

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, June 5, 2017
1:15 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL, CHAIR
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE L. PARKER
COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN AL TAUBENBERGER

BILLS 161061, 170365, 170432, 170433, 170434,
170438, 170515, 170519, and 170555
RESOLUTION 170446

- - -

1
2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
3 afternoon. Thank you all for being here.
4 We're going to ask Councilman Green to
5 join us for our quorum. Would you?
6 Thank you.

7 We will now call the Finance
8 Committee into order. We do have a
9 quorum. To my left, Councilman Greenlee.
10 To his left, Councilwoman Parker,
11 Councilman Domb, and Councilman Green, as
12 well as myself. That gives us a quorum,
13 and we are now happy to begin our
14 hearing.

15 We will ask the Clerk to read
16 the title of the -- before we do, let me
17 say that Bill No. 170365 will be held at
18 the request of the sponsor. That is
19 170365.

20 We're now going to ask the
21 Clerk to read the title, and we will ask
22 our Treasurer, Rasheia Johnson, to come
23 forward. We will begin with 170432 and
24 170434. Thank you.

25 THE CLERK: Bill No. 170432, an

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 ordinance constituting the Fourteenth
3 Supplemental Ordinance to General Gas
4 Works Revenue Bond Ordinance of 1998;
5 authorizing the City of Philadelphia to
6 sell, either at public or private sale,
7 one or more series of Gas Works Revenue
8 Bonds and Gas Works Revenue Bonds to
9 refund such Bonds, and one or more series
10 of Gas Works Revenue Notes and Gas Works
11 Revenue Bonds or Notes to refund such
12 Notes; to pay the costs of certain
13 capital projects and other Project Costs;
14 authorizing the City to obtain credit
15 enhancement for any Series of the Bonds
16 or Series of Notes; making certain
17 determinations and covenants relating to
18 Gas Works Revenues and the payment of
19 interest and principal; and authorizing
20 covenants and actions in order that the
21 Bonds and Notes shall not be arbitrage
22 bonds; all under certain terms and
23 conditions; and
24 170434, an ordinance
25 authorizing, generally, the continued

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 issuance and sale by the City of
3 Philadelphia of Gas Works Revenue Notes
4 of the City, prescribing the forms of
5 notes and providing for their execution
6 and payment, pledging certain revenues of
7 the Gas Works as security, adopting a
8 rate covenant and directing the
9 imposition and collection of rates and
10 charges sufficient to comply therewith,
11 prescribing the conditions precedent to
12 the issuance of specific series of notes,
13 including a resolution passed by the Bond
14 Committee providing for establishment of
15 credit support for notes, providing for
16 designation of a fiscal agent and sinking
17 fund depository, providing for
18 establishment of a sinking fund and its
19 management, providing remedies upon
20 default, and providing for amendments and
21 modifications.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you very much.

24 (Witnesses approached witness
25 table.)

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you for being here. Please identify
4 yourself for the record and begin your
5 testimony.

6 MS. JOHNSON: Sure. Rasheia
7 Johnson, City Treasurer.

8 MR. GOLDEN: Joseph Golden,
9 Executive Vice President, Acting CFO of
10 PGW.

11 MS. JOHNSON: Good afternoon,
12 Councilwoman Blackwell and members of the
13 Committee of Finance. I'm Rasheia
14 Johnson, City Treasurer of the City of
15 Philadelphia, and with me this afternoon
16 is Joseph Golden, Acting Chief Financial
17 Officer for the Philadelphia Gas Works.
18 I am here to testify in favor of Bill No.
19 170432 and 170434.

20 Bill No. 170432, constituting
21 the Fourteenth Supplemental Ordinance,
22 would authorize the Philadelphia Gas
23 Works working with the Office of the City
24 Treasurer to issue up to \$300 million of
25 Gas Works Revenue Bonds and Gas Works

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 Revenue Notes program for capital needs
3 in an aggregate principal amount up to
4 \$120 million.

5 Proceeds from the sales of the
6 Bonds shall be used to finance capital
7 projects included in the capital program
8 for the Gas Works included in the capital
9 budget of the Gas Works, as approved by
10 the City Council, as well as required
11 payments to Sinking Fund Reserve and
12 costs of issuance and/or capitalized
13 interest of the bonds.

14 The proceeds from the sale of
15 the Notes shall be used only for
16 authorized capital and maintenance
17 projects of the Gas Works, as well as to
18 pay costs of issuance and/or capitalized
19 interest on the Notes. Effecting this
20 program will allow the City and the Gas
21 Works to fund current and near future
22 capital needs at short-term interest
23 rates while borrowing exactly at the time
24 capital is needed, eliminating the need
25 to reinvest bond proceeds in the current

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 interest rate environment.

3 Bill No. 170434 would provide
4 authorization to continue the
5 Philadelphia Gas Works existing Working
6 Capital Commercial Paper Revenue program
7 in an aggregate principal amount not to
8 exceed \$150 million designed to provide
9 access to liquidity in the potential case
10 of a shortfall.

11 Bill No. 170434 seeks an
12 additional authorization of five years.
13 Although the Gas Works has not drawn on
14 this program since 2009, in the event of
15 unforeseen financial crises or liquidity
16 event, the Commercial Paper would provide
17 working capital financing at short-term
18 interest rates.

19 I would like to respectfully
20 request a suspension of the rules to
21 allow for first reading of the bill at
22 the next meeting of Council.

23 This concludes my testimony,
24 and I'm happy to answer any questions at
25 this time.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you very much.

4 The Chair notes Councilman
5 Squilla is here, as well as Councilman
6 Taubenberger. Thank you very much.

7 Are there questions?

8 Councilman Domb.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
10 Madam Chairwoman.

11 Good afternoon.

12 MS. JOHNSON: Good afternoon.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I just have a
14 question. I want to make sure I
15 understand. On the Working Capital
16 Commercial Paper Revenue Notes, that's
17 only in the need to provide liquidity in
18 case of a potential shortfall; is that
19 correct?

20 MR. GOLDEN: That's correct.

21 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So do we pay
22 interest on that if we don't draw it
23 down?

24 MR. GOLDEN: We don't pay
25 interest. We do pay a letter of credit

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 fee. The letter of credit fee is used to
3 cover both authorization of the 120
4 million and the 150 million. It's a dual
5 purpose letter of credit.

6 COUNCILMAN DOMB: How much is
7 the credit fee to have that liquidity
8 potential of 150 million?

9 MR. GOLDEN: I don't know off
10 the top of my head now.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Can we find
12 that out?

13 MS. JOHNSON: Yes. We can get
14 that information to you.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So basically
16 this is money that's put aside in case we
17 need it. We don't pay interest on it,
18 but we do pay an annual fee or a one-time
19 fee?

20 MR. GOLDEN: We pay an annual
21 fee on a monthly basis. It's the letter
22 of credit to support it. To the extent
23 that the notes are not issued, there is
24 no interest component at all.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And that

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 can't be accomplished through a line of
3 credit through a bank for much lower
4 fees, can it?

5 MR. GOLDEN: It could be.
6 We're in the process of reviewing that
7 now.

8 MS. JOHNSON: Right. We
9 actually are working on an RFP right now
10 to change from the letter of credit
11 structure to a line of credit, and we
12 should hopefully have the RFP out for bid
13 next week sometime.

14 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Right. Okay.
15 And what is the interest rate typically
16 on these bonds that you're seeing today?

17 MS. JOHNSON: I mean, around
18 the 4, 4 and a half percent.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: If you could
20 just let me know. I'd like to know what
21 the fees are for that letter of credit.
22 Just let the Chairwoman know.

23 MS. JOHNSON: I'll get that
24 back to you.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 Thank you very much. Thank you.

3 MS. JOHNSON: Sure.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you.

6 Are there further questions?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
9 you very much.

10 The Chair now asks the Clerk to
11 read the title of Bill No. 170433 and
12 170438 and 170515. We ask Janet Parrish
13 and PGW team to come forward.

14 THE CLERK: 170433, an
15 ordinance approving the Fiscal Year 2018
16 Capital Budget providing for expenditures
17 for the capital purposes of the
18 Philadelphia Gas Works (including the
19 supplying of funds in connection
20 therewith) subject to certain constraints
21 and conditions, and acknowledging receipt
22 of the Revised Forecast of Capital
23 Budgets for Fiscal Years 2019 through
24 2023; and

25 170438, an ordinance approving

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 a lease agreement between the
3 Philadelphia Gas Works by the
4 Philadelphia Facilities Management
5 Corporation, solely in its capacity as
6 operator and manager of the City-owned
7 Philadelphia Gas Works, and Germantown
8 Realty Investment Group, LP for certain
9 premises located at 212 through 214 West
10 Cheltenham Avenue; and

11 170515, an ordinance amending
12 Chapter 19-3200 of The Philadelphia Code,
13 entitled "Keystone Opportunity Zone,
14 Economic Development District, and
15 Strategic Development Area," to provide
16 for extension of certain benefits, under
17 certain terms and conditions.

18 (Witnesses approached witness
19 table.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you very much. Did you do 433, 438, and
22 this testimony for 515?

23 THE CLERK: Yes.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you.

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2 Thank you very much. The Chair
3 notes that Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds
4 Brown is here, as well as Councilman
5 David Oh, and we're very, very glad to
6 see him and that he is in good health.
7 Thank you. Councilman Bobby Henon is
8 also here.

9 So we thank them all for being
10 here at this Finance hearing. Thank you.
11 We have nearly everyone here, but quite a
12 quorum. Thank you very much.

13 Please identify yourself and
14 begin. Thank you, Ms. Parrish.

15 MS. PARRISH: Thank you,
16 Chairwoman Blackwell. My name is Janet
17 Parrish. I'm the Interim Director of the
18 Philadelphia Gas Commission. Seated to
19 my left?

20 MR. MOSER: My name is Douglas
21 Moser, Executive Vice President and
22 Acting COO of PGW.

23 MS. PARRISH: And he is here
24 with me on the 433.

25 And with me on the 438 seated

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 to my right?

3 MR. SNYDER: Raymond Snyder,
4 Senior Vice President for Gas Management
5 at PGW.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
7 you.

8 MS. PARRISH: So beginning with
9 Bill 170433, thank you for the
10 opportunity to present this testimony,
11 Chairwoman Blackwell, members of the
12 Committee, on behalf of the Philadelphia
13 Gas Commission. We have submitted
14 written testimony, which I will not read
15 into the record, but I would like to
16 summarize, if I may. And attached to the
17 testimony I would note is a copy of the
18 Gas Commission's Order in this matter and
19 setting forth in full its recommendations
20 to City Council regarding PGW's Fiscal
21 Year 2018 Capital Budget. These
22 recommendations were adopted at the Gas
23 Commission's public meeting held on April
24 25th of this year.

25 We, of course, are here today

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 to urge Council -- the Committee and then
3 Council's approval of the bill, and we
4 are requesting a suspension of the rules
5 so first reading can occur at the next
6 session of Council.

7 In brief, PGW's total request
8 for the coming fiscal year was about \$118
9 million. This included reauthorization
10 of about \$2.8 million in unused spending
11 authority from its Fiscal 2016 Capital
12 Budget. And so after review when all was
13 said and done, what the Gas Commission is
14 recommending to Council is a budget that
15 is about \$3.6 million less; that is,
16 about \$114.4 million. This, I would
17 note, is about \$4.8 million than the
18 current Fiscal Year 2017 Capital Budget.

19 It does maintain higher levels
20 of investment in accelerated cast iron
21 main replacement, similar to last year.
22 This is funded by a surcharge that I know
23 you're familiar with, the distribution
24 system improvement charge. It generates
25 about \$33 million per year towards

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2 accelerated cast iron main replacement,
3 enabling PGW to replace an additional 13
4 to 15 miles per year on top of the old
5 baseline 18-mile-per-year program. PGW
6 also has submitted written testimony from
7 Mr. Moser, which, of course, goes into
8 additional detail about the specific
9 projects in the budget.

10 Just to highlight two other
11 issues, if I may. One is that the Gas
12 Commission is once again recommending
13 that City Council would approve -- it's
14 an updated set of capital budget
15 guidelines that we have brought to you
16 for a number of years now for approval in
17 conjunction with the annual capital
18 budget. We call them the capital program
19 protocols, and this has all the standards
20 and conditions and rules that apply to
21 the capital budget as approved.

22 The other area I'd like to
23 touch on briefly as usual is the DBE
24 participation forecast in conjunction
25 with the capital budget. As you know,

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2 each year we do ask PGW to provide that
3 forecast, and this is arrived at through
4 a line-item-by-line-item review of the
5 capital budget, and, of course, it backs
6 out things such as PGW labor expense and
7 other internal charges, also sole source
8 contracts, which actually don't offer an
9 opportunity for DBE participation.

10 And it's always important to
11 stress that unlike the City's reporting,
12 PGW actually reports actual spend. So
13 what you are seeing here, and we're
14 seeing the last 12 months on a rolling
15 12-month basis, a 14 percent actual DBE
16 spend. That is -- it may sound a little
17 bit lower than the City's goals, but,
18 again, we are focused on spend and not
19 just contracts which are being let and
20 offer an opportunity for participation.

21 For Fiscal 2018, the DBE
22 opportunity amount that was identified
23 with respect to the budget is about \$11
24 million higher than it was with the prior
25 year's budget. So that does anticipate a

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2 slightly higher DBE spend in the coming
3 fiscal year than last year.

4 Now, the other thing that we've
5 really been focused on is not just the
6 spend itself but analysis, more detailed
7 analysis, of where this participation is
8 coming from. And so in the past year,
9 year and a half, we have seen PGW begin
10 to develop a lot more data and analysis
11 at the request of the Gas Commission and
12 because I think it's being driven as well
13 by the PGW Board of Directors. And with
14 this information, I think PGW will be
15 better able to focus its efforts and
16 identify where those opportunities exist
17 and where they are untapped, where it's
18 succeeding and where it is not doing as
19 well.

20 The other thing and really just
21 hot off the press as of earlier this
22 afternoon is the first disparity study
23 that's been conducted for PGW by Econsult
24 with the Milligan Group. So literally
25 that just came into our hands earlier

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 today. So we haven't had a detailed
3 opportunity to review it yet, but my high
4 level review indicates that it shows that
5 there's still some untapped opportunity
6 there to increase participation, but
7 there is also a need to develop yet more
8 granular data about the specific
9 subindustries in which ready, willing,
10 and able vendors do exist who may or may
11 not be being tapped yet. So I think it
12 kind of sets a stage for additional
13 efforts, and this is really an ongoing
14 work in progress for PGW.

15 So those are a few of the
16 comments we wanted to share with you
17 today, and, of course, Mr. Moser, myself
18 would be happy to answer any questions
19 you may have.

20 Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you very much. And certainly that is it
23 for both bills?

24 MS. PARRISH: No. I'm happy to
25 go on to Bill 438, if you'd like.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes.

3 We'd like to get them in and then ask our
4 questions.

5 MS. PARRISH: Sure. So, again,
6 good afternoon, Chairwoman Blackwell,
7 members of the Committee. My name is
8 Janet Parrish. I'm the Interim Director
9 of the Philadelphia Gas Commission. I'm
10 here today to present testimony on behalf
11 of the Gas Commission in support of Bill
12 170438.

13 Attached to my written
14 testimony again is a copy of the Gas
15 Commission Order setting forth its
16 approval of the lease in question, and
17 this is basically a four-year renewal or
18 extension, if you want to look at it that
19 way, of a lease for PGW's customer
20 service center in the Germantown section
21 of Philadelphia. It's a longstanding
22 site of a customer service center.

23 The Commission did approve the
24 lease at its meeting held on April 25th
25 of this year and is recommending that

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 Council do likewise.

3 Again, we are asking for a
4 suspension of the rules so first reading
5 can occur at the next session of Council.
6 And, again, additional details are
7 contained in PGW's written testimony.

8 Substantively, the lease is
9 really virtually identical to the one
10 that both City Council and the Gas
11 Commission approved in 2013, and the
12 first year rent, I'm happy to note, will
13 be the same as the current rent. No
14 increase in year one.

15 Through the course of our
16 review, PGW entered into some additional
17 negotiations with the landlord and was
18 able to have the annual rent escalator
19 reduced from 3 percent to 2 percent. So
20 it is a fairly straightforward really
21 renewal of a lease, and it's a fairly
22 busy site, as I think you may be aware,
23 for PGW customer traffic for various
24 forms of assistance with bills and
25 programs like the Low-Income Home Energy

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2 Assistance program, and we favorably
3 commend approval of the lease to this
4 Committee.

5 We'd be happy to answer any
6 questions you may have.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
8 you very much.

9 We wanted to ask a question
10 about the DBE issue. It has here goals
11 for 2016, 20 percent. Goals for 2017, 17
12 percent. Now, you say you spent some
13 thousands more, but during this time,
14 it's so important and we're fighting so
15 hard for jobs and inclusion in all
16 neighborhoods. We wonder why it's gone
17 from 20 percent to 17 percent, again what
18 you expect in 2018 and what we can expect
19 in the future.

20 MR. MOSER: I believe the goal
21 of the 20 percent was an aspirational
22 kind of goal. It was probably a little
23 bit higher than we were going to be
24 expected to achieve, but we wanted to set
25 the bar high for ourselves to be able to

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 try and strive for that. The 17 percent
3 goal is probably the realistic kind of
4 goal that we're going to be able to
5 achieve.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Well,
7 you know, it may be aspirational if you
8 did it higher than you expected, but it
9 was your goal. And during these times
10 where we're really giving all the
11 businesses, universities, we're holding
12 their feet to the fire, we really expect
13 to have real numbers and increase in
14 participation, not decrease in
15 participation, and we wonder when we can
16 expect that. When can we expect an
17 increase in these numbers?

18 MR. MOSER: I think as
19 Ms. Parrish has indicated, we just
20 finished the disparity study, which will
21 help us to drive our program, find out
22 the -- help to determine those areas that
23 we can expect greater participation, and
24 we are committed to trying to achieve a
25 higher goal and trying to achieve a

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2 greater participation on those levels.

3 MS. PARRISH: And I would add,
4 Chairwoman, if I may, your point is well
5 taken. You look at the numbers and you
6 look at it as an aspirational statement,
7 and even taking into account the fact
8 that, as I mentioned, I mean, each year's
9 goal is driven by the specifics of the
10 budget. So sometimes there are certainly
11 more opportunities, for example, for
12 professional services to be engaged
13 because PGW has a large one-time project
14 and that offers an opportunity. It
15 doesn't recur year to year. So you will
16 see some fluctuation from year to year.

17 But putting that aside, the
18 goal is certainly to do better, to do
19 more, and that is why the focus of the
20 Gas Commission has been on trying to give
21 PGW direction in that vein to drive
22 towards more detailed analytics so they
23 actually know and can analyze the vendor
24 base. That's why you're seeing this
25 disparity study for the first time.

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2 So are we there yet a hundred
3 percent? No. I mean, I wouldn't say
4 that, and I don't think PGW would tell
5 you that. Are we moving in the right
6 direction? I think, yes, staying focused
7 on the fact that what you're seeing here
8 cannot directly be compared to the City's
9 numbers, because it is actual spend and
10 not a percentage of contracts which are
11 being let. So it's a little difficult to
12 compare apples and apples unless you are
13 comparing apples.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Well,
15 we do have some concerns with it, we ask
16 that you note, and we will expect
17 something different certainly as we move
18 forward.

19 Councilman Domb.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
21 Madam Chairwoman.

22 And good afternoon. Thank you
23 for your testimony. I just have a couple
24 of quick questions. The small easy one
25 is the lease. I'm just looking at the

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 paperwork. The lease is like \$72,000 a
3 year roughly, 6,000 a month. How many
4 square feet is that property?

5 MS. PARRISH: I believe it's
6 4,112. And that, I believe, is stated in
7 the ordinance.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. And
9 the other question I had is, we were at a
10 briefing, at least I was and maybe some
11 of the new Councilmembers, maybe a year
12 or two ago, 18 months ago, whatever it
13 was, but they showed us how the PGW
14 average bills were going down for the
15 citizens of the City. Is that still the
16 case or is it different right now?

17 MS. PARRISH: I'll ask
18 Mr. Moser to address that.

19 MR. MOSER: The commodity, the
20 price of the gas, the commodity itself
21 has continued to go down at that point in
22 time, but right now it's pretty much
23 leveled off and we expect it to stay flat
24 in the near future.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. So

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 then the City of Philadelphia essentially
3 is the shareholder, right, of PGW? It's
4 owned by the City technically, right?

5 MS. PARRISH: Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So we've seen
7 our revenues go down, but my question --
8 and I've been asking about this for
9 whatever time I've been here. We have
10 several buildings the City owns -- I
11 don't know if there's 18, 20 or 25
12 buildings -- that are not using PGW,
13 using an alternative source, and it seems
14 to me that the potential of revenue for
15 those conversions is between roughly
16 maybe \$3 to \$4 million potential a year.
17 And do we have a written plan of when
18 we're going to convert those buildings
19 over? Because it's not just the annual
20 revenue that I'm concerned about. My
21 concern is if we ever want to value PGW
22 on a capitalization rate, that 4 million
23 of income could equate to 80 million of
24 value. And so my question is whether
25 it's the Art Museum or whether it's in

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 2020 or whenever it is, I would like to
3 see a written plan of when we're going to
4 convert the buildings the City owns to
5 the utility company that the City owns.

6 MS. PARRISH: So I would offer
7 that I guess the question is who does
8 that plan come from, is that the
9 Administration or is that PGW?

10 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I think it
11 should be a joint effort between the
12 Administration and PGW.

13 MS. PARRISH: PGW is certainly
14 a willing partner in that.

15 MR. MOSER: And I would
16 agree --

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So you can
18 help PGW.

19 MR. MOSER: I would agree to
20 that. We would encourage all conversions
21 of City buildings over that have the
22 opportunity to convert over. We'd be
23 more than happy to work with whoever is
24 designated as our point of contact to be
25 able to work with the City to accomplish

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 that.

3 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So we have to
4 convene a meeting to have that plan in
5 writing, because otherwise this is
6 going -- we'll be here in 2020 talking
7 about the same thing.

8 MR. MOSER: I would agree, sir.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And in the
10 case of PGW, in order to find new revenue
11 versus raising the rates, we need more
12 customers, and as long as the City owns
13 these buildings, it seems to me they
14 should be on PGW.

15 MR. MOSER: I would agree, sir.

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you for
17 your testimony.

18 MS. PARRISH: Thank you very
19 much.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
21 Madam Chairwoman.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you.

24 Are there any further
25 questions?

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2 Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good

4 afternoon.

5 MS. PARRISH: Good afternoon.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Following
7 up to Councilwoman Chairwoman Blackwell's
8 questions, I'm curious, you state in your
9 testimony that you seek a number of ways
10 to honor what you put on paper with
11 regards to DBE/WBE participation. Do you
12 currently have any joint ventures? You
13 have here joint venture arrangement with
14 a DBE. Are there any joint ventures
15 currently with a DBE?

16 MR. MOSER: We do not have any
17 joint ventures with PGW. Some of our
18 prime contractors joint venture with --

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Please
20 pull the mic closer to you.

21 MR. MOSER: PGW does not joint
22 venture, but some of our prime
23 contractors would joint venture with a
24 subcontractor to achieve that.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: That are

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 DBE?

3 MR. MOSER: Yes, ma'am.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. And
5 when you say that PGW is, quote,
6 committed to increasing the opportunities
7 in the awarding of contracts to DBEs
8 wherever possible, what does that
9 translate into? Provide us with some
10 examples.

11 MR. MOSER: We do have our
12 supply chain individuals here today if
13 you'd like to hear from them as to a lot
14 of the programs that they have
15 instituted.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes, I
17 would.

18 MS. PARRISH: I think that
19 would be helpful. We have the Vice
20 President of Supply Chain, Anthony Mauro,
21 M-A-U-R-O, and also the Director of
22 Contract Management and Supplier
23 Diversity, Erica Patterson.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.

25 (Witnesses approached witness

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 table.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good
4 afternoon.

5 MS. PATTERSON: Good afternoon.
6 How are you?

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Fine.
8 Thank you. Please state your name for
9 the record.

10 MS. PATTERSON: Yes. Erica
11 Patterson, Director of Contracts
12 Management and Supplier Diversity in the
13 Supply Chain Department at PGW.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We're
15 going to have to ask you to please pull
16 the mic closer to you.

17 MS. PATTERSON: Sure.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Terrific.
19 Sir?

20 MR. MAURO: Tony Mauro, Vice
21 President of Supply Chain at PGW.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So by way
23 of background and, again, I'm quoting
24 from the testimony, these vendors are
25 actively recruited to participate in

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 PGW's procurement opportunities. So
3 provide for us a couple of examples of
4 what that means, what that looks like.

5 MS. PATTERSON: So I'm sorry.
6 Can you repeat the question?

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes. It
8 says here in the testimony, DPW's
9 testimony -- it's not DPW. It's PGW.

10 Accordingly, these vendors are
11 actively recruited to participate in
12 PGW's procurement opportunities.

13 So just share with us briefly
14 what that means, what that looks like
15 when you actively recruit.

16 MS. PATTERSON: Yes. As an
17 initiative to support the Supplier
18 Diversity program at PGW, what we do is
19 we have built relationships with OEO. We
20 have also built relationships recently
21 with the Hispanic -- the Greater
22 Philadelphia Hispanic Chamber of
23 Commerce, also the African American
24 Chamber of Commerce, and soon to come the
25 Asian Chamber of Commerce to build these

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 strategic partnerships that will allow us
3 to meet new minority, small or
4 woman-owned businesses to bring them into
5 PGW as a meet and greet so that they are
6 fully aware of the different types of
7 opportunities that we have to offer, and
8 we can also get to know their side of
9 their business and what expertise they
10 have to offer to kind of meet up in a
11 matchmaking perspective to bring those
12 opportunities to them and to bring their
13 expertise to PGW.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So you say
15 these are new strategic partnerships.
16 New as of when? The last six months, the
17 last year?

18 MS. PATTERSON: I'm going to
19 say within the last year. Most recent
20 ones is our membership, corporate
21 membership, with the Greater Philadelphia
22 Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and also the
23 African Chamber of Commerce as well.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: So then do
25 you track, you have some means of

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 tracking the yield of what those
3 partnerships return?

4 MS. PATTERSON: So because this
5 is kind of like a fairly new recent
6 initiative, we do have or will be putting
7 mechanisms in place to track that to kind
8 of understand the performance and the
9 relationships that we are gaining out of
10 those partnerships, yes.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Do you
12 care to add anything, Mr. Mauro?

13 MR. MAURO: No. Erica assumed
14 responsibility for Supplier Diversity at
15 PGW just almost exactly two years ago,
16 and I can tell you, you won't find a
17 person who is more dedicated really into
18 building relationships, and she has a
19 real passion for this in this area, and
20 we do a lot to support her. We're
21 looking to, anywhere we can, to find any
22 opportunity to increase our spend with
23 women, minority, and disabled-owned
24 companies.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. So

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 then I would suspect that if you're about
3 a year old or this new practice,
4 initiative is a year old, that a year
5 from now you'll be able to provide some
6 greater detail and further speak to
7 Chairperson Blackwell's concern that the
8 aspirational goal is actually lower than.

9 MS. PATTERSON: Yes. Yes.
10 There's a lot of moving parts in our
11 development. We're building that
12 foundation for our Supplier Diversity
13 program. Just as Ms. Parrish said, the
14 disparity study is kind of hot off the
15 press. So from a data analytics
16 perspective, that will be that component
17 that we would need to kind of digest that
18 information, along with building
19 strategic partnerships and continuing to
20 add additional resources and tools that
21 will help us along the way to kind of
22 full or kind of finalize our program.
23 So, yes.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay.
25 Well, thank you. We'll look forward to

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 that update a year from now.

3 MS. PATTERSON: You're welcome.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you.

6 Councilwoman Parker.

7 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
8 you, Madam Chair.

9 And just a quick follow-up to
10 Councilwoman Blackwell and Councilwoman
11 Reynolds Brown's comments relative to the
12 diversity and inclusion. Let me also
13 first just commend you for even getting
14 the process started and being proactive,
15 because the way things have happened in
16 this body since I've been a member of it
17 and even when I was in Harrisburg is
18 usually we don't get to the diversity and
19 inclusion discussion until something
20 requires us to do so and to take action.
21 So thank you for being forward-thinking.

22 With that being said, I'll ask
23 that you also think about members of
24 Council as a part of your recruitment
25 strategies and tools, because we all send

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 out e-blasts and newsletters, and we have
3 networks of small business owners who we
4 interact with and particularly the
5 District Councilmembers on a regular
6 basis and then as Councilmen and women
7 at-large citywide. So as you're working
8 on recruitment and you're using these
9 very particular entities, we also want to
10 make sure that we're reaching out to
11 churches and using any vehicle that may
12 not normally be a part of the recruitment
13 process, because it can only add value to
14 your recruiting effort.

15 MS. PATTERSON: Oh, absolutely.
16 I agree. I think that's an awesome
17 statement.

18 Just to add on to that for
19 further initiatives that PGW is doing,
20 we've also built a relationship since
21 I've been actually promoted to Director
22 within the last two years, we've built
23 that relationship with OEO. We meet with
24 them quarterly. And in addition to that,
25 Iola Harper has also included us on

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 several committees, such as the EORC
3 committee, which we will take part in
4 upcoming, also OEO's committees that they
5 have on a regular basis as well to bring
6 that local entity inclusion so that we're
7 all on the same page as it relates to
8 building strategic partnerships and
9 growing our programs individually but
10 doing it from a collective perspective.

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Listen,
12 the celebratory mode will come in when
13 you look at the ROI a year or a year and
14 a half to two years later, then you look
15 at everything that you've invested and
16 you see the yield. It makes it matter.
17 So thank you.

18 MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you very much.

21 Any further questions?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
24 you very much.

25 We'll now call on Duane Bumb,

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 Senior Deputy Director of Commerce, for
3 Bill No. 170515.

4 (Witness approached witness
5 table.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
7 afternoon.

8 MR. BUMB: Good afternoon,
9 Chairwoman Blackwell and members of the
10 Committee on Finance. My name is Duane
11 Bumb. I'm the Senior Deputy Director of
12 Commerce for the City of Philadelphia. I
13 am here today on behalf of the
14 Administration to testify in support of
15 Bill 170515, a bill authorizing the City
16 of Philadelphia to apply to the
17 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to extend
18 the Keystone Opportunity Zone, or KOZ,
19 designation and its related benefits for
20 an additional ten years for 46
21 properties.

22 The KOZ program was created in
23 1999 to stimulate private investment on
24 vacant or underutilized properties. This
25 coordinated program allows for state and

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 local business taxes to be waived on
3 targeted sites approved for participation
4 by both levels of government. The KOZ
5 program has been modified several times
6 over the last 19 years, with many new
7 properties added and the benefit term of
8 other properties extended. Since the
9 implementation of the KOZ program, the
10 results in Philadelphia have included
11 over \$1.7 billion in new private
12 investment and approximately 12,000 jobs
13 created or retained.

14 Under current state legislation
15 governing the KOZ program, the City of
16 Philadelphia may apply to the
17 Pennsylvania Department of Community and
18 Economic Development, or DCED, for the
19 extension of term for properties
20 currently receiving KOZ benefits,
21 provided the property owner has not
22 previously utilized KOZ benefits and the
23 property continues to remain vacant or
24 underutilized. Applying for extension of
25 KOZ benefits for selected properties will

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 allow the City to maximize the impact of
3 the KOZ program for those businesses that
4 are currently considering a significant
5 investment by the City.

6 The Department of Commerce is
7 actively working with several companies
8 considering new development in the City.
9 Two of these businesses are expected to
10 make location decisions within the next
11 two months and have identified sites in
12 the City that are in active competition
13 for those development opportunities.
14 Each of these location decisions could
15 result in the construction of a major new
16 facility and the creation of over 1,000
17 permanent jobs. In each case, the value
18 of KOZ benefits will be critical in
19 determining whether a site in
20 Philadelphia is selected for the
21 investment. Both businesses making
22 imminent site decisions will be seeking a
23 full ten years of KOZ benefits. The only
24 way to provide that term is to seek an
25 extension of the KOZ designation for the

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 selected sites. The City will only make
3 an application to the state for the
4 extension of KOZ benefits once a business
5 has been identified that is ready to
6 invest and create jobs in the City. We
7 are seeking the ten-year KOZ extension to
8 assure that Philadelphia is the preferred
9 location for these businesses.

10 In addition to the five KOZ
11 properties being considered for these two
12 immediate attraction candidates, the
13 Department of Commerce is requesting
14 permission to extend 39 additional KOZ
15 properties throughout the City. Except
16 for the two privately owned properties in
17 the Northeast being considered as
18 preferred site for one of the imminent
19 business opportunities, the remaining 44
20 properties being requested for KOZ
21 extension are all owned through PIDC and
22 the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial
23 Development, or PAID. All properties are
24 located within our industrial parks,
25 along the Delaware River, and at the Navy

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 Yard. We will submit each of these sites
3 to DCED for extension as new projects
4 become imminent. Receiving City and
5 School District authorization to make an
6 application to the state for extension of
7 K0Z benefits allows the City's economic
8 development team to rapidly and
9 definitively offer ten years of K0Z
10 benefits when attracting businesses.

11 As has been the case in
12 previous rounds of K0Z legislation
13 extensions and designations, the City
14 will require all property owners to enter
15 into a Payment in Lieu of Taxes, or PILOT
16 agreement, for the term of the K0Z
17 extension with payments set at 110
18 percent of the previous year's real
19 estate taxes. All PILOTs will be in
20 effect for the life of the K0Z
21 designation.

22 This concludes my testimony. I
23 respectfully request that the Committee
24 support Bill 170515 and request that you
25 vote this bill out of Committee with a

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 favorable recommendation and further ask
3 that the rules of Council be suspended to
4 allow for a first reading at Council's
5 next scheduled session.

6 Thank you for your
7 consideration. I'd be happy to answer
8 any questions you may have.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you very much.

11 We'll now call on -- is it
12 Councilman Henon?

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: We're
14 sharing.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
16 Councilman Domb, then Henon. They'll
17 share the question.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
19 Madam Chairwoman.

20 And good afternoon.

21 MR. BUMB: Good afternoon.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I have a few
23 quick questions. We visited this KOZ
24 issue and the Governor held us up on the
25 new applications back in, I guess, last

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 year, was it?

3 MR. BUMB: Last fall.

4 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Do you think
5 that's going to be a problem extending
6 these?

7 MR. BUMB: No. We are allowed
8 by existing legislation to extend
9 properties so long as they meet certain
10 tests, and we've done that. Even over
11 the last year, we've extended properties.
12 So, no, I don't think we have an issue.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Just so I'm
14 clear on a few things, there's two
15 companies right now you're working with
16 for new locations?

17 MR. BUMB: Yes.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Are they
19 within the current KOZs that we have on
20 the books?

21 MR. BUMB: Neither of those
22 companies is within the City right now at
23 all.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: No, no. But
25 would their locations be --

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 MR. BUMB: The sites that each
3 of those companies is looking at are KOZ
4 sites.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: The other
6 question I had is, on the first page of
7 your testimony you talked about 1.7
8 billion in new private investment since
9 the implementation of the KOZs. Do you
10 have any idea of what the percentage is
11 of the total investment in the City? Is
12 that 5 percent of the investment, 10
13 percent? That would help understand the
14 impact, in measuring the impact of the
15 KOZ.

16 MR. BUMB: I don't have that
17 right now, but you're right, I think that
18 we can find out for you.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I'd be
20 curious to know that number.

21 And the other question is the
22 Navy Yard, which Urban Land Institute
23 last March, I think, or May recognized as
24 the number one adaptive reuse of space as
25 a KOZ. There are at least 12,000 jobs

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 there alone. Do you think this number
3 might be low, 12,000?

4 MR. BUMB: Well, some of the
5 jobs at the Navy Yard, the jobs, for
6 example, at the Department of Navy, were
7 there before and those count toward that.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: But is this
9 12,000 all the KOZs?

10 MR. BUMB: Yes, it is. Parts
11 of the Navy Yard, including the shipyard,
12 were not in the KOZ, for example.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
14 you. Thank you very much.

15 Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: Madam Chair,
17 thank you.

18 Thank you for your testimony.
19 Just kind of -- I don't know. Maybe I
20 made the wrong decision on letting the
21 Councilman go first. He asked all the
22 good questions.

23 But has anything changed on --
24 is this just a simple reapplication
25 process because the time had expired for

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 the state or are we adding properties to
3 it?

4 MR. BUMB: We can't add any
5 properties right now. The only ability
6 we have is to extend the term of existing
7 sites that are still eligible.

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: So this is
9 just a technical standard extension of
10 the time so we can get in within the
11 state's fiscal budget?

12 MR. BUMB: Yeah. It's
13 basically resetting the clock so that any
14 business that comes into a KOZ site has a
15 full ten years of benefits.

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: Right.
17 Because they could be harmed because the
18 state hasn't --

19 MR. BUMB: Yes.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: -- enacted
21 their legislation, which enables us to do
22 ours. So we're giving the state
23 permission to extend the time on the
24 properties that we have listed through
25 this legislation --

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 MR. BUMB: Yes.

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: -- is that
4 correct?

5 Great. Thank you.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
7 Further questions?

8 Yes. Councilman Domb.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
10 Madam Chairwoman.

11 I have one other question.
12 Those two companies that want to come to
13 the City of Philadelphia and be in a KOZ,
14 which of our taxes are the most onerous
15 for them? Have they identified that to
16 you? Like of all the taxes we have in
17 the City, which one would be the biggest
18 factor for them not to come if they can't
19 get into a KOZ?

20 MR. BUMB: So different
21 companies will have different tax
22 implications, and I would -- and these
23 are very different sorts of companies.
24 It's my guess is that in each case, the
25 tax that's most onerous is a state tax,

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 which the KOZ also waives.

3 COUNCILMAN DOMB: State tax?

4 MR. BUMB: State taxes are also
5 waived by KOZ, which is one of the
6 reasons we want to put KOZ in place here,
7 because it requires that the state also
8 waive its taxes. So state corporate
9 taxes, for example, in certain cases
10 could be the most onerous tax.

11 The City, one of the taxes that
12 is waived is real estate tax, but we
13 already have a ten-year tax abatement,
14 which effectively sort of takes care of
15 that tax. So the other tax -- one tax
16 that's very impactful for new
17 construction would be the sales tax. So
18 the 6 percent state and 2 percent local
19 sales tax for all the construction
20 materials would be very impactful,
21 probably the most impactful in the first
22 year of the program. And then the
23 business income and receipts taxes
24 probably is the next in line.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Is the net

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 income portion of the BIRT, business
3 income and receipt tax, a big factor?

4 MR. BUMB: It can be. Again, I
5 think much of this depends on the type of
6 company. The two examples that we have
7 here that are confidential companies that
8 haven't named themselves yet, one would
9 be a corporate headquarters function,
10 again, with over 1,000 jobs, and the
11 other one would be a distribution center,
12 and they have very different sort of tax
13 implications. So the net profit would on
14 the headquarters company be very
15 impactful.

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: First of all,
17 I can tell you this, we all want these
18 companies here. So whatever we can do to
19 help, we'll be there. I think my --
20 well, thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Are
22 there any other questions?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
25 you very much.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 MR. BUMB: Thank you.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Now
4 we'll call forward Frank Breslin, Revenue
5 Commissioner, for Bill No. 170519.

6 THE CLERK: 170519, an
7 ordinance amending Chapter 19-1300 of The
8 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Real Estate
9 Taxes," by creating a tax foreclosure
10 diversion program that requires housing
11 counseling assistance, updating tax
12 installment payment agreements to help
13 taxpayers with financial hardships, and
14 other related items; all under certain
15 terms and conditions.

16 (Witnesses approached witness
17 table.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you, Madam Clerk.

20 Thank you. Please identify
21 yourself and begin your testimony.

22 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Good
23 afternoon. Frank Breslin, Revenue
24 Commissioner. With me?

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER WAXMAN:

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 Marisa Waxman, First Deputy Revenue
3 Commissioner.

4 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Good
5 afternoon, Chairwoman Blackwell and
6 members of the Committee on Finance. I
7 am Frank Breslin, Revenue Commissioner
8 and Chief Collections Officer. Thank you
9 for the opportunity to testify on Bill
10 170519, which seeks to help our most
11 vulnerable homeowners avoid foreclosure
12 and remain tax compliant.

13 The Administration, and
14 particularly the Department of Revenue,
15 are in complete agreement that helping
16 homeowners stay in their homes is a moral
17 and financial obligation we have to our
18 residents. Several years ago, the
19 Department of Revenue, the Law
20 Department, Community Legal Services, and
21 City Council worked collaboratively for
22 approximately 18 months to develop the
23 Owner-Occupied Payment Agreement, we call
24 OOPA.

25 For most homeowners, OOPA ties

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 their monthly payment for delinquent real
3 estate taxes to their ability to pay.
4 Thousands of individuals and families
5 have entered the program and are making
6 their monthly payments and are protected
7 from further enforcement and additional
8 interest and penalties. Offering OOPA,
9 while continuing to improve our
10 collection efforts, has led to a
11 meaningful reduction in the number of
12 non-compliant taxpayers while generating
13 more than \$100 million annually from
14 delinquent collections to fund City
15 services and the School District of
16 Philadelphia.

17 Now that we have a few years
18 experience with OOPA, we can see that
19 there are still some gaps in this safety
20 net. In particular, low-income
21 homeowners who cannot afford to pay the
22 current year bill, a requirement under
23 OOPA, are still struggling. Bill 170519
24 offers a starting point for the team that
25 developed OOPA and others to come

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 together again to design a solution that
3 will protect these homeowners.

4 We met last Thursday with
5 Council President's staff about ideas to
6 develop these initial proposals into a
7 successful program. We discussed how to
8 engage more stakeholders, like the legal
9 services and housing counseling agencies,
10 various City departments, community and
11 civic leaders, and the homeowners
12 themselves, into the process of designing
13 a program to meet our shared goal of
14 keeping homeowners in their homes and
15 avoiding the threat of tax foreclosure.
16 We look forward to collaborating on this
17 effort.

18 Thank you for the opportunity
19 to testify this afternoon. I'm happy to
20 answer any questions.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you so much. That's so important.

23 Councilman Domb.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
25 Madam Chairwoman.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 Thank you for your testimony.

3 I'm just curious on the OOPA program,
4 what's the lowest monthly payment
5 available?

6 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: \$25 per
7 month.

8 COUNCILMAN DOMB: \$25 per
9 month?

10 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Yes.

11 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I'm not
12 familiar with it, but if a tax bill is
13 \$1,000 a year and I'm paying 25 a month,
14 what happens to the balance of that
15 money?

16 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: The
17 balance kind of -- it's frozen and it
18 sits until such time that the property is
19 sold and then the delinquency would be
20 satisfied.

21 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Does it sit
22 there with interest or without interest?

23 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Without
24 interest and penalty.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So it's an

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 interest-free loan until the transfer of
3 the property occurs?

4 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Correct.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And then if
6 you were to design another program,
7 you're talking about a payment less than
8 \$25 a month?

9 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN:
10 Possibly. There's other opportunities.
11 As I said in my testimony, one of the
12 things that's a requirement of OOPA is,
13 to use the \$25 a month example, a
14 taxpayer who is in that agreement and
15 paying \$25 a month, when their new year's
16 tax liability rolls on, the requirement
17 is to stay current on that, and that has
18 been an obstacle for some taxpayers to
19 remain current in their OOPA agreement.

20 Now, although the law doesn't
21 require it, the Department, when made
22 aware of those situations, we've been
23 allowing the taxpayers to remain in OOPA.
24 We've basically been taking their current
25 year liability when they can show a

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 hardship and inability to pay and putting
3 that balance into the OOPA and allowing
4 them to just continue to make their \$25 a
5 month payment.

6 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So what
7 you're saying is the OOPA bill says the
8 first year I can pay 25, but after that,
9 I got to pay the full amount, but you've
10 been allowing them to pay the \$25 a month
11 going forward?

12 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Correct.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And so in
14 your opinion, what kind of an alternative
15 would be to paying \$25 a month?

16 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Well,
17 some of the things discussed would be to
18 formalize that ability to roll the
19 current year taxes into the OOPA
20 agreement. That would allow the current
21 program to exist with revision as opposed
22 to designing a completely separate
23 deferral program. But really the goal
24 is -- I mean, this was one meeting and a
25 little bit of brainstorming, but we

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 really want to get all the stakeholders
3 into a room and really discuss what the
4 options are. I mean, we really committed
5 doing that 18 months where we were doing
6 OOPA and we met very frequently and for a
7 long period of time and came up with a
8 program that has been very effective, I
9 believe, but as I testified and as has
10 been exhibited, it still left some gaps
11 in that safety net, and we are committed
12 to try to close those.

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Is there a
14 requirement to get into OOPA or any of
15 these payment plans that we have them go
16 through the EITC and make sure they --
17 see if they qualify so they can get even
18 more money?

19 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Well,
20 one of the things we do when anyone comes
21 in for an OOPA or one of our low-income
22 agreements is, we make sure that we make
23 them -- our service reps make them aware
24 of the Earned Income Tax Credit so that
25 they're not missing out on that.

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2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Right.

3 There's other programs also available. I
4 guess all the plans that are available, I
5 just want to make sure that they have
6 signed off and said -- so we can get them
7 as much money as possible to help them.

8 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: Yes,
9 absolutely. I mean, that was the goal of
10 this, is to -- and the Department of
11 Revenue is committed to trying to
12 increase enrollment in all of the
13 assistance programs, and this past year,
14 this current fiscal year, we brought on
15 an administrator for assistance programs
16 in both -- for both the tax side and the
17 water side of the Department.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So after they
19 enter the OOPA program, do we do any kind
20 of cross-marketing to those people,
21 telling them again about Earned Income
22 Tax Credit and other programs?

23 COMMISSIONER BRESLIN: We do.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. All
25 right. Thank you very much for your

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2 testimony.

3 Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you.

6 Any further questions?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
9 you very much.

10 The next panel on this subject
11 will be Irwin Trauss, Philadelphia Legal
12 Assistance; Monty Wilson; and Rocco
13 Labrosciano, Community Legal Services;
14 and Will Gonzalez, Executive Director,
15 Ceiba.

16 (Witnesses approached witness
17 table.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you. Good afternoon. Please identify
20 yourself in any order and begin your
21 testimony.

22 MS. MARTIN: Good afternoon.
23 Thank you for having us. My name is
24 Catherine Martin. I'm a staff attorney
25 at Community Legal Services. I am here

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2 with my client, Rocco Labrosciano.

3 Community Legal Services of
4 Philadelphia has long been an advocate of
5 low-income homeowners. Today we support
6 Council President Clarke's proposed bill
7 to create a tax diversion program and a
8 tax deferral program. In support of the
9 tax deferral program, we offer the
10 testimony of my client, Mr. Rocco
11 Labrosciano, who is a low-income
12 Philadelphian who would benefit from the
13 protections of a tax deferral program.

14 MR. LABROSCIANO: Thank you,
15 ma'am. My name is Rocco Labrosciano. I
16 reside at 1731 South Mole Street,
17 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19145, zip
18 code.

19 My mother and father are the
20 record owners of my home in South
21 Philadelphia. I have lived in the home
22 all my life. My mother passed away in
23 1998. My father was a retired federal
24 police officer, a captain at that. He is
25 deceased now. I used to work for the

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2 Philadelphia School Board, and I was
3 injured on the job and I was shot six
4 times in the back. I was saving my
5 little daughter. She was only four at
6 the time. I have been operated on this
7 problem many times for that, and I had
8 two heart attacks. I'm crippled. I have
9 a paralysis in my left leg. I am on lots
10 of medicines, and I'm not well at all.
11 My only income is \$735 a month in Social
12 Security.

13 If I lose my home, I have
14 nowhere to go. I've lived there all my
15 life. I don't know no other house. I
16 tried everything in my power to do
17 everything that I can, but it doesn't
18 cover everything. When you're hungry, no
19 one hears your stomach growling but you.

20 Thank you, ma'am.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you, and we're praying for you.

23 MS. MARTIN: Thank you.

24 MR. LABROSCIANO: Thank you,
25 ma'am.

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2 MR. TRAUSS: Good afternoon.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
4 afternoon.

5 MR. TRAUSS: I'm Irwin Trauss
6 with Philadelphia Legal Assistance.
7 Madam Chairman, members of the Committee,
8 I'd like to thank you for this
9 opportunity to speak in support of this
10 bill, which is an immensely important
11 bill. I'm with Philadelphia Legal
12 Assistance where I've worked for the last
13 22 years. I've been an attorney
14 representing low-income homeowners in an
15 attempt to prevent them from losing their
16 home to tax and mortgage foreclosure for
17 the past 42 years.

18 I would like to first applaud
19 the testimony of the Revenue
20 Commissioner, Mr. Breslin, and his
21 recognition that the robust protections
22 that are in place currently for
23 preventing low-income homeowners from
24 losing their homes has some gaps. There
25 are holes in the safety net through which

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2 people are falling. The people in our
3 experience that are falling through those
4 safety net are the most vulnerable, the
5 people in most need of affordable
6 housing, minority homeowners. And it's
7 our experience running the Save Your Home
8 Philly hotline, which is supported by the
9 Department of Housing and Community
10 Development of the City of Philadelphia,
11 we run the hotline. It was originally a
12 hotline designed to protect homeowners
13 from mortgage foreclosures, part of the
14 City of Philadelphia's Mortgage
15 Foreclosure Prevention Program and as
16 part of the First Judicial District's
17 Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Program.

18 In recent years, tax
19 foreclosures have now far outstripped
20 mortgage foreclosures as the primary
21 source of low-income people losing their
22 homes.

23 I have attached -- I'm not
24 going to read my testimony. I'm going to
25 try to summarize it. I have attached to

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2 my testimony -- I don't know if
3 Councilmembers have that, but there are
4 two charts and a map attached. The Graph
5 No. 1 shows in around 2012 or 2013, tax
6 foreclosures began to exceed mortgage
7 foreclosures as the kinds of properties
8 we've been seeing. Graph No. 2 shows a
9 dramatic increase in tax foreclosures
10 from the period 2010 through 2015 to the
11 beginning of 2016. And the map at the
12 end of my testimony I think dramatically
13 demonstrates part of the problem with the
14 present tax foreclosure sale practices of
15 the City of Philadelphia.

16 A fairly cursory look at that
17 map demonstrates the overwhelming number
18 of properties that are being sold for tax
19 sales. And this is residential
20 properties. This is a map, as best could
21 be determined, of the residential
22 properties that are being sold -- that
23 are subject to petition, tax sale
24 petitions, in the City of Philadelphia
25 for the year 2016. The vast majority of

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2 them are in minority -- majority minority
3 census areas of the City of Philadelphia.
4 Eighty-five percent or 84 percent of the
5 properties that are subject to tax
6 petitions, residential properties, are in
7 minority majority census tracks in the
8 City, which means it's our experience --
9 and this is anecdotal experience from the
10 people who we see coming to us for help.
11 It's our experience that the tax sales
12 that are actually taking place are tax
13 sales of people who are falling through
14 the safety net because they are infirm,
15 elderly, have insufficient incomes to
16 allow them to pay the current taxes on
17 their homes or are otherwise vulnerable.
18 And what we are also seeing is that often
19 these sales are for relatively low tax
20 balances, and the sales themselves are
21 usually for a fraction of the value of
22 the property. What we see is that the
23 City of Philadelphia unintentionally, I'm
24 sure, is acting as an agent for the
25 transfer of wealth from our minority

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2 communities, our minority homeowners, to
3 speculators and property flippers. And
4 this bill, which we endorse, and we also
5 endorse some further steps that the
6 Revenue Commissioner has indicated his
7 willingness to consider, this bill goes a
8 long way by creating a diversion program
9 and a deferral of prospective taxes or a
10 part of prospective taxes. By doing
11 that, this bill goes a long way to enable
12 the City to ensure that its tax
13 collection practices are in line with its
14 objectives and its policies, which are
15 policies of avoiding and ending
16 homelessness, ensuring that low-income
17 elderly folk and elderly folks in general
18 can age in place, and promoting minority
19 ownership, homeownership, and taking
20 steps to protect the wealth that's been
21 accumulated by our minority citizens in
22 their real property rather than seeing
23 that wealth decimated and transferred to
24 private business interests.

25 So in closing, I'd like to once

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2 again thank you for the opportunity to
3 speak. I want to particularly thank
4 Council President Clarke for inviting me
5 to address this bill and to share our
6 experiences on the hotline with what
7 we're seeing, and be happy to answer
8 questions either now or at the end of the
9 panel's testimony.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
11 you.

12 MR. WILSON: Do you wish to
13 hold questions until we've all spoken?

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yes.

15 MR. WILSON: Good afternoon,
16 members of the Committee. I'd like to
17 thank you for this opportunity to speak
18 today in support of Bill 170519.
19 Community Legal Services strongly
20 supports this bill, which adds two very
21 significant protections to our city's
22 most vulnerable homeowners when they're
23 struggling to pay their annual real
24 estate taxes owed on their most valuable
25 asset, their homes.

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2 First, the bill creates a
3 property tax foreclosure diversion
4 program similar to Philadelphia's
5 nationally renowned Mortgage Foreclosure
6 Diversion Program. Tax delinquent
7 homeowners would be referred to housing
8 counseling and legal services agencies
9 early and often during the collection
10 process for assistance applying to
11 programs such as the Homestead Exemption,
12 the Senior Tax Freeze, and the
13 Owner-Occupied Payment Agreement program.

14 Second, the bill creates a
15 property tax deferral program which would
16 allow our most vulnerable homeowners,
17 families living in deep poverty, the
18 elderly, people who are physically and
19 mentally disabled, to defer payment of
20 real estate taxes owed on their homes.
21 This would allow these homeowners to
22 remain in their homes rather than losing
23 their homes at a tax sale and pushing
24 them into the City's shelter system,
25 nursing homes, hospitals, and streets,

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2 sometimes at a net cost to the City.

3 I am a supervising attorney at
4 Community Legal Services in Philadelphia
5 where we provide free legal services and
6 representation to low-income
7 Philadelphians. When I began working at
8 CLS, my work focused on defending
9 homeowners facing mortgage foreclosures
10 or predatory lending by private banks.
11 Since 2004, I have represented an
12 increasing number of homeowners who are
13 facing legal action by the City to
14 collect delinquent property taxes owed on
15 their homes, a property tax foreclosure.
16 Since 2009, the City has sharply
17 increased its collection of these taxes,
18 collecting an estimated \$1.3 billion in
19 real estate in Fiscal Year 2016, an
20 increase of \$100 million from 2015. As
21 noted by Council President Clarke, along
22 with this increase in revenue there's
23 been a 1,200 percent spike in the number
24 of tax foreclosure actions filed by the
25 City from 2010 to 2016, with 4,450 of

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2 those tax foreclosures filed against
3 owner-occupied homes in 2016.

4 We recognize that the City
5 needs this money to provide services and
6 funds for our schools. At the same time,
7 however, City Council and Mayor Kenney
8 must recognize the impact that this tax
9 increase and increase in collections and
10 tax foreclosures has on the most
11 vulnerable homeowners as well as on our
12 communities and our neighborhoods.
13 Community Legal Services advised over 300
14 homeowners struggling with delinquent
15 taxes, with delinquent property taxes, in
16 2016, and we are on track to see another
17 300 similar homeowners this year.
18 Problems with delinquent property taxes
19 are now the number one issue which comes
20 to our office in North Philadelphia on
21 intake for advice. Yet I think CLS and
22 PLA, Philadelphia Legal Assistance, are
23 seeing only the tip of the iceberg. We
24 can estimate that there are at least
25 20,000 residential homestead properties

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2 with tax delinquencies outstanding, and I
3 believe the number is probably closer to
4 25,000. Not all these homeowners are
5 necessarily low income. However, in a
6 city where 26 percent of Philadelphians
7 live in poverty and 184,000
8 Philadelphians live in deep poverty, on
9 less than \$850 a month for a family of
10 three, we can safely say that there are
11 thousands of low-income homeowners who
12 are struggling each month with the choice
13 to pay for either food, water or property
14 taxes. Many of these poorest homeowners
15 are elderly and living on fixed Social
16 Security benefits. Others, like
17 Mr. Labrosciano, are surviving on
18 disability benefits. These are the most
19 vulnerable homeowners who are slipping
20 through the City's current safety net.

21 Bill 170519 is a significant
22 step towards improving the safety net in
23 two important ways. First, it broadens
24 the net by creating a tax diversion
25 program that will allow the Department of

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2 Revenue to quickly refer eligible
3 homeowners to housing counseling and
4 legal service agencies as early as
5 possible. These agencies can provide
6 advice and assistance in applying for
7 payment plans or other tax relief
8 programs or help homeowners deal with the
9 threat and anxiety of a tax foreclosure
10 filing against their home. A tax
11 diversion program will need to be paid
12 for and funded, but the costs should be
13 reduced since Philadelphia already has an
14 active system of housing counseling and
15 legal service agencies in place under the
16 current mortgage diversion program. Any
17 new costs will involve expanding the
18 current system, not simply creating it
19 out of whole cloth.

20 Additionally, every time a
21 proposed diversion program helps a
22 taxpayer enter into a payment plan or
23 resolve litigation, the City will save on
24 considerable time and expense in court
25 costs, attorney's fees, and other charges

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2 of litigation.

3 We will be submitting a set of
4 proposed amendments to the bill, which
5 should clarify the access to housing
6 counseling and legal service agencies
7 should occur early, often, and throughout
8 the process. These referrals should
9 begin when the initial bills are sent out
10 in November or December, throughout any
11 foreclosure litigation, and even after
12 the sale so homeowners can be advised of
13 their right of redemption. Nevertheless,
14 we applaud the fundamental idea of
15 expanding the safety net by using the
16 system of local agencies we already have
17 in place throughout the neighborhoods in
18 Philadelphia to help all homeowners, not
19 just the poorest, to successfully pay
20 their property taxes and to access tax
21 relief programs like the Homestead
22 Exemption and the Owner-Occupied Payment
23 Agreement program.

24 The bill also adds an
25 additional layer to the safety net by

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2 creating a property tax deferral program,
3 allowing low-income homeowners, seniors,
4 and others who can show significant
5 financial hardship to defer payment of
6 all or part of their residential property
7 taxes. The deferred taxes would accrue
8 interest and come due when the homeowner
9 dies or the property is sold. The bill
10 also caps the total of annual deferrals,
11 allowing the City to accurately predict
12 the maximum financial cost of the
13 program.

14 For homeowners living in deep
15 poverty, a full or partial deferral may
16 be the only way they can afford to remain
17 in their homes. Living on less than \$750
18 a month, Mr. Labrosciano struggles, but
19 pays his bills each month. I have other
20 elderly clients who are surviving on food
21 stamps and Meals on Wheels, but simply
22 have nothing left over at the end of the
23 year to pay their annual property taxes.
24 Some of my clients suffer from physical
25 and mental disabilities which makes

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2 paying the bills even more challenging.
3 The proposed deferral program would help
4 many of these homeowners to shelter in
5 place, sometimes at a considerably less
6 cost to the City than if they were forced
7 into the shelter system. For example,
8 Mr. Labrosciano's home was sold to
9 collect less than \$6,000 total in water
10 and tax bills. Without CLS's help to set
11 aside the sale, if Rocco Labrosciano had
12 been ejected and moved into the shelter
13 system, even at the lowest cost of \$40
14 per night per a bed for a shelter bed,
15 Mr. Labrosciano would have cost the City
16 \$14,600 annually. That's a net loss to
17 the City of \$8,600. If he was elderly or
18 had children or required hospitalization
19 or other social services, the cost to the
20 City could have been dramatically higher.

21 The proposed tax deferral
22 program recognizes that in certain
23 situations, it is simply more cost
24 effective for the City to allow some
25 homeowners to shelter in place in their

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2 homes rather than foreclose on them for a
3 relatively small amount of money and
4 incur greater costs later on.

5 We urge the Committee to vote
6 in favor of this bill. Property taxes
7 affects us all, but in a city with one of
8 the highest rates of low-income
9 homeownership in the nation, property
10 taxes have the most impact on
11 Philadelphia's poorest and most
12 vulnerable homeowners. Without the
13 programs continued in this bill, the
14 City's increased collection efforts,
15 though well intentioned, threaten to
16 substantially reduce the City's stock of
17 affordable housing. The diversion
18 program and the deferral program proposed
19 by this bill go a long way to set a
20 policy that says to these vulnerable
21 homeowners you're not just a source of
22 revenue; you are all part of
23 Philadelphia's neighborhoods and
24 communities. Each of you, each
25 individual, each family has a value.

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2 Thank you.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
4 you very much.

5 Any questions?

6 Thank you, gentlemen, very
7 much.

8 Councilman Domb.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
10 Madam Chairwoman.

11 I have a question for the
12 panel. Do you think -- let me make sure
13 I understand. The bill recommends total
14 deferral of all taxes. A homeowner pays
15 no taxes until they either pass away or
16 they sell the property.

17 MR. WILSON: The bill
18 recommends that is an option to have the
19 person defer the taxes. However, it
20 leaves it -- right now it doesn't speak
21 to whether the person will necessarily
22 always get a total deferral or a partial
23 deferral. So there is room for the
24 Department to allow only a partial
25 deferral.

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2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: And the
3 current program, OOPA, which has,
4 according to the Commissioner, payments
5 down to \$25 a month, you don't think --
6 can that program be adjusted to
7 accommodate this or do you think you need
8 a whole new program?

9 MR. WILSON: I think to go back
10 to the Commissioner's earlier response to
11 you, I think it's important to understand
12 that with OOPA, you don't just pay \$25 a
13 month. There are tiers of payments. So
14 those with the lowest level of income, 30
15 percent of area median income in
16 Philadelphia, they might -- someone
17 living on 735 a month, they might pay \$25
18 a month towards delinquency. They still
19 have to maintain the current taxes in
20 full. So if their yearly tax bill is
21 \$2,400, they need to be saving another
22 200 a month on top of that 25. So what I
23 usually explain to clients is, your house
24 bill, your rent to stay in your home is
25 really that \$200 for next year's taxes,

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2 plus another \$25 on top of that.

3 What we're running into is,
4 some people are able to do that. They
5 can make those two monthly payments. But
6 now we're running into the people whose
7 incomes are so low and money is so tight,
8 they can't afford to save up next year's
9 tax bill. It's simply too tight. So
10 simply lowering the monthly payment isn't
11 going to solve the problem.

12 MR. TRAUSS: If I could, a
13 couple issues. One important distinction
14 is that OOPA is backward looking.

15 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Is what?

16 MR. TRAUSS: Backward looking.
17 The amendments in this bill are forward
18 looking. So OOPA is designed -- it was
19 originally designed to address tax
20 delinquencies. It wasn't designed to
21 address the current obligation to pay
22 taxes, as Monty described. So when you
23 go into an OOPA agreement and they say,
24 okay, for the lowest tier, you can pay
25 \$25 a month for the back taxes,

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2 essentially what's happening is that
3 there's a deferral of those back taxes.
4 You're paying \$25 a month on those back
5 taxes. If the property is ever sold,
6 those back taxes will be collected, but
7 you have to pay the current taxes. Now,
8 the current taxes can be small, they can
9 be big, and in many areas of Philadelphia
10 which once were moderate and low-income
11 areas, they are now growing and often
12 dramatically growing.

13 So looking forward, what we're
14 seeing are people who, one, simply can't
15 afford, as Monty described, may not be
16 able to afford any significant amount of
17 taxes simply if they're living on \$700 a
18 month because you're on Social Security
19 or SSI, you've had a lifetime of work,
20 you've paid off your mortgage. And this
21 is a point I want to make. Most of these
22 houses are houses in which people have
23 lived for lifetimes and paid off their
24 mortgages. These are people who for some
25 reason after they've paid their mortgages

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2 have limited income, drastically reduced
3 income because of age or disability or
4 some other problem and now can't --
5 because there's no mortgage -- when there
6 was a mortgage, the taxes were being
7 paid. Now there's no mortgage. Taxes
8 aren't being paid.

9 So there are people who can't
10 afford even modest taxes sometimes, often
11 can't afford rapidly rising taxes, often
12 don't have the wherewithal to object when
13 the City sometimes wrongfully
14 dramatically increases the value of the
15 property without actually looking at the
16 property to justify the increase. So you
17 have people that are the least able to
18 defend themselves against a sale, and
19 what we see is that's whose houses the
20 City is selling. It may be the City is
21 also selling some commercial properties,
22 but the people who walk into our doors
23 are the people who can't even get it
24 together to take advantage of OOPA and
25 all these other things that perhaps could

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2 mitigate their taxes.

3 So this is a forward-looking
4 bill, and this forward-looking bill does
5 two things. One is to permit
6 prospectively the deferral of part or all
7 of the taxes based on the person's
8 situation. And the bill as currently
9 written requires a year by year
10 recertification forward looking. And
11 presumably if the house is ever sold,
12 then the taxes would come out of the
13 proceeds of the sale. If we get to this
14 point and if there are changes, we would
15 suggest -- "we," meaning PLA, and I think
16 CLS would agree with this -- that the
17 process of recovering the taxes be on a
18 shared equity basis, that not every
19 dollar of deferred tax goes to the City,
20 because what you want to do is you want
21 the homeowner to continue to be
22 interested in maintaining the home and in
23 sharing the appreciation of the home, so
24 you're not discouraging people from
25 putting money into the home on the theory

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2 that, oh, well, what's the difference,
3 when it gets sold, I'm not going to get
4 anything. But that's another discussion.

5 But the primary thing is, one,
6 that there's a forward-looking thing, and
7 if the person's circumstances change,
8 then the amount they pay could go up, so
9 the amount of deferral could go down.

10 The other very, very important piece of
11 this is to get -- this bill creates a
12 right on the part of each homeowner to
13 assistance, either from a housing
14 counselor or an attorney, early in the
15 process, and this assistance early in the
16 process can often accomplish what you,
17 Councilman Domb, were suggesting,
18 becoming aware of these alternatives
19 where there might be some money and
20 taking advantage of them, to the extent
21 possible.

22 One of the problems we see is
23 also a problem which we haven't been able
24 to resolve yet and I'm hopeful we will be
25 able to resolve with the Revenue

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2 Department and, that is, the way the
3 Revenue Department collects taxes, it
4 generally, except with great difficulty,
5 when it accepts taxes, it applies them to
6 the oldest taxes that are due. So it's
7 very difficult to get the Revenue
8 Department to take a payment, even a
9 partial payment, that could be applied to
10 the current year's taxes, which would
11 enable the homeowner to take advantage of
12 the tax -- the state tax rebate program.
13 And the City is losing out, we believe,
14 on hundreds of thousands, if not millions
15 of dollars of potential rebates which
16 aren't there because the homeowner can't
17 show they paid last year's taxes, which
18 is a requirement for getting the rebate.

19 And there's a couple solutions
20 we want for that. One is changes to the
21 collection process to make it much easier
22 for money to be applied to the current
23 year taxes so that it's easier to get the
24 rebate and also the possibility of a City
25 program which could front money to the

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2 homeowner to pay that year's taxes,
3 because once that year is paid, the
4 homeowner will be entitled to a rebate
5 for the amount that's paid, which would
6 be a continuing rebate, which every year
7 would essentially be a transfer from the
8 state to the city on account of taxes.

9 MR. WILSON: Think of it as a
10 smaller EITC. We are leaving money on
11 the table at the Department of Treasury
12 that we --

13 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Let me go
14 back to this for a minute. You're saying
15 there's a state program that would
16 reimburse them 100 percent for their real
17 estate taxes?

18 MR. WILSON: Up to \$950.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Up to \$950.

20 MR. WILSON: It's tiered by
21 income again. So as your income
22 increases, you get less back. It's
23 between 350 and up to 975, I believe,
24 dollars.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: So we need to

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2 figure out how we can work within that
3 program to make sure they get that money.

4 MR. WILSON: Correct.

5 MR. TRAUSS: Yes. And this has
6 been a subject of discussion in the past,
7 and I believe the Revenue Department may
8 now be more receptive to that in the
9 context of addressing what is becoming a
10 more obvious problem, in that not only is
11 the City losing money, but the current
12 practice is targeting, I think, exactly
13 the people we don't want to be targeting.

14 COUNCILMAN DOMB: How do people
15 qualify for that \$950 state money real
16 estate taxes?

17 MR. WILSON: You have to be age
18 eligible or disabled, qualify as having a
19 disability, and also income eligible
20 along with age. So it's essentially a
21 senior citizen who is income eligible.
22 Off the top of my head, I believe the
23 single person eligibility is \$2,300, but
24 it tiers its way down.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: The gentleman

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 that was here before sitting in the back
3 row, does he qualify?

4 MR. WILSON: He would qualify.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Is he getting
6 that money now?

7 MR. WILSON: He is not because
8 he hasn't been able to pay up -- he's
9 paying his current taxes in installments.
10 So he hasn't paid in full.

11 What a rebate -- what the
12 program that Irwin is describing would do
13 is advance him the funds so that his
14 taxes would then be paid in full, and
15 then the City would be able to get that
16 rebate back from the state.

17 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
18 you. I have one other question. You're
19 an attorney, I believe, right?

20 MR. TRAUSS: Yes.

21 MR. WILSON: Yes.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: This is just
23 in my mind. I'm trying to figure
24 something out. Some houses might have
25 mortgages on them. So take an example of

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 a \$100,000 home with an \$80,000 mortgage
3 and the City does a full deferral
4 program. Does that lender have any
5 rights or -- they're going to be upset
6 with us because we're pushing their
7 position on the property higher up,
8 because we're first. We come before the
9 mortgage company. Do they have any legal
10 action against us?

11 MR. TRAUSS: They have no legal
12 action I can see against the City. When
13 you say "us," you mean the City?

14 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Yes.

15 MR. TRAUSS: Would they be
16 unhappy? I can't speak to whether
17 they'll be unhappy or not, but I can say
18 that if the process was one in which
19 their present position was not threatened
20 by the possibility of an immediate
21 foreclosure, I don't think it would
22 change significantly what's happening
23 now.

24 COUNCILMAN DOMB: But I could
25 see where they might be upset. Take the

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 example of a \$100,000 townhouse and a
3 \$50,000 mortgage and someone is in
4 deferral for a long time and the mortgage
5 is still on the books and that deferral
6 exceeds the value of the property,
7 they're going to get wiped out.

8 MR. TRAUSS: Well, I mean, you
9 do raise a point that -- I don't think
10 that would happen much these days because
11 most mortgages now require as a condition
12 of the mortgage the escrowing of an
13 amount for taxes and insurance. And
14 now -- so the question would be if a
15 person could apply for and get a
16 deferment, would that be a default under
17 the mortgage.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Right.

19 MR. TRAUSS: And, I mean,
20 that's a question we'd have to think
21 about. I would argue that it would not
22 be, but...

23 MR. WILSON: Councilman, I
24 think most lenders would advance the
25 funds to protect their interest. They

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 would want themselves to be in the first
3 position. They typically -- most
4 mortgages cover that funds and then we
5 have to deal with a homeowner who comes
6 to us with a mortgage foreclosure.

7 The population we're talking
8 about, there's 300 people that have come
9 to CLS. Those people, by and large, are
10 folks who the mortgage is already paid
11 off or there never was a mortgage. This
12 really is another tier down from kind of
13 the working-class folks who have
14 mortgages. We're talking about real deep
15 poverty here.

16 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. All
17 right. Thank you very much for your
18 testimony today. Thank you.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you.

21 Mr. Gonzalez.

22 MR. GONZALEZ: Yes. I just
23 want to make two brief points. First of
24 all, thank you for giving me the
25 opportunity to testify.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
3 you.

4 MR. GONZALEZ: As you know,
5 housing counselors are key to the success
6 of the ordinance. So we respectfully
7 urge you to appropriately fund this
8 program, specifically the housing
9 counseling component, with resources
10 above and beyond what Philadelphia can
11 derive from CDBG. As you know, our
12 current administration in Washington is
13 threatening to take CDBG at zero.

14 Also as you saw today, issues
15 related to tangled title make it
16 difficult for housing counselors to work
17 on these issues. So supporting them is
18 ever more important, especially in
19 communities where these type of tangled
20 title issues are very high, and those are
21 communities where foreign-born residents
22 live and limited English proficient
23 populations. The number of limited
24 English proficient people in Philadelphia
25 is increasing and so is the number of

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 immigrants. The economic impact of
3 immigrants in the realm of housing is
4 substantially one of tapped out and keep
5 it alive. Immigrants occupy about 80,000
6 of the -- more than 600,000
7 owner-occupied units in the City. Fifty
8 percent of immigrants in the City are
9 living in owner-occupied housing, and
10 even unauthorized immigrants are doing
11 their part, as 14,000 unauthorized
12 immigrants in the City live in a home
13 they own, according to the Migration
14 Policy Institute.

15 So we are excited that City
16 Council is working on this. We support
17 this effort. We want to continue to work
18 with the City, especially as it ensures
19 that LEP populations are not left out
20 from accessing it.

21 Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you.

24 Any questions?

25 Councilwoman Parker and then

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown.

3 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
4 you, Madam Chair.

5 And let me start by thanking
6 each of you for your testimony. First,
7 Irwin, I want to go to your testimony.
8 You include -- and I thank you so much.
9 This is the first time that I've seen a
10 copy of this since the Council President
11 first distributed it some time ago, and I
12 appreciate your including a copy of the
13 map that our tech staff developed showing
14 the 2016 property tax foreclosure filings
15 and the list of homeowners.

16 Now, this is important to me
17 because this map defies the narrative
18 that those who are in trouble as it
19 relates to potentially losing their homes
20 from reverse mortgages, from tax
21 foreclosures, from predatory lending or
22 any of the other ills that we battle
23 against, that they are just those in the
24 City of Philadelphia that are living in
25 deep poverty. And this is extremely

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 important to me because while I see
3 portions of my colleagues' districts
4 included in this map, the entire Ninth
5 Councilmanic District that I represent is
6 in this map. But listen to this: My
7 district has one of the most highest
8 homeownership rates in the City of
9 Philadelphia. The City's average is 52
10 percent. The Ninth is about 60 to 61
11 percent, and we have regions that have up
12 to 77 to 78 percent homeownership rates.

13 So when we think about the
14 people who are being impacted, I hope you
15 will help us change the narrative so
16 folks know these are not people sitting
17 home twiddling their thumbs waiting for
18 government to give them a handout. They
19 were once proudly a part of our
20 working-class, moving on up in the
21 socioeconomic world and all of a sudden,
22 God struck and said we're going to allow
23 you the golden grace to grow older and
24 become more seasoned. Now you're
25 retired. You don't earn the same amount

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 of income that you used to earn around,
3 and now you can barely afford to care for
4 what was your greatest asset.

5 So help us change the narrative
6 about who is being impacted, and you
7 start by making sure you distribute this
8 map wherever you go so that when people
9 begin to say tax foreclosures, reverse
10 mortgages, going into foreclosure, this
11 only impacts poor people. You show them
12 this map and you show them that this
13 impacts black, white, brown people in
14 neighborhoods across the City of
15 Philadelphia, as it doesn't discriminate
16 by zip code. Okay? They make a nickel
17 over the income guidelines, so they
18 usually aren't eligible for any programs
19 that are offered, and now they're about
20 to lose their greatest asset.

21 Thank you, and thank Council
22 President Clarke for his leadership on
23 this issue.

24 MR. WILSON: Amen.

25 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Well,
4 Councilwoman Parker has quite eloquently
5 and elegantly articulated what was in my
6 thoughts. Your authenticity and
7 compassion for those who end up in deep
8 poverty is truly admirable, and I think
9 we should not miss the opportunity to
10 acknowledge what you do every day on a
11 daily basis because you think it's not
12 only the right thing to do, but
13 ultimately it's people we know and love
14 and don't know that end up in these
15 awful, heart-wrenching, very sad
16 circumstances.

17 MR. TRAUSS: Thank you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: We
19 appreciate your important work.

20 MR. TRAUSS: Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.

22 MR. TRAUSS: Can I just follow
23 up on one point that Councilwoman Parker
24 made. A lot of the problems are a result
25 of the success of the City. I mean, the

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 problems of the people we're talking
3 about. As Councilwoman Parker said, it's
4 not just poor people. It's not just --
5 it's people who have spent their lives
6 working and they now just might be
7 over-eligible for certain programs, but
8 they're in a position often not because
9 of anything they've done wrong but
10 because the City is now more attractive
11 and the taxes are going up so that
12 they're being faced with high tax bills
13 because their property values are going
14 up, and the City is now more aggressive
15 about increasing those values and
16 collecting. And it seems to me that this
17 bill, the way that it's fashioned,
18 addresses a number of issues in actually
19 a very elegant way, because it really
20 encompasses what the LOOP program was
21 trying to do and a number of other
22 programs, by allowing there to be a
23 deferral of some or all of the taxes
24 based on a person's economic
25 circumstances prospectively. And if

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 properly structured, it can be a fairly
3 efficient way of simply addressing those
4 needs and also addressing the people that
5 find themselves in neighborhoods that are
6 increasing in value or gentrifying, or
7 however you want to call it, but it could
8 be a bill that could very much allow
9 people to stay in those neighborhoods and
10 increase the diversity of those
11 neighborhoods and offset some of the
12 tensions that we're seeing in some
13 neighborhoods as they change.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And as
15 Councilwoman Sanchez often says and I've
16 learned to understand and respect is, it
17 should not have to be an either/or. We
18 should be able to do both, period.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. TRAUSS: Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
22 you very much.

23 We'll ask the Clerk to read the
24 title of Bill No. 170555 and welcome Fred
25 Purnell to come forward.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 THE CLERK: 170555, an
3 ordinance authorizing the Director of
4 Planning and Development, on behalf of
5 the City, to file applications with the
6 United States Department of Housing and
7 Urban Development for a Community
8 Development Block Grant; to file
9 applications to participate in the HOME
10 Investment Partnership program and the
11 Emergency Solutions Grant program; and to
12 apply for a Housing Opportunities for
13 Persons with AIDS grant; and to file
14 applications with the Commonwealth to
15 obtain grants under the Act of April 12,
16 1956, Section 4, as amended, to prevent
17 and eliminate blight; authorizing the
18 Director of Planning and Development and
19 the Director of Commerce to file
20 applications to obtain other grants from
21 the Commonwealth; authorizing the
22 Director of Commerce to use the Section
23 108 Loan Guarantee Program; and
24 authorizing the Director of Planning and
25 Development and the Director of Commerce

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 to enter into all understandings and
3 assurances contained in such applications
4 and take all necessary action to accept
5 the grants; all under certain terms and
6 conditions.

7 (Witness approached witness
8 table.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you very much.

11 Welcome.

12 MR. PURNELL: Good morning.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
14 afternoon. Thank you for your patience.

15 MR. PURNELL: Good afternoon,
16 Councilwoman Blackwell, members of the
17 Finance Committee and City Council. I'm
18 Frederick Purnell, Deputy Director of
19 Housing and Community Development, and I
20 will present testimony on behalf of the
21 Administration on Bill No. 170555, which
22 permits the City to apply for the federal
23 CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, and ESG funds and for
24 state funds from DCED.

25 To receive this funding from

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 HUD, the City is required to submit an
3 approved Consolidated Plan to HUD by
4 August 15th, 2017. That Consolidated
5 Plan will also include a budget for the
6 Housing Trust Fund and other sources.

7 We have supplied written
8 testimony, and I will be presenting a
9 condensed version of that same testimony.

10 The City anticipates \$38.807
11 million in CDBG funds and 8.402 million
12 in HOME funds. We anticipate Housing
13 Trust Fund earnings of \$11 million by the
14 end of FY18. The Consolidated Plan for
15 2018 through 2022 and the Annual Action
16 Plan 2017-2018 outlines our spending
17 plans. As required by HUD, the
18 Consolidated Plan also includes a Housing
19 and Homeless Needs Assessment, a Housing
20 Market Analysis, and a Strategic Plan.

21 Our goals and strategic actions
22 are designed to meet Philadelphia's high
23 priority for housing and community
24 development needs. They are creating
25 affordable homeownership and rental

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 housing opportunities; preserving
3 existing affordable homeownership and
4 rental housing; reducing homelessness and
5 expanding special need housing
6 opportunities; foster open access to all
7 housing and community resources and
8 programs; address the education,
9 economic, and income needs of people and
10 neighborhoods; strengthen community
11 assets and manage vacant land to improve
12 quality of life; promote fair housing and
13 access to opportunities for all
14 Philadelphians.

15 A number of goals will receive
16 increased attention in FY18. Using
17 revenue approved by City Council last
18 year, this summer the City will release
19 the first 20 million of a \$60 million
20 bond to support critical home
21 improvements. Today, PHDC has a backlog
22 of over 7,400 homes in the Basic Systems
23 Repair Program, Weatherization, and
24 Adaptive Mod Program.

25 PHDC has already started work

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 on these backlog cases, and by the end of
3 the summer, over \$6 million in home
4 repairs will be underway. Over the next
5 three years, the \$60 million combined
6 with existing levels of CDBG and HTF
7 funding will largely eliminate the
8 backlog of all three housing preservation
9 programs and allow thousands of families
10 to stay in their homes.

11 As I have discussed with many
12 of you -- and I want to personally thank
13 you all for the individual briefings you
14 allowed me and my staff to give most of
15 your offices -- we will be developing a
16 reporting template so you can keep track
17 as we make progress to eliminating the
18 backlog.

19 Preservation of existing
20 affordable housing is also a high
21 priority. To preserve rental units
22 nearing the end of their compliance
23 period or in need of capital investment,
24 the City has awarded funding to support
25 seven preservation projects. In FY18,

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 the City has allocated an additional \$1.5
3 million in CDBG for neighborhood-based
4 rental preservation projects, again,
5 targeted at those projects with expiring
6 tax credit commitments.

7 Philadelphia homeowners
8 continued to face mortgage and, more
9 recently, tax and reverse mortgage
10 foreclosures. Our award-winning
11 Foreclosure Prevention Program has saved
12 more than 10,000 homes from foreclosure
13 and will continue.

14 We are working with The
15 Reinvestment Fund to develop a strategy
16 around reverse mortgage foreclosures, and
17 we look forward to working with Council
18 President Clarke's office and your
19 offices to address tax foreclosures.
20 These strategies help keep homeowners,
21 many of whom reside in Philadelphia
22 middle market neighborhoods, in their
23 homes.

24 About one in seven renters are
25 experiencing eviction in Philadelphia.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 In FY18, the City will make funds
3 available to develop a strategy to help
4 renters avoid eviction and remain in
5 their houses.

6 Other programs will continue at
7 level funding in FY18 - affordable
8 housing and special need housing
9 production programs; cleaning and
10 greening of vacant lots through the
11 Philadelphia LandCare program; business
12 and community-based organization
13 assistance; job training through
14 YouthBuild; and tenant-based rental
15 assistance.

16 To increase economic
17 opportunity, the City will continue to
18 use CDBG to support programs aimed at
19 small businesses and neighborhood
20 commercial corridors, including technical
21 assistance to micro businesses, small
22 business loans, business attraction and
23 expansion activities, and organizational
24 capacity building. The Plan includes
25 \$7.3 million from the Housing

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 Opportunities for Persons with AIDS
3 program, rental assistance to allow 700
4 people with HIV to rent their own
5 apartments or homes with the greatest
6 need and the largest single use of our
7 HOPWA program funds.

8 The City anticipates \$3.5
9 million in Emergency Solution Grant
10 funds. These funds are administered by
11 the Office of Homeless Services and are
12 matched with \$3.5 million in City General
13 Funds to support emergency shelter,
14 homeless prevention, rapid rehousing, and
15 housing retention services and programs.

16 It is important to note that
17 while our federal funding remains level
18 for FY18, the threat of substantial cuts
19 to CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, and ESG is a
20 serious concern. We will continue to
21 work with our partners to highlight our
22 achievements with these funds and also to
23 work to identify new revenue sources.

24 I want to thank you for the
25 opportunity to present this testimony.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 We ask that Council suspend the rules to
3 permit first reading at the next Council
4 session, and my colleagues and I are here
5 to answer any specific questions that any
6 members of the Committee or the
7 Chairperson may have.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
9 you, and we thank your team as well.

10 Any questions?

11 (No response.)

12 MR. PURNELL: I neglected to
13 introduce my colleagues. With me is
14 David Thomas, the Interim Director of
15 PHDC; Melissa Long, the Deputy of DHCD;
16 Karen Fegely, Deputy of Commerce; and
17 Gregory Heller, Executive Director of the
18 Redevelopment Authority.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you very much.

21 Any other questions?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
24 you very much.

25 Panel 2, Lauren Ascher,

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 Elizabeth Shay, Keith Green, Will

3 Gonzalez, and Sarah Yeung.

4 (Witnesses approached witness
5 table.)

6 MS. ASCHER: Good afternoon,
7 Chairwoman Blackwell and members of the
8 Committee on Finance. My name is Lauren
9 Ascher. I am a Supervising Attorney at
10 Philadelphia VIP.

11 I first want to express our
12 gratitude to DHCD and the City for your
13 continued support of VIP's homeownership
14 work. VIP provides free legal services
15 to low-income Philadelphians by referring
16 them to private attorneys who handle
17 their cases pro bono. We recruit, train,
18 and support those volunteer attorneys.

19 The funding provided through
20 DHCD allows us to assist over 500 clients
21 per year with tangled title, real estate
22 tax, and mortgage foreclosure issues.
23 The City General Funding supports the
24 Tangled Title Fund, what we refer to as
25 TTF, which pays for legal and

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 administrative costs associated about
3 clients obtaining title to properties.

4 Through our work, we see the
5 prevalence of tangled title issues. We
6 estimate a minimum of 14,000 homes in
7 Philadelphia have tangled title problems.
8 Many of those folks also owe back real
9 estate taxes.

10 From July 2016 through April
11 2017, VIP assisted 172 tangled title
12 clients, over half of whom had real
13 estate tax issues as well. We also do
14 mortgage foreclosure work. We support
15 volunteer attorneys who provide ongoing
16 and emergency assistance in the Mortgage
17 Foreclosure Diversion Program. From July
18 2016 to April of this year, we matched 46
19 mortgage foreclosure clients with
20 volunteer attorneys who work in tandem
21 with housing counselors. And in addition
22 to these numbers, VIP supported volunteer
23 attorneys in over 250 cases that were
24 already referred at the start of this
25 fiscal year.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 The Tangled Title Fund pays for
3 costs associated with clearing title.
4 The biggest expenses are probate filing
5 fees at the Register of Wills and
6 especially transfer taxes. The average
7 cost per application to resolve tangled
8 title problems is over \$1,200, and that
9 number is increasing.

10 Since Fiscal Year 2012-2013,
11 TTF had been getting 50,000 per year, but
12 in 2016-2017, TTF received only 30,000,
13 which ran out in April. Although we did
14 find out on Friday that we will be
15 receiving an additional 20K for the
16 remainder of this fiscal year. So we
17 want to express our gratitude for that.

18 Since 2014, we've seen a
19 dramatic increase in dollar amounts of
20 TTF disbursement when AVI took effect,
21 because probate filing fees and transfer
22 taxes are based on property values. In
23 2014-2015, more than 24,000 was spent on
24 transfer taxes alone. To date this year
25 we spent 21,000 on transfer taxes.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 The current proposed TTF budget
3 for 2018 is 30,000, which means there
4 will only be a few thousand dollars left
5 to pay any expenses other than transfer
6 taxes. If the TTF budget does not
7 increase, clients will have to either
8 abandon their hope of getting title to
9 their homes or will have to take money
10 from their budgets for food and
11 utilities, things like that, to pay title
12 costs. Since the CDBG money cannot be
13 spent on TTF, we respectfully ask for
14 City Council's help to find money to
15 bring the TTF budget back up to 50,000.

16 Thank you.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
18 you.

19 MS. SHAY: Good afternoon.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
21 afternoon.

22 MS. SHAY: My name is Beth
23 Shay. I'm the Director of Homeownership
24 Rights for the SeniorLAW Center, and it's
25 my pleasure, Madam Councilwoman and

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 Council staff, to appear today to tell
3 you what SeniorLAW Center has been up to
4 to protect the senior homeowners in the
5 City of Philadelphia.

6 So I want to talk about the
7 Consolidated Plan for 2018-2022 and
8 impress upon you how your mission and our
9 mission at SeniorLAW Center align.

10 Under the proposed Consolidated
11 Plan, there are seven core goals
12 identified by the City, and we're ready
13 to assist the City to achieve several of
14 these. The first, preserve affordable
15 homeowner and rental housing. So for the
16 third year, City Council has funded the
17 SeniorLAW Center's triage program in the
18 Residential Mortgage Foreclosure
19 Diversion Program, which is an efficient,
20 effective model to give senior homeowners
21 coming into mortgage foreclosure legal
22 assistance and assistance to their
23 DHCD-funded housing counselors.

24 SeniorLAW Center also leads the
25 effort to inform seniors about the free

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 home repair programs that the City and
3 state have available. We've created a
4 flyer to circulate this information, but
5 we don't stop there. Seniors frequently
6 contact us after they've had a reverse
7 mortgage to pay for home repairs and are
8 not satisfied with those repairs. We
9 testified about this problem in March
10 before City Council. We have two
11 practice groups in the Philadelphia
12 community pursuing contractor fraud
13 claims against contractors who are taking
14 money from seniors and not making the
15 needed repairs or making shoddy repairs.

16 Recently Philadelphians have
17 been alerted through articles in the
18 Inquirer to the growing problem posed by
19 tangled title properties, especially in
20 gentrifying neighborhoods. The point was
21 made that because it costs \$300,000 to
22 build a single unit of affordable
23 housing, the City will never solve its
24 housing problems with new construction.
25 Therefore, The Reinvestment Fund has

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 suggested another approach. The Fund
3 estimates there are 34,000 occupied
4 houses that could be made habitable for
5 less than \$30,000 each. It's a bargain,
6 but first the City must provide legal
7 assistance to those residing in these
8 tangled title properties to clear the
9 title and make the resident the owner of
10 the property so they're eligible for
11 these funds.

12 The second goal, reduce
13 homelessness and expand special needs
14 housing opportunities. Foreclosure of
15 reverse mortgages is a uniquely senior
16 problem since borrowers have to be 62
17 years of age or older, and it's an
18 ongoing problem in Philadelphia, with 649
19 reverse mortgage foreclosures filed
20 between 2007 and September 2016. The
21 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
22 Development, who insures these loans,
23 understands the stress these homeowners
24 are under with these foreclosing loans,
25 and forcing the relocation of these

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2 seniors may contribute to hastening the
3 death of these borrowers. So HUD carved
4 out an exception to foreclosures for
5 borrowers who are 80 years old and older
6 who are suffering long-term physical
7 limitations. SeniorLAW Center is
8 uniquely qualified to advocate for these
9 frail, elderly seniors and get their
10 foreclosures stopped and keep them in
11 their homes.

12 In 2016, SeniorLAW worked on 86
13 delinquent property tax cases for
14 Philadelphia seniors. While we are proud
15 of these efforts, we realize that many
16 frail and elderly homeowners may be
17 losing their homes to tax foreclosure, as
18 was mentioned earlier, and SeniorLAW
19 Center looks forward to working with the
20 City to explore the creation of a similar
21 protection for seniors facing real estate
22 property tax foreclosure. We hope the
23 City will follow the lead of the federal
24 government and recognize that foreclosing
25 tax delinquent properties resided in by

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 disabled seniors may harm their health
3 and must be avoided.

4 The goal, foster open access to
5 all housing and community resources and
6 programs. SeniorLAW Center conducts
7 community education and provides
8 telephone counseling about all available
9 senior resources. We take seriously our
10 role as protector of senior rights, and
11 we frequently educate throughout the City
12 on senior housing topics such as reverse
13 mortgage pitfalls, property tax
14 assistance program for senior homeowners,
15 the importance of untangling title to the
16 family home, and the need to write a will
17 in order to keep the title from getting
18 tangled when ownership is passed to the
19 younger generation. We also appear on
20 panels in senior centers and throughout
21 the community, presenting information in
22 English and Spanish on how to protect
23 yourself from deed fraud and how to hire
24 a repair contractor.

25 We enroll seniors in tax

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2 programs over the phone while they are in
3 Diversion Court, lowering their real
4 estate taxes and making it more likely
5 they can afford a monthly mortgage
6 payment that will permit them to reside
7 in their homes.

8 Promote fair housing and access
9 to opportunity. Just last week I spoke
10 about reverse mortgage servicing problems
11 at the National Consumer Law Center's
12 Mortgage Conference, which was held here
13 in Philadelphia. Some of the mortgage
14 problems dealt with a simple servicing
15 issue such as mortgage companies' failure
16 to provide large print notices so they
17 are legible to seniors with failing
18 eyesight. Some are more onerous such as
19 enforcing short deadlines on seniors, who
20 are often overwhelmed and unable to
21 respond on time. With increased
22 financial support, we hope to bring these
23 servicing issues to the government's
24 attention by filing administrative
25 complaints with HUD.

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2 So through representation,
3 education, advocacy, we serve over 5,000
4 seniors each year. We in our work save
5 homes, fight abuse, protect rights, and
6 it's a wise investment, as are the
7 grandparents, senior veterans, older
8 homeowners, family members, and residents
9 we are proud to serve.

10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
12 you very much.

13 We will interrupt a moment.
14 The Chair now recognizes Councilman
15 Greenlee.

16 We will momentarily conclude
17 our hearing. We'll return in a moment.
18 And we will enter our meeting to allow
19 for an announcement.

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
21 you, Madam Chair. Unfortunately I have
22 to leave the hearing at this point. I
23 wish to be recorded as voting aye on all
24 bills being reported from this Committee
25 today, the appropriate rules suspension

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 to permit first reading at our next
3 session, and I wish to be voted aye on
4 any amendments to those bills, with the
5 exception of Bill No. 161061, in which I
6 wish to be counted as voting no, if it
7 should be called up for a vote.

8 Thank you, Madam Chair.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you very much.

11 We will now conclude the
12 meeting and go back to our public hearing
13 and recognize our next speaker.

14 MS. ORTEGA: Good afternoon.
15 I'm Julianne Schrader Ortega. I'm the
16 Vice President and Chief of Programs at
17 the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.
18 Thank you for the opportunity to appear
19 before you this afternoon to share the
20 dramatic support that DHCD funding makes
21 in neighborhoods across Philadelphia
22 through the PHS Philadelphia LandCare
23 program. I'm joined today by my
24 colleague Keith Green, who is the
25 Director of the Philadelphia LandCare

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2 program.

3 PHS exists to connect people
4 with horticulture and together create
5 more beautiful, sustainable, and healthy
6 communities. We work collaboratively
7 with people and organizations of all
8 backgrounds to tackle the toughest
9 challenges through plants, gardens, and
10 gardening. The Philadelphia LandCare
11 program is a strategic partnership
12 between the City of Philadelphia and the
13 Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. For
14 the last 17 years, the LandCare program
15 has been cleaning, greening, and
16 maintaining vacant land in neighborhoods
17 throughout the City. Currently PHS
18 maintains over 12,000 vacant lots, which
19 is over 30 percent of the vacant land in
20 Philadelphia.

21 The LandCare program also
22 serves as an incubator that helps develop
23 small businesses and creates jobs.
24 Seventeen landscape contractors and 18
25 community organizations participate in

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2 this work, and together they employ close
3 to 300 people every season.
4 Additionally, hired contractors reflect
5 the diversity of the communities they
6 serve. Forty percent of the
7 participating landscape contractors are
8 minority certified and another 30 percent
9 are minority owned.

10 The 18 community organizations
11 that participate in this program hire
12 local residents from their neighborhood
13 to perform the maintenance work, giving
14 them a direct role in keeping their
15 communities clean and safe. And since
16 the start of the program, over 900
17 parcels, close to 10 percent of the
18 vacant lots managed, have been developed
19 into new homes, commercial businesses,
20 neighborhood parks and gardens, helping
21 to restore the urban fabric of
22 neighborhoods throughout the City.

23 As demonstrated in numerous
24 studies, the LandCare treatment is a low
25 cost, high return solution that improves

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2 health and safety outcomes for
3 neighborhood residents. Every dollar
4 invested in vacant lot remediation
5 returns \$333 to society at-large and
6 reduced gun violence. And this treatment
7 has been shown to significantly reduce
8 crime, lower stress, and increase
9 exercise. Studies have also found that
10 LandCare increases the values of homes
11 nearby the lots that are cleaned and
12 greened by an average of \$41,000, which
13 means that for every dollar spent to
14 clean and green vacant land, housing
15 wealth increases by \$224. Additionally,
16 LandCare has improved access to green
17 space for over 45,000 residents and
18 intercepts over 2 million gallons of
19 stormwater runoff each year.

20 For the second year, in
21 addition to LandCare's work in community
22 development, PHS is facilitating our
23 reentry initiative, which creates
24 pathways from prison to entry-level
25 positions in landscaping and horticulture

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2 fields. Through this initiative, PHS has
3 placed 80 returning citizens over the
4 past two years, many of whom were hired
5 last year and are returning this season,
6 and we maintain 2,000 additional
7 Philadelphia Land Bank sites. Over the
8 last two months, 24 individuals have
9 graduated from a five-week paid intensive
10 training in horticulture, landscaping,
11 and workplace leadership skills. Most of
12 the graduates have been hired by LandCare
13 contractors and community organizations
14 and have been working since the start of
15 the season in April.

16 Since January, PHS has placed
17 close to 40 individuals through this
18 initiative. New graduate Camille
19 Torrence, who received a supervisory role
20 on the landscape crew at the
21 Brewerytown-Sharswood Community Civic
22 Association, has said this about the
23 training and placement program: The boot
24 camp opened doors for me. It helped me
25 to get a better job and maybe start my

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2 own business.

3 Currently, the level of funding
4 for FY 2018 does not include the \$500,000
5 necessary to continue the LandCare
6 reentry initiative. We are asking that
7 this funding be restored to allow us to
8 continue this important program that
9 trains and connects returning citizens
10 with available jobs in landscaping
11 fields. In addition to placing 40
12 individuals in landscaping positions,
13 this funding also enables us to maintain
14 2,000 additional Philadelphia Land Bank
15 parcels and supports five community
16 LandCare organizations that were added
17 last year through this initiative, all of
18 which are crucial to the success of the
19 program and help us deliver on our
20 mission to connect people with
21 horticulture and together create healthy
22 and sustainable communities.

23 From reducing blight in
24 neighborhoods to building the capacity of
25 local small businesses and connecting

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 returning citizens with available
3 landscaping positions, PHS is proud to
4 work with DHCD to improve our city.

5 Thank you again for the
6 opportunity to testify, and Keith and I
7 will be happy to answer any questions.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
9 you very much.

10 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you again
11 for inviting me to testify today's double
12 duty. I want to -- first of all, again,
13 my name is Will Gonzalez. I'm the
14 Executive Director of Ceiba. We commend
15 DHCD for the work that it presents in the
16 report and we are proud to partner with
17 it through our work and that of our
18 member organizations.

19 We also, however, as good
20 friends are not shy about constructive
21 criticisms due to our shared and mutual
22 interest and commitment to equitable
23 community development. We look forward
24 to building on the relationship that we
25 have with DHCD for years to come,

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2 especially as the Latino community
3 continues its rapid growth. As you know,
4 the Latino community is the largest
5 limited English proficient population in
6 the City. And so we have some special
7 interest in making sure that what Council
8 was so successful at putting through,
9 that Charter change, Section 860, which
10 requires that equal access is provided to
11 City services for all people who are
12 limited English proficient.

13 We have -- I have to give
14 credit where credit is due in terms of
15 DHCD for listening to us as we butted
16 heads literally over the last six months,
17 nine months on issues related to language
18 access. To their credit, they supported
19 the in-service for housing counselors
20 regarding their need to abide to the
21 Charter change and federal law to provide
22 equal access to people who are limited
23 English proficient.

24 That said, however, we know
25 that we need to remain vigilant and, in

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2 true candor, are concerned about the
3 implementation of the home repair program
4 and addressing the list, the long list,
5 of people who are in need of that
6 service. We commend again City Council
7 for attacking that list and addressing
8 that list, but we want to both remind
9 DHCD and PHDC to please incorporate the
10 needs of limited English proficient
11 populations in addressing that list and
12 in keeping the list open.

13 We are committed to working
14 with the City on the success of DHCD and
15 the home repair program, and we look
16 forward to continuing to be constructive
17 critics and helpful hands.

18 Thank you for your attention to
19 this matter.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you very much.

22 Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds
23 Brown.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes. I
25 want to highlight and celebrate the work

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 of the PHS program and thank you for your
3 detailed testimony, but thank you more
4 for crafting a program that really goes
5 to the spirit and the tenor of a lot of
6 concerns raised by Councilmembers, that
7 we look out for returning citizens and
8 immigrants who live in Philadelphia,
9 local residents, and that you are
10 intentional in making sure that those you
11 do contract with are also from our city.

12 And so with regards to
13 returning citizens, is there an age
14 limit?

15 MR. GREEN: How you doing? I'm
16 Keith Green.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good
18 afternoon.

19 MR. GREEN: Director of
20 Philadelphia LandCare.

21 We do not have an age limit.
22 Actually a lot of the people that
23 participated in the program has been the
24 age of 18 to, I believe, 55 was the
25 oldest that we had.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I've
3 already texted my staff to ask us to get
4 brochures over. So for the record, how
5 long is the program? Once a person is
6 identified, recruited, and enrolled, how
7 long is the training prior to them
8 transitioning to a real job?

9 MR. GREEN: The training is
10 about a month long, and what we do is, we
11 train them in basic landscaping, how to
12 use weed whackers, lawn mowers, riding
13 mowers, walk-behinds, that stuff,
14 training them how to identify weeds and
15 plant material, and then we also identify
16 employers that want to play a part in
17 this program. And I will also say that
18 all the people that's participated in the
19 program are all local small businesses
20 and that they hire more than just one. A
21 lot of them, they've employed like two to
22 three people at a time.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Now
24 putting my former social worker hat on,
25 are there any wraparound services, for

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 lack of a better word, that helps them to
3 stay on track and on course given other
4 challenges they may have to grapple with
5 in their lives?

6 MR. GREEN: We do work with
7 RISE and we also work with other
8 organizations around the City, like the
9 Men and Women of Excellence; Ready,
10 Willing and Able, and I believe ODAAT --

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Excellent.

12 MR. GREEN: -- that actually
13 specialize in those type of services.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And how
15 old is this program now?

16 MR. GREEN: Our R to R program
17 has been in existence for, I believe,
18 close to nine years.

19 MS. ORTEGA: Yes. PHS has been
20 working at the prison since 2006, and we
21 have a different landscaping -- or have
22 done landscaping training and placed
23 folks in jobs, returning citizens in
24 jobs, throughout that program. But this
25 has been a real -- for the last two

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 years, we've been really marrying our
3 LandCare initiative with returning
4 citizens in a new way.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I clearly
6 remember in my second term when there was
7 a lot of friendly debate on how we could
8 do better with regards to those returning
9 from or leaving -- making a transition
10 from the prisons back into the real world
11 and where the opportunity was, and the
12 notion of landscaping actually was a part
13 of a friendly debate here. So to now see
14 that it's real and it's a tangible
15 initiative is admirable. So thank you
16 for your work.

17 MR. GREEN: Thank you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: And I'll
19 take plenty of those brochures.

20 MR. GREEN: I was about to say,
21 if you want some, I have some right here.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
24 you very much.

25 We talk every day about this

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 issue of returning citizens.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Yes, we
4 do.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We're
6 happy to hear about it, and certainly we
7 appreciate all the help. There are so
8 many meetings. Could you share some
9 more?

10 Could staff please -- thank
11 you, Matt.

12 Thank you very much. We want
13 to call Panel 3, Alice Wright, Ruth
14 Bazemore, Max Ray-Riek, and Carolyn
15 Placke.

16 (Witnesses approached witness
17 table.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you very much. Please identify yourself
20 and begin your testimony.

21 MR. RAY-RIEK: Hi there. I'm
22 Max Ray-Riek. I'm a member of ACT UP
23 Philadelphia. This is my first time
24 doing this, so I'm a little nervous.

25 Good afternoon, Chairperson

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 Blackwell and members of the Committee.
3 Thank you for the opportunity to give
4 testimony. I'm a member of ACT UP
5 Philadelphia and ACT UP is concerned with
6 ending the AIDS crisis, which is still a
7 crisis and becoming even more so in the
8 last few years despite major medical
9 advancements. One main driver of the
10 crisis now and the reason I am here is
11 housing.

12 The City of Philadelphia
13 recently released the first needs
14 assessment for housing for people with
15 HIV and AIDS in over 20 years. People
16 living with HIV and AIDS, according to
17 this needs assessment, are about three
18 times more likely to experience
19 homelessness than the general population,
20 with women, African American, and
21 Hispanic people and transgender
22 individuals at disproportionately high
23 risk of experiencing homelessness.

24 Estimates indicate that there
25 are nearly 600 Philadelphians living with

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 HIV/AIDS currently experiencing
3 homelessness in Philadelphia, and only
4 about 400 slots in the Housing Assistance
5 for people with AIDS program, all of
6 which are filled and which rarely turn
7 over.

8 For homeless individuals with
9 HIV, waiting times for permanent housing
10 are six months or more. For people
11 considered not officially homeless, the
12 wait list will close on July 1st, with
13 wait times for those currently on the
14 list estimated at seven to eight years.
15 This means the wait list is closed for
16 people living on a relative or friend's
17 couch or floor without their own key,
18 people trading sex for a place to sleep,
19 people paying 50 to 90 percent of their
20 income for rent, and people living in a
21 home that is making them sick through
22 mold, damp, infestations, et cetera. For
23 people with HIV, these situations are
24 particularly dangerous.

25 In addition, HIV, like

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 tuberculosis and hepatitis C, is a
3 communicable chronic illness. When
4 someone can't access medication, their
5 viral load increases and they can pass
6 HIV onto others. While safe, stable,
7 affordable housing helps people use drugs
8 or have sex more safely, the biggest
9 benefit of housing is that it reduces the
10 individual's and the community's viral
11 load. Health is prevention and housing
12 is health.

13 A study in Buffalo, New York
14 just confirmed that permanent supportive
15 housing programs reduce viral load and
16 increase CD4 count. An older study from
17 Philadelphia confirmed that for people
18 with HIV, safe, stable, affordable
19 housing reduces emergency room visits and
20 healthcare costs.

21 In Philadelphia, according to a
22 recent study by the Federal Reserve Bank,
23 from 2000 to 2014, we've lost 23,000
24 affordable rental units. When Project
25 HOME last week opened a first-come,

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 first-served affordable housing building
3 with just 88 units, hundreds of families
4 spent the night lined up around the block
5 hoping to get a slot.

6 Recently, several properties
7 funded under the Low-Income Housing Tax
8 Credit are coming up on their 20-year
9 time limit and developers can evict
10 current tenants and sell the apartments
11 at market rate. Finding new affordable
12 housing for these displaced tenants has
13 proved very difficult.

14 And, finally, the opioid crisis
15 in Philadelphia is underscoring the need
16 for housing solutions that save lives
17 even for people in active addiction.
18 Housing First programs locally and
19 nationwide have had higher success rates
20 than transitional housing programs that
21 require sobriety to earn permanent
22 housing.

23 In short, we have an affordable
24 housing crisis in Philadelphia, and for
25 people with communicable chronic illness,

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 mental health struggles, and/or
3 addiction, it's a deadly problem that
4 impacts the community's health. So I'm
5 here to urge Council as you consider Bill
6 170555 to consider taking three
7 additional steps. Increase the funding
8 available specifically for affordable
9 housing in Philadelphia. Programs like
10 density bonuses and finally finishing our
11 inclusionary zoning law are important.
12 Other resources to look for include
13 PILOTs, or Payments in Lieu of Taxes,
14 from large non-profits, capping the
15 ten-year tax abatement, creating a fund
16 paid into by entities phasing out of the
17 tax abatement period to begin paying
18 their first year's taxes slowly over time
19 or voluntarily paying additional tax
20 deductible donations over time,
21 considering a distributor-level tax on
22 home improvement products like cans of
23 paint that will have minimal impact to
24 the individual consumer but will help
25 low-income Philadelphians share in the

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 wealth of our housing boom.

3 The second thing is to focus
4 more City funding on affordable housing
5 through the Housing Trust Fund or a new
6 additional mechanism on support for
7 tenants. Current programs of the Housing
8 Trust Fund are focused on developers and
9 homeowners, but we must also focus on
10 homelessness prevention for tenants and
11 scatter site tenant-based rental
12 assistance programs. Scatter site
13 tenant-based rental assistance is key to
14 housing first and any permanent
15 supportive housing programs, because
16 individuals can move into neighborhoods
17 of their choice, case managers can build
18 relationships with individual landlords
19 and not in my backyard problems are
20 avoided. For people with drug and
21 alcohol addiction, mental illness, and
22 communicable chronic illness, this kind
23 of housing support is vital.

24 And, finally, use housing as a
25 tool for healthcare. By this we mean

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 prioritizing individuals with
3 communicable chronic illness across all
4 housing programs, including PHA, the
5 Housing Trust Fund, et cetera.
6 Coordinate between the Health Department,
7 OSH, DBHS to keep track of data on
8 community health and tie it to housing.
9 Work with Medicaid and insurers to
10 reimburse as much supportive housing
11 service as we possibly can, providing
12 technical assistance and even up-front
13 funding, if needed. Make a clear
14 definition of housing first and hold all
15 City-funded programs accountable to it,
16 and be clear that housing is healthcare
17 and healthcare is prevention.

18 Thank you for your time.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you very much.

21 Ms. Bazemore, it's very nice to
22 have you here today and always great to
23 see you.

24 MS. BAZEMORE: Thank you for
25 allowing me to speak. And I hope I don't

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 get too emotional, because I'm a
3 community activist and I really am
4 speaking today on a situation that my --
5 first, I represent funding from SCOP,
6 which is Support Community Outreach
7 Program.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Please
9 give us your name for the record,
10 Ms. Bazemore.

11 MS. BAZEMORE: Oh, I'm sorry.
12 My name is Ms. Ruth Bazemore.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
14 you.

15 MS. BAZEMORE: And the
16 abbreviation is called SCOP, which is
17 funded by Department of Human Service.
18 We have been receiving funding for years,
19 and we represent a cross-section of the
20 City that we basically do outreach for
21 youth in our communities.

22 What I'm speaking on today is,
23 I represent a block captains coalition of
24 Haddington, which represents 14 City
25 blocks of block captains. Our boundaries

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 are from 52nd to 55th, Market to Race,
3 and we have been together for
4 approximately 18 years. We started out
5 by being funded by William Penn
6 Foundation to our children's future with
7 all. Later we joined SCOP, because the
8 funding stopped.

9 SCOP actually is the most
10 beautiful program that -- we represent
11 all of these different communities,
12 churches and different organizations,
13 that we give help to our community and
14 our children. But we are a reimbursing
15 organization, which means that we submit
16 a grant and if we are lucky enough to be
17 funded, we have to actually use our money
18 first and then we get reimbursed by the
19 program.

20 What happened this year -- I
21 should go back. DHS now in 2010 has more
22 or less been more like privatized, and
23 it's been joined by a group called
24 Community Umbrella Agencies, which we say
25 is CUAs. The CUAs actually have taken

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2 over basically our funding. Just this
3 year, two months ago, the CUAs advised us
4 that they were taking 20 percent of our
5 funding that was already advocated to
6 them. They also said that we were not
7 going to have our picnic, which is a big
8 thing that we have been doing for the
9 last 25 years or more, which actually is
10 one of the big events that we give to our
11 poor community. My question is, there
12 was no real meeting of where the 20
13 percent went to, and how do you do this
14 when it's a contract. And nobody can
15 tell us what is going on. But my
16 question is, it's my money, and so we
17 should have been able to use our money to
18 have what we always had, was a picnic for
19 our children. And with more and more,
20 our sense, all these different groups
21 have come in supposedly to help our
22 community, we're finding out that we no
23 longer have a voice. We seem to be not
24 at the table when all these things are
25 negotiated, but the fact is, we're being

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 told what we can do or what we're not
3 going to do.

4 And the bottom part is, it's
5 our money and it's our time, and we spent
6 so much trying to actually help our
7 community, because this \$5,000 grant
8 maximum has not been increased for the
9 last 20 years. And everybody don't get
10 that, but the bottom line is, we have to
11 spend our money before we get reimbursed.
12 And the reimbursement sometimes does not
13 necessarily meet their criteria, so the
14 money comes out of our pocket.

15 But that's not why I am so
16 outraged. My outrage is, we really do
17 not know what part we play with the CUAs.
18 The CUAs basically is an adoption in
19 foster care. And then we basically have
20 our own SCOP and then we were told to
21 join with our Epics. Our Epics and our
22 CUAs have not merged together, so we're
23 not even sure what part we play.

24 But the bottom part is, our
25 SCOP family love our community, and we

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 use all our resources to make our
3 community and our children who gets
4 nothing to get what little resources we
5 get to make it work.

6 And my question also is, I
7 would like to understand the
8 accountability of why we have to -- we
9 must do -- we must show monies and where
10 it goes, but there's no -- we do not know
11 how the CUA or any of the other groups
12 who's supposed to be helping us, it
13 doesn't happen.

14 I work or I partner a lot with
15 Barry School, and the bottom line is, the
16 other day I went to Barry School. There
17 is no after-school programs. There is no
18 nothing, and we have the highest amount
19 of children of needs that they get
20 nothing. And when I told them that we
21 were going to do things, because I do
22 things with them, take them on trips and
23 we're going to do the breakfast, but it's
24 not fair. I would like to know what
25 happens with accountability of some

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 schools and some programs are getting
3 everything, but our community, who can't
4 speak, gets nothing, and we blame the
5 parents and our children for actions that
6 is committed for them because there's no
7 outreach.

8 So I am outraged, because I
9 think there has to be an accounting.
10 There has to be -- we need to understand
11 where our monies are spent in our
12 community that's designated according to
13 the census tract. Why do some
14 communities get nothing or very little
15 and some gets a lot of different programs
16 and supports from other groups and our
17 children is criticized and their parents
18 are criticized for not being on target,
19 when the fact is only the different
20 groups of us who love our children in our
21 community is not made whole.

22 If we had brought all of our
23 children from these programs, it would
24 just -- it would make you really --
25 because our children are precious. And

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 when we take them to Washington and New
3 York and all these different places, we
4 have no problem, because our children are
5 glad to be there and they know how to
6 behave and they know we love them. But
7 it's not fair. It really is not fair for
8 people to take away from our -- what
9 we're entitled to and blame us for the
10 condition that you placed us in.

11 Thank you for listening to me.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
13 you very much.

14 Are there any questions?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Any
17 comments?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you both very much.

21 MS. BAZEMORE: Thank you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you.

24 We'll ask the Clerk to read the
25 title of Bill -- this is an amendment for

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 161061.

3 THE CLERK: An ordinance
4 authorizing City Officials to File
5 Articles of Incorporation to establish a
6 Non-Profit Corporation that shall be
7 called The Philadelphia School Teacher's
8 Reimbursement Fund, Inc., for the purpose
9 of reimbursing personal money spent by
10 teachers of the Philadelphia School
11 District for the purchase of supplies,
12 materials, and equipment needed for their
13 classrooms.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you very much.

16 We're going to ask the Chief
17 Education Officer to hold up a minute
18 because we have the President of the
19 Retired Teachers Association, School
20 District, who has to leave. So would you
21 come forward, and then we'll have Otis
22 Hackney, Chief Education Officer, the
23 Mayor's Office of Education to testify.

24 (Witness approached witness
25 table.)

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

3 Welcome. Please identify yourself for
4 the record and begin your testimony.

5 MS. TAYLOR: Good afternoon.

6 My name is Emilee Taylor. I'm a retired
7 art educator with the School District of
8 Philadelphia.

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you.

11 MS. TAYLOR: Thank you, City
12 Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell and members
13 of City Council and the Finance Committee
14 for providing opportunity for me to
15 testify in support of Bill 161061, the
16 Philadelphia Teacher Reimbursement Fund.
17 My name is Emilee Taylor and I'm a
18 retired art educator, having served as a
19 teacher and teacher support specialist
20 for art education for 39 years with the
21 School District of Philadelphia. During
22 my period, I have spent thousands of
23 dollars for supplies to support my art
24 program. I was provided a budget to
25 start and build a program at the two

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 schools of my employment, but despite
3 having a budget, I did spend my own money
4 to purchase resources and supplies that I
5 would otherwise not have in my classroom.

6 When I started my position as
7 teacher support specialist for art
8 education, I became increasingly aware of
9 the need for monies for supplies as
10 schools suffered from reduced funding.
11 Schools hired art teachers with little to
12 no funding for their programs. As
13 schools closed, the Art Department
14 quickly redistributed art supplies to be
15 given to schools in need.

16 Teachers have conducted methods
17 to raise funds such as art programs and
18 exhibitions, auctions, and community
19 fundraisers to supplement their school
20 budgets. Despite these efforts, teachers
21 continue to spend their own money for
22 materials. They would quickly spend the
23 \$100 allotment provided by the District,
24 which is available to every teacher.
25 This is not the way to support our

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 students and programs in our communities.

3 There was a need for equal
4 opportunities for teachers and schools to
5 receive reimbursement for purchased
6 materials outside of the school
7 allotment. There was a need for a
8 vehicle of financial support that
9 directly connects with the teachers.

10 It is my hope that the proposed
11 teacher allotment reimbursement bill is
12 passed to provide such an opportunity,
13 because our students and teachers deserve
14 it. I would like to thank Councilman
15 David Oh for introducing this bill, and I
16 want to thank you for the opportunity to
17 speak on behalf of Bill 161061 and I ask
18 the City Council's consideration towards
19 the passing of this bill.

20 Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

22 Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good
24 afternoon.

25 MS. TAYLOR: Good afternoon.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you
3 for your participation and for paying
4 attention to an issue that all of us here
5 on City Council care about when it comes
6 to finding innovative ways to figure out
7 how we can deliver what all of our young
8 people and children deserve, arts
9 education.

10 We must add -- I feel compelled
11 to ask, are you aware of another -- it's
12 called the Fund for the School District
13 of Philadelphia which currently exists?
14 And my limited understanding of it allows
15 for the support for support services and
16 programs within the School District. Are
17 you aware that that funding currently
18 exists?

19 MS. TAYLOR: No. Actually, I
20 became more aware of it just through this
21 process and learning about what is
22 available through the introduction of the
23 reimbursement bill by Councilman Oh. But
24 as a teacher, many of us are not aware of
25 programs such as that, especially if it

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 goes directly to the school and the
3 school gets reimbursement for some
4 specific need, that we may not be aware
5 of it. As a teacher, I have never had
6 the opportunity to get any kind of
7 reimbursement.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Or access?

9 MS. TAYLOR: Other than the
10 \$100 that we would get from the School
11 District. So to answer your question,
12 no.

13 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Okay. All
14 right, then. And you should simply be
15 aware of that, because that is one of the
16 factors in our deliberations around this
17 measure.

18 Okay. Thank you very much.

19 MS. TAYLOR: Thank you.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you. Thank you very much.

22 Mr. Otis Hackney, we will
23 certainly invite you to come forward.
24 And as you all may know, he is the Chief
25 Education Officer, Mayor's Office of

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 Education. We'll still ask him to
3 identify himself for the record and then
4 make his testimony.

5 (Witness approached witness
6 table.)

7 MR. HACKNEY: Yes. Thank you.
8 Good afternoon. My name is Otis Hackney
9 and I'm the Chief Education Officer for
10 the Mayor's Office of Education. I would
11 like to begin by thanking Councilwoman
12 Blackwell and Councilman Oh and the
13 members of the Committee on Finance for
14 inviting me to offer testimony today on
15 Bill No. 161061, which would establish a
16 non-profit corporation to reimburse
17 School District of Philadelphia teachers
18 for a portion of out-of-pocket expenses
19 spent on classroom supplies and
20 equipment.

21 I appreciate the important
22 issue that this bill seeks to address,
23 and I applaud efforts to support our
24 amazing teachers. Because the School
25 District of Philadelphia does not receive

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 sufficient state funding to meet the
3 comprehensive needs of our schools,
4 educators often spend their own money on
5 classroom supplies. I experienced this
6 firsthand both as a teacher when I was a
7 teacher at Germantown High School and
8 also as a school administrator here in
9 the City of Philadelphia, especially at
10 South Philadelphia High School.

11 However, this bill creates a
12 potential duplication of services for
13 supporting teachers across the District.
14 Earlier this year I joined the Board of
15 Directors of the Fund for the School
16 District of Philadelphia. The Fund, an
17 independent 501(c)(3) not-for-profit
18 organization that raises and administers
19 philanthropic contributions to provide
20 support services and programs within
21 District schools. The Fund's existing
22 organizational structure can be utilized
23 to fulfill this task in lieu of creating
24 a new non-profit entity to provide a
25 similar service.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 I thank you again for the
3 opportunity to testify, and I'm happy to
4 answer any questions you may have at this
5 time.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
7 you very much.

8 Any questions?
9 Councilwoman Parker.

10 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
11 you, Madam Chair.

12 And thank you, Mr. Hackney, for
13 your testimony. I just wanted you
14 particularly because of Ms. Emilee
15 Taylor's comments in response to
16 Councilwoman Reynolds Brown's question
17 regarding her knowledge of the Fund for
18 the School District of Philadelphia's
19 Fund and the potential duplications of
20 services in her response. In addition to
21 that, I appreciate your acknowledging the
22 out-of-pocket expense that occurs on a
23 natural basis for those who are in the
24 classroom, teachers and administrators.
25 Unfortunately you've walked both sides,

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 and you know there are three teachers and
3 I think even four -- I'm not sure if
4 Councilman Oh himself may have been in
5 the classroom. Can't remember, but I
6 know Blackwell, Reynolds Brown, and
7 Parker are both certified teachers in
8 English, I believe.

9 So I just wanted -- and Emilee
10 was just here -- to note that this is an
11 issue and it is one that does demand our
12 attention and interest, and it is my hope
13 that with Councilman Oh having raised
14 such a substantive matter, that the
15 Administration will work with the
16 Councilman in a very meaningful way to
17 try to come up with a solution that is
18 not viewed from a public perception
19 and/or the technical substance of how it
20 will work is not viewed as a duplication
21 of services, because the Councilman
22 raises an issue that is valid based on
23 the lack of funding that we know we
24 receive and you acknowledged it in your
25 testimony from the state perspective, and

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 it is an issue that I think deserves our
3 attention.

4 So I wanted to commend
5 Councilman Oh for raising this issue to
6 talk about the expenses that teachers and
7 administrators incur and work with us in
8 a way that we can find some common ground
9 to address the issue.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. HACKNEY: Thank you.

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: And can
13 you comment on your willingness to work
14 with the Councilman.

15 MR. HACKNEY: Yes. I think
16 with me being here talking about what
17 resources are available or the
18 infrastructure that exists to getting the
19 word out to teachers, so as I was sitting
20 here hearing that teachers may not know
21 about the Fund, how do we make sure that
22 they are aware, the teachers and building
23 principals, of how to utilize that, so
24 that way, we can cover the cost of
25 different projects or expenses that

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 teachers incur.

3 I can tell you as a former
4 teacher and principal, I've come out of
5 pocket many times. My wife reminded me
6 over the weekend when I was thinking
7 about today how much we spent over the
8 years in terms of instructional supplies,
9 but also helping children like buying
10 shoes, clothes, food that I know that we
11 have done, the Hackneys have done, over
12 the years, including Principal Hackney in
13 terms of helping to close the gap on
14 different programs, that we always come
15 out of pocket often, so how do we better
16 utilize dollars in our schools, so that
17 way, we can cover the cost.

18 Some creative ways that I
19 was -- if we were ever to get -- when I
20 was able to get philanthropic dollars
21 contributed to South Philadelphia High
22 School, we would do things small like
23 mini grants, so that way, a teacher could
24 put in a request and ask for a certain
25 amount and really be thoughtful about how

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 they would utilize those dollars in the
3 classroom.

4 So there are ways to be really
5 responsive to the needs of teachers, so
6 that way, we can limit how they have to
7 come out of pocket, but definitely
8 letting them know about how the structure
9 of the Fund is already in place to do
10 exactly what you want it to do, and those
11 dollars could be earmarked for schools
12 and for special projects within those
13 schools within the Fund.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you.

16 Councilman Oh.

17 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you,
18 Chairwoman, and thank you, Councilwoman
19 Parker, and thank you, Chief Executive
20 Officer Otis Hackney. You are just a
21 great reputation as a principal and as a
22 teacher.

23 I will say my concerns are
24 this: I am very happy to work in any
25 way. I'm just one of 17 legislators, but

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2 I also have to do my part. My concern
3 is, one, that starting with this, that
4 the issue of teachers spending their own
5 money -- and for the most part, the
6 problem for our schools is that there's
7 great inequity. And so what has balanced
8 the fact that some schools have more,
9 some schools have less? It's been the
10 teachers, teachers who actually spend
11 their own money to buy what is necessary.
12 And as employees of the School District,
13 first of all, we don't expect employees
14 to supply their own material, let alone
15 for the schools, to purchase basically
16 fundamental necessary items, but they do,
17 and there has not been a satisfactory
18 mechanism to account for that, record it,
19 make it transparent to the public. And
20 even I as a Councilman don't know how
21 much money teachers and even parents are
22 spending to support schools, classrooms,
23 and other things.

24 The thing that has been
25 available to teachers that they seem to

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 all know about, and it is not any other
3 reimbursement program than \$100 for the
4 year. Again, for the second time that
5 we've had a hearing, we just happen to go
6 out to a fast food place. It's actually
7 Burger King, four kids, my wife buying
8 food for all of them and a cousin. You
9 know it costs \$47. \$47 for Burger King.
10 Teachers getting reimbursed \$100 for 30
11 kids or more for the year is woefully,
12 tragically, horribly inefficient. And I
13 understand that there are big fish to
14 fry. All I'm saying is trying to fry all
15 these big fish and solve the entire
16 School District problem to me is, I'll
17 say, inadequate.

18 If the Fund for the School
19 District of Philadelphia will commit to
20 establishing a separately created fund
21 that its sole and only purpose is to
22 reimburse teachers up to \$5,000 -- and
23 that's been a point of contention.
24 People say like \$5,000? Yeah, \$5,000, up
25 to \$5,000. But \$100, \$500 is completely

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 inadequate. And I understand there's
3 challenges about funding. The creation
4 of a fund to reimburse teachers is just
5 the creation of an entity. There has
6 been no allocation of money for this.
7 It's not costing the School District or
8 the City anything. If you create the
9 entity solely dedicated to reimbursing
10 teachers up to \$5,000, vetted and looked
11 at by former teachers, then the challenge
12 is upon whoever created it, in this case
13 primarily I think me and all the other
14 Councilmembers that may be interested to
15 find the funds wherever we find it,
16 corporations, foundations, to provide
17 that kind of funding.

18 Up until now -- and you can
19 correct me if I'm wrong -- we have asked
20 if the Administration would be willing to
21 compromise if we reduced \$5,000 to \$2,500
22 or compromise from \$5,000 to \$1,000,
23 would the Administration support the
24 creation of the fund, the answer has been
25 no. And it seems to be around the amount

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 of money, number one, which I can't
3 understand.

4 Secondly, the Administration --
5 and I understand, and I can't say -- you
6 could correct me if I'm wrong. The Fund
7 for the School District of Philadelphia
8 has not committed to creating a dedicated
9 funding source to reimburse teachers.
10 There are a lot of things on that plate,
11 and teachers' reimbursements historically
12 have been a very low priority.

13 I would just say that from the
14 top point of view of fixing the School
15 District, that's a huge, enormous
16 challenge that I know a lot of good
17 people are working on, but it's just a
18 huge challenge. But on the ground level,
19 classroom to classroom, school to school,
20 we have teachers, and to me the teachers
21 are the things that -- the people that
22 fill the cracks. And my question is, can
23 you either commit to reimbursing teachers
24 in a way other than like \$100 or 200
25 bucks a year? If not, what is the

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 opposition to creating this fund? You
3 said potential duplication. To my
4 knowledge, there's no duplication yet.
5 The Fund for the School District has not
6 created a reimbursement process. So it
7 may create a reimbursement process, but
8 it's just one of a zillion things the
9 Fund is doing. And then there's the
10 School District itself. And we're not
11 getting into -- has nothing to do with
12 the contract negotiation or anything. As
13 I've said before, I've had communications
14 with some entities that are interested in
15 funding, but not -- we can't go further
16 if we don't have a fund.

17 MR. HACKNEY: So on behalf of
18 the Fund, I am a member of the Board, but
19 I cannot speak on behalf of the entire
20 organization. I think the Executive
21 Director, if possible, if you would like
22 us to engage you and your office and talk
23 about how we can set up that, I know from
24 speaking with the Executive Director of
25 the Fund that she is willing to explore

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 this opportunity for teachers in the City
3 of Philadelphia, and that's why I feel
4 comfortable in evoking the role that the
5 Fund could play and the willingness that
6 it has to design such a system to set up
7 a reimbursement or some type of resources
8 for teachers.

9 I can say that on behalf of the
10 Mayor's Office, the Mayor has set up
11 his -- he's been very public about the
12 luxury boxes in the stadiums that he has
13 set up, so that way, the funds go to the
14 Fund for Philadelphia for the School
15 District of Philadelphia to support
16 schools and teachers in those efforts.
17 And so how do we just make -- how do we
18 ensure that that information is out to
19 teachers and they know how to access
20 those resources and/or how do we make
21 sure that those that would like to donate
22 contribute philanthropic dollars towards
23 the fund, so that way, those monies can
24 be earmarked for teachers and those
25 supplies or special projects.

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2 We can meet and figure out what
3 would be a reasonable amount. I can put
4 my current lens on it, but also my
5 principal lens and teacher in terms of
6 when you talk of like really large
7 amounts of money, when you say like
8 \$5,000, that's generally for some type of
9 special project. And so how do you
10 create opportunities for teachers to ask
11 for resources and supplies around special
12 projects versus the smaller dollar
13 amounts which help for day-to-day
14 operations. But we still cannot be lost,
15 and I can tell you from doing the budget
16 process for schools for many years is
17 that when we are inadequately funded, it
18 makes those choices very challenging, not
19 just for the teachers but at the
20 principal level when they have to make
21 decisions around how much money is left
22 in operating to buy those supplies. And
23 it does vary from school to school when
24 you think about some schools that have
25 different resources or external resources

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 or "friends of" groups that can help
3 close those gaps and other schools don't.

4 So we're not in disagreement in
5 terms of the need to or why it's
6 important to make sure that our teachers
7 have the resources that they need to in
8 some cases just provide basic supplies
9 for students. It is a reality, and it's
10 a reality that we've existed and dealt
11 with for a long time, but the
12 inadequacies in the state funding and
13 when those budget cuts hit -- and I was a
14 sitting principal at the time when the
15 last round -- when the billion dollars
16 was cut and we saw -- I mean, paper was a
17 premium. Resources, pencils for testing,
18 all of those things became -- batteries
19 for calculators for testing, all of those
20 things became an extreme premium, let
21 alone the resources that you would need
22 just to run the classroom on a daily
23 basis.

24 So there's no disagreement in
25 terms of the need, but it's just making

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 sure if we have an organization that is
3 ready, willing, and already staffed and
4 has the resources and the means and the
5 know-how to do this, to do it. That's
6 why just advising on how we can better
7 partner with the existing structure.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: Yeah. Let me
9 say that I don't want to waste time. I'm
10 not directing this towards you. I'm
11 trying not to make it negative. What I'm
12 saying is, if we're just going to BS
13 around this, let's just kill it today and
14 move on to something else. I don't want
15 to have a discussion about something
16 about something. In other words, the
17 reimbursement to teachers predates the
18 billion-dollar cut. I mean, before the
19 billion dollars was cut, there were
20 teachers spending their own money. It's
21 been an ongoing issue and it's not like
22 it happened five years ago. It's just
23 been an ongoing thing. It's just been
24 exacerbated by the current situation.
25 And the School District is looking at a

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 \$700 million deficit and a whole bunch of
3 other issues. For me, the creation of a
4 separate fund means the only thing that
5 fund is for is to reimburse teachers.
6 That money does not go anywhere else,
7 can't go for something else, something
8 more important. That's the only thing it
9 does. And to my knowledge, there's
10 \$85,000 from the former effort by Mayor
11 Nutter that is discontinued by the United
12 Way. So there's \$85,000 they're going to
13 give to the School District. There's
14 \$200,000 that was appropriated for
15 specifically reimbursing school supplies
16 under Mayor Nutter's program, and there's
17 been, at least on paper, another
18 \$200,000. So there's theoretically up to
19 \$485,000 available simply to reimburse
20 teachers.

21 I don't know where that money
22 is going. I'm not saying that that money
23 should go into this fund. All I'm saying
24 is there has been money identified, but
25 at the end of the day, it's woefully

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 inadequate and there has to be, at least
3 in my opinion, if we're going to be
4 serious about this, a commitment to
5 reimbursing teachers.

6 And one of the things I'm
7 concerned about is, people fund different
8 things. Quite frankly, when someone says
9 to me, you know, should I give a
10 contribution to the SRC, my answer is no.
11 I mean, not \$5,000. That's not going to
12 make any difference. But if you'll go to
13 a school or I'll go to a school and we'll
14 see what they need and we'll purchase the
15 materials, that will make a difference
16 with your \$5,000.

17 Some corporations, foundations,
18 they will not fund the SRC, but they will
19 fund the reimbursement to the
20 individuals, the teachers that are
21 spending money. And so to me, it's an
22 addition of funding, not a reduction or a
23 competition for funding. And the issue
24 is that we've had this, I guess --
25 reimbursement of teachers has been a

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 topic that predates me, but at least this
3 bill has been there, and to me if there
4 was a serious interest in creating a
5 Teacher's Reimbursement Fund within the
6 Fund for the School District, there would
7 be a proposal, and there isn't. There's
8 a discussion and it's got to be voted on
9 and then it's not going to be dedicated
10 and then how much are we talking about,
11 what's the mechanism.

12 I would just say like here's
13 the best I can do. I'm just a
14 legislator. The Mayor is another elected
15 official. He can propose something. The
16 SRC could propose something, and
17 everybody could propose something. This
18 is just what I proposed, and I've not
19 seen a counterproposal similar, a
20 dedicated funding thing, we know how much
21 money is in, basically vetted by former
22 Philadelphia school teachers who know
23 what the difference is and an effort to
24 get money into it so that we will and
25 they will and everybody will know that

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 the money in there is for reimbursing
3 teachers and addressing inequity in our
4 school system.

5 But thank you very much.

6 MR. HACKNEY: Thank you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
8 you very much.

9 Any other comments or
10 questions?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
13 you very much.

14 We would like to call Leslie
15 Marie Grace, Barbara Bennett, Vivien
16 Hansbury, and Barbara Saverino.

17 (Witnesses approached witness
18 table.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you. Please begin in any order.
21 Introduce yourself to the record, if you
22 will.

23 MS. GRACE: Hi. I'm Leslie
24 Grace. I'm an art teacher at Nebinger
25 Elementary. I would like to begin by

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 thanking Chairwoman Blackwell, Councilman
3 Oh, and members of the Committee on
4 Finance for this opportunity to offer
5 testimony today in support of Bill No.
6 161061.

7 I feel like I'm really fired
8 up. Sorry. I've been waiting for so
9 long.

10 I would like to emphasize some
11 of the points I made when I previously
12 spoke in support of this bill. Currently
13 the only form of reimbursement for
14 teachers is a \$100 allotment offered
15 yearly. For further clarification, under
16 the existing agreement within our old
17 contract between the School District and
18 PFT, teachers can be reimbursed for only
19 \$100 of classroom supplies. And I say
20 that twice to make sure that there is
21 understanding how little teachers are
22 given for out-of-pocket expenses.

23 Furthermore, though there are
24 programs like the Fund for the School
25 District of Philadelphia, that does not

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 directly support all classroom teachers
3 in all subject areas, especially areas
4 where we serve all children, like
5 specials.

6 Their stated major priority of
7 establishing libraries in all K to 3
8 classrooms, though significant and
9 obviously important, does not help
10 support all teachers in the District and
11 does not help support all of the
12 classroom needs.

13 This bill would not create a
14 duplication of service, and if there are
15 multiple vehicles for funding, then I say
16 all the better. \$100, and that's it.
17 And if anyone in front of the classroom
18 or who has a child knows well, that \$100
19 does not go far.

20 Furthermore, the Philadelphia
21 Education Supplies Fund through United
22 Way established by Mayor Michael Nutter
23 in which the School District applied on
24 behalf of all schools is no longer in
25 effect. Even if it was, it was not

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 something that all teachers had equitable
3 access to.

4 Regardless, this bill is just
5 to establish a transparent non-profit to
6 help support our city's hard-working
7 teachers who spend their own hard-earned
8 dollars on their students. Why is it
9 accepted and expected as the norm for
10 teachers to pay out of their wages?
11 Teachers are professionals, and we should
12 be treated as such. If we spend our own
13 money on our students, we should be
14 reimbursed. I fail to see why this bill
15 would not be supported, as it would be a
16 non-profit and it would only do good to
17 help raise the equity of education in our
18 district.

19 I have personally paid for over
20 \$12,000 of supplies, furniture, and
21 technology for my classroom over the past
22 four years. In addition, wanting to
23 ensure that my students have an equitable
24 education to that of their counterparts
25 in more affluent areas or districts, I

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 have had to hustle and grovel for
3 funding, as well as paying out of my own
4 pocket. I have spent countless hours
5 fundraising for my room, begging family
6 members, friends, and the greater
7 community, and in total, I've raised over
8 \$20,000 in the past four years. Though I
9 am grateful for my \$100 allotment, that
10 amount clearly cannot support a
11 classroom.

12 Please do not pause for cause.
13 Please do not take a step back. This is
14 a fund that is urgently needed to support
15 all teachers, all classrooms, and would
16 have a direct positive effect on all
17 students at no loss to the City and no
18 loss to the School District. If we want
19 to ensure that equitable education of our
20 city's students, then this bill needs
21 support. We are losing great teachers in
22 our city to more affluent school
23 districts where they are provided with
24 budgets, fundamental supplies, and are
25 valued in their role as a professional

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 educator.

3 I would also like to submit
4 into the record a petition with 231
5 signatures, and growing I might add, in
6 support of Bill 161061.

7 Please show your support of our
8 city's teachers and schools. Please vote
9 to move this bill out of Committee with a
10 favorable recommendation.

11 Thank you for this opportunity.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
13 you.

14 MS. HANSBURY: My name is
15 Vivien Hansbury and I am a retired
16 teacher of 25 years. I am also the
17 President of the Philadelphia Public
18 Schools Employees Retirees Association
19 and the Regional Director of the
20 Pennsylvania State Association of
21 Retirees.

22 When my organizations heard
23 about Councilman Oh's bill, I was amazed.
24 I said to myself, so the clock has
25 reversed to over 25 years and gave

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 teachers a bill required to use our
3 personal funds to provide the necessary
4 materials that children need in our
5 classroom, especially children with
6 special needs.

7 So my organizations are here to
8 support Bill 161061. I think the
9 teachers -- the mere fact that teachers
10 are willing to still use personal funds
11 for basic classroom supplies is a
12 testament to their dedication to the
13 students, but also an indictment of a
14 system that puts them in a position that
15 requires them to use personal funds for
16 basic supplies.

17 The need for the replacement of
18 basic supplies increases as the school
19 year needs. We talk about the progress
20 of students, but yet we are unwilling to
21 provide those necessary materials that
22 are needed to ensure that our children
23 progress.

24 So the two people who preceded
25 me said most of what I was going to say,

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 so I will shorten my testimony to just
3 say to the City Council, this is a need.
4 You sat in somebody's classroom. You
5 achieved because we teachers taught you
6 the skills that you need to achieve. How
7 dare you say you cannot find the funds
8 and provide the funds for children to
9 achieve?

10 This is an excellent bill, and
11 we encourage you to pass the bill. My
12 two organizations are willing to do
13 anything that you deem necessary to
14 ensure that this bill passes.

15 I thank you so much for your
16 time, and we are looking forward that one
17 day we will see on the Internet that this
18 bill has passed.

19 Thank you so much.

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
21 you.

22 MS. BARNETT: I will be very
23 brief in my presentation and my request
24 for the support of Bill 161061, and I'd
25 like to say good afternoon to Chairperson

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 Council Lady Blackwell and to the
3 honorable Councilmembers who are present.

4 As a past employee of the Philadelphia
5 public school system, I fully support
6 this bill.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Could
8 you give us your name for the record.

9 MS. BARNETT: Barbara Barnett.
10 Sorry.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Is it
12 Barnett? It's not Bennett?

13 MS. BARNETT: No; Barnett.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you.

16 MS. BARNETT: For more than 42
17 years, I was employed as a School
18 District teacher. I have had several
19 different employments in the District,
20 but mainly my main focus was in the
21 classroom, and as a classroom teacher it
22 was my pleasure to share with the
23 students in a number of different schools
24 from -- my certification was K through
25 12, but I worked in the junior high

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 school mainly and in the high school, the
3 High School for Creative and Performing
4 Arts. I am now the proud grandmother of
5 two graduates and I have one grandchild
6 who is a current student at the high --
7 the Science Leadership Academy, and I
8 have the one who -- one of the students
9 who graduated has been the recipient of a
10 lot of help from his school and his
11 school principal, as well as his
12 teachers. They have sought funds and
13 they have provided funds for his
14 education. Fortunately we have had to
15 supplement some of that because they did
16 a number of very special things. They
17 had an exchange program that had to be
18 funded, and of course that was provided.
19 Some of the teachers provided funds for
20 that. I also as a grandmother helped to
21 provide that.

22 The generous proceeds from the
23 teacher's pocket was greatly appreciated
24 and it was beneficial to not only my
25 grandchildren but to the other students

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 in the classroom.

3 During my School District
4 tenure, I too supplied monies for
5 students who were in need of various
6 things, for trips, for trips to the
7 theatre, to projects that they provided,
8 individual projects, and travel that they
9 had to do for some of their performances.
10 There must be a direct interest in
11 providing funds for the budget for
12 providing teachers with reimbursement.
13 It is important that you look at your
14 conscience and say, I too will support
15 Bill 161061 for the benefit of the
16 students of the School District.

17 Thank you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
19 you very much.

20 We note that United Way,
21 Barbara Saverino, has submitted
22 testimony. The stenographer should have
23 it and all of us in our packets. That
24 was to be written only. So we will
25 submit it as is requested.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 Any questions or comments?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you very much, ladies.

6 MS. BARNETT: Thank you for
7 hearing us.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: We'll
9 ask the Clerk to read the title of
10 Resolution No. 170446 and ask Rob Dubow
11 to come forward.

12 THE CLERK: 170446, resolution
13 authorizing the Committee on Finance to
14 hold hearings to examine the City's
15 Annual Reports requirement as it relates
16 to every City office, department, board
17 and commission that issues any permit,
18 licenses or any document for which a fee
19 is charged in order to ascertain and
20 discuss with the Administration the
21 current availability of these reports and
22 going forward, a schedule which sets out
23 when these reports can be made available
24 to Council for this fiscal year and every
25 fiscal year thereafter.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 (Witnesses approached witness
3 table.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Good
5 afternoon. Thank you for your patience.

6 MR. DUBOW: Good afternoon,
7 Chairwoman Blackwell and members of the
8 Committee. My name is Rob Dubow. I'm
9 the City's Finance Director. I'm joined
10 by Anna Adams, Budget Director, and we
11 are here to testify in support of
12 Resolution 170446, which examines the
13 City's fee structure for various
14 services.

15 Our understanding is the intent
16 of the resolution is to ensure that the
17 City has in place policies and procedures
18 to ensure that it is charging the
19 appropriate level of fees for services
20 provided by City government. This would
21 mean undertaking periodic analyses to
22 determine whether the fees the City
23 charges cover the costs of the services
24 being provided. To the extent that those
25 analyses resulted in appropriately higher

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 fees, they could either lessen the
3 pressure to increase taxes, provide
4 funding to improve the health of the
5 pension fund or the City's General Fund
6 or fund additional services.

7 We support the intent of the
8 resolution and look forward to working
9 with Council to ensure that fees are at
10 appropriate levels.

11 With that, I'll conclude my
12 testimony, and we're happy to answer any
13 questions you may have.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you.

16 Any questions or comments for
17 Mr. Dubow?

18 Councilman Domb.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
20 Madam Chairwoman.

21 Good afternoon.

22 MR. DUBOW: Good afternoon.

23 COUNCILMAN DOMB: The goal of
24 this is to, as we've talked about, is to
25 figure out if we're charging the right

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 fees for the services we provide as a
3 city and making sure that we've included
4 all the costs of those fees from every
5 department of the City. And that's the
6 big overreaching goal, because we've seen
7 in testimony during Council that some of
8 the fees date back to -- the court system
9 was 1984. Some others were 2006. So we
10 just want to make sure that they reflect
11 the current cost of the services we're
12 providing today. So whatever you need in
13 the way of support from us to accomplish
14 that goal, 100 percent support of that.

15 MR. DUBOW: Thank you.
16 Appreciate it. And we think it's a
17 worthy goal and we'd like to work with
18 you on it.

19 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.
20 Thank you for your testimony today.
21 Thanks.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
23 you.

24 Any other comments or
25 questions?

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
4 you very much.

5 Is there anyone else here who
6 would like to testify on any of the bills
7 or this resolution?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
10 you much. Seeing none, then this will
11 end our public hearing and we will enter
12 into our public meeting.

13 The Chair will ask Councilwoman
14 Blondell Reynolds Brown to read a copy of
15 a motion for Bill No. 170432.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Thank you,
17 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No. 170432
18 be reported from this Committee with a
19 favorable recommendation and further move
20 that the rules of Council be suspended so
21 as to permit first reading at the next
22 session of City Council.

23 (Duly seconded.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It has
25 moved and seconded that Bill No. 170432

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 be reported from this Committee with a
3 favorable recommendation and further
4 moved that the rules of Council be
5 suspended so as to permit first reading
6 of this bill at the next session of
7 Council.

8 All those in favor of the
9 motion will signify by saying aye.

10 (Aye.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Those
12 opposed say nay.

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The
15 ayes have it, and the motion carries.
16 Bill No. 170432 will be reported from
17 this Committee with a favorable
18 recommendation and a request that the
19 rules of Council be suspended so as to
20 permit first reading at our next session
21 of Council.

22 The Chair recognizes
23 Councilwoman Reynolds Brown for a motion
24 with regard to Bill No. 170433.

25 THE CLERK: Thank you, Madam

6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

Chair. I move that Bill No. 170433 be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation and further move that the rules of Council be suspended so as to permit first reading of this bill at the next scheduled session.

(Duly seconded.)

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It has been moved and properly seconded that Bill No. 170433 be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation and, furthermore, that the rules of Council be suspended so as to permit first reading at our next session of Council.

All those in favor say aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The ayes have it and the motion carries, and Bill No. 170433 will be reported from this Committee with a favorable

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 recommendation and a request that the
3 rules of Council be suspended so as to
4 permit first reading at our next session
5 of Council.

6 The Chair now recognizes
7 Councilwoman Parker with a motion for
8 Bill No. 170434.

9 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
10 you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill No.
11 170434 be reported from this Committee
12 with a favorable recommendation and
13 further move that the rules of Council be
14 suspended to permit first reading of this
15 bill at the next session of Council.

16 (Duly seconded.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It has
18 been moved and properly seconded that
19 Bill No. 170434 be reported from this
20 Committee with a favorable recommendation
21 and further moved that the rules of
22 Council be suspended so as to permit
23 first reading of this bill at the next
24 session of Council.

25 All those in favor of the

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 motion will signify by saying aye.

3 (Aye.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Those
5 opposed nay.

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The
8 ayes have it and the motion carries, and
9 Bill No. 170434 will be reported from
10 this Committee with a favorable
11 recommendation and a request that the
12 rules of Council be suspended so as to
13 permit first reading at our next session
14 of Council.

15 The Chair now recognizes
16 Councilwoman Parker for a motion on Bill
17 No. 170438.

18 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
19 you, Madam Chair. I move that Bill No.
20 170438 be reported from this Committee
21 with a favorable recommendation and
22 further move that the rules of Council be
23 suspended to permit first reading of this
24 bill at the next session of Council.

25 (Duly seconded.)

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It has
3 been moved and properly seconded that
4 Bill No. 170438 be reported from this
5 Committee with a favorable recommendation
6 and further moved that the rules of
7 Council be suspended so as to permit
8 first reading of this bill at our next
9 session of Council.

10 All those in favor say aye.

11 (Aye.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:

13 Opposed?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The
16 ayes have it, and Bill No. 170438 will be
17 reported from this Committee with a
18 favorable recommendation and a request
19 that the rules of Council be suspended so
20 as to permit first reading at our next
21 session of Council.

22 The Chair now recognizes
23 Councilman Domb for a motion on Bill No.
24 170515.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No. 170515
3 be reported from this Committee with a
4 favorable recommendation and further move
5 that the rules of Council be suspended to
6 permit first reading of this bill at the
7 next session of Council.

8 (Duly seconded.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It has
10 been moved and properly seconded that
11 Bill No. 170515 be reported from this
12 Committee with a favorable recommendation
13 and further moved that the rules of
14 Council be suspended so as to permit
15 first reading of this bill at the next
16 session of Council.

17 All those in favor say aye.

18 (Aye.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL:
20 Opposed?

21 (No response.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The
23 ayes have it and the motion carries, and
24 Bill No. 170515 will be reported from
25 this Committee with a favorable

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 recommendation and a request that the
3 rules of Council be suspended so as to
4 permit first reading at our next session
5 of Council.

6 The Chair now recognizes
7 Councilman Domb for a motion on Bill No.
8 170519.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
10 Madam Chair. I move that Bill No. 170519
11 be reported from this Committee with a
12 favorable recommendation and further move
13 that the rules of Council be suspended to
14 permit first reading of this bill at the
15 next session of Council.

16 (Duly seconded.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It has
18 been moved and properly seconded that
19 Bill No. 170519 be reported from this
20 Committee with a favorable recommendation
21 and further moved that the rules of
22 Council be suspended so as to permit
23 first reading of this bill at the next
24 session of Council.

25 All those in favor of the

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 motion will signify by saying aye.

3 (Aye.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Those
5 opposed nay.

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The
8 ayes have it and the motion carries, and
9 Bill No. 170519 will be reported from
10 this Committee with a favorable
11 recommendation and a request that the
12 rules of Council be suspended so as to
13 permit first reading at our next session
14 of Council.

15 The Chair now recognizes
16 Councilman Oh for a motion on 170555.

17 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
18 much, Councilwoman Blackwell. At this
19 time I would make a motion to -- I would
20 offer an amendment to Bill No. 161061.

21 Am I on the wrong script here?
22 I'm sorry.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: You're
24 moving a little faster than we are.

25 COUNCILMAN OH: I'm sorry. I

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 go all the way back.

3 Thank you, Madam Chair. I move
4 that Bill No. 170555 be reported from
5 this Committee with a favorable
6 recommendation and further move that the
7 rules of Council be suspended to permit
8 first reading of this bill at the next
9 session of Council.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Do we
11 have a second?

12 (Duly seconded.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It has
14 been moved and properly seconded that
15 Bill No. 170555 be reported from this
16 Committee with a favorable recommendation
17 and further moved that the rules of
18 Council be suspended so as to permit
19 first reading of this bill at the next
20 session of Council.

21 All those in favor of the
22 motion will signify by saying aye.

23 (Aye.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Those
25 opposed?

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: The
4 ayes have it and the motion carries, and
5 Bill No. 170555 will be reported from
6 this Committee with a favorable
7 recommendation and, furthermore, that the
8 rules of Council be suspended so as to
9 permit first reading at our next session
10 of Council.

11 The Chair now recognizes
12 Councilman Oh for a motion on the
13 amendment to Bill No. 161061.

14 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you,
15 Madam Chair. I offer an amendment to
16 Bill No. 161061. A copy of the amendment
17 has been circulated to all members of the
18 Committee. I move for the adoption of
19 the amendment.

20 (Duly seconded.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It has
22 been moved and properly seconded that the
23 amendment to Bill No. 161061 be approved.

24 All those in favor of the
25 motion will signify by saying aye.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 (Aye.)

3 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Those
4 opposed will say nay.

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
7 the motion carries. Bill No. 161061 has
8 been amended.

9 I think that does it for us.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: I have an
11 additional motion, I believe.

12 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
13 you. The Chair again recognizes
14 Councilman Oh for a motion on Bill No.
15 161061, as amended.

16 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
17 much, Madam Chair. I move that Bill No.
18 161061, as amended, be reported from this
19 Committee with a favorable recommendation
20 and further move that the rules of
21 Council be suspended to permit first
22 reading of this bill at the next session
23 of Council.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It was
25 moved, but it was not seconded.

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.

2 COUNCILMAN DOMB: I'll second
3 it. I'll second it.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: It has
5 been moved and seconded that Bill No.
6 161061, as amended, be reported from this
7 Committee with a favorable recommendation
8 and further moved that the rules -- with
9 a favorable recommendation.

10 COUNCILMAN OH: I did.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: And
12 further --

13 COUNCILMAN OH: Well, I don't
14 think I did because I don't need a
15 suspension.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: All
17 right. All those in favor of the motion
18 will signify by saying aye.

19 (Aye.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Those
21 opposed say nay.

22 (Nay.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: The nays
24 have it and the motion fails, and Bill
25 No. 161061, as amended, will not be

1 6/5/17 - FINANCE - BILL 161061, ETC.
2 reported from this Committee with a
3 favorable recommendation.

4 And let me further say that for
5 all these votes, Councilman Greenlee left
6 his vote for nay on this bill and aye on
7 all of the other bills.

8 I think that concludes our
9 business for today. We also had a
10 resolution, but of course a resolution
11 does not have to be voted on; am I
12 correct? So we thank you all very much,
13 and that will conclude the business of
14 our Finance hearing.

15 (Committee on Finance concluded
16 at 4:30 p.m.)

17 - - -

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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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June 5, 2017

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