

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Wednesday, November 5, 2014
10:15 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR., CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILMAN BRIAN O'NEILL
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILL 140653 - An ordinance amending Title 19
of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Finance,
Taxes and Collections," by providing for an
expanded tax credit for employment of
veterans; all under certain terms and
conditions.

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COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good

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morning. This hearing is called to

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order. This is a public hearing of the

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Commerce and Economic Development

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Committee on Bill No. 140653. My name is

7

W. Wilson Goode, Jr., Chair of the

8

Committee.

9

I note that a quorum is

10

present. To my left is Councilman Brian

11

O'Neill. To my right is Majority Leader

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Curtis Jones. To his right is

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Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell.

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The title of Bill No. 140653,

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amending Title 19 of The Philadelphia

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Code, entitled "Finance, Taxes and

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Collections," by providing for an

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expanded tax credit for employment of

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veterans; all under certain terms and

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conditions.

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Our first witness is the

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Revenue Commissioner. And before that, I

23

think Councilman Oh wants to make some

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opening comments.

25

COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very

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2 much, Mr. Chairman and members of the
3 Committee. I especially thank you for
4 being here this morning after yesterday's
5 events, the election, and certainly the
6 work that you're doing.

7 I just wanted to say how proud
8 I am of our Council, all of us, for doing
9 the first veterans hiring tax credit of a
10 municipality or big city in the United
11 States, and it was a wonderful thing for
12 us to do, both for our city for
13 increasing the skilled labor pool and
14 opportunities for jobs for veterans, but
15 also for Philadelphians because of more
16 employment and retention and creation of
17 new jobs.

18 This was declared by Council
19 Year of the Veteran, and as part of that,
20 we held a hearing and found that although
21 we have this wonderful tax credit of
22 \$2,000 per year for two years, a total of
23 \$4,000, that it was not being used to the
24 extent that we thought it would be used
25 and not even close. And so based on the

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2 hearings and the recommendations of the
3 experts, this amendment was introduced to
4 increase the veterans tax credit to
5 \$5,000 per year for three years,
6 totalling \$15,000, and with that, I
7 believe that we will also not only
8 maintain the good intentions but actually
9 see the results and the fruit of our
10 labor.

11 So certainly I do want to just
12 remember Sergeant Major Jon Cavaiani who
13 passed away, but chose Philadelphia as a
14 city that he would rest in until going to
15 Arlington National Cemetery. He's a
16 Medal of Honor recipient and he is going
17 to be buried today, and there's a lot of
18 Philadelphians traveling down to
19 Arlington.

20 So certainly with him in mind
21 and his advocacy for veterans, I want to
22 thank the Committee and look forward to
23 the hearings.

24 Thank you very much, Chairman.

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,

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2 Councilman, for your work and for your
3 remarks.

4 I want to note for the record
5 Councilman Squilla and Councilman Johnson
6 are here as well.

7 Commissioner, please state your
8 name for the record and proceed with your
9 testimony.

10 COMMISSIONER TOLSON: Good
11 morning, Chairman Goode and members of
12 the Committee of Commerce and Economic
13 Development. My name is Clarena Tolson.
14 I'm the Revenue Commissioner and Chief
15 Collections Officer for the City of
16 Philadelphia. I'm here to testify in
17 support of Bill No. 140653 introduced by
18 Councilman Oh. This bill would expand
19 the tax credit amount and duration
20 received for hiring a returning veteran.
21 Currently the credit is for \$2,000 per
22 year for two years for each full-time
23 employee and \$1,000 per year for two
24 years for each part-time employee against
25 a company's Business Income and Receipts

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2 Tax liability. The program is currently
3 capped at 500 full-time equivalent
4 participants. At current rates, the
5 maximum tax expenditure is \$1 million per
6 year.

7 This bill extends the program
8 from its current end date of June 30th,
9 2014 through June 30th, 2020. It also
10 expands eligibility to members of the
11 Reserve of various branches of the
12 military. Additionally, it increases the
13 amount of a credit annually to \$5,000 for
14 a full-time employee and \$2,500 for a
15 part-time employee. And, lastly, it
16 increases the number of years the credit
17 can be claimed for each employee from two
18 years to three years.

19 This change increases the
20 potential tax expenditure associated with
21 the program from \$1 million to \$2.5
22 million.

23 We support these amendments.
24 Expanding the universe of eligible
25 employees and the amount of the subsidy

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2 may help fulfill the goal of the program,
3 increasing employment opportunities for
4 returning veterans.

5 Thank you for the opportunity
6 to testify today. I'm here to answer any
7 questions that you may have.

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
9 for your testimony.

10 Any questions?

11 Councilman Squilla.

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
13 Mr. Chair.

14 As of now, how much of the tax
15 credits are being used?

16 COMMISSIONER TOLSON: Currently
17 there are no tax credits being used.

18 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: So none.
19 So this hopefully will incentivize other
20 businesses to, I guess, use the tax
21 credit incentive to hire the veterans?

22 COMMISSIONER TOLSON: That's
23 correct.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And do you
25 have a projection of what you believe may

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2 happen from this or do you think we need
3 to do a better job of, I guess, PR,
4 letting people know that this is
5 available to them, or what do you think
6 would be the best way to go about, I
7 guess, publicizing this availability to
8 our businesses to hire veterans?

9 COMMISSIONER TOLSON: There
10 would be a fair amount of outreach that
11 occurs with veteran organizations and
12 with the business community to advise
13 them of the bill, the revisions to the
14 law and the opportunity that they may
15 have by using or hiring veterans. We
16 hope that this bill will have the impact
17 that the Councilman has suggested, but
18 given that we don't have the history or
19 knowledge of why businesses aren't
20 participating, at this point we cannot
21 make a projection about what will happen
22 in the future.

23 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Now, do we
24 know who would be publicizing it? Is it
25 going to be publicized through Revenue

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2 or --

3 COMMISSIONER TOLSON: Revenue
4 will certainly be publicizing it.

5 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay. And
6 we can help too as Councilmembers to push
7 it out.

8 COMMISSIONER TOLSON: We would
9 love to partner with you on that.

10 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you
11 very much.

12 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Councilman
13 Jones.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
15 Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank
16 Councilman Oh for this.

17 Could you give us some
18 indication -- and probably witnesses to
19 testify will do so -- what the scope, how
20 many returning veterans are coming to the
21 Commonwealth and then prospectively to
22 Philadelphia, what kind of impact.

23 COUNCILMAN OH: As a point of
24 information, the numbers that I had were
25 from a couple years ago, and those

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2 numbers may have changed, but I believe
3 that we have an expert sitting in our
4 midst and colonel retired, Tim Williams.
5 I'm not putting him on the spot. He may
6 know that number, maybe Debby Derricks.
7 I understood approximately 10,000, but
8 that is returning to the State of
9 Pennsylvania. That was a couple years
10 ago. Some military -- the Pennsylvania
11 National Guard, they may have already
12 returned. I just heard that another unit
13 was being sent out again. So I'm not
14 clear on the numbers at this point in
15 time. And then to Philadelphia
16 specifically, I'm not sure, so I can't
17 answer that.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I'll look
19 forward to the testimony that we'll hear,
20 Mr. Chairman.

21 The other question is, you will
22 work with, as Councilman Squilla talked
23 about, marketing this to businesses. For
24 example, when we do the mailing for the
25 tax, we could put a little excerpt in

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2 there or a note or notification that
3 these tax credits are available.

4 COMMISSIONER TOLSON: Yes, sir.
5 We will do that.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: All right.

7 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Councilman
9 Johnson.

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you,
11 Mr. Chairman.

12 I just wanted to take a moment
13 to acknowledge my support for this
14 legislation and thank Councilman David Oh
15 for introducing it. My dad was a
16 veteran, and upon him passing away, his
17 veterans benefits supported my mother and
18 I until I was, I think, 21. And so that
19 played a major role in helping my mom and
20 I pretty much improve the quality of our
21 life when I used to receive the check
22 every month. And so I'm a strong
23 advocate of supporting our veterans and,
24 most importantly, because they go over
25 beyond the call of duty, they should be

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2 appreciated here in America, specifically
3 here in the City of Philadelphia, which
4 is the cradle of our country.

5 And so I just want to thank you
6 for introducing it, and I wholeheartedly
7 support it.

8 Thank you.

9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
10 Councilman.

11 Any other questions or comments
12 from the Committee for this witness?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Seeing none,
15 thank you very much.

16 COMMISSIONER TOLSON: Thank
17 you, sir.

18 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Timothy
19 Williams. I'll just call the rest of the
20 list I have also. Scott Brown, Alex
21 Archawski, and Mike Graber can come as a
22 panel.

23 (Witnesses approached witness
24 table.)

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good

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2 morning. Please state your name for the
3 record and proceed with your testimony.

4 MR. WILLIAMS: Good morning,
5 Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity,
6 members of the Council, for the
7 opportunity to testify. My name is Tim
8 Williams. I'm the Executive Director of
9 the Veterans Multi-Service Center, and
10 today it is an honor to testify on behalf
11 of the Veterans Multi-Service Center, a
12 non-profit operating throughout
13 Philadelphia and the surrounding counties
14 on the verge of extending operations into
15 Central Pennsylvania, Southern New
16 Jersey, and Delaware. It is through my
17 position as Executive Director that I
18 stand here in representation of over
19 2,500 veterans that we serve annually,
20 but also as a veteran that understands
21 what it means to separate from service,
22 enter the private sector, and seek
23 employment.

24 The pending bill will increase
25 the employer tax credit from an existing

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2 rate of 2,000 annually for a total of two
3 years to 5,000 annually for three years
4 for full-time employees in order to
5 encourage credit application and use.

6 I stand strongly behind
7 granting every employer a means to seek
8 out and hire our nation's heroes, those
9 who have sacrificed much for our country
10 and are deserving of opportunity and
11 advancement. To further incentivize this
12 existing proposition is a stride in the
13 best direction to achieve this end.

14 At the VMC, we have trained
15 over 200 veterans in preparation for
16 employment and placed over 300 veterans
17 in jobs last year alone. I believe
18 increasing the tax credit will aid these
19 efforts in the upcoming years.

20 Yet there's also no greater way
21 to maximize utilization of this advantage
22 than to arm veterans directly with the
23 knowledge to present their individual
24 case before a hiring director or
25 committee. We must work harder to spread

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2 the word, enhance communication on this
3 front, and ensure that individual
4 veterans are made aware.

5 Furthermore, we must also raise
6 awareness amid local corporations, human
7 resource departments, and other
8 stakeholders that may be unaware of the
9 existing tax credit. Without knowledge
10 of such benefits, they are unable to
11 participate or have less incentive to
12 actually seek veterans candidates.

13 Thank you again for granting me
14 the opportunity to speak on behalf of our
15 organization, the Veterans Multi-Service
16 Center, and for the over 2,500 veterans
17 that we serve annually.

18 Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
20 for your testimony and thank you for your
21 service.

22 Please state your name for the
23 record and proceed with your testimony.

24 MR. ARCHAWSKI: City Council,
25 Councilman Oh, thanks for the invitation.

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2 My name is Alex Archawski. I'm the
3 Executive Director of Greater
4 Philadelphia Veterans Network. Myself, I
5 transitioned twice out of the service,
6 first time active duty, second time in
7 the Reserve. I got called back up after
8 9/11.

9 What we do as an organization
10 is, we help -- our mission is threefold,
11 to help develop a career objective for
12 transitioning veterans and help them
13 place them in jobs, as well as we help
14 them with the leadership roles that they
15 will be in their new companies, as well
16 as we help veteran entrepreneurs create
17 their business and succeed in this area.
18 So we do employment leadership and
19 entrepreneurship in the greater
20 Philadelphia area.

21 I am a huge supporter of Bill
22 No. 140653. I do know that anything that
23 is new sometimes takes time, and I think
24 I've spoken to Councilman David Oh that
25 next year we are going to do a webinar

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2 with our area employers and it will bring
3 in all of the assets that are needed here
4 for the economic development. Scott
5 Brown and others already have a list of
6 employers that would probably be
7 attending. So we'll kind of get the ball
8 rolling on that so we can do our job to
9 really put that information out, really
10 do an in-depth process to show them how
11 easy it is and then to understand what is
12 holding them back. So we really need to
13 start asking questions for the employers
14 as well, is what has been preventing them
15 from doing this.

16 So we're going to be spending a
17 lot more time the first quarter in 2015
18 spending time not just with the veterans
19 but also the employers and then
20 understanding as well if they're using
21 third-party like accounting firms to
22 understand that they're doing their
23 paperwork as well.

24 Thank you for your time.

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you

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2 for your testimony and thank you for your
3 service.

4 Please state your name for the
5 record and proceed with your testimony.

6 MR. GRABER: My name is Michael
7 J. Graber, Sr. I am the original staff
8 member at Impact Services, which
9 celebrated 40 years this September the
10 21st. When I came aboard in 1993, I
11 began by myself. That was 21 years ago.
12 Several programs have been established.
13 We're very proud to be here to testify on
14 behalf of the reason for us being here
15 today.

16 I myself do the work. I've
17 been doing the work for all these years.
18 I have had the great experience of being
19 on active duty in the United States Navy.
20 I have Vietnam War service aboard two
21 naval ships. I was also in a Long-Range
22 Recon Unit in the U.S. Army for ten years
23 after that.

24 When I came to Impact, Impact
25 had never worked with veterans before,

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2 and so for the past 21 years, my primary
3 goal has been to build programs and
4 partnerships. Two years ago I was put
5 into a new development and partnership
6 development responsibility, and that's
7 what I'm doing here today to talk about
8 that. I have a brief statement I'd like
9 to make as well.

10 Impact Services' Veterans
11 Services Department has been providing
12 job development and job placement
13 services since 1993. This has been
14 accomplished with grants provided by the
15 Department of Labor "Veterans Education
16 Training" funds in the form of "Homeless
17 Veterans Reintegration Programs." Impact
18 was the pioneer and first recipient of
19 HVRP funds in the City of Philadelphia
20 and Southeast Pennsylvania.

21 Impact works with homeless
22 veterans as part of our primary target
23 group for all of our programs and
24 services. We have one DOL program, we
25 have three VA grant and per diem

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2 transitional housing programs, and we
3 have one HUD permanent housing program as
4 well. The fundamental goal of the DOL
5 program was to work with hard-to-place
6 veterans where long-term homelessness is
7 a significant barrier to regular
8 full-time employment. Our HVRP programs
9 include classes for return-to-work
10 strategy, counseling, resume prep, and
11 job interview techniques.

12 The HVRP staff conducts
13 outreach in the entire metropolitan area
14 at veteran partner organizations, other
15 social work providers, VA hospitals,
16 shelters, job centers, et cetera. I
17 myself have worked in ten VA hospitals in
18 six states to develop our programs and
19 services.

20 Impact specializes in working
21 with veterans that suffer from
22 co-occurring disorder, which is also
23 known as dual diagnosis. This is when a
24 major mental health disorder occurs
25 simultaneously with addictive use of

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2 drugs and alcohol.

3 Our DOL and housing programs
4 have served thousands of needy unemployed
5 veterans in the last 21 years. In 2012,
6 Impact opened the first HUD-funded
7 permanent supportive housing facility for
8 difficult, special needs, dual diagnosed
9 veterans in this region. We continue our
10 special mission at the start of every day
11 with a new fresh perspective on the
12 constantly changing needs of Philadelphia
13 veterans. As such, Impact has daily
14 contact and interaction with veterans of
15 all conflicts and need.

16 There is no doubt, however,
17 that a large and growing segment of
18 veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars
19 are in great need of assistance and
20 training so that they can return to work.
21 Impact absolutely supports the expansion
22 of tax credits for employers in support
23 of veteran employment.

24 Impact is committed to doing
25 everything possible to make a job happen

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2 for any veteran that wants and needs our
3 help and assistance to make real work
4 possible. Part of our mission is to make
5 sure that no veteran will ever feel alone
6 and never gets left behind.

7 Thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
9 for your testimony and thank you for your
10 service.

11 Are there questions for this
12 panel?

13 Councilman Jones, then
14 Councilman Squilla.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.
16 Very briefly, Mr. Chairman.

17 I asked the previous question
18 on were there statistics, numbers about
19 returning veterans for Pennsylvania and
20 Philadelphia over the past year to give
21 us some sense of scope.

22 MR. GRABER: Well, in terms of
23 our own experience, there's a significant
24 larger number of veterans that I deal
25 with and that I meet, I speak to and

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2 present to and work with that are
3 unemployed, and there's a reason for
4 that. With the recent downturn in the
5 economy and the reconstructive effort to
6 put us back in command and control of our
7 economic resources for employers and
8 businesses, it's been very difficult for
9 employers, I would imagine, taking a
10 piece out of their book, to be able to
11 afford to do some things for veterans.

12 We don't want our appeal as
13 veterans that have served on active duty
14 with our level of enthusiasm and need
15 overshadow the employers' desire and
16 decision to hire us because of the fact
17 that we want to work. We feel as though
18 there must be more of a concerted effort,
19 and I believe with this gentleman said
20 here, there has to be more of a concerted
21 effort to reach out to employers and to
22 get them to buy in to the situation with
23 veterans, because far too many are
24 unemployed.

25 As recently as two years ago,

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2 the unemployment for veterans under the
3 age of 30 was more than 10 point some
4 percent. Now it's still above -- I think
5 the state average now is like 5 point
6 some percent unemployment. It's still 7
7 or 8, in some places in the state 8, 9
8 percent of veterans unemployed, which I
9 think is far too many unemployed
10 veterans.

11 So there's a need. It's
12 ongoing. It's constant. And all of the
13 guys haven't returned from Afghanistan
14 yet. The 10th Mountain Division was
15 demobilized from Afghanistan. They're
16 coming back. There's a whole bunch of
17 people, both reserve and active, that are
18 being demobilized. So that number may
19 very well grow unless there's more of an
20 enthusiastic effort to provide veterans
21 with employment.

22 MR. ARCHAWSKI: A couple key
23 points in all this about, I guess, the
24 word transitioning veterans is really
25 about -- as we always tell employers, a

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2 veteran comes home every day alone. So
3 even though they come home as a unit,
4 there's no base here. So they all have a
5 termination day. They all have a
6 different day. So they come home
7 individually, not as a group, unless
8 they're with the Guard and the
9 reservists, as well as we should take
10 into account the Guard and reservist in
11 all this as well for employment purposes.

12 But the other point is when
13 you're looking at the hiring process for
14 veterans, a lot of them go back to
15 college. So it's not when they can't
16 come out. Temple University has 700
17 student veterans plus. So it is
18 basically how do they categorize and how
19 do we educate them, as well as we need to
20 also partner with these institutions to
21 make sure that when they work with the
22 career services department of these
23 universities that are helping place vets
24 that are graduating from universities,
25 that they tell the employers they're

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2 working with all this as well. So I
3 think that that's very important.

4 So I don't have the clear
5 statistics of this, because what it means
6 of a transitioning veteran is they can
7 come to a university here locally, so
8 they are part of the statistic now if
9 they go to Temple or Drexel, I'm
10 assuming, or they could be in the suburbs
11 at West Chester. So it's a little bit
12 skewed, but they're in school.

13 One of the key successes is,
14 we're going to help drive that. Greater
15 Philadelphia Veterans Network will help
16 drive the communication with the
17 universities and the career services
18 departments so they can communicate that
19 with their employers as well as part of
20 the process.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
22 Mr. Chairman.

23 MR. WILLIAMS: I believe that
24 the number that Councilman Oh said, the
25 10,000, is probably in the ball park. If

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2 we talk about Drexel and we talk about
3 Temple, that's 1,500 returning veterans
4 there just as college students. So I
5 think 10,000 is in the ball park.

6 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

7 Councilman Squilla.

8 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Also, I
9 mean, we have spoken about trying to get
10 the employers engaged, and I hear that I
11 guess the Philadelphia Office of Veterans
12 Affairs and you guys are working on some
13 type of symposium or venue where you
14 invite the, I guess, people who will be
15 hiring veterans. Is that scheduled for
16 this year?

17 MR. ARCHAWSKI: There's kind of
18 different things that are happening
19 either by our organization or by the VA.
20 Sometimes it's the same message. I
21 believe the process is who is the right
22 person in these companies to communicate
23 this with, because for the longest time,
24 if you think about it, hiring veterans
25 comes from the CEO, and the CEO basically

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2 hands down the responsibility to the
3 director of talent acquisition. The
4 director of talent acquisition typically
5 has no clue even where and how to begin,
6 and that's where we help. So we have to
7 understand are they the one touching all
8 this or are they handing this off to
9 another person within the department of
10 HR that's involved with accounting. So
11 we really need to understand who is not
12 educated on this, because there's still a
13 lot -- this is still a lot of new for
14 companies when they're hiring veterans.
15 These responsibilities for the hiring
16 managers for these companies, that's not
17 all they do. They don't just hire vets.
18 They hire every demographic. So they
19 have to understand who am I going to be
20 assigning this to. So this is really
21 where we take it to the next level next
22 year where we find somebody to take the
23 responsibility so we can check on the
24 right individual, and I hope this helps.

25 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And then I

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2 guess when we have that list, say we have
3 a bunch of companies, organizations
4 willing to do that, then I guess do we
5 present them with a list of able veterans
6 able to fill those positions or have all
7 these people that actually companies
8 actually interested in hiring veterans
9 going to an event where you actually have
10 the veterans applying for the jobs and
11 something that can actually connect them
12 both?

13 MR. ARCHAWSKI: So, Councilman,
14 you're talking about like a job fair? So
15 there's one tomorrow done by a national
16 organization called Recruit Military, and
17 they do it professionally and for profit.
18 So there's big companies out there. So
19 there are veteran job fairs that are
20 going on. We're still trying to educate
21 both -- a lot of us are trying to educate
22 these job fairs, the veterans and the
23 employers, how to do it correctly. I
24 think it really makes sense that if these
25 big national organizations, like Hiring

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2 Heroes USA that are coming down from DC
3 to U.S. Chamber, the Recruit Military
4 that come from out of state and they come
5 to Philadelphia, we need to figure -- we
6 need to communicate with them to say if
7 any of your employers hire veterans
8 during these job fairs, we need to find
9 out and measure these as appropriately
10 for this bill to understand if they're
11 going to start using these tax breaks.

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: It seems
13 some of the complaints that we get from
14 veterans and the like are that some of
15 these so-called job fairs also have a fee
16 associated with them, and that sort of is
17 a deterrent, I would say, to having some
18 people who really can't afford to go to
19 these events go. Now, if we could also
20 help with the Administration, with
21 Council, with our social media to also
22 get the word out. I know the Veterans
23 Affairs office sends us e-mails, and we
24 try to associate them and put them on our
25 social media to also get the word out,

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2 but I think in collaboration of everybody
3 working together, we'll sort of really
4 make at least people aware of the
5 situation and then hopefully take
6 advantage of that. And if we could work
7 with you, I know everybody here would be
8 more than willing to do that. I think we
9 just need to keep the open dialogue and
10 communication going forth so we can help
11 each other.

12 Thank you.

13 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
14 Councilman.

15 Councilman Oh.

16 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you,
17 Chairman. I'd just like to make a
18 comment that in a certain sector of our
19 economy, we are challenged to retain
20 employers in the City and even in the
21 suburbs because they are looking to go to
22 other places because of the workforce,
23 and that hurts not just the high-end
24 folks they're trying to hire, but the
25 folks in the middle and the folks

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2 particularly at the lower end that we are
3 really as a city trying to work hard,
4 ensure they have jobs and, Councilman,
5 good-paying jobs.

6 One of the things that is so
7 important that veterans provide our city
8 with is highly trained, highly qualified,
9 experienced workers, but one of the
10 problems that we have in the private
11 sector is that when we see these
12 gentlemen and ladies, we don't know who
13 they are.

14 In some units of the military,
15 their job is to communicate and to
16 express, and they do it very well, but in
17 other units of the military, their job is
18 to get things done with very little
19 talking, if any at all, and that's a
20 completely different culture.

21 With my service in the
22 military, albeit brief, I have a
23 familiarity with the units and I know
24 when these gentlemen tell me what units
25 they served in or make a reference, I

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2 know what training they had, what
3 experience they have, and they have been
4 through some very difficult, highly
5 selective and challenging experiences.
6 As an employer, I can use that. I know
7 how I can use that, but they may not know
8 how to tell me how I can use that. And
9 so the tax credit doesn't offset the
10 payment of salary. It really provides
11 the opportunity for employers to invest
12 in understanding how to unlock the key to
13 outstanding employees with excellent
14 service who may do things and probably
15 will do things in a workforce that are
16 hard to find with the level of loyalty
17 and commitment and self-sacrifice that is
18 outstanding. And certainly I think it is
19 a shame if our employers are not on top
20 of this process, because rather than
21 looking to move and things like that,
22 they can simply take advantage of this
23 tax credit and put themselves in a way
24 where they will understand the men and
25 women coming before them and their rich

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2 service they provide to their company.

3 Thank you very much.

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
5 Councilman.

6 Any other questions or comments
7 for this panel?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. GRABER: Mr. Chairman, I'd
10 just like to say one thing. Unemployment
11 after major conflicts is nothing new to
12 the United States. This happened after
13 World War II. My dad was a World War II
14 vet in the South Pacific in the United
15 States Marine Corps. So I remember him
16 telling me how difficult it was to get
17 back to work and all the stories I heard.

18 My uncles all served in World
19 War II. After Korea, same thing
20 happened. After Vietnam, when you came
21 back, you got spit on. You got beat up.
22 You got called every name associated with
23 the word mother, and you all know what
24 I'm talking about. There were no jobs.
25 A lot of us went to school. We didn't

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2 have our GI bill and what-have-you. And
3 the reason why a lot of us are so
4 passionate about this is because we don't
5 want what happened after World War II,
6 Korea, and Vietnam to happen to these
7 people today, our own people, our
8 veterans.

9 We don't want you to take us
10 out to lunch. We don't want you to rub
11 our back. We don't want you to baptize
12 our baby. We want respect. And how do
13 you get respect? If you respect your
14 armed forces, you want people to enlist
15 voluntarily -- it's an all-volunteer
16 Army. If you want people to volunteer to
17 serve in the armed forces, then do
18 something for them when they get off
19 active duty. Show the respect they need
20 and want and deserve by giving them a
21 job.

22 Thank you.

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
24 for your testimony.

25 Any other questions or

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2 comments?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
5 very much.

6 Is there anyone else to testify
7 on this bill?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Seeing none,
10 we will move from our public hearing into
11 our public meeting.

12 The Chair recognizes Councilman
13 Squilla, the Vice Chair of the Committee,
14 for a motion on the amendment to Bill No.
15 140653.

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: I make a
17 motion on the amendment of 140653.

18 (Duly seconded.)

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: All in
20 favor?

21 (Aye.)

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Those
23 opposed?

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: The

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2 amendment is approved.

3 The Chair recognizes Councilman
4 Squilla again for a motion on Bill No.
5 140653, as amended.

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: I make a
7 motion that Bill, as amended, 140653 be
8 approved by the Committee, suspension of
9 the rules to be heard at the next reading
10 of Council.

11 (Duly seconded.)

12 COUNCILMAN GOODE: All in
13 favor?

14 (Aye.)

15 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Those
16 opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Bill No.
19 140653, as amended, is reported out of
20 this Committee with a favorable
21 recommendation and suspension of the
22 rules to allow first reading at our next
23 session of Council.

24 This concludes our public
25 meeting.

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2 Thank you very much.

3 (Committee on Commerce and

4 Economic Development concluded at 10:45

5 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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