

Committee on Labor and Civil Service
November 20, 2018

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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND CIVIL SERVICE

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, November 20, 2018
12:40 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE L. PARKER, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILL 180846 - An ordinance amending Section 17-1305 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Compensation Required to be Paid to Employees," to revise the compensation required to be provided in connection with application of the Philadelphia 21st Century Minimum Wage Standard; and amending Section 19-2604 of the Code, entitled "Tax Rates, Credits, and Alternative Tax Computation," to make the wage rates related to the tax credit for new job creation consistent with Section 17-1305; all under certain terms and conditions.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good
3 afternoon. This hearing is called to
4 order. This is a public hearing of the
5 City Council Committee on Labor and Civil
6 Service. The purpose of this public
7 hearing is to hear testimony on Bill No.
8 180846.

9 I recognize the presence of a
10 quorum of the Committee members. Members
11 of the Committee in attendance are Vice
12 Chair Councilman Brian O'Neill,
13 Councilmembers Domb, Gym, and Squilla.

14 Do any of you -- and I would
15 ask Councilman Squilla, who is the lead
16 sponsor of this bill that was also
17 offered in introduction with
18 Councilmembers Sanchez, Parker,
19 Blackwell, Bass, Greenlee, Henon, Gym,
20 Jones, Council President Clarke,
21 Councilmembers Johnson, Green, and
22 Reynolds Brown, if he has any comment.

23 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
24 Madam Chair. I appreciate it, and as you
25 can see with the number of sponsors on

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2 this bill how important you realize it is
3 to City Council. But, first, before we
4 start, I'd just like to again acknowledge
5 Councilman Goode, whose initial
6 legislation created where we are today.
7 So I think we should give him --

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Councilman
10 Goode led the way on living wage,
11 understanding if we as a city need to
12 move the needle on poverty, we have to
13 start paying people more money, and
14 that's the most important thing.

15 (Applause.)

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And the
17 other thing is, the City of Philadelphia,
18 as we work with the Administration -- and
19 you're going to hear Deputy Mayor Rich
20 Lazer testify later on -- working
21 together with the Administration,
22 learning to lead by example, and I see a
23 lot of those signs up here, and it's so
24 important to --

25 (Applause.)

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2 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Leading by
3 example, we can show that the City cares
4 about the people of this city, the
5 workers of the City of Philadelphia, the
6 contractors and subcontractors. And
7 knowing if we do that and if we lead,
8 others will follow, and you'll see
9 private industries start to follow along
10 and knowing that people of our city
11 deserve a living wage.

12 And this again is just a start,
13 working with a lot of legislation, as
14 you're going to hear in the future, to
15 continue to move the needle on poverty.
16 And I do want to thank Reverend Holston
17 and POWER and the whole team.

18 (Applause.)

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Along with
20 AFSCME and SEIU and Unite Here and all
21 our union partners here for --

22 (Applause.)

23 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: --
24 understanding what it means to have a
25 living wage here in the City of

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2 Philadelphia.

3 So we'll let the hearing
4 continue. We're going to have some
5 testimony from the Administration and
6 then by some of the members of the
7 community.

8 And thank you, Madam Chair, for
9 allowing me to speak, and looking forward
10 to having this hearing.

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
12 recognizes Councilwoman Gym.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
14 very much, Madam Chair.

15 I want to also extend my
16 gratitude to everyone who came out here
17 today to show support for workers and for
18 a city that needs to be on the rise.

19 I also want to thank my
20 colleague Councilman Squilla and
21 certainly my personal mentor and many of
22 the folks in this audience, our hero,
23 Wilson Goode, Jr. Thank you so much,
24 Councilman, for leading by example for
25 such a long time.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And I just
4 want us to remember in this room what it
5 takes to get to places. It takes so much
6 organizing and it takes a moral
7 authority, sometimes beyond and outside
8 the halls of power, and especially when
9 we are in a situation where our State
10 Legislature has not moved on the lowest
11 minimum wage in the entire country, where
12 Congress is stuck, that we as a city can
13 and must do better and that the problem
14 of poverty is not just an issue that is
15 to be lived and experienced, but that it
16 is an economic system that is
17 manufactured and, therefore, can and must
18 be changed.

19 (Applause.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: POWER's work
21 and tireless work help lead us to today's
22 hearing, and we are now in a
23 collaboration as a whole city to really
24 see what truly it looks like to see the
25 City lift people out of poverty.

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We have seen cities push people out of poverty, push them out of our cities, push them out of our center places. But not here. Here we are trying to do something different. We are here to lift up, and when we lift up, imagine what this city can look like when people can put roofs over their heads, food on the table, keep their families together. That is the central mission. That's what holds us together. And here and today, I'm proud that we are going to talk about what it means to lift up the City's minimum wage and have it extend to all of our subcontractors within the City of Philadelphia, an extremely powerful responsibility, but also that it coincides with things like a fair workweek and an opportunity for people outside --

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: -- of City employment. And it has been a real pleasure to thank POWER for becoming an

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2 active organization around that fight as
3 well.

4 I want to thank our
5 Administration for showing leadership in
6 committing to providing the living wage
7 to our subcontractors and our City
8 workers and for committing to ensuring
9 and supporting fair workweek standards
10 for the service, retail, and hospitality
11 workers all across the City, and I'm
12 looking forward to December 6th when we
13 can see a true economic dignity message
14 come before City Council, delivered and
15 carried by all of you in this room, but
16 sent out with a loud call to every single
17 member of our city and all across the
18 country that this is the nation that is
19 going to see a moral calling for ending
20 poverty, for lifting people out of it,
21 and for a City Council and a municipality
22 that will be on the cutting edge of it.

23 Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair

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2 recognizes Vice Chair O'Neill.

3 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank you,
4 Madam Chair.

5 I voted for Councilman Goode's
6 bill originally. I'll be voting for this
7 today. I just refer to it, when people
8 ask me, as the City putting its money
9 where its mouth is, because we
10 essentially pay for this through our
11 contracts, and I think it's the right
12 thing to do.

13 But I also would ask our list
14 of witnesses, I don't think this is real
15 controversial at this point on the
16 Council, and if you could express your
17 support and let us read your testimony,
18 I'd like to be around for the final vote
19 on this and not have to leave my vote,
20 because it's always questionable whether
21 the vote really counts if you leave it.

22 So thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
25 you, Vice Chair O'Neill. And, Vice Chair

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2 O'Neill, I'm telling you, that's what
3 comes with your seniority. You knew how
4 to deliver that message diplomatically.

5 But I just want to say for the
6 record, you heard me when I mentioned
7 Councilman Squilla, a lead sponsor of the
8 bill, but I was very intentional about
9 reading the number of co-sponsors, so
10 that you know it is highly likely that we
11 will see unanimous passage of this bill
12 from Committee today.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: So I just
15 wanted to note that for the record.

16 In addition to that, let me
17 just say that as a District
18 Councilperson, I am very much concerned
19 about an issue called neighborhood
20 stabilization, and if you want people to
21 be in a position where they can afford to
22 make repairs, they can improve the very
23 home that they live in, the best way to
24 do that is to provide them with the
25 tools, the economic self-sufficiency that

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2 will allow them to have some dignity when
3 they can do it and make those repairs
4 because they are earning a wage that
5 would allow them to do so. So this is
6 not just a moral --

7 (Applause.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: This
9 doesn't just provide a moral imperative.
10 This is allowing people to have some
11 dignity in the process of doing that.

12 With that being said, I'm going
13 to ask the Clerk to now read the title of
14 the bill being considered today.

15 THE CLERK: Bill No. 180846, an
16 ordinance amending Section 17-1305 of The
17 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Compensation
18 Required to be Paid to Employees," to
19 revise the compensation required to be
20 provided in connection with application
21 of the Philadelphia 21st Century Minimum
22 Wage Standard; and amending Section
23 19-2604 of the Code, entitled "Tax Rates,
24 Credits, and Alternative Tax
25 Computation," to make the wage rates

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2 related to the tax credit for new job
3 creation consistent with Section 17-1305;
4 all under certain terms and conditions.

5 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
6 you.

7 Before I ask the Clerk to call
8 on the first witnesses, the first panel
9 to testify, I do want to acknowledge that
10 we've been joined by Councilmember Derek
11 Green, Councilmember at-large.

12 Any comments, Councilman?

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: No.

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: With that
15 being said, will the Clerk please call
16 the first panel to testify.

17 THE CLERK: Richard Lazer and
18 Manny Citron from the City of
19 Philadelphia.

20 (Witnesses approached witness
21 table.)

22 DEPUTY MAYOR LAZER: Good
23 afternoon, everybody.

24 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
25 both. I'm just going to ask you to

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2 please state your name for the record and
3 then proceed with your testimony.

4 DEPUTY MAYOR LAZER: Sure.
5 Richard Lazer, Deputy Mayor for Labor.
6 Good afternoon, Chairwoman --
7 sorry. Go ahead. Go ahead, Manny.

8 MR. CITRON: Manny Citron,
9 Chief of Staff in the Mayor's Office of
10 Labor.

11 DEPUTY MAYOR LAZER: Good
12 afternoon, Chairwoman Parker, members of
13 the Committee. My name is Rich Lazer.
14 I'm Deputy Mayor for Labor, and I thank
15 you for the opportunity to appear before
16 you today and testify in favor of Bill
17 No. 180846.

18 Bill No. 180846 will amend
19 Chapter 17-1300 of The Philadelphia Code,
20 the "21st Century Minimum Wage Standard,"
21 to increase the minimum wage standard for
22 City contracts to \$15 an hour by July 1,
23 2023. On behalf of the Mayor and the
24 entire Administration, I'd like to extend
25 our thanks to Council for considering

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2 this bill.

3 The question of where
4 Philadelphia should set its living wage
5 is part of a larger conversation
6 happening across America about what
7 exactly a minimum wage is for. For too
8 long, the federal minimum wage and the
9 minimum wage set by the Commonwealth of
10 Pennsylvania has set people across our
11 country up for failure. Here in
12 Philadelphia we see the impacts of this
13 with too many of our neighbors working
14 hard every day to still struggle to make
15 ends meet because they simply can't
16 afford to pay their bills, make their
17 rent, and raise their kids on 7.25 an
18 hour.

19 The City first started on the
20 path of addressing this challenge under
21 Councilman Goode's bill in 2005 when
22 Council passed the first iteration of the
23 Minimum Wage and Benefits Standard. The
24 ordinance has been tweaked and amended in
25 the years since, but today in supporting

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2 Bill No. 180846, we feel that we are
3 continuing on the path towards supporting
4 family-sustaining jobs for City workers
5 and City contractors.

6 At 15 an hour, hardworking
7 Philadelphians can truly begin to climb
8 out of poverty. They can pay their
9 bills, put food on the table, and finally
10 enjoy the security of having at least a
11 small nest egg in case something
12 unexpected comes up.

13 In setting this minimum
14 standard, the City of Philadelphia will
15 once again lead by example and ensure
16 that our own employees and the employees
17 of our contractors and subcontractors
18 earn a wage that allows them the dignity
19 of living beyond the reach of poverty.

20 The Administration strongly
21 supports this bill and thanks Councilman
22 Squilla, Chairwoman Parker, and all the
23 partners in the advocacy and labor
24 community. I just want give a shout-out
25 to SEIU, Unite Here, and AFSCME and

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2 specifically POWER that has really
3 championed this legislation over the last
4 several months.

5 (Applause.)

6 DEPUTY MAYOR LAZER: And I also
7 want to thank former Councilman Goode for
8 all the work he has done on this,
9 spearheading this back in 2005 and all
10 that he's done in this Council.

11 So at this point, that
12 concludes my testimony, and I'd be happy
13 to answer any questions.

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
15 recognizes Councilman Squilla.

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you.
17 And this will be quick because we're all
18 on the same side here, so it's really
19 good, and it's kind of fun to have this
20 type of hearing.

21 But I do want to personally
22 thank you, Manny, and the Administration
23 for putting up with me and all the groups
24 with the constant meetings and e-mails
25 back and forth and knowing that by

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working together and communicating, we
can get to a place where we all could be
supportive of this great legislation, and
then becoming an administrative piece of
legislation to be put forward is -- it's
a true sign of how working together and
how we can positively move the needle
together as Council and the
Administration work together on this.

A real quick story. I was at a
Flag Day celebration about two years ago
and Kate Esposito came up to me and said,
You know, we want to do \$15 an hour.
Would you support that?

I said, Oh, sure. I said,
Let's get together and talk about it.
And we sat down and talked about it, and
it took a while to get here, but we are
here today, and so I'm really grateful.
I'm grateful for the Administration's
willingness to work with everybody on
this. So great job, and thank you.

DEPUTY MAYOR LAZER: Thank you.

(Applause.)

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2 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
3 recognizes Councilman Domb.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
5 Madam Chairwoman.

6 And good afternoon.

7 DEPUTY MAYOR LAZER: Good
8 afternoon.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I'm in favor
10 of this, but I have a question I want to
11 pose to you or a challenge. When I look
12 at the numbers, even \$15 an hour, I say
13 to myself we still are leaving \$100
14 million in federal Earned Income Tax
15 Credits on the table in Washington that
16 could go to 40,000 Philadelphians, \$100
17 million. And I'm trying to think, is
18 there any way that we can require or
19 recommend -- I mean, think about it this
20 way: Single parent, 44,000 of income,
21 two kids under the age of 17, or a couple
22 51,000 of income, two kids under the age
23 of 17 can get checks from the federal
24 government of \$6,000 a year and file back
25 three additional years. They can get

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2 \$24,000. We left \$100 million that was
3 taken out of our paychecks in federal
4 withholding and sits in Washington, DC.

5 So my challenge for you,
6 Richie, is how can we incorporate some
7 way of getting people informed on this
8 EITC that should come back to all of our
9 people, the 40,000 Philadelphians that
10 aren't getting these checks?

11 DEPUTY MAYOR LAZER: Yeah. I
12 think we definitely agree with you, and
13 we know you've been championing that
14 since you've been here. I think we can
15 use the coalition that helped put this
16 bill together, along with yourself and
17 the Administration, to how we can inform
18 as many people as possible if they're
19 leaving money on the table that is
20 rightfully their money, and we'd be
21 honored to work with you on that.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Because we
23 have 400,000 people in poverty. This
24 would impact 10 percent, which is a huge
25 impact, and it doesn't cost us anything

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2 other than communicating it.

3 DEPUTY MAYOR LAZER:

4 Definitely. We agree with you.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

6 Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

7 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

8 you.

9 Are there any other questions
10 or comments from members of the Committee
11 for this panel?

12 (No response.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Seeing
14 none, I want to say thank you all so very
15 much, and we've constantly heard thank
16 the Administration, along with our lead
17 sponsor here, Councilman Squilla. You go
18 downstairs to that second floor and you
19 tell Mayor Jim Kenney thank you for
20 leading, leading from the front on this
21 issue, not the Administration but our
22 Mayor Jim Kenney.

23 Thank you, Rich Lazer.

24 DEPUTY MAYOR LAZER: Thank you.

25 Thank you, Chairwoman.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Will the
4 Clerk please call the second panel.

5 THE CLERK: Mark Price, Labor
6 Economist at Keystone Research Center.

7 (Witness approached witness
8 table.)

9 MR. PRICE: Hello, everyone.
10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Please
12 state your name for the record.

13 MR. PRICE: My name is Mark
14 Price. I'm a Labor Economist at the
15 Keystone Research Center based in
16 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Thank you very
17 much for the opportunity to be here.
18 Sorry it took so long to get up here. I
19 like to make an entrance I think
20 sometimes.

21 Keystone is a think-tank based
22 in Harrisburg. We focus on economic
23 issues throughout the Commonwealth, in
24 particular on issues of wages. And so I
25 thank the Council for taking up this

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2 ordinance. We are certainly supportive
3 of the idea of setting a wage floor at 15
4 in this city for workers employed by the
5 City contractors.

6 For many people in this
7 community, as you all know very well,
8 wages are so low, they have difficulty
9 making their ends meet. They can barely
10 cover their rent or transportation, and
11 they then have to rely on the local food
12 bank, and of course, as many of you have
13 probably seen in the last couple of
14 weeks, there was a major report using
15 USDA data that indicated that 300,000
16 people in this city are food insecure.
17 They don't have access to the food they
18 need to live a healthy and full
19 lifestyle, and the Economic Policy
20 Institute in Washington, DC has put
21 together -- and it's in my testimony --
22 some data on the cost of living that's
23 specific to this city, and by their
24 estimate, a single adult with no children
25 needs around \$2,785 a month to cover

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rent, to cover healthcare,
transportation, necessities, and taxes.
When you look at what you earn at \$15 an
hour, that's an income on a monthly basis
of just \$2,600. So even 15 leaves you a
bit short of what it actually costs to
live in this city, and I think that's a
very important thing to recognize.

Here I'd also note that when
you express the federal poverty threshold
on a monthly basis, a single adult to be
officially poor has to earn less than
\$1,063 a month. If you have one child,
that's \$1,408 a month. So those are very
conservative thresholds. And the issue
of people not being able to make their
ends meet isn't just about those in your
community that are officially poor. It
extends well in the income distribution.
There are a lot of people who are working
and simply are not making enough.

Now, you also have the
wonderful privilege of being in a city
that has an unemployment rate of 5.2

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percent. That's the lowest September unemployment rate that you had in this city in 28 years. I have to go to an older dataset to find out if it was ever lower than that. So this is a city that's performing quite well, but that economic growth is not broadly shared.

When we look at income growth in this city, we find that the top 20 percent of families in the City have seen their income grow, after you adjust for inflation, by about 13 percent since 2007. The bottom 60 percent of the City's families -- and this includes those in poverty as well as those near -- the bottom 60 percent have seen no growth in their income compared to the 60 percent back in 2007.

So the City is performing well. It's generating a lot of employment. It's growing faster than the State of Pennsylvania, but a lot of that growth is not trickling down to your constituents, and I think policies like you're

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2 proposing are a step in the right
3 direction.

4 We established minimum wage
5 laws to correct for the fact that
6 low-wage workers lack bargaining power.
7 So they have difficulty negotiating with
8 their employer for a livable wage. They
9 also have difficulty gaining access to
10 higher wages as the economy grows and
11 profitability grows. So it's important
12 to raise the minimum wage as a way to
13 overcome that shortage of bargaining
14 power.

15 When we look at the data, the
16 median wage for a full-time worker back
17 in 1968, which I'm sure none of us
18 remember, was \$3.15 an hour. The minimum
19 wage in that year was 1.60 per hour. So
20 a typical minimum wage worker made at
21 least half of what a typical worker made.

22 Now, you fast forward to today,
23 the minimum wage is less than a third of
24 what the typical worker in this state
25 earns, and this is a result of the fact

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that over time the federal government and Pennsylvania, they have not raised the minimum wage as often as they should have or as high as they should have, and that has reduced purchasing power, the minimum wage, and that's not just hurt those that are right at 7.15, it's extended to really the bottom 20 percent of workers.

Now, there is a proposal in the General Assembly to raise the minimum wage in the State of Pennsylvania to \$15 an hour by 2024. That would lift the wages for just over 250,000 workers here in the City of Philadelphia. That's about almost 40 percent of your resident workforce. So, again, the challenge of low wages is a widespread problem.

While we wait for the General Assembly to take action on raising the minimum wage, I think it's perfectly appropriate for the City of Philadelphia to take a very modest step of raising the wage floor that prevails for contractors that are employed -- for workers that are

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employed by your contractors providing services to the City. These ordinances are common throughout the country, and they're typically known as living wage ordinances, and they really seek to make the public sector a model employer.

While this ordinance can be expected to increase contracting costs for the City, it's important to recognize that the failure of paying living wages now imposes costs on workers, their families, and their communities. So when a fair day's work doesn't provide a fair day's pay, that leads to a longer line at the local food bank. That leads to a longer line at people seeking housing assistance. And so Philadelphia, as an employer of labor, knows probably better than every other employer in this city the consequences of low wages, because it comes back to haunt you in every other aspect of public services. So it's perfectly appropriate for the City to take a step towards establishing we are

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2 going to be a good employer, we're going
3 to make sure the wages we pay are
4 livable.

5 With that, that's the end of my
6 testimony. Thank you very much.

7 (Applause.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
9 for your testimony.

10 Any questions?

11 The Chair recognizes Councilman
12 Domb.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Mr. Price, I
14 just want to let you know I'm probably
15 the oldest one up here and I remember
16 getting paid \$1.60 an hour when I was --
17 I went to school, went to wrestling
18 practice, 7 to 10 o'clock at night I was
19 a janitor in an office building. So I do
20 remember that.

21 But my question to you is, the
22 issue here I think is if minimum wage had
23 been adjusted from the beginning to the
24 rate of inflation, what would that number
25 be today?

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2 MR. PRICE: To the rate of
3 inflation would get you to around \$10 an
4 hour.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Today?

6 MR. PRICE: Today.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: For some
8 reason I thought it was higher.

9 MR. PRICE: No. Inflation is
10 actually -- it's a pretty conservative
11 metric for raising wages. So, yeah, it
12 gets you to about 10. If you adjusted
13 wages for productivity growth -- and
14 there's a sign back there that has that
15 on it -- the minimum wage would be much
16 higher, probably in the range of \$16, \$17.

17 There's that sign.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay.

19 MR. PRICE: So --

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 19.33.

21 MR. PRICE: There we go.

22 My preferred metric is, I would
23 like to get the minimum wage back to
24 about half. So when you are earning
25 minimum wage back there in 1968, thank

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2 you for that admission, that's where I'd
3 like us to get to, about half. That
4 would limit the growth and inequality
5 that we've seen over time, and certainly
6 that's the goal.

7 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Have you ever
8 done a study that shows by raising wages
9 on municipalities how much money they
10 might save in other areas?

11 MR. PRICE: I have not. You
12 mean in terms of if we had higher wages,
13 we wouldn't have to spend as much on
14 housing assistance?

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Right.

16 MR. PRICE: I have not seen
17 those, and I think that's driven more
18 than anything by the fact that we still
19 remain stuck in a period where minimum
20 wages are generally pretty low. I think
21 over time as you see places like
22 California, Washington, we'll begin to
23 see more of that sort of careful work
24 done to illustrate clearly that when
25 you're raising wages, you get less

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2 reliance on public services.

3 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Right. Okay.

4 Thank you.

5 Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
7 recognizes Councilwoman Gym.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you,
9 Madam Chair, and I'll be just really
10 quick.

11 Mark, thank you so much for all
12 the work that you've done, particularly
13 on your research around the State of
14 Working Philadelphia. I think that was
15 extremely powerful. I think also a
16 statistic that was mentioned that is very
17 moving to a lot of people certainly on
18 our Council and within this larger room
19 is that 80 percent of those 300,000
20 Philadelphians who reported being food
21 insecure are working Philadelphians.
22 They are working. They are working jobs,
23 and they don't feel like they can make
24 enough to put food on their table, and
25 that is a serious lesson for all of us,

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2 that we can't traditionally use just
3 macro measures of economic growth and
4 expect that it will end poverty. And I
5 think your editorial in the Inquirer
6 recently that talks about the important
7 things that businesses can do, which is
8 not only -- and cities can do, not only
9 just in raising wages but providing
10 stable schedules, to be smart about how
11 we take care of working parents and
12 families and Philadelphians is an
13 essential component towards the City's
14 overall health, not just measured purely
15 by massive corporate growth, but in the
16 City's economic health felt by individual
17 residents and members.

18 So I'm looking forward to
19 continuing to push for all of these
20 things with you, and I really just want
21 to thank you for your work in this area.

22 MR. PRICE: Thank you very
23 much.

24 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
25 you.

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2 Are there any other questions
3 or comments from members of the
4 Committee?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Seeing
7 none, thank you so very much for your
8 testimony.

9 Will the Clerk please call the
10 next panel to testify.

11 THE CLERK: Michelle Newman
12 from Bruegger's Bagels and Daisy Cruz,
13 the Mid-Atlantic Director for SEIU 32BJ.

14 (Applause.)

15 (Witnesses approached witness
16 table.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you
18 both. Just please state your name for
19 the record and then proceed with your
20 testimony.

21 MS. NEWMAN: Hello. My name is
22 Michelle Newman. I work at the
23 Philadelphia International Airport and
24 I'm a leader at Unite Here.

25 MS. CRUZ: Good afternoon. My

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2 name is Daisy Cruz. I'm with 32BJ.

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: So,
4 Michelle, if you can, just for the
5 record, turn that microphone right
6 towards you. And, listen, straighten it
7 out to get it as close as possible,
8 because we want the stenographer to hear
9 every word you say.

10 MS. NEWMAN: All right. I got
11 you.

12 My name is Michelle Newman.
13 I'm a leader in Unite Here and I work at
14 the Philadelphia International Airport.
15 My story starts about roughly five years
16 ago when I lost my mother to opioid
17 addiction. A few months after that, I
18 found out the house I was renting was
19 being sold. At the same time, I found
20 out I was expecting another child. I had
21 nowhere to go and I ended up in emergency
22 shelter.

23 I went to OSHA every day, just
24 to be turned away, be told that the City
25 was full, there was no space for us.

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Eventually I got a spot in transitional housing, just in time to give birth to my daughter. I started taking classes to get my GED. I also took ServSafe classes for food service work. I got a job at the airport, and I now have been working there for the past two years. I have two children living with me and one adult son who is trying to make it on his own.

I'm proud to say that I'm standing on my own two feet, but I'd be lying if I said it wasn't a struggle. Each week I struggle to pay bills between rent, childcare, SEPTA, gas, electric, putting food on the table. It's simply not enough to get by. It doesn't add up. So I do get food stamps and I cut back where I can.

Working at the airport has been a really positive thing for me, but it's not enough to support myself and my two children. I make \$13 an hour. Because my co-workers and I formed a union, we

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2 have full-time work, but the two ends
3 still don't meet.

4 The airport is a great resource
5 for our city. It brings billions of
6 dollars into our economy, but when it
7 comes to ending poverty in Philadelphia,
8 there is no shortcuts. We have to raise
9 wages.

10 I applaud City Council for the
11 actions you are taking. It will make a
12 huge difference for me and my children
13 and my co-workers. One day I hope to be
14 able to take my family on a trip or just
15 simply take them somewhere fun, and get a
16 car. I want to provide more than just a
17 roof over their heads.

18 That's a dream that we are
19 fighting for at the airport, and with
20 your help, we are taking one step closer
21 to making it a reality.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. CRUZ: Good afternoon,
25 members of City Council. My name is

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Daisy Cruz. I'm the Director of the
Mid-Atlantic District for SEIU 32BJ.
32BJ represents over 10,000 members
working in the Philadelphia area and the
surrounding counties, including the
subcontracted workers at the Philadelphia
Airport. Thanks to the hard work of the
Mayor and City Council, standing with
airport workers after six years of
fighting for better wages and a union,
they just ratified their first contract
this past summer.

(Applause.)

MS. CRUZ: Philadelphia has the
largest number of people living in
poverty than any other large city in the
United States and does not need more
low-wage jobs that leave workers in
poverty, needing public assistance to get
by. Instead we need family-sustaining
jobs that lift workers out of poverty.
That is why 32BJ SEIU is supporting
increasing the 21st century living wage
to \$15 per hour. We think that this is

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2 an important step towards alleviating
3 poverty in our neighborhoods. The City
4 should not be in the business of
5 subsidizing poverty-wage jobs or
6 employers who do business with the City
7 of Philadelphia.

8 I want Council to understand
9 that even though the airport receives
10 significant taxpayer support, that nearly
11 2,000 workers at the airport would not
12 benefit from the increase -- would not
13 benefit from this increase due to the
14 language in the lease. Next year's lease
15 negotiations will determine if they will
16 be covered. But I still want to thank
17 Council once again for your hard work and
18 supporting workers and the right to form
19 a union and be paid a living wage.

20 Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
23 recognizes Councilman Squilla.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Just no
25 questions, but thank you both for

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2 testifying.

3 And, Michelle, I'd like to say
4 that you're a role model for a lot people
5 here in the City of Philadelphia. So
6 thank you what you're doing and
7 continuing to do, and hopefully we can
8 continue to help you to make that a
9 reality. So thank you so much.

10 MS. NEWMAN: Thank you.

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
12 recognizes Councilman Domb.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
14 Madam Chairwoman.

15 My question is for you,
16 Michelle. How old are your children?

17 MS. NEWMAN: My children are
18 23, 15, and 3.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Are you
20 familiar with the Earned Income Tax
21 Credit?

22 MS. NEWMAN: Yes.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Because you
24 can get checks, real money, and we'll
25 help you get the checks. I'm saying this

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because if anyone else has children under the age of 17, you can get real money from the federal government and file back three additional years. So we're happy, if you want to see me afterwards or whatever, we're happy to help you. If you know people who have kids -- if you don't have kids under 17, you can get a check of \$508, and if you're making -- it's from \$7 and a quarter to \$22 an hour. If you have children and you're making 44,000 as a single parent, you have two kids under 17 or 51,000 as a couple, you can get checks -- I'm going to repeat this -- of up to \$6,000 a year and you can file back three additional years. Someone could get \$24,000. So whatever we can do to get you the money, we want to do that. So, I mean, any one of us can help you. The Department of Revenue can help you. But we want to see you get the money. So if you know of other people, I'd love for you to be a champion for that.

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MS. NEWMAN: Definitely do.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
you.

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
recognizes Councilwoman Gym.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
very much.

And I just wanted to also say
to Michelle, thank you for your story.
Your stories change the way we look at
issues and how we think about things. It
is not enough to do and solve charity
through -- or solve poverty through
charity or small programmatic efforts.
It matters to transform the way we think
about things. And you've been a stalwart
supporter through a whole host of
different things. It's been great to be
in partnership with you, and I'm grateful
to you. I know that your children are
grateful for you fighting for them, but
for other moms all across the City who
can't be here today to testify in the way

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2 that you do.

3 So I just want to honor you.

4 Thank you so much for changing the way we
5 look at things with this, and this bill
6 is the least that we can do and there's a
7 lot more that we can do together too.

8 MS. NEWMAN: Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
11 you.

12 Let me just before you go,
13 Michelle and Daisy, let me just state
14 this for the record. Michelle, while
15 you're giving your testimony, I'm
16 reminded -- and sometimes I think we
17 forget, and if you saw Councilwoman Gym
18 and I sort of doing this whispering back
19 and forth -- people forget sometimes that
20 not everyone starts the race of life at
21 the starting line. Some people start at
22 the 200 yard line, the 300 yard line, and
23 I'm really telling you, some people start
24 a mile ahead of the rest of us. But what
25 you just described is your willingness to

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2 not give up in this race of life.

3 No one should ever be able to
4 tell you that your desire to take your
5 kids on a trip, your desire to have a
6 car, your desire to give them access to
7 an opportunity that they may not see
8 presently in front of them, that's what
9 we need you to do, but we don't need
10 government to give it to you. We need
11 you to have access to the opportunity to
12 do it so you can do it for yourself with
13 dignity. So remember that.

14 Daisy --

15 (Applause.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: -- I just
17 want to say it's nice to see you all.
18 It's nice to see you all here. It's nice
19 to see the entire team, but I'm really,
20 really looking forward to seeing this be
21 developed into a regional campaign that
22 is bipartisan, that is not just in urban
23 municipalities, but our older suburban
24 regions that are also areas where people
25 could also benefit from a wage increase

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2 and that this fight is taken on the big
3 stage about two hours away from here,
4 that place called Harrisburg, because
5 that's where we really need to see some
6 action.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Will the
10 Clerk please call on the next panel.

11 THE CLERK: Durrel Lewis, Sky
12 Chefs at the Philadelphia International
13 Airport, and Reverend Gregory Holston,
14 Executive Director of POWER.

15 (Applause.)

16 (Witnesses approached witness
17 table.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Can both
19 of you please state your name for the
20 record and then proceed with your
21 testimony.

22 MR. LEWIS: Hi. My name is
23 Durrel Lewis and I work at Sky Chef at
24 the Philadelphia Airport. I'm 24 years
25 old and I've been there for two and a

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half years. I'm a warehouse worker,
which means I pack and transport packaged
goods. My duties is to build racks of
food and beverages for the airlines,
everything from meals to chips to sodas
to forks and napkins. I make about
28,000 a year. It's a very physical job.
I've seen a lot of people come and go.
It's back-breaking work, and some people
find that it's not worth it.

My goal is just to be
comfortable. I want to pay my bills and
have money left over. I'm trying to get
a better house. I live with my mother
right now. I'm trying to save money for
my own place.

Pretty much every week I have
to dip into my savings to pay bills, so
it's hard to save anything. I feel lucky
that I don't have any kids. I don't know
how I could even support a family on this
job. I can barely get by as it is.

This bill to increase the City
minimum wage is going to help a lot of

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people in our city. We need it. And I'm also fighting for safety. We have busted equipment. It seems like the company doesn't want to pay for it. One time a wheel was broken. I told my supervisor about it, but the company didn't do anything about it. A few days later that same wheel broke off and it crushed my foot.

The company treat us like we're less than human beings. Some people are immigrants from other countries. If you come to this country for a better life, it shouldn't matter where you come from or how well you speak English. Everyone deserves respect, everyone deserves safety, and everyone deserves to make a better living.

I want to thank the City Council for looking out for Sky Chef workers. We just went through a fight to get included in the minimum wage for the airport. Sky Chef wanted to be carved out so they could pay less than \$8 an

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hour, but City Council stepped up, and
now we're treated like any other airport
workers. It made a huge difference for
us. I'm happy to stand here today and
say we're moving in the right direction.
Thank you for all y'all support.

(Applause.)

REVEREND HOLSTON: My name is
Reverend Gregory Holston. I'm Executive
Director of POWER. POWER is 65-plus, now
moving at about 100 congregations across
the City of Philadelphia, the surrounding
counties, now moving out to Lancaster,
York, Lebanon, and Dauphin counties and
the Lehigh Valley area, and we're
building communities of opportunity that
work for all all across the state.

Faith is the foundation of
everything we do, and race is the lens in
which we look at every issue.

We are thankful for this bill,
and we want to thank those who are part
of our Economic Dignity Team, our leaders
on the team Kate Esposito, leaders on the

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team Terri Burgin, our leaders on the
team Carol Duncan, our leaders on the
team Paula Paul, who have been fighting
this fight for about four years, about
four years.

(Applause.)

REVEREND HOLSTON: We're so
glad the Administration is with us now,
but this is one of the first things we
told the Administration when they came
in, that they had to do this, and we
wanted it done in the first hundred days
of this Administration, but we're
thankful that they're standing with us
today.

Race, again, is the lens in
which we look at every issue, and we
recognize that 50 percent of all African
Americans make less than \$15 an hour and
60 percent of all Latinos. So the issue
is a racial justice issue. It's not just
simply an economic justice issue. It's
not simply just a fairness issue. It is
an issue that affects and creates racial

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2 discrimination.

3 You can look at our workers
4 that are here with us from Unite Here.
5 You can look at the workers that are here
6 at SEIU, and you see that they're black
7 and brown people. That shows how deeply
8 that this is a racial justice issue.

9 And so when we talk about
10 leading by example in a city that is 45
11 or 42 percent African American, majority
12 people of color, it means when you lead
13 by example, that you're standing up for
14 racial justice, that you're standing up
15 for racial equality, that you're standing
16 up for racial equity across the board in
17 every area of life, and we're so thankful
18 for today and plead the day for those who
19 are co-sponsoring this bill are taking
20 that step forward to stand up for
21 workers, black and brown workers all
22 across this city.

23 I will also just say to you as
24 a pastor, there's many a times that I've
25 had congregants come and I hadn't seen

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them for a month or two months, and I would ask them, How you doing, what's going on, haven't seen you. And the response has always been almost all the time this: Pastor, I work two or three jobs. I can't get here on Sunday. I'd love to be here with my kids and I enjoy the service, but this is the only day off I've had in two months and I decided to come to church.

Too many are working extra jobs and are getting paid 7.25 on those extra jobs and still not making ends meet. Franklin Delano Roosevelt probably said it best, as he talked about the same issue some 70 years ago when he recognized that and said that no company, no business that depends on workers who are living in poverty to succeed -- if they're depending on those workers to make their business successful, they're businesses that don't deserve to exist.

(Applause.)

REVEREND HOLSTON: We're glad

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the City of Philadelphia is stepping up
to say that we deserve to exist, because
we're going to make sure that all of our
workers are making at least \$15 an hour
and are not living in poverty.

We thank you today as we go
forward on this issue, but you know as
well as I do, with a town that has 26
percent poverty rate and 14 percent of
the people living in deep poverty, we
have so much more to do. We have so much
work that has to happen, and we're ready
to stand with you and partner with you to
put the next pieces of legislation
forward as well, because we are in a
state of emergency. Children are
hurting. Families are hurting. And when
you're in a state of emergency, you do
whatever is necessary to move us out of
that emergency.

Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
recognizes Councilwoman Gym.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
3 very much, Madam Chair.

4 Durrel, I just wanted to say
5 thank you again for being here and all
6 the spaces in which you and your brothers
7 and sisters at Unite and especially at
8 Sky Chef have raised attention. Again,
9 it's about telling your stories,
10 reminding us that some of the biggest
11 corporations in the world can afford to
12 give their folks a living wage, can
13 afford to give them a stable schedule.

14 You've been able to stand with
15 us, not because the campaign is winnable
16 and easy, but because, most importantly,
17 it's the right thing to do, especially
18 when it's hard, especially when people
19 are struggling. And if we're not there
20 for each other in the times and places in
21 which we have to build out the tough work
22 ahead, not just because it's in it for
23 each one of us but because we're
24 committed to that broader anti-poverty
25 agenda, we're not going to win.

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2 So I really want to thank all
3 of you and your brothers and sisters at
4 Unite for being just stalwart on this
5 issue, stalwart on that fair workweek and
6 telling your story and having this be
7 heard.

8 The City should not be
9 subsidizing poverty wages. We shouldn't
10 be doing it in our city, at the airport
11 or at the School District either. So
12 we're looking forward to winning that
13 with you.

14 MR. LEWIS: Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
17 recognizes Councilman Green.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
19 Madam Chair.

20 I want to thank all of the
21 witnesses here to testify. In
22 particular, Mr. Lewis, I want to commend
23 you for your testimony and actually being
24 a member of Unite Here. Too often when
25 we look at television on a daily basis

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and look at the evening news, we see negative views of young men, especially young men of color, and the fact when you talk about you're trying to save for a home, living with your mother and trying to save the dollars you need to buy your own home and being a leader in Unite Here and also being a leader in your own right, I think it's very important that you continue to walk in that space. And I think you are being observed by people that you don't even realize, people in your neighborhood, people in your community that see you go to work every day, dealing with the struggles you're dealing with, and still get up every day to go to work and set that message and example.

So I just want you to realize the shoes you walk in, when I think about people like Echol Cole or Robert Walker, who lost their lives because of the Memphis sanitation strike. So the stuff that you're doing every day is something

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2 that's very important. So your testimony
3 really touched me based on the fact that
4 you're doing what you need to do to show
5 your leadership for young men in your
6 community. So thank you.

7 MR. LEWIS: No problem.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The Chair
10 recognizes Councilman Squilla.

11 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you.
12 Thank you, Chairman.

13 And, Durrel, I would like to
14 second what Councilman Green said,
15 because it is important to hear that and
16 from the people who are in there, not
17 just complaining about something but
18 doing something, and that's the key that
19 we have here.

20 And also, Reverend Holston,
21 thank you for your leadership and POWER's
22 leadership on this. They wouldn't take
23 no for an answer, continued to go out and
24 work on things to make sure this came to
25 be, and we really appreciate that effort

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2 that your team has put together. So
3 thank POWER and all the organizations
4 that have been a part of this, because
5 this is the only reason why it happened.

6 Thank you.

7 REVEREND HOLSTON: Thank you.

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
9 you.

10 Durrel, if there's anything
11 that I want you to leave here with today,
12 it's the power of authenticity and that
13 no one else has the ability to speak for
14 you better than you. So it's nice when
15 people impacted get to tell their story
16 and it's not manufactured through the
17 lens of someone who hasn't walked in your
18 shoes.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. LEWIS: Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. LEWIS: Y'all have a nice
23 day.

24 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Are there
25 any other questions or comments from

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2 members of the Committee?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Is there
5 anyone else here in the audience to
6 testify on this bill?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Well,
9 this is going to conclude the hearing.
10 We will now go into the public meeting to
11 consider action to be taken on the bill
12 that was heard today.

13 We are now officially in a
14 public meeting and motions for Bill No.
15 180846.

16 The Chair recognizes Councilman
17 Squilla for a motion on Bill No. 180846.

18 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
19 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No. -- I
20 proudly move that Bill No. 180846 be
21 reported from this Committee with a
22 favorable recommendation and further move
23 that the rules of Council be suspended to
24 permit the first reading of this bill at
25 the next session of Council.

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2 (Duly seconded.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: It has
4 been moved and properly seconded that
5 Bill No. 180846 be reported from this
6 Committee with a favorable recommendation
7 and further moved that the rules of
8 Council be suspended to permit first
9 reading of this bill at the next session
10 of Council.

11 All those in favor of the
12 motion will signify by saying aye.

13 (Aye.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Those
15 opposed?

16 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Excuse me
17 one second. I know there was a
18 last-minute amendment that was added that
19 was shared across.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Do all
21 members have a copy of the amendment?

22 (Yes.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: There's a
24 proposed amendment that should be in
25 front of us, proposed amendment to Bill

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2 No. 180846. It has been circulated to
3 all members of the Committee, so the
4 Chair will recognize Councilmember
5 Squilla for an amendment to Bill No.
6 180846.

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
8 Madam Chair. I move the amendment to
9 Bill No. 180846 be supported.

10 (Duly seconded.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: It's been
12 moved and properly seconded that Bill No.
13 180846 be reported from this Committee --
14 has been amended. So now we're going to
15 do the bill. We will move it as amended.
16 So the Chair is going to recognize
17 Councilman Squilla for a motion on Bill
18 No. 180846, as amended.

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
20 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No.
21 180846, as amended, be reported from this
22 Committee with a favorable recommendation
23 and further move that the rules of
24 Council be suspended to permit the first
25 reading at the next session of Council.

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2 (Duly seconded.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: So it has
4 been moved and properly seconded that
5 Bill No. 180846, as amended, be reported
6 from this Committee with a favorable
7 recommendation and further moved that the
8 rules of Council be suspended to permit
9 first reading of this bill at the next
10 session of Council.

11 All those in favor of the
12 motion will signify by saying aye.

13 (Aye.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Those
15 opposed?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: The ayes
18 have it and the motion carries, and Bill
19 No. 180846, as amended, will be reported
20 from this Committee with a favorable
21 recommendation with a request that the
22 rules of Council be suspended to permit
23 first reading at the next session of
24 Council.

25 This concludes the business of

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1 11/20/18 - LABOR - BILL 180846
2 the Committee on Labor and Civil Service.

3 We thank you all, and
4 congratulations.

5 (Applause.)

6 (Committee on Labor and Civil
7 Service concluded at 1:30 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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