So when I got
24 my cell phone and stuff, I sat down. He
25 gave me the bag. And the security came

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 through because they saw me give him --
3 well, the person a bag. They thought I
4 sneaking something in, which I was. That
5 was a cell phone. So when I got there,
6 they came downstairs and they told me
7 come with them and bring all the bags
8 with me. So when I got caught, I was
9 locked up for possession of a weapon, and
10 that's how I got to AVR.

11 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What
12 military school were you?

13 MR. GASS: Elverson, Broad and
14 Susquehanna.

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And you
16 went there from where? Where were you
17 before?

18 MR. GASS: McMichael.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Were you
20 assigned to Elverson?

21 MR. GASS: No. I applied for
22 there and got accepted.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: You applied
24 for there and got accepted, okay. And
25 how were your grades? How were you doing

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 at the time?

3 MR. GASS: I got A's, B's. Now
4 I got to CEP.

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I
6 understand because the School District is
7 run differently now because the state
8 took it over, so there's certain rules
9 and regulations they impose, but you
10 couldn't go back to where you were at the
11 military school?

12 MR. GASS: I'm not out of CEP
13 yet. They had kicked me out and I wind
14 up in CEP.

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So they
16 kicked you out for the weapon?

17 MR. GASS: For 182 days.

18 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So when are
19 you eligible to go back, if you could go
20 back?

21 MR. GASS: When I complete
22 these days.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: How many do
24 you have left?

25 MR. GASS: I don't know. I

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 just started in September. I'm supposed
3 to be getting out in June.

4 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And you
5 were doing well at Elverson, you were
6 doing well at the military academy?

7 MR. GASS: Yes.

8 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I mean, it
9 goes back to some of the rules and
10 regulations that we follow relative to
11 sentencing. I mean, it's a five-year
12 mandatory minimum with a gun. It's an
13 immediate mandatory expulsion. I mean,
14 when you have a young man who is getting
15 A's and B's, I'd recognize he'd have to
16 deal with his issue and stand up for what
17 he did, but to be in CEP after that
18 makes -- there's no real benefit long
19 term to that, because CEP --

20 MR. RYAN: No. You're right.
21 CEP is not a situation where he can
22 thrive from. However, because he was
23 doing well in the military academy, he's
24 made the honor roll already.

25 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: At CEP?

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. RYAN: Yes. So he's
3 maintaining his ability to do what he
4 needs to do, and it's going to make him
5 eligible for other high schools.

6 Now, he went to the High School
7 Expo and applied for other high schools.
8 Now, when he's finished the 180 days that
9 he's required to do, you know, he's
10 eligible to reenter the School District
11 of Philadelphia high schools.

12 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But you're
13 doing well at CEP?

14 MR. GASS: Yeah.

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What's the
16 environment? Which one do you go to?

17 MR. GASS: Burgundy shirts,
18 Huntingdon Park.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What's the
20 environment like? What's your experience
21 there every day? What's it like?

22 MR. GASS: It's like basically
23 nothing to me. Like when I go there, I
24 just do me and I leave.

25 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Just do

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 your work and you're on your way out of
3 there. Now, when you're done school, you
4 attend the program?

5 MR. GASS: Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: That's
7 every day or weekends?

8 MR. GASS: Monday to Friday --
9 I mean, Monday to Thursday.

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What times
11 are you there?

12 MR. GASS: Well, it starts when
13 I get out, straight from school to 7:30.

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So you have
15 homework help and computer access and
16 things like while you're there?

17 MR. GASS: Oh, yeah. At the
18 program, yes.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Yes, at the
20 program. Well, it seems like you kind of
21 dodged the problem and are on your way
22 back to keeping it together and doing
23 well, either at the military school or
24 someplace else.

25 Do you have interest in the

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 military or you just signed up for that
3 school because what reason? Did you
4 have --

5 MR. GASS: I just feel as
6 though it was more like discipline for
7 me, like keeping me out of trouble.
8 That's why I applied for there.

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Do you have
10 an interest in the military or you just
11 went there for the discipline?

12 MR. GASS: Yeah. I was
13 thinking about going into the Navy.

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Well, good
15 luck. I hope you get back into wherever
16 you want to go. That's a great career.
17 I would look at the Navy right now as
18 opposed to some of the other branches
19 until we get out of this mess, until
20 we're out of this mess in Iraq. But good
21 luck. Nice meeting you.

22 MR. RYAN: All right. Okay.
23 (Applause.)

24 MS. WHEELINGS: Good afternoon.
25 My name is Rita Wheelings. I work for

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 PAAN as an AVRYP youth worker. These are
3 two of my students that I'm very proud
4 of. I have three, but the third is
5 sitting behind me. But these two young
6 ladies here have a lot of potential. I
7 enjoy working with them. I also do home
8 visits. I've watched them make
9 remarkable progress.

10 The one on the far end will
11 tell you her story and the progress that
12 she has made in this program as well as
13 changing in behaviors. That was the
14 reason why she ended up in the program.

15 I'm not even going into the
16 history of anything else. I just want
17 you to listen to these two young ladies.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
19 State your name for the record.

20 MS. LOTT: Quadirah Lott,
21 Q-U-A-D-I-R-A-H, L-O-T-T.

22 I got sent here for aggravated
23 assault. Me and Mika right here, we was
24 in the store and -- what store?

25 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: No. I

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 didn't ask you, but you can tell us if
3 you want.

4 MS. LOTT: A clothing store.
5 We was in the store and the lady was
6 arguing -- her and Mika had a conflict,
7 so I went over there to see what all the
8 commotion was about. When I went over
9 there, them two was fighting. So I tried
10 to break it up. Someone was swinging on
11 me, so me and the other lady started
12 fighting. And we got locked up that day
13 and I got sent here. But I got out of
14 AVRP because of good behavior.

15 And what I really wanted to
16 talk about was the school I go to, CEP.
17 I just found out yesterday that you can't
18 graduate from that school. So like if I
19 stayed there until 12th grade, I can't
20 graduate. And I don't want to be in
21 there. I want to get out. I want to go
22 to a graduation. I want to have a prom.
23 We can't have any of that in that school,
24 and they just making this rule this year.
25 And he said like you only got to do 182

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 days. They tell you that, but it's a
3 small percentage that he going to get out
4 in June, because they like -- it's
5 real -- they don't tell you that they're
6 real strict, but they're real strict.
7 Like the littlest thing, they make you
8 stay in there for a whole other year.
9 And now I can't -- like they trying to
10 say that you can't graduate from that
11 school.

12 So I'm just trying to get out
13 of that school and do the best that I
14 can. But it's a lot of distractions in
15 that school, like everybody trying to be
16 tough, everybody trying to prove a point.
17 So I'm just trying to get out.

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Why do
19 you go to CEP? Where do you go? At
20 Front?

21 MS. LOTT: No; Westminster,
22 43rd and Westminster. I go there
23 because, again, when I went to Vare, I
24 was fighting.

25 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So you

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 had a lot of fights and they sent you to
3 CEP?

4 MS. LOTT: No. I had one fight
5 and they sent me to CEP. I had one fight
6 in the school and they sent me to CEP.

7 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And
8 you've been there how long?

9 MS. LOTT: I've been there ever
10 since 7th grade. I'm in the 9th right
11 now.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: You've
13 been there two years?

14 MS. LOTT: Yes.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I went to
16 CEP. I went to the one in Texas before
17 they opened any of them here in
18 Philadelphia. Some of us went down there
19 to take a look at the model. That's
20 state funded. The state reps actually
21 wanted that program here in Philly.

22 I'm surprised that you're still
23 there after two years.

24 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: The last
25 gentleman that testified said it was 180

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 days.

3 MS. LOTT: They tell you that,
4 182 days. They tell you that, but --

5 MR. RYAN: There's a criteria.
6 Grades have to be a certain amount.

7 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Okay.

8 MS. LOTT: Excuse me, but --

9 MS. GILBERT: But some people
10 do --

11 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I'm sorry.
12 You have to identify yourself.

13 MS. GILBERT: My name is Mika
14 Gilbert, M-I-K-A, G-I-L-B-E-R-T.

15 You have to be there, behave
16 and be learning, but some people, like my
17 friend Champell, she been there for four
18 years and she come to school every single
19 day and she still hasn't been out. I got
20 there January 3rd and I come to school
21 every day. I got a 96.8 attendance. I'm
22 on honor roll, and I got -- my behavior
23 is 2's and I still think I'm not going to
24 get out by February.

25 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: You go to

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 CEP also?

3 MS. GILBERT: I go to Front and
4 Huntingdon Park, CEP.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: CEP.

6 That's what I meant. Oh, Front.

7 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Front,
8 right.

9 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. I
10 don't know. We have to check that,
11 because I just didn't think anybody would
12 be in CEP for four years. You said you
13 have a friend that's been there for four
14 years?

15 MS. GILBERT: She's been there
16 for four years, ever since it opened.

17 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And I
18 think last year one of the schools did do
19 something, because someone from there
20 called me and asked me to help them. It
21 has something to do with senior
22 activities, because I thought -- did
23 Front Street have their first graduation
24 last year?

25 MS. GILBERT: I don't know if

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 it was their first, but they did have a
3 graduation and they did have a prom. But
4 they got together with Allegheny CEP.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. I
6 knew that someone did call me from there.

7 MS. GILBERT: But I don't want
8 to graduate from there either.

9 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So I
10 guess your goal is to get out of CEP?

11 MS. LOTT: Yeah, because you
12 can't graduate from that school. They're
13 not letting nobody graduate or nothing,
14 no proms, no nothing. And that's what
15 like I go to school for, to graduate.

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: What
17 grade are you in?

18 MS. LOTT: 9th.

19 MS. GILBERT: 10th.

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Do you mind
21 me asking what you want to do when you
22 get out of school?

23 MS. GILBERT: I want to go to
24 college to study to be a pediatrician.

25 MS. LOTT: I want to be a

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 lawyer.

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Good. All
4 right. Great. Because sometimes I ask
5 my kids and they go, I don't know. I
6 don't know what I want to do. At least
7 you guys have some idea what you want to
8 do. So good luck.

9 MS. WHEELINGS: And she hasn't
10 had a chance to tell her story. So this
11 is Mika Gilbert.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So --
13 okay. I'll wait for -- Michael?

14 MS. GILBERT: Mika, M-I-K-A.
15 She told the story already. Aggravated
16 assault. We was in the store and the
17 lady put her hands in my face, and I hit
18 her and we started fighting.

19 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. So
20 that's why you're at AVRP also?

21 MS. GILBERT: Yes.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: For
23 fighting?

24 MS. LOTT: I got out of AVRP
25 for good behavior, though.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: But you
3 just come back because you like it so
4 much, don't you?

5 MS. LOTT: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. WHEELINGS: The reason why
7 she's still -- she's discharged. She was
8 discharged for good behavior. So she has
9 no attachment to AVRP. However, she and
10 I have stayed in contact with each other.
11 And there's no sense in having a child in
12 the program just because they completed
13 it, you leave them alone and you don't
14 check on them. So she and I formed a
15 relationship. Matter of fact, in order
16 to come here today, she spent a night
17 with me.

18 So we at AVRP, we look at our
19 students as a part of our family. So
20 they're not even students. I don't even
21 classify them as students. They're part
22 of my family. So as a whole and as
23 usual, we come in contact with each
24 other. I call them up. I go to their
25 schools. I check on them.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 I have another lady behind me,
3 Ms. Lavello, who was a little bit shy.
4 But these are my children. They're an
5 extension of myself. So it's just more
6 than a program. It's trying to really,
7 really help these young ladies and to
8 watch them grow and to mature and to see
9 the potential that they have, because as
10 you can see, they speak very well, and
11 her wish is -- she really wanted to come,
12 Councilman Miller, for you to get her out
13 of CEP. She said, I'm going and I want
14 to speak to her because I want her to get
15 me out of CEP. She's actually an A, B
16 student. So is she.

17 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I don't
18 want to know your address, but where do
19 you live?

20 MS. LOTT: Me?

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: In what
22 part of the city?

23 MS. LOTT: South Philly.

24 MS. WHEELINGS: Both of them
25 live in South Philly.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I'm sorry.

3 What side of Broad? East or west?

4 MS. WHEELINGS: West.

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: West side?

6 Like Point Breeze area?

7 MS. WHEELINGS: Yes.

8 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Okay.

9 Fine. I'd be happy to have you talk to
10 my staff, too. I'm an at-large member,
11 but I live in South Philly, so it's kind
12 of like we're all --

13 MS. LOTT: Where you live at?

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I live at
15 11th Street, 11th and Tasker. Where are
16 you guys at?

17 MS. LOTT: I live on 27th and
18 Tasker.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Oh, okay.

20 MS. GILBERT: 22nd and Snyder.

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Well, I'll
22 tell you what, when you leave here, if
23 you want to go to my office and see
24 Wilhelmina, she'll get all your
25 information. We'll at least check out

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 what's going on. Okay?

3 MS. LOTT: Thank you.

4 MS. WHEELINGS: Thank you.

5 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: You're
6 welcome.

7 (Applause.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All
9 right. Thank you.

10 Hi. Go on, state your name.

11 MR. COOPER: My name is Martez
12 Cooper, C-O-O-P-E-R, with the CRP
13 Program, Children Rights, founder, and
14 I'm here to speak a little bit of my mind
15 about what I heard today and really what
16 I know about the violence that is going
17 on across the city with our juveniles.
18 And me being a father and a grandfather
19 and running the CRP program, there's a
20 lot of things that's being brought to my
21 attention on the level of violence, end
22 the violence, where I don't think it was
23 really touched on today at all on a large
24 scale as far as the games, the video
25 games. It's like unimaginably a part of

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 the problem, and I don't understand with
3 so many professional people in America,
4 period, as far as the psychiatrists and
5 the professors at the colleges, black
6 colleges and so on, with the studies
7 that's coming out, I don't understand why
8 these games has not really been brought
9 to the forefront. It's a very bad, bad
10 problem with the games. Of course, I
11 know that you know that the case of the
12 young man in -- Swayneiffer (ph)
13 Jefferson who threw his baby and killed
14 his baby over the games not too long ago,
15 maybe like two months ago when the baby
16 got tangled up in the cord and he jumped
17 up and beat her to death.

18 There is major cases going on
19 across the country, even on the Supreme
20 Court level, where people have took
21 lawsuits out on these game providers, and
22 I think that it really should be looked
23 at a little more strongly in
24 Philadelphia.

25 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Why do

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 you call them video gangs? What is that?

3 MR. MUHAMMAD: He said video
4 games.

5 MR. COOPER: Video games.

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: What is
7 that?

8 MR. COOPER: Games: XBox,
9 PlayStation.

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Oh,
11 games.

12 MR. COOPER: Games.

13 MR. MUHAMMAD: My name is Abdul
14 Muhammad.

15 What he's trying to say is
16 basically like you got to understand, 50
17 Cent's game, you get points for selling
18 crack, you get points for killing people.
19 Grand Theft Auto. They have games out
20 there that basically they train the U.S.
21 Army and the Navy to actually kill people
22 with that our children have right here
23 and now. And it's not only the games,
24 it's the entertainment industry, it's the
25 rappers. You know, it's the families not

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 having proper guidance from your mother
3 and your father. It's a whole situation
4 that works in the profit of big business
5 at the loss of basic poor people here in
6 America. And it's like people know that,
7 when you think about anything, that
8 poverty breeds crime. And when you put a
9 gun in somebody's hand and when you put
10 crack in their hand and you actually
11 solidify it and you promote it, it's
12 saying, look, it's cool to go kill
13 somebody. It's saying, look, it's cool
14 to sell drugs. And it's not cool to
15 actually not think that way. That's what
16 it's saying to our youth. It's a basic
17 conspiracy.

18 I am a youth, and this man
19 right here basically took me from being
20 at risk to being an influence to other
21 younger adults, because if I didn't have
22 him, my father, Abdul Azim Muhammad,
23 which was the Director of the Brewertown
24 CDC, along with Darrell Clarke,
25 basically, you know, he left me astray.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 I didn't have anything. And he left --

3 MR. COOPER: And then we hear
4 Darrell Clarke and Azim Muhammad write an
5 article that --

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Excuse
7 me. Excuse me. We didn't come here
8 to -- I know Azim and --

9 MR. COOPER: Okay. But I'm
10 just saying but then when we have them to
11 make statements in the paper, not only
12 them -- and we didn't come here to bash
13 them neither, but when we have them to
14 make statements in the paper as of what
15 they do for the youths in the City of
16 Philadelphia, that's a disgrace to even
17 sit there and even say anything like
18 that.

19 MR. MUHAMMAD: Yes, it is.

20 MR. COOPER: Because when Azim
21 Muhammad, for one, got his own kids that
22 he don't even take care of.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I don't
24 think you stated your name for the
25 record, did you, Azim's son?

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. MUHAMMAD: Abdul Azim

3 Muhammad. That's my name.

4 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All

5 right. Thank you.

6 MR. MUHAMMAD: And basically --

7 MR. COOPER: For the record,

8 I'm his brother, Azim's brother. Same

9 mother, same father. I'm also on the

10 CDC, Brewerytown, Secretary, Martez

11 Cooper. But I also run the children's

12 program besides that. We're not going to

13 get into that. This is about kids. And

14 I wonder why --

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right.

16 We're not going to talk about that.

17 MR. COOPER: -- it wasn't more

18 publicized about this meeting, you know,

19 and other kids like where we could have

20 brought in other kids from the streets.

21 It was like programs that was brought

22 into this situation.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: But you

24 know what?

25 MR. COOPER: I don't understand

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 that.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well --

4 MR. COOPER: I seen it on the
5 news.

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, I'm
7 glad you did see it on the news, and
8 other people probably saw it, too. Like
9 I said before, this is not the first and
10 it won't -- it is the first, but it won't
11 be the last. We will have plenty of
12 opportunity for anybody that wants to
13 come and talk to be able to do that. So
14 now that we know who you are and we can
15 get your name and number so that when we
16 have our next hearing. But it is on TV.
17 City Council is required by law to do
18 public advertising of public hearings.
19 So it's been in the newspaper. My
20 office, we didn't do a personal mailing
21 to lots of groups because we knew it just
22 wouldn't be that kind of time, but we did
23 reach out to AVRPA, we reached out to
24 PAAN, we reached out to Integrated Town
25 Watch, we reached out to Don't Fall Down

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 in the Hood. And those are the only
3 groups we actually reached out to.

4 MR. COOPER: Well, the reason
5 why I said that was because I have been
6 trying my best to, you know, present not
7 a plan and not just about the violence,
8 because we all know about the violence,
9 and we could go over and over and over
10 and over again, but we still going to
11 have more murders and we still going to
12 have more guns on the streets, and we all
13 know where they coming from. And for
14 everybody to sit around and just -- it
15 really disgusts me when grown people sit
16 around and just act as though that we got
17 to ask these questions from these kids
18 that they really answer theyself. And
19 then on top of that, like when are we
20 going to get to the solutions? If the
21 city can't handle the violence that's
22 going on, when are we going to shut the
23 city down and maybe call in the National
24 Guards or whatever? This is ridiculous
25 how many murders that we have this year

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 alone already. We have six murders in
3 four hours in one day, and it's got
4 worse ever since then. When do it stop?
5 You know what I'm saying? Where do it
6 stop?

7 And this is what we saying in
8 our communities and every community
9 across the city, because we work with the
10 whole city. It should not just be one
11 program director to one -- this is a
12 major problem that we talking about, our
13 kids.

14 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Why do
15 you think we have --

16 MR. COOPER: And we're losing
17 them. I mean, the schools is like hell,
18 and we know this. And there's no money
19 going towards nothing that's helping our
20 youth, and, therefore, other programs
21 that come in and other people to use the
22 pain of the youth that's dying across our
23 city and come out and make statements
24 about our community, it got to stop,
25 because we're not going to stop until it

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 do stop. And if the city -- and if the
3 President of the United States can't stop
4 it, I think that the people are going to
5 have to stop it theyself. And that's the
6 only reason why the democrats is in there
7 now, is because the people have to come
8 out and put some type of stop to what's
9 going on in the White House. And it's
10 trickling down into our local government,
11 and it's bad, and we not having it no
12 more. We not going to sit and just be
13 walked around and act like we going to do
14 something and everybody going to get this
15 and they going to walk away with this
16 money and this program walk away with
17 this money and all these officials or
18 whoever.

19 I don't want to bash nobody,
20 because that's not what it's about. We
21 already got the Mayor and the District
22 Attorney beefing at each other like
23 gangster rappers, so I'm not going to sit
24 here and do that. But we know what's
25 going on, and it's bad, and it's not

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 stopping. The people are screaming.
3 They can't even come out of their house.
4 There's a rape on one end of my block,
5 there's a rape on the other end of my
6 block. I can't walk to the Chinese
7 store. My kids can't walk to the Chinese
8 store. When they do and I take them
9 around there, the Chinese store sells
10 them everything that they need.

11 When they was talking about the
12 "Stop Snitching" T-shirts was the problem
13 in the city, the Chinese was selling
14 them. Everybody know where 5th Street
15 at, 5th and -- they selling them all up
16 and down there.

17 But that's not the problem.
18 The T-shirts don't kill people. People
19 kill people. And if we keep going around
20 the problem and not dealing with it by
21 playing games with these little programs,
22 you see what I'm saying -- yeah, they
23 might help some youths. We got thousands
24 of youths out here that's not eating at
25 all, don't even have heat in they house.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 You know what I'm saying? And how far do
3 we go with this?

4 We need to shut these game
5 stops down, because they're just as bad
6 as crack houses. That's what I came here
7 to say. We definitely need to shut them
8 down.

9 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: What do
10 we need to shut down?

11 MR. COOPER: The game stops.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: The gang
13 stops?

14 MR. COOPER: Game, game, game,
15 game stops. Stop and go's, game stops,
16 they all the same. And that's where the
17 violence is coming from. If everybody
18 acted in this city and this country acted
19 like they don't know, I'm going straight
20 to Congress with it. We need to stop
21 these games. The games is programming
22 our kids. If the Army, the Navy, the Air
23 Force and Marines is using the games to
24 train the soldiers to kill, what are they
25 doing to our kids? Why do we have 400

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 murders this year and New York had 600?

3 That's a thousand murders in two cities.

4 How many other cities and counties and

5 states do we have across this country?

6 Clevo and Dillon from the

7 church called Mafia in Colorado played

8 the games, and we all know about the

9 games. But the corporations is running

10 our city and not our city officials, and

11 that's how we look at it. The

12 corporation has got the upper hand.

13 Nobody is saying nothing to them at all.

14 We know where the guns is coming straight

15 of Colosimo's right there on -- right

16 here. It hardly needs a license. You go

17 to any gun show and get any gun you want,

18 AK 47's or whatever. And they there.

19 Every kid got a gun almost. Every other

20 kid got a gun. I'm going to say that

21 much. Trust me. And if ya'll don't

22 believe it, I can show it to you.

23 That's where we at. It's not

24 about no games no more. We got to really

25 deal with this problem. And if the city

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 can't deal with it, then we think that
3 ya'll should call in the National Guard
4 and shut the city down.

5 The FBI just said yesterday
6 that Philadelphia is one of the worst
7 cities for violence and told the black
8 men to watch their back. This is from
9 the FBI.

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All
11 right. Thank you.

12 MR. COOPER: We didn't hear
13 from the President because he's not going
14 to say nothing.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you
16 for your testimony.

17 MR. COOPER: He's busy cutting
18 everything that we need to be able to
19 handle this problem. And if ya'll don't
20 handle him, we're going to handle him,
21 too. And we are the people.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
23 you.

24 Do you have any more --

25 MR. MUHAMMAD: I have something

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 to say, though. Basically my point is
3 this: I have no faith -- no disrespect
4 to anybody up here right now, but I have
5 no faith in you. One thing, because my
6 father is connected with this whole City
7 Council, this whole city government up to
8 Governor Rendell. And basically I've
9 seen my father -- I had a conversation
10 with him talking about taking
11 neighborhoods. Ya'll don't want to stop
12 the violence, because meanwhile while the
13 violence is going on, our neighborhoods
14 are getting taken away from us. It's not
15 just in Philadelphia; all across America.
16 This is --

17 MR. COOPER: Violence
18 (unintelligible.)

19 MR. MUHAMMAD: Exactly. This
20 is a situation that's being influenced.

21 MR. COOPER: Guns help the
22 developers.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
24 Thank you.

25 MR. MUHAMMAD: This is a

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 situation that's been influenced. And I
3 know you want to say thank you. I know
4 you want to say --

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: No. I'm
6 not saying that. This is not an
7 opportunity nor a forum to come and talk
8 about your dad. Now, if you guys have
9 issues --

10 MR. MUHAMMAD: This is related
11 to the violence.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: -- that's
13 okay, but today we want to hear from
14 young people. We want to ask their
15 questions.

16 MR. COOPER: (Unintelligible.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Excuse
18 me, Mr. --

19 MR. COOPER: Well, why can't he
20 say his story?

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: He can.
22 He can say that.

23 MR. COOPER: If a counselor
24 come in and bring --

25 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: But this

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 is not an opportunity for that.

3 MR. MUHAMMAD: I'm 19 years
4 old.

5 MR. COOPER: (Unintelligible.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Because
7 you took up all the time. How about
8 that?

9 MR. MUHAMMAD: Because it
10 doesn't fit that doctrine; that's why.

11 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Excuse
12 me.

13 MR. MUHAMMAD: It doesn't fit
14 that doctrine. And I'm a youth who can
15 see. I'm a youth that knows this. Just
16 like Councilman Kenney said, that I'm
17 glad you changed because you decided not
18 to carry guns no more, it was no -- it's
19 no problem with none of these youths.
20 It's a problem with ya'll, the parents,
21 the adults, who are not doing anything
22 about this situation right here and now.
23 And I know that, because I am a youth who
24 lived through this, who has been on the
25 streets, who has been out there and had

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 no guidance, from not my father, not my
3 mother, not from any adults in school.
4 They didn't care. They just wanted to
5 kick me out.

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well,
7 that's very unfortunate.

8 MR. MUHAMMAD: It's very
9 unfortunate that it's not just me.

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I
11 understand. But we know that.

12 MR. MUHAMMAD: It's a
13 widespread epidemic, because this is the
14 problem. This is not a problem with all
15 of America. That is a problem mainly
16 with black and brown youths. And the
17 reason why it's not stopping, because it
18 is because of black and brown youth.
19 They don't want it to stop. They want to
20 influence this situation. They don't
21 want black and brown youth to become
22 anything. Where these guns coming from,
23 where are these drugs coming from?

24 During prohibition you had
25 illegal removal of alcohol. They stopped

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 it because the majority of the people
3 committing those crimes were white.
4 They're not legalizing drugs. They're
5 not. Because we're the ones dying over
6 it and going to jail over them. No one
7 cares.

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Go on,
9 sir.

10 MR. COOPER: The solutions that
11 we got is to shut down the game stops, at
12 least start working on looking at your
13 wars, the fact of the games being a
14 problem. Because until you accept that
15 as a problem, it will never even be
16 looked at, and in the mean time, in the
17 between time, we're training serial
18 killers, we're training child molesters.
19 And that's why you have so many rapes.
20 How much have the rapes went up in
21 Pennsylvania in the last few months?
22 They are raping people on the games.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We have
24 to wrap this up. We have a couple more
25 people to testify.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. COOPER: All right. You
3 can wrap it up.

4 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: I have a
5 meeting that I have to get to.

6 Ma'am, do you want to testify
7 there?

8 MR. COOPER: I just want to say
9 one more thing.

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And we
11 have --

12 MR. COOPER: We have to
13 actually sit down and have a meeting
14 where we can come in with our package and
15 bring a solution.

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: You could
17 have brought a package in today. You
18 could have left it today.

19 MR. COOPER: Well, like I said,
20 I seen it on the news, so I wasn't really
21 aware of it today.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

23 MR. MUHAMMAD: The solution --

24 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We'll
25 talk to you after --

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 MR. MUHAMMAD: Can I say one
3 more thing?

4 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Yes.

5 MR. MUHAMMAD: The solution
6 lies within the black community being
7 independent and not being exploited.
8 That's the bottom line. That's the
9 solution.

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
11 Thank you.

12 Mr. Johnson and, ma'am, do you
13 want to testify?

14 MS. HALL: Good afternoon.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Good
16 afternoon.

17 MS. HALL: Madam Chair, I thank
18 you kindly for this opportunity and for
19 your colleagues. My name is Carin Hall.
20 That's C-A-R-I-N. I'm from the Third
21 Ward, 21st Division, and like many here,
22 I was not aware or privileged to be
23 contacted in advance.

24 I'm here today to represent
25 several elements in brief. One, a school

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 teacher who could not be here by the name
3 of Bernard Miller started up a program
4 called "No Gun Play" for radio shows, and
5 last year in his first effort with "No
6 Gun Play" request weekends for
7 broadcasters, when he went to Clear
8 Channel, he was told, Who's supporting
9 your "No Gun Play" petition? And he
10 didn't have anyone. So I came along with
11 three organizations that I run. I have a
12 Philadelphia Think Tank. I have another
13 group of constituents concerned about
14 violence that meets every Sunday
15 afternoon for two and a half hours, the
16 telephone bridge conference calls and in
17 person at Union 332 International. And I
18 have another group that works diligently
19 with new directions for people who have
20 had social barriers who did not receive
21 their education. While the focus may be
22 on youth, we have a population who did
23 not receive the education that you and I
24 may be privileged to.

25 Today I come forward to you to

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 announce officially that "No Gun Play"
3 weekend must be enforced by you and your
4 colleagues. In fact, the petition --
5 because I did not have a chance to do a
6 formal package, I'm just going to leave
7 you the press release that Bernard Miller
8 had put together. He's working at the
9 School District of Philadelphia as a
10 substitute teacher.

11 We know that there are social
12 barriers and economic barriers that keep
13 us in the position that we're in, but
14 this last witness was true, we do need to
15 look at games and media, the media
16 position when it comes to corporations.

17 C. Delores Tucker died with
18 this in mind and it's incumbent on us to
19 continue: We want to build citizens, not
20 criminals.

21 Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
23 you. You can just bring it up here if
24 you want. Thank you.

25 MR. JOHNSON: Hello,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 Councilwoman.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Hi. Good
4 afternoon.

5 MR. JOHNSON: I'm sorry to hold
6 you up. I know you have a lot of
7 important things to do.

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: That's
9 okay.

10 MR. JOHNSON: For the record,
11 my name is Stephen Johnson, Jr. I'm
12 currently the Assistant Sergeant-At-Arms
13 for City Council. This is a very
14 sensitive topic to me and this is the
15 only reason why I actually came up here
16 to speak.

17 First of all, I would like to
18 say that my grandfather, who is the
19 Philadelphia Police Commissioner,
20 Sylvester Johnson, has done numerous
21 things for the community as far as
22 outreach programs to the youth, and all I
23 can say is, I think we need to have a
24 liaison between the police and the youth,
25 someone, even myself, I will say. I'm 26

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 years old. I'm at the age where I can
3 communicate with adults and also youth.

4 I am hip hop. I have numerous
5 accolades, and I don't really want to get
6 into that, but I have one thing to say
7 about that. Hip hop culture is not a
8 criminal culture. I know a lot of people
9 look at us as being hip hop and being
10 criminals. They see us with the baggy
11 pants, hat turned to the back and
12 probably look at us as, you know,
13 criminals, but it's not even like that.
14 I think that we need to embrace hip hop's
15 youth, because the youth is our future.

16 We need to have, I believe, a
17 ten-point plan with the leaders of hip
18 hop and some of the elected officials so
19 we both can get on the same plan, ten
20 points for the leaders of hip hop and
21 elected officials. Elected officials can
22 say, Well, these are ten things that I
23 can do or we can do in order to better
24 the communication and better the lives of
25 our youth in the community, and also the

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 leaders of hip hop can say, Well, these
3 are ten things that we can do that can
4 make your job much more easier. I have
5 an artist in mind, KRS-1, who is one of
6 the leaders of hip hop.

7 I also believe that we need to
8 have more funds for programs that are out
9 there. Also, we need to have more access
10 to information. I know we have our Daily
11 News, we have Channel 10 or 6 or
12 whatever, but we need another way in
13 order to communicate to get this message
14 out there. I know the politicians, they
15 can -- when it's time for election time,
16 they put a lot of things in the mail and
17 send those packages off in order to get
18 the information what they need for votes,
19 petitions and anything. I think we need
20 to do something for the youth as far as
21 getting involved and getting that out
22 there, the message out there.

23 I believe we need more hip hop
24 activities. There's an emcee right now
25 that is nationally known. His name is

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 Nas, and he came out with an album that
3 is called "Hip Hop is Dead." Well, I
4 don't believe hip hop is dead. I believe
5 hip hop is actually calling out to
6 survive, and I believe that some of these
7 officials might be able to help us do
8 that by giving us more free concerts.
9 That might be an avenue or something that
10 you might look into, free concert for the
11 youth.

12 Also, they say that we're a
13 criminal culture, but our culture is
14 based on these four principles, which is
15 peace, love, unity and having fun.
16 That's basically what we're about.

17 I'm not up here speaking for
18 anybody else, but I am speaking for
19 myself when I say that. Rap is something
20 that you do and hip hop is something that
21 you live, and I am a product of hip hop.
22 I'm a member of an organization called
23 the Temple of Hip Hop. They have a
24 website, Templeofhiphop.org that anybody
25 can get information.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 Also, my own organization that
3 I'm currently starting is called the Hip
4 Hop League of Excellence, and that is
5 going to be a Philly-based organization
6 to try to get some of these youth off the
7 streets and to make them more aware of
8 certain things that's going on in the
9 community. I know that a lot of people
10 out here that don't have money, they
11 don't have jobs, they don't have
12 opportunities, but there are some things
13 that they can do to make themselves more
14 productive in this world.

15 I myself have been homeless.
16 I've lived in the streets of Los Angeles
17 trying to pursue my dream and to live hip
18 hop, and it was one thing that I've done.
19 When I was homeless, what I did was, I
20 sold my own CDs. I think that more
21 people need to have that information or
22 need to know how to do that, how to walk
23 up to someone and how to create a
24 business opportunity. Because when you
25 sell a CD, you're selling your music,

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 you're promoting your music, you're
3 making a connection with someone and
4 you're also getting money in your pocket.
5 Now, if we can have an actual program,
6 even a DVD, to show youth how to do that,
7 that can be very lucrative for that
8 individual and people to come.

9 I know, like I said, time is of
10 the essence. I have my co-workers
11 looking at me like, Mr. Johnson, can you
12 please stop talking right now, and I know
13 everybody wants to go home, but like I
14 said, this is a very sensitive topic to
15 me, and I thank you for your time and
16 thank you for everything that you've
17 done, Ms. Reed, for the community.

18 Thank you.

19 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
20 you. Thank you for coming in.

21 Are you with the Archye?

22 MR. SPENCE: With IDAAY.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Yes,
24 IDAAY, right. He's the Chair of the
25 board.

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 You testified. You have
3 something else to say?

4 MR. SPENCE: Yeah, just less
5 than two minutes. One of the things I
6 wanted to bring out is, a lot of talk was
7 about the recreation centers. I'm
8 actually down at the recreation centers,
9 some of them, and we need them to be
10 upgraded. I mean, not just the security
11 and stuff, but they need to be upgraded.
12 There are rats and mice running around in
13 there, stuff like that. So if you're
14 going to invest in it, you got to invest
15 in those, too.

16 The other thing is the
17 President, I need to say, is -- you need
18 to -- I mean, you always can come down,
19 talk to the youth. No better way than
20 listening to them in their own
21 environment and seeing that their parents
22 are on drugs and things like that and
23 they're selling drugs and the reality of
24 what's going on.

25 And the last thing is, as IDAAY

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 President, the way that the funds come
3 down, talk to Archye about what we can
4 do, because a lot of the stuff that we're
5 growing in, you got like -- the Institute
6 of the Development of the African
7 American Youth is serving all the youth
8 throughout the city, and it's just taking
9 everything that we can to keep it
10 running. And a lot of the contracts come
11 in a lot slower. I know you guys are
12 doing all that you can, but when those
13 contracts don't come in, it's real people
14 who devote their lives that I have to
15 look in the eye and go, I can't pay you
16 this week, I got to wait until next week.

17 So you can probably talk to
18 Archye about what we can do about shoring
19 up the contracts, making sure that they
20 get -- once we submit them, that they get
21 it in time, because I'm sitting here
22 right in front of it.

23 So that's all I wanted to say.
24 Some of the things I can talk to you
25 about. I'm in the personal level, if you

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 want to as well.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All
4 right. Well, as I stated before, this
5 was the first but it won't be the last
6 hearing or opportunity for people to
7 talk. There were some people who said
8 they didn't know. This was not a hearing
9 to hear about a whole lot of programs all
10 over again. This was a hearing to hear
11 from our children. And that's what we
12 want to do. We want to personally come
13 down to the program and talk to the
14 children more.

15 The City of Philadelphia and
16 many rec centers need additional work,
17 and we understand that. I can tell you
18 all the rec centers in my district that
19 need work. I'm not familiar with a lot
20 of those that was mentioned today, but I
21 guess if we had a wish, if we had a
22 dream, one would be to have the money to
23 do all that we could do to get these rec
24 centers up.

25 MR. SPENCE: And I know the

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971
2 youth that talked today, and this was a
3 great start. We thank you for it, but
4 there's nothing like seeing them in their
5 own environment and their own clothes and
6 stuff like that, and we have an open
7 invitation to visit any of our programs,
8 sit down and listen to what they are.
9 They're able to free themselves up a
10 little bit more and you will actually get
11 to see them. So we just extend --

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We
13 probably understand a lot more about the
14 environment that these children live in
15 than you realize. I don't live in some
16 little --

17 MR. SPENCE: I'm giving you an
18 open opportunity.

19 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right. I
20 live in the hood, honey. But anyway --

21 MR. SPENCE: Thanks a lot for
22 your time.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank you
24 for coming.

25 MR. SPENCE: Thanks for

1 1/30/07 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 060971

2 listening to our young people.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

4 Thanks. Thank you.

5 This Committee is recessed to
6 the call of the Chair. Thank you.

7 (Committee on Public Safety
8 adjourned at 4:20 p.m.)

9 - - -

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the
proceedings, evidence and objections are
contained fully and accurately in the
stenographic notes taken by me upon the
foregoing matter on January 30, 2007, and that
this is a true and correct transcript of same.

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

(The foregoing certification of this
transcript does not apply to any reproduction
of the same by any means, unless under the
direct control and/or supervision of the
certifying reporter.)