

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
COMMITTEE ON LAW AND GOVERNMENT

Room 400, City Hall  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Thursday, April 19, 2012  
1:45 p.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE, CHAIR  
COUNCIL PRESIDENT DARRELL L. CLARKE  
COUNCILMAN BILL GREEN  
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON  
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.  
COUNCILMAN JAMES KENNEY  
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILL 120177 - An ordinance providing for the submission to the qualified electors of the City of Philadelphia of the proposal set forth in a Resolution approved by Council proposing an amendment to the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter to allow for the establishment of an independent rate-making body for fixing and regulating water and sewer rates...

RESOLUTION 120188 - Resolution proposing an amendment to The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter to allow for the establishment of an independent rate-making body for fixing and regulating water and sewer rates...

- - -

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COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Good

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afternoon, everyone. This is the

4

Committee on Law and Government.

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For the record, we have a

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quorum with Councilman Kenney, the Vice

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Chair of the Committee, Council President

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Clarke and Councilman Green and myself,

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Bill Greenlee as the Chair.

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Ms. Marconi, will you please

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read the bill and resolution before us

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today.

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THE CLERK: Bill No. 120177, an

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ordinance providing for the submission to

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the qualified electors of the City of

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Philadelphia of the proposal set forth in

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a resolution approved by Council

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proposing an amendment to the

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Philadelphia Home Rule Charter to allow

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for the establishment of an independent

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rate-making body for fixing and

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regulating water and sewer rates and

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charges; to prescribe open and

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transparent processes and procedures for

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fixing and regulating said rates and

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2 charges; and authorizing the appropriate  
3 officers to publish notice and to make  
4 arrangements for the special election.

5 Resolution 120188, resolution  
6 proposing an amendment to The  
7 Philadelphia Home Rule Charter to allow  
8 for the establishment of an independent  
9 rate-making body for fixing and  
10 regulating water and sewer rates and  
11 charges; to prescribe open and  
12 transparent processes and procedures for  
13 fixing and regulating said rates and  
14 charges; all under certain terms and  
15 conditions; and providing for the  
16 submission of the amendment to the  
17 electors of Philadelphia.

18 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
19 you.

20 Does anyone have anything to  
21 say before we start the hearing?

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I'll  
23 say briefly.

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Council  
25 President Clarke.

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

3 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Briefly, and I'm sure I will be  
5 interjecting during the course of the  
6 proceedings. Briefly, I just wanted to  
7 say that, first, thank you all for moving  
8 expeditiously on this hearing process.

9 Second, I just want to say for  
10 the record that I have the utmost respect  
11 for the Water Commissioner and the  
12 professionals that work within the  
13 Department. This particular legislation  
14 is essentially being put in place and we  
15 ask for support. It's to give the level  
16 of transparency that I think should be  
17 required any time you're making any  
18 adjustments in rates, taxes or any other  
19 aspect of requiring that individuals pay  
20 more for be it public utilities or real  
21 estate taxes.

22 As you know, this City Council  
23 of Philadelphia has been very open in its  
24 process, admittedly sometimes more than  
25 we would like, but the reality is we

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2 understand the need to be transparent as  
3 we go through a process that's very  
4 clear.

5 During the course of the  
6 testimony, I anticipate that there will  
7 be some levels of concern raised by some  
8 individuals as it relates to establishing  
9 a new process. We will be prepared to  
10 show other municipalities and other  
11 instances where similar processes are  
12 currently or have been put in place that  
13 from our perspective, at least mine in  
14 particular, should allay any concerns  
15 that individuals have about that  
16 particular process, and at the end of the  
17 day, I think it's appropriate for people  
18 to understand how decisions are made in a  
19 clear and meaningful way.

20 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
22 you, Mr. President.

23 Anybody else from the  
24 Committee?

25 (No response.)

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2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing  
3 none, I know Mr. Butkovitz has an  
4 appointment coming up. So, please,  
5 you'll be our first witness,  
6 Mr. Butkovitz.

7 (Witness approached witness  
8 table.)

9 CONTROLLER BUTKOVITZ: Is this  
10 on?

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Yeah, we  
12 hear you.

13 CONTROLLER BUTKOVITZ: Thank  
14 you very much. Good afternoon. Thank  
15 you, Chairman Greenlee, President Clarke,  
16 Councilman Kenney, Councilman Henon,  
17 Councilman Green.

18 I'm very happy to be here this  
19 afternoon in support of President  
20 Clarke's legislation and proposed Charter  
21 amendment that will change the procedure  
22 for water rate-making in Philadelphia.

23 We have kind of a peculiar  
24 process right now where, in effect, the  
25 Water Commissioner operates as

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2 prosecutor, judge and jury. Under  
3 fundamental principles of due process,  
4 that is not the way we do things in  
5 America, and Councilman Green, for  
6 example, led the way a year or so ago in  
7 altering that process, for example, at  
8 the Board of Revision of Taxes where the  
9 prosecutorial role is separated from the  
10 role of sitting in judgment.

11 And this takes place in a  
12 context of a history of enormous water  
13 rate increases over the last few years  
14 and projected large water rate increases  
15 into the foreseeable future. We've had  
16 an 18 percent increase over the last  
17 three years. There has just been a  
18 proposal for a 28 and a half percent  
19 increase for regular water rate  
20 customers, and there has been a proposed  
21 rate-making with respect to stormwater  
22 users, which turns the existing procedure  
23 completely upside down and has produced  
24 such extraordinary changes as a 900  
25 percent increase in a shopping mall in

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2 the Northeast, which will increase the  
3 annual water bill from \$97,000 to  
4 \$930,000, another owner who is being  
5 increased from \$396 to \$23,808. We have  
6 a list of over 500 companies that are  
7 facing these kinds of geometric  
8 increases.

9 Now, I understand that  
10 objections have been raised by  
11 individuals who support the current  
12 structure, and to paraphrase it, the  
13 argument is that's easier to get bond  
14 buyers to buy water bonds if they know  
15 that the Water Commissioner has singular  
16 authority to dictate the rates. But  
17 utility rate-making was never designed to  
18 just give consideration to the  
19 bondholders to the exclusion of  
20 everything else.

21 There needs to be a balance,  
22 and one of the factors to be considered  
23 in the balance is the impact on  
24 consumers. That's what happens at the  
25 state level. That's what the PUC does.



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2 There needs to be some capacity, and to  
3 date, that is something that -- that kind  
4 of flexibility does not exist in the  
5 current structures as designed in  
6 Philadelphia.

7 I can't conceive that you could  
8 put a proposal with these kinds of  
9 radical rate increases in front of an  
10 independent board and get a yes vote from  
11 that kind of board. You couldn't get a  
12 yes vote from the Public Utility  
13 Commission to these kinds of radical  
14 restructuring.

15 I will say obviously there will  
16 have to be certain protections built in  
17 to make sure that it's not a political  
18 process. We have precedent for that in  
19 the way the Charter is designed. We can  
20 use nominating panels. You can bring in  
21 some of the area professors, for example,  
22 or some of the professional associations  
23 as screeners of some of the members of  
24 the board. I think things will have to  
25 be -- people will have to be held to a

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2 professional standard.

3 We're not asking that this, in  
4 effect, be put to a vote of the voters or  
5 a referenda on rate increases. People  
6 can be independent without being the  
7 people who are the proposer, the  
8 proponent of the rate increase.

9 I think this is an idea whose  
10 time has come, and I enthusiastically  
11 support it. And I'm available for any  
12 questions from the panel.

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
14 you, Mr. Butkovitz.

15 Any questions or comments from  
16 members of the Committee?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Please  
19 let the record reflect that Councilman  
20 Henon, a member of the Committee, is also  
21 present.

22 Seeing none, thank you.

23 CONTROLLER BUTKOVITZ: Thank  
24 you very much.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you

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2 very much.

3 Our next two witnesses are from  
4 the Administration, Mr. Andrew Stober and  
5 Ms. Nancy Winkler.

6 And while they're coming up,  
7 let me just state I think most of the  
8 people that I have on the list have  
9 already sent in their testimony. So that  
10 will be made part of the record. We'd  
11 appreciate the consideration of  
12 summarizing your statements. That way,  
13 we can keep moving a little bit. And  
14 that's for everybody. Obviously you have  
15 the right to read it, but we ask just for  
16 the sake of time if you could summarize  
17 your statements, that would be great.

18 (Witnesses approached witness  
19 table.)

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:  
21 Mr. Stober, you want to go first.

22 MR. STOBER: Sure. Good  
23 afternoon, Chairman Greenlee, Council  
24 President Clarke and members of the  
25 Committee.

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2 We believe that working  
3 together we can improve the current  
4 rate-making process and ensure a  
5 rate-making system that ratepayers  
6 continue to trust, respect and rely upon.

7 The current rate-making process  
8 was established by an agreement between  
9 the Water Department, City Council and  
10 Community Legal Services in 1992 and is  
11 recognized by rating agencies and utility  
12 rate experts for its depth, its integrity  
13 and its transparency. Only one other  
14 time has Philadelphia had this discussion  
15 in the past 20 years, and it's important  
16 for our ratepayers and our bondholders to  
17 have a public discussion about how rates  
18 are established and have a reliable and  
19 apolitical means of establishing new  
20 rates. We value this discussion, and we  
21 thank you for holding this hearing on the  
22 proposed Charter change today.

23 To reiterate, we are open to  
24 further discussion with Council regarding  
25 improvements to our process and the

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2 manner in which rates are established.

3 Companion legislation to establish a new  
4 rate-making system is not currently under  
5 consideration. The Administration is  
6 concerned that without such a companion  
7 bill, there is a cause for concern among  
8 bond-rating agencies, our current  
9 bondholders and future bond buyers who  
10 have relied on the current rate-setting  
11 process in connection with evaluating the  
12 Department's credit rating and who will  
13 be left unsure as to what the future  
14 rate-setting body would be.

15 As the City Treasurer will  
16 testify, this uncertainty alone can have  
17 a harmful financial impact on the cost of  
18 borrowing and ultimately potentially  
19 harming our ratepayers. We want to work  
20 with you, Chairman and the Council  
21 President and other members of Council,  
22 on the underlying substantive ordinance  
23 that would require -- that would be  
24 required to establish a new rate-setting  
25 process, and we're committed to working

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2 in partnership on such an ordinance,  
3 particularly given the importance of this  
4 matter.

5 As we work together to consider  
6 changes to the future rate-making  
7 process, I suggest careful consideration  
8 be given to what we hopefully agree works  
9 well in the current process. Today's  
10 rate-making process takes over a year to  
11 complete, costs over \$2 million in  
12 engineering, financial and legal fees to  
13 support hearings, testimonies, discovery  
14 and stakeholder representation from  
15 constituencies, including residential  
16 business and stormwater customers, large  
17 water users and other consumers. The  
18 process follows the same standard as the  
19 PUC style rate commission -- PUC style  
20 rate case procedure, to protect the  
21 public's interest by balancing the needs  
22 of the consumer and the utility to ensure  
23 safe, reliable utility service at  
24 reasonable rates.

25 As many in this room know, the

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2 process includes the employment of a  
3 public advocate and an independent  
4 hearing officer at the agreement of the  
5 Mayor, City Council President and the  
6 City Controller; disclosure of all of the  
7 Water Department's supporting  
8 documentation for its requested rate  
9 increase and an examination of Water  
10 Department personnel and other City  
11 witnesses, offering of expert testimony  
12 and testimony in opposition to rate  
13 changes.

14 There's an opportunity for all  
15 stakeholders to raise issues and seek  
16 clarifications and receive timely  
17 responses.

18 A final -- the hearing officer  
19 has management and review responsibility  
20 for all testimony and provides the Water  
21 Commissioner with a report and a  
22 recommended decision on rates, all based  
23 on these records.

24 The final decision does come  
25 from the Water Commissioner, who must

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2 fully consider and give substantial  
3 weight to the hearing officer's report  
4 and ensure that the rates are sufficient  
5 to meet public health and safety, protect  
6 Philadelphia's water environment and  
7 foster the utility's credit worthiness.

8 A system of checks and balances  
9 through which elected representatives of  
10 the City approve the utility's operating  
11 budget and capital budget and the Water  
12 Commissioner ensures that rates and  
13 charges are adequate to recover the  
14 approved revenue requirements.

15 Ultimately, there's the right  
16 of any party to challenge the  
17 Commissioner's rate determination before  
18 the Court of Common Pleas.

19 Council plays a pivotal in the  
20 rate process. Council determines the  
21 standards upon which the rates are set  
22 per the Home Rule Charter, and those  
23 standards are that rates are to be just,  
24 they're to be reasonable and  
25 non-discriminatory for each class of



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2 customer based on the actual cost of  
3 service. There can mean no  
4 cross-subsidies between customer classes,  
5 and special rates are designated, though,  
6 for the public and private schools,  
7 charities, religious institutions and the  
8 Philadelphia Housing Authority.

9 Philadelphia's rate proposal is  
10 based on a cost of service study, which  
11 itself is based on Council's approved  
12 appropriations for the Water Department's  
13 operating and capital funds. Council  
14 also approves the authorization of every  
15 water revenue bond for financing in its  
16 capital budget, and the debt service from  
17 these issues take up the significant  
18 portion of water and sewer rates.

19 The current process has  
20 afforded many benefits: a robust and  
21 reliable water and sewer infrastructure,  
22 which is efficiently and cost-effectively  
23 managed, and rates that compare very well  
24 with rates of other utilities, both in  
25 the region and nationwide, and, finally,

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2 rate increases that are predictable.

3 We recognize that the

4 announcement of the proposed \$4 a month

5 rate increase, sewer and stormwater rates

6 brings all of our attention to the need

7 to keep a close watch on the Department's

8 budget. But we should keep in mind that

9 mandated environmental and financial

10 responsibilities of water managers are

11 increasing here and everywhere. And we

12 all pay if we do nothing and invest

13 inadequately.

14 Broken pipes and sewer

15 collapses cause building damage and

16 traffic delays; overflows of sewage into

17 our rivers and streams and less

18 protection to our water supply from

19 terrorism, climate change development and

20 gas production; flooding in our

21 neighborhoods; increased costs of

22 operating and maintaining an ever-aging

23 network of pipes and sewers; and an

24 inability to seek all the opportunities

25 to reduce costs, ultimately decrease bond

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2 ratings; and ensuring the cost of capital  
3 at higher rates; and, finally,  
4 unaffordable federal lawsuits if we don't  
5 meet our mandated requirements.

6 The Water Department is  
7 committed to working with City Council  
8 and ratepayers to address the full range  
9 of issues presented by the proposed rate  
10 increases and pursue opportunities to  
11 reduce costs, increase revenues and  
12 minimize those rate increases.

13 We're also committed to working  
14 together with Council to evaluate how  
15 rate-setting is established in the  
16 future. That evaluation, among other  
17 things, should seek to ensure that fiscal  
18 stability of the Water Department and  
19 abide by the current standards of  
20 fairness and equity that are hallmarks of  
21 the process.

22 We look forward to working with  
23 you on determining the provisions of such  
24 a bill as soon as possible.

25 Thank you for allowing me to

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2 share the Administration's testimony on  
3 this very important matter, and I'm  
4 joined by members of the Water Department  
5 executive team, and we're happy to answer  
6 any questions you may have.

7 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
8 you, Mr. Stober.

9 If the record will also reflect  
10 that Councilman Jones, the Majority  
11 Leader, is also present on the Committee.

12 And if it's okay with everyone  
13 else, I'd like Ms. Winkler to testify  
14 first and then we'll open to questions.

15 Ms. Winkler.

16 MS. WINKLER: Okay. Thank you  
17 very much. Good afternoon, Councilman  
18 Greenlee and members of the Committee of  
19 Law and Government. My name is Nancy  
20 Winkler and I am the City Treasurer. I  
21 am here today to testify on Bill No.  
22 120177 and Resolution No. 120188. As you  
23 know, these bills are designed to allow  
24 Council to change the water rate-making  
25 process.

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2 As I will describe in my  
3 testimony, this bill and resolution could  
4 have a very substantial negative impact  
5 on the cost of borrowing for the Water  
6 Department.

7 My duties include the oversight  
8 of the issuance and management of the  
9 Water and Wastewater Revenue Bonds, which  
10 are used to fund a very large portion of  
11 the Water and Sewer Capital Maintenance  
12 and Improvement Program.

13 I think this is important  
14 because, as you know, the Water  
15 Department is facing a \$6.8 billion in  
16 current dollar value capital program and  
17 they plan to finance roughly 80 percent  
18 of that program with bonds. About  
19 one-third of the Water Department's total  
20 budget each year is dedicated to pay debt  
21 service. As a capital-intensive entity,  
22 the cost of borrowing flows directly to  
23 the ratepayers as a burden they must pay.  
24 So we hope to work with you to find a way  
25 to maintain the lowest possible costs to

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2 run the Water Department.

3 So I am concerned that the  
4 Charter change could reduce the credit  
5 quality of the Water Department and be  
6 perceived very negatively by the  
7 bond-rating agencies and investors.

8 There are two potential areas  
9 of concern that I'd like to focus on  
10 today, although I think there are others  
11 for discussion in the future. One, I'd  
12 like to urge Council to avoid creating a  
13 period of uncertainty where the market  
14 may have been noticed that there will be  
15 a change in the process, but they won't  
16 have any idea of what the new process  
17 would look like. And I'll discuss  
18 further what the concerns are there.

19 And then second, as we don't  
20 yet know the new rate-making process and  
21 how that will be designed, I believe that  
22 the new rate-setting process may  
23 indirectly or directly add more political  
24 involvement than the current system, and  
25 that, from a purely credit assessment

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2 process, would be harmful and cause cost  
3 increases.

4 Ratings and investor perception  
5 of credit quality are important because,  
6 as I said, how much it costs to borrow  
7 money. And it has become more of a  
8 concern since 2008 and the credit crisis  
9 of 2008. The capital markets have become  
10 substantially more focused on credit  
11 quality than they have historically. And  
12 as a result, the bond market is demanding  
13 relatively larger interest cost premiums  
14 for weaker credits. The Water  
15 Department's program is large, and these  
16 are driven by federal mandates.

17 The Water Department is rated  
18 A1 by Moody's, A by Standard and Poor's  
19 and A-plus by Fitch. These ratings from  
20 each of these three rating agencies are  
21 in fact higher than the City's general  
22 obligation bond rating, but they are  
23 lower than the average among the large  
24 municipal water utilities in America.

25 Credit analysts weigh a number

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2 of different qualitative and quantitative  
3 factors in determining credit strength.

4 At the most basic and with respect to my  
5 first concern, investors and rating  
6 analysts need to feel highly confident  
7 that they understand the way the Water  
8 Department rates and charges will be set.

9 Any period of uncertainty will be  
10 disruptive and negative. This is true  
11 even for a relatively short period of  
12 uncertainty.

13 If investors who currently hold  
14 the water bonds feel a need to sell them  
15 in order to avoid this uncertainty, they  
16 may incur losses. This could leave a  
17 permanent negative impression, which  
18 would adversely impact not only the water  
19 and sewer bonds, but also the market's  
20 general view of the City and how it  
21 manages its debt. This, in and of  
22 itself, could increase the City's overall  
23 cost to borrow.

24 Certainly a multi-year period  
25 of uncertainty regarding the rate-setting



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2 process would additionally create  
3 problems for the Water Department and  
4 potentially upset its normal bonding  
5 program. The Water Department needs to  
6 borrow on a regular basis to support its  
7 capital program, so a disruption in  
8 capital borrowing could materially  
9 adversely impact the capital and  
10 operating program for the Water  
11 Department.

12 With respect to my second  
13 concern, I'd like to quote from a 2011  
14 Fitch report, entitled "U.S. Water and  
15 Sewer Revenue Bond Rating Criteria." And  
16 this is the quote: "While elected  
17 officials play a necessary role in  
18 regulating the utilities' monopolies in  
19 their jurisdictions, the most stable  
20 utilities will generally operate  
21 relatively free from day-to-day political  
22 interference or controversies concerning  
23 rate-setting policies. This is made  
24 easier by the long-term maintenance of  
25 financial management and planning

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2 practices, rate flexibility, manageable  
3 and well-planned capital programs, and  
4 segregation of enterprise fund finances  
5 from those of the general government."

6 The Water Department's bond  
7 ratings are substantially dependent on  
8 the current rate-setting structure, which  
9 involves a rate hearing process that  
10 covers a four-year planning period. So  
11 investors are very focused on the current  
12 process and understand it well.

13 Over the years, I've seen in  
14 many investor and rating agency reports  
15 that lists the Water Commissioner's  
16 authority to set rates as a core positive  
17 credit attribute of the City Water Fund.  
18 The rate-setting process; in particular,  
19 the Water Commissioner's authority, is  
20 one of the few positives among some  
21 negative attributes which affect the  
22 Department's credit rating. Again, as I  
23 mentioned, the Department is rated below  
24 most other water utilities in America,  
25 and it's because of these following sort

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2 of negative factors that weigh down the  
3 rating: a large indigent population  
4 base, a large capital improvement  
5 program, high levels of debt, high  
6 reliance on the Rate Stabilization Fund  
7 to maintain coverage, much lower average  
8 days cash on hand, and a low General Fund  
9 bond rating.

10 Institutional investors and  
11 private bondholders, letter of credit  
12 providers, rating agencies and others  
13 have a keen interest in who sets the  
14 rates for this utility. The internal  
15 rate-setting ability mitigates the credit  
16 concerns because the system has the  
17 ability to manage its revenues.

18 I believe that investors  
19 understand about the very open year-long  
20 process that is undertaken now, and they  
21 recognize that that dampens the rate  
22 increases, which is in fact I think a  
23 factor in why the ratings are below  
24 average and also why our days cash on  
25 hand are suppressed relative to other

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2 entities, similar entities.

3 The Water and Wastewater

4 Revenue Bonds that are now in circulation

5 were issued under the 1993 Restated

6 General Bond Ordinance. The General

7 Ordinance provides the basis of the

8 covenants or contract terms under which

9 the bonds were issued. At the time of

10 the General Ordinance was amended and

11 restated to its current form, the rating

12 agencies and investors were highly

13 critical of the credit worthiness of the

14 Water Fund and its integrity as an

15 independent enterprise of the City. The

16 provisions of the General Ordinance were

17 drafted, and the General Ordinance was

18 enacted to strengthen the Water Fund

19 credit and permit the City and the Water

20 Department to raise the capital necessary

21 to support the City's water and

22 wastewater system at a cost that's

23 affordable to the City, to the Water Fund

24 and to the Water Department's customers.

25 This has been very successful with its

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2 forward-looking structure.

3 Thank you very much for  
4 allowing me to share my views on this  
5 important matter to the City, to the  
6 Water Department and to the Water  
7 Department's customers.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you  
9 both very much. I know I think other  
10 members have questions. If I could just  
11 ask two real quickly, and I just want to  
12 preface the first question by saying this  
13 does not reflect in any way on this  
14 Administration or certainly this Water  
15 Commissioner, who I think is an extremely  
16 capable person, and he and I have had a  
17 conversation about this.

18 But I've heard from a number of  
19 people -- and I just want either or both  
20 of your reaction on this -- that I know  
21 oftentimes this is described as  
22 apolitical or keeping politics out of it.  
23 You have a Water Commissioner who is  
24 appointed by the Mayor, a political  
25 person, makes a recommendation, it goes

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2 around -- and I know it goes through, as  
3 Mr. Stober said, a set of standards and  
4 procedures. Then comes back around and  
5 comes to that same individual, appointed  
6 by the Mayor, a political person, who  
7 makes the final decision. So he makes  
8 the decision on the proposal he  
9 originally put out.

10 I know we're all about  
11 confidence of the public and all. A lot  
12 of the public have indicated to me they  
13 don't have the confidence in that  
14 proposal.

15 So I wonder if you could just  
16 comment on that for a minute and -- well,  
17 I have another question, but I'll let you  
18 say that first.

19 MR. STOBBER: So I think I would  
20 comment to say that that has been a  
21 process that, one, when looking at our  
22 rates as a measure and the increases over  
23 time has worked well for the City. I  
24 think the point that is raised about the  
25 questions about independence are fair

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2 points, but in terms of practice, it  
3 seems to have worked well compared to  
4 other places over time.

5 That said, the City's and the  
6 Administration's primary concern is about  
7 a period of uncertainty, and so we want  
8 to make sure that we have the opportunity  
9 to work with Council to establish  
10 whatever that new process is going to be  
11 and have that based on many of the same  
12 principles our current -- based on the  
13 same principles our current process is  
14 based on. We want to limit that period  
15 of uncertainty so it's clear, because the  
16 current Charter change as proposed does  
17 not lay out what the new process is to  
18 be.

19 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I  
20 understand that. One other question  
21 along that line, though. The present  
22 process we're in now, does any other city  
23 do it this way that you're aware of?

24 MS. WINKLER: I could comment.  
25 Rather than the specific year-long

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2 process, I could note a number of cities  
3 where from a rating perspective they  
4 could classify it as a full -- what we  
5 would call full rate-setting authority.  
6 I mean, all of these governments have a  
7 political -- or operate in a political  
8 environment, and everyone has to be  
9 concerned about the customers and the  
10 cost to customers. It's always on  
11 everyone's mind, and it's on the rating  
12 agencies' mind too. I mean, the  
13 percentage of that median household  
14 income is an explicit factor, percent of  
15 MHI is an explicit factor in a rating  
16 analyst's or credit analyst's review.

17 But so, for example, the City  
18 of Atlanta has full rating-setting  
19 authority. The District of Columbia,  
20 autonomy to set rates. I'm just reading  
21 from reports. The New York City  
22 Municipal Water Finance Authority,  
23 independent rate-setting.

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I mean,  
25 where does it say -- this is the



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2 information -- I'm sorry to interrupt you  
3 there, but you mentioned Atlanta. Now,  
4 my understanding is that the rates are  
5 proposed by a department to City Council.  
6 City Council has the final approval  
7 power. Is that not correct? Am I having  
8 the wrong information here?

9 The point I'm trying to make  
10 is, is there any place else that you're  
11 aware of where this process where you  
12 have really, in all due respect, one  
13 individual makes a recommendation and  
14 after the circle goes around, comes back  
15 to him or her and that person makes the  
16 final decision?

17 That's the point I'm trying to  
18 get. It seems like from the information  
19 we got, there's at least some other body  
20 or group of people that make that final  
21 decision.

22 MR. STOBBER: So the process  
23 that was established in the Home Rule  
24 Charter in 1952 is a distinct process  
25 from what occurs in many other places.

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2 That's correct.

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And I  
4 guess my follow-up question -- and I'll  
5 stop here because I know a lot of other  
6 people have questions -- is, if the way  
7 we do it was that good, why isn't anybody  
8 else -- do you have a comment on why  
9 nobody else does it that way?

10 MR. STOBBER: They're perhaps  
11 not as --

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Probably  
13 not a fair question, but I asked it  
14 anyway.

15 MR. STOBBER: I can't speak for  
16 other cities.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Okay.  
18 But I'm just -- I think that's to me  
19 anyway the biggest concern and the  
20 biggest concern I have, that you're  
21 really in the end, it's one person that's  
22 doing this, and that just doesn't -- and,  
23 again, I'm not questioning the integrity  
24 of anybody. It just doesn't sound right,  
25 I think, to the general public when it

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2 comes out, particularly when their rates  
3 get increased, even if that Commissioner  
4 made the absolute proper decision for  
5 everybody concerned. That's the only  
6 point.

7 I'm sorry. Ms. Winkler, do you  
8 have anything else? I interrupted you.  
9 So I'm sorry.

10 MS. WINKLER: We can share  
11 these other cities with you.

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Fine.  
13 And I have some information here too. So  
14 we'll see.

15 I'm sorry to monopolize here.  
16 Councilman Kenney.

17 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,  
18 Mr. Chairman.

19 Just two areas. One, I'm a  
20 little -- first of all, I don't know  
21 where I'm at on these two pieces of  
22 legislation yet. But I'm a little  
23 conflicted in your testimony in that I  
24 don't understand why the process you have  
25 in place now is inherently fair and

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2 transparent, that the process is being  
3 recommended at least or will be  
4 negotiated or talked about as this moves  
5 forward will be a similarly vetted group  
6 of people that are engineers, that are  
7 financial analysts, that are people who  
8 are capable of doing this. If they have  
9 the same knowledge and same background  
10 and understand the federal requirements  
11 and the market's requirements and the  
12 customer, ratepayers' requirements, why  
13 would they make a decision any different  
14 than our wonderful Water Commissioner  
15 would make and his qualifications?

16 I don't -- Ms. Winkler, your  
17 testimony came a little off guard, the  
18 politics, politics, politics. Well, I  
19 don't expect to be sitting on this  
20 rate-making agency. I suspect that some  
21 similarly situated engineer person who  
22 has a strong financial background like  
23 yourself would sit on that rate-making  
24 board and make a decision based on all  
25 the facts that you consider yourselves.

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2 Why would they come to a different  
3 conclusion? I mean, that's, I guess -- I  
4 think what the Council President -- he'll  
5 speak for himself -- and what Councilman  
6 Greenlee has said is that we get -- when  
7 you make a decision, we have to live with  
8 it, both politically and financially. So  
9 if we have similarly situated qualified  
10 people making the same decision with the  
11 same set of facts that you're looking at,  
12 why would the decision be any different,  
13 other than your -- not illusion; your  
14 actual assertion that politics would make  
15 a difference?

16 MS. WINKLER: So what I'm  
17 trying to share with you is what I  
18 believe -- and I think it's important to  
19 inform everyone who is in this dialogue.  
20 I think everybody wants to be well  
21 informed as they consider this proposal,  
22 is what would -- what is sort of the  
23 third party, the capital market's,  
24 perception, and that's what I'm trying to  
25 speak to. I'm not trying to tell you

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2 that I think this is inherently a greater  
3 political process or less. I actually  
4 think -- I think someone already pointed  
5 out that we have a Water Commissioner  
6 appointed by the Mayor who is a  
7 political -- is an elected official. And  
8 so I think it's more about the fear and  
9 the uncertainty that --

10 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I just have  
11 a little trouble -- I reject, to a  
12 degree, respectfully, that the political  
13 red herring is the one reason why we  
14 shouldn't do this. I just -- because I  
15 think in the end, the process is going to  
16 be that's going to create a board that's  
17 going to have the people on it similarly  
18 qualified than the people that are making  
19 the decision now. However, it will seem  
20 like more of a public process.

21 MR. STOBBER: And I think the  
22 struggle right now with this resolution  
23 and Charter change as it stands is, it's  
24 not laid out how that board would be  
25 established.

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2 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: That's  
3 fair.

4 Just one other issue, and I  
5 need you to frame this, because I think  
6 part of this entire discussion is based  
7 in two separate issues. One is the  
8 setting of water usage rates and the  
9 other one is this angry issue of  
10 stormwater management rates. And I need  
11 you to explain again to kind of not  
12 reeducate me but reinforce my  
13 understanding of it and the understanding  
14 of the people in the room how we got to  
15 where we are with stormwater rates that  
16 are set the way they are.

17 MR. STOBBER: I'd actually like  
18 to ask Commissioner Neukrug to do that.  
19 There's no one who knows that history  
20 better than him.

21 (Witness approached witness  
22 table.)

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Good  
24 afternoon, Commissioner. Please identify  
25 yourself for the record.

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2 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Good

3 afternoon. Howard Neukrug, Water

4 Commissioner.

5 We've always been charging for  
6 stormwater and the cost of managing  
7 stormwater in the City, which includes  
8 issues of flooding, it involves issues of  
9 debris and cleaning up our rivers and  
10 streams and many other things and costs  
11 associated with that. In the past we had  
12 charged based upon the size of a water  
13 meter. The theory was, was the bigger  
14 your water meter, the bigger your  
15 industry and the bigger your plot of land  
16 was. What we found out particularly in  
17 the 1970's and '80s and '90s, that that  
18 wasn't really true. The biggest  
19 contributors of flooding of water into  
20 our system was not the large meters going  
21 into a hospital or another facility like  
22 that, but were really the parking lots.  
23 And the parking lots, which could be two,  
24 three acres, impervious cover, with very  
25 little or to no water meter, were not



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2 paying anything.

3 So we went for many, many years  
4 here where how we charged for stormwater  
5 was not necessarily fair and equitable,  
6 as is the responsibility of the Water  
7 Department as given to us by City Council  
8 and the Charter.

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: We've been  
10 continually told that the state has  
11 mandated certain things be done, which  
12 has created this radical increase in  
13 stormwater management rates. Is that  
14 accurate?

15 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: That is  
16 not accurate. There is not a radical  
17 increase in stormwater rates. As a  
18 matter of fact, the stormwater rates are  
19 remaining somewhat stable. What you're  
20 seeing is as we change the process to  
21 make it fairer for everyone so that  
22 people are paying the true cost of their  
23 service. If you have an acre of land,  
24 over the course of a year you have one  
25 million gallons of rainwater that's going

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2 into the system, and so we're changing  
3 the process on how --

4 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But the  
5 state didn't require us to do this; we  
6 did this on our own?

7 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: The  
8 change in the process?

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: We made  
10 this decision on this fairness issue.

11 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Well, we  
12 made it alone, meaning that the City  
13 Council --

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: No, no.  
15 The Water Department made this decision.

16 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: No.  
17 That's what I'm saying. It's City  
18 Council with stakeholders back in the mid  
19 '90s got together and figured out that  
20 this process that we have in place based  
21 upon meters was not a good process  
22 because it wasn't fair and equitable.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But we do  
24 have the ability then to mitigate what  
25 are drastic increases in commercial

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2 rates, which I understand in one  
3 instance, for example, Cardone  
4 Industries, not solely because of this  
5 reason, but basically moved thousands of  
6 jobs to Texas as a result of their having  
7 to deal with this increase in stormwater  
8 management fees.

9 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Well, I  
10 think that's a debatable discussion that  
11 I'm happy to have outside of Council,  
12 but, yes, you are correct. Because of  
13 the change in how we're charging for  
14 stormwater, not the total charge of the  
15 utility --

16 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And I'm  
17 sorry, because I'm going to stop after  
18 this, but this is the same dilemma we're  
19 having with AVI, is basically what is  
20 fair may not be affordable.

21 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: And  
22 you're absolutely correct. And --

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And if it's  
24 not affordable to the point where we're  
25 either going to stifle jobs or move

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2 people, I don't know how fair it is to  
3 everybody else.

4 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: And I  
5 did not -- I was giving the history. I  
6 wasn't going to the point of the number  
7 of customers that we have who have been  
8 highly impacted on this process, and  
9 we've been very concerned about those  
10 folks and, similar with AVI, how do you  
11 make sure that all your customers are  
12 well managed, and the way we've done  
13 it --

14 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Or how --

15 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: The way  
16 we have done it for Philly water and for  
17 this process at this point in time is, we  
18 issued a 10 percent cap on increases to  
19 the stormwater fees for this year and  
20 next year, and we're looking forward to  
21 the rate process so that that 10 percent  
22 cap, if approved, can continue for  
23 another 15 years.

24 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Finally,  
25 I'm very interested in fairness, but I'm

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2 also interested in not doing something  
3 that puts people out of business or  
4 reduces the amount of employment.

5 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: And  
6 there's -- it's very clear from the Water  
7 Department's perspective, we make revenue  
8 on selling water and wastewater services.  
9 We're not looking to put people out of  
10 business either.

11 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I'm not  
12 saying you are.

13 Anyway, thank you,  
14 Mr. Chairman.

15 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
16 you, Councilman.

17 Councilman Green.

18 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

19 I'm sorry. You just said we  
20 put in a 10 percent cap.

21 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Yes.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And then you  
23 said, oh, if approved.

24 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: We've --

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So could you

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2 explain the process there.

3 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Joe, do  
4 you want to come up and explain it,  
5 please.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: No.  
7 Commissioner, I'd like for you to explain  
8 it, if you can.

9 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: We had  
10 stormwater regulations put in place --  
11 I'm sorry. We had our rate process put  
12 into place four years ago, which called  
13 for a four-year phase-in of this new  
14 program, and with the issues that we've  
15 had over the last number of years is,  
16 we've identified some highly impacted  
17 customers, we have put in a temporary  
18 halt to the program.

19 COUNCILMAN GREEN: How has that  
20 temporary halt gone into effect?

21 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: I'll  
22 have to bring in my CFO to really  
23 explain --

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I mean,  
25 didn't you have to do rate-making? Did

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2 you go through a process to put in the 10  
3 percent into effect?

4 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: We put  
5 in some regulations.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Put in  
7 regulations?

8 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Put in  
9 regulations that lead us into this  
10 rate-making process where a more  
11 permanent fix can be considered. And for  
12 that new more permanent fix, we called  
13 together a Citizens Advisory Committee  
14 that met for approximately six months to  
15 help get the stakeholders, all the  
16 stakeholders, including the people most  
17 impacted by these changes, to the table  
18 to discuss and come up with a fair and  
19 equitable way to move forward.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: You said if  
21 approved, 10 percent if approved. What  
22 did you mean by that?

23 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Well,  
24 there's a rate-making process and there's  
25 going to be a hearing examiner who is

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2 going to issue a report based upon  
3 information that's given to this  
4 examination by the Water Department, by  
5 other stakeholders, all parties who are  
6 concerned about the stormwater issues and  
7 other issues. The hearing examiner's  
8 initial report -- and the report is  
9 pretty much going to be the final word,  
10 except the Water Commissioner has the  
11 ability to take a look at that report and  
12 say, Is there anything here that's going  
13 to harm my fiduciary responsibilities to  
14 provide safe drinking water for the  
15 public health of Philadelphia, protect  
16 the environments and make sure that rates  
17 remain as affordable as possible. That's  
18 my charge.

19 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Exactly.

20 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: That is  
21 my charge.

22 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And so  
23 that's my point. So you were talking  
24 about the 10 percent as if it was a done  
25 deal and then caught yourself and said if



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2 approved. But it's approved by you. So,  
3 in essence, we all know that there's  
4 going to be a 10 percent cap that has not  
5 yet been approved by you.

6 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Right.

7 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And that's  
8 fundamentally how we got into this  
9 process.

10 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: There's  
11 a 10 percent cap that's in place today  
12 through the regulations. There's a  
13 process that's in place now. We know  
14 that there's a CAC report out there that  
15 indicates that it makes sense by using  
16 the best folks and best minds and quite a  
17 big process of stakeholders -- and City  
18 Council was part of the stakeholder  
19 process -- to come up with a reasonable  
20 compromise on how to make sure that  
21 businesses can move forward unharmed  
22 through this process.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Don't you  
24 think that this, Okay, we've got this  
25 process, oops, we didn't see these big

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2 problem stakeholders' issues, could have  
3 been resolved from the beginning had  
4 there been a public open process,  
5 advertising, the ability for people to  
6 testify before a commission, not hearing  
7 examiners, sort of like you have the  
8 ability to go before the PUC and others?  
9 Isn't that -- I mean --

10 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Our  
11 process is very PUC-like, and there is a  
12 very open stakeholder process.

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: It's  
14 PUC-like, except the same person who  
15 proposes it decides.

16 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: First of  
17 all, I don't propose it. It's my Deputy  
18 makes the proposals and makes the filings  
19 and --

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The person  
21 who works for you.

22 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: I'm  
23 looking forward to the time when I got a  
24 hearing examiner's report and be able to  
25 take a look at it and hopefully approve

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2 it without changes.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN:

4 Commissioner, I want to be clear. I have  
5 tremendous respect for you. I think you  
6 run a great department. You do a great  
7 job as Water Commissioner. I'm happy  
8 you're there. This is not about the  
9 Water Commissioner or the Water  
10 Department or the great people who work  
11 there or anything else. It's about a  
12 fair, open process, and in the four years  
13 I've been here, process has been more  
14 important to this Administration than  
15 results. And what I'm very surprised at  
16 is that we are now in a situation where  
17 we don't want the most open, transparent  
18 process that we could put in place. And  
19 so I do have a question there, and, that  
20 is, the Administration -- one of the  
21 objections is that we're going to create  
22 uncertainty if we move ahead with this  
23 bill.

24 My question now for all of you  
25 sitting up there is, if you were forced

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2 to replace this process with another  
3 process, with some kind of commission or  
4 other body that is going to review the  
5 proposals for the Water Department rather  
6 than have it come back to you, please  
7 describe for us what you would suggest  
8 we'd put in place.

9 MR. STOBBER: I think -- and I  
10 just, again, want to be very clear.  
11 We're not opposed to the Charter change.  
12 We want to make sure that we have an  
13 ordinance that defines that process  
14 quickly.

15 I think, first and foremost,  
16 that process needs to ensure that and  
17 needs -- the process needs to be held to  
18 the standard, that the rates are based on  
19 the actual cost for customers, whether  
20 those customers are residential,  
21 commercial or industrial. That process  
22 needs to be held to a standard that  
23 ensures sufficient resources are provided  
24 to the Department to meet all of its  
25 regulatory and financial requirements.

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2                   So I think those are the two  
3       foundational things it has to be held to.  
4       I think that the process would, in many  
5       ways, look the same in terms of  
6       interrogatories and how rates are  
7       presented and how it's a contested  
8       process we would want, and rating  
9       agencies have consistently provided  
10      higher ratings to systems that are, as  
11      the rating agencies describe them,  
12      apolitical, which I think largely refers  
13      to elected officials not serving on those  
14      boards and those who are appointed to it  
15      being professionals in fields that are  
16      relevant to making these determinations  
17      and that they be as free as possible, and  
18      as Chairman Greenlee pointed out, we  
19      currently have a final decider who is an  
20      appointee of the Mayor, but that there  
21      are provisions in place that signal to  
22      both the buyers of our bonds but also to  
23      our own ratepayers that these are people  
24      who are looking out for the best interest  
25      of the system.

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2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So you  
3 didn't really answer the question. Who  
4 would you appoint to the commission? How  
5 many members would it be, et cetera?  
6 Like what kind -- should we qualify the  
7 people as we need an engineer, we need  
8 someone with a financial background, we  
9 need somebody who -- what does this look  
10 like, this apolitical vehicle system that  
11 is not the Water Department making the  
12 final determination?

13 MR. STOBBER: Right. I think  
14 that -- and it's the kind of thing that  
15 we would like to have further discussion  
16 about and we would want to do research on  
17 what the best practices are in terms of  
18 what are the cities that have the highest  
19 ratings and have managed their systems  
20 most responsibly. But I think you're  
21 right, that it would likely include  
22 someone with an engineering background,  
23 someone with a financial background,  
24 someone with a consumer advisory  
25 background, someone with a management

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2 background, those sorts of individuals  
3 who could review the case before them.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: The reason I  
5 ask this question is, how long have you  
6 been aware of this bill, the  
7 Administration, this Charter change?

8 MR. STOBBER: I believe I first  
9 became aware of it in the last few weeks.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: It was  
11 introduced March 8th.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: March 8th,  
13 okay. So during that time -- I mean, if  
14 you had come here today and said, Gosh,  
15 we'd love to see a five- or seven-member  
16 board, this is what it would look like,  
17 this is who should serve on it, this is  
18 what other cities do, I'm confident that  
19 we would sit here and consider this, but  
20 you're saying there's uncertainty and we  
21 want to investigate it. And I don't know  
22 how we move forward even in our  
23 discussions with you unless we pass this  
24 out of Committee today to focus attention  
25 on the kind of body that we should have.

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2 I will note that someone I  
3 think on Council proposed a list here,  
4 and almost every city I see here Council  
5 has final approval. So there is a  
6 political process for San Francisco.  
7 There's a political process for most  
8 cities I see here of the largest cities  
9 in the country and otherwise. Usually  
10 the Council is approving or the Mayor and  
11 Council are appointing the members of the  
12 commission, et cetera. So they all seem  
13 to be able to float bonds.

14 Thank you.

15 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
16 you, Councilman.

17 Councilman Henon.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,  
19 Mr. Chairman.

20 I too want to start off by  
21 saying it is our responsibility, City  
22 Council, to ask these tough questions to  
23 not only Commissioners but folks who  
24 arbitrarily -- or maybe not  
25 arbitrarily -- are making decisions that



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2 affect City of Philadelphia as a whole.

3 And, as you know, we've had some ongoing  
4 conversations about a stormwater runoff  
5 piece of legislation to try to address  
6 some of the mitigation efforts that the  
7 City is undertaking and the expenses and  
8 how it is formulated and calculated and  
9 shared throughout classes, the several  
10 classes in the City of Philadelphia.

11 My colleagues have raised many,  
12 many, many good points I think that is  
13 appropriate for today, and it is the  
14 process and uncertainty that leaves us  
15 with questions. Our Comptroller says the  
16 judge and jury in one agency, keeping  
17 politics out. When you have programs to  
18 mitigate the City and not have  
19 necessarily -- you say due process, I say  
20 selective due process on selective  
21 stakeholders who may be invited to  
22 participate in some of the public process  
23 or hearings is certainly concerning, but  
24 necessary, which I think we all  
25 understand and agree on.

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2 Hearing about good businesses  
3 who employ a lot of folks in the City  
4 leaving, moving to Texas is  
5 disheartening. It's sad when we're  
6 trying to attract businesses here and our  
7 conversations here are uncertain. How  
8 would you like to be a business who is  
9 trying to plant themselves in the City of  
10 Philadelphia under those kind of  
11 uncertain conditions is certainly  
12 speculative, if not leaves something that  
13 they should be considering before they  
14 take that leap and the leap of faith.

15 We are -- from what you have  
16 indicated, that there's going to be a  
17 report from a hearing officer; is that  
18 correct? When is that report due? Is  
19 that before or after the rate change?

20 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: We are  
21 in a process now for amending the rates  
22 for Philadelphia water and sewer. The  
23 process has a hearing officer, who has  
24 been selected by the Mayor, City Council  
25 President and City Controller, and this

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2 person in very many ways represents a  
3 one-person board of a board similar to  
4 what you have all been speaking of. We  
5 look forward to this hearing officer to  
6 hear testimony from many different  
7 parties and to weigh that testimony very  
8 seriously and issue a report that makes a  
9 recommendation on the future water and  
10 sewer rates for the City of Philadelphia.  
11 That process will be approximately a  
12 six-month process. It can be shorter, it  
13 can be longer depending on how many  
14 stakeholders and how many issues come up  
15 during the process.

16 Again, it's a very robust,  
17 transparent process that I welcome  
18 everyone from City Council and from the  
19 City of Philadelphia, citizens, to come  
20 in and witness this and partake in it.  
21 And that report carries a lot of weight  
22 to how future water and sewer rates will  
23 be in the City of Philadelphia.

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: So are we --  
25 so the timeline, it's up to six months.

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2 And we as a Council body --

3 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: The  
4 timeline is --

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Council  
6 President, when are we supposed to make  
7 our decisions on some of these rate  
8 changes or discussions?

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I'll  
10 get it -- if it's okay with you,  
11 Councilman, I was trying to defer my  
12 comments until after. Then I'll talk  
13 about, from my perspective, our process.

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: Absolutely.  
15 My concern is putting the cart  
16 before the horse without having -- when  
17 you're talking about having a lot of  
18 weight in the decisions and the rate  
19 suggestions, think about the position  
20 that we're in, hearing from businesses,  
21 hearing from residents, hearing from many  
22 groups throughout the City of  
23 Philadelphia encouraging us to stand up  
24 for some of the biggest decisions they  
25 have to make in their lives, whether to

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2 stay here in the City of Philadelphia or  
3 take advantage of \$3 million incentives  
4 for three miles away to have these kind  
5 of accommodations just handed to them.

6 That's concerning, and the  
7 uncertainty is, again, as you said, if  
8 there's an increase, if there's an  
9 increase and there's a cap, does that  
10 mean there's going to be an increase on  
11 top of a potential cap? So if you have a  
12 10 percent cap, if there's an increase  
13 and if it is for a period of 15 years --  
14 and I know that number may be arbitrary,  
15 but a length of time like that, would an  
16 increase be on top of that cap? So  
17 somebody would be 10 percent plus  
18 whatever the proposed increase would be.  
19 Because they're the kind of decisions  
20 that people are making when they are  
21 employing City residents here in the  
22 neighborhoods throughout our great city  
23 and making those decisions whether we  
24 stay here or move three miles away.

25 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: And,

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2 Councilman, I appreciate the question,  
3 and I certainly hope that no businesses  
4 leave because of stormwater management.  
5 We have programs in place beyond the cap  
6 to offer loans and to offer no-interest  
7 grants to businesses who are most highly  
8 impacted to ensure that costs do not rise  
9 to any significant level that would cause  
10 anyone to leave the City of Philadelphia  
11 because of the stormwater fees.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Correct me  
13 if I'm wrong, and I'll end with this,  
14 Mr. Chairman. But the cost for these  
15 incentive programs, which I do think is a  
16 great offering for those who can afford  
17 to do some of the incentives, I mean,  
18 you're still asking them to invest a  
19 tremendous amount of money, whether it's  
20 qualifying -- if they qualify for a loan,  
21 it's still a loan, and the monies for the  
22 loan is going to be part and paid by the  
23 increases that we're all going to be or  
24 potentially be taking on.

25 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: There is

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2 no free water. Somebody has to pay for  
3 the water. Somebody has to pay for the  
4 stormwater. If we give out grants, just  
5 like City Council gives out grants, it  
6 does come from somewhere and someone is  
7 paying. So, yes, in one sense, you're  
8 correct.

9 In another sense, it's an  
10 advisory committee that got together and  
11 assessed an entire customer class, the  
12 non-residential business class, and  
13 recognized that there were a small number  
14 but significant number of customers who  
15 are highly impacted by the stormwater  
16 fees and that we needed to somehow help  
17 them to manage so that a two-to-five-acre  
18 impervious cover one-story building for  
19 storage or light industry with very  
20 little water use does not pay  
21 astronomical rates for stormwater fees.  
22 And the way we did that is, one, we  
23 created a credit system so that you can  
24 get credit for whatever is on your land  
25 that's managing stormwater now.

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2 Two, we issued a low-interest  
3 loan program so that these same folks  
4 could have the ability to come in and,  
5 for a good rate of return on their  
6 investment, reduce permanently their  
7 stormwater fees.

8 Number three, we offered free  
9 engineering consulting services to any of  
10 these impacted customers to come out and  
11 assist them in identifying ways that they  
12 can indeed improve their management.

13 And, number four, when we  
14 recognized that because the stormwater  
15 fees aren't high enough to make the  
16 incentive a commitment of capital into  
17 your property, that we changed the  
18 low-interest loan program over to a  
19 grants program to make it more  
20 attractive, so that companies and  
21 landowners can find ways to manage their  
22 land.

23 And the last thing, of course,  
24 we did was establish this 10 percent cap,  
25 so that any changes that happen until the



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2 point where a true cost of service for  
3 the stormwater fee comes into effect, it  
4 would be a very long -- I believe it's  
5 15-year process, between now and the time  
6 those costs would come into play. And,  
7 of course, at any time in the future when  
8 someone makes an improvement to their  
9 land and builds something on these  
10 properties, they will be doing it with  
11 stormwater management regulations, which,  
12 of course, again offers the credit.

13 So we've put in place a number  
14 of programs because we are very sensitive  
15 and concerned about our good customers,  
16 who are sitting behind me here, and  
17 looking forward to keeping them as  
18 customers and helping them manage  
19 stormwater in their property so that  
20 their property doesn't shed so much water  
21 into the streets of Philadelphia, which,  
22 as you know, last year we had quite a bit  
23 of flooding in Philadelphia, in  
24 Germantown, in South Philadelphia and  
25 elsewhere, and these are all concerns and

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2 they're all costly and something -- we  
3 need to manage the water.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
5 you.

6 Council President Clarke.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:  
8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 Good afternoon. Real briefly,  
10 this is somewhat difficult in terms of  
11 moving this process. And to the  
12 Commissioner, I talked to you about this  
13 some time ago, and actually prior to the  
14 introduction of the bill, I actually  
15 spoke to the Administration before I  
16 introduced it, because I know it would be  
17 some concern. And one of the reasons  
18 that we introduced the legislation that  
19 would essentially authorize a Charter  
20 change was because I did not want to  
21 muddy the water, so to speak, of your  
22 current process, although I didn't  
23 necessarily agree with it, but I believe  
24 in being a responsible elected official.

25 So we did not insert it in a

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2 way that may have been not the best  
3 because we would have been somewhat  
4 rushed. So that's why we did it, and I  
5 explained that to the Administration.  
6 That's why we did it.

7 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: We  
8 appreciate that, Councilman.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: It  
10 was subsequently changed in working  
11 together, craft language that would make  
12 some sense. So I guess for me being  
13 responsible, it now seems to be coming  
14 back on me that it is causing people to  
15 have some level of concern. Because the  
16 reality is, once you do a Charter change,  
17 you cannot address that issue for, I  
18 think it's, five years. So I didn't  
19 think it was appropriate to put all this  
20 language in the Charter change, because  
21 we have done that in the recent past on a  
22 number of bills and, frankly speaking, a  
23 number of us in retrospect wish we hadn't  
24 voted for some of those bills because the  
25 language that's currently in there and

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2 some of the processes that were  
3 established by the Charter change. So I  
4 did it this way for a reason.

5 Second of all, it was my full  
6 intention as we move through this process  
7 to do it in a way to, one, respect the  
8 hard work, as I said earlier, of the  
9 Commissioner and all the people involved  
10 and the professionalism associated with  
11 that. And it was my hope that we would  
12 be able to do this in a cooperative way  
13 and in a collaborative way, but I'm a  
14 little disheartened when I hear the  
15 testimony today that we keep hearing  
16 references of political involvement and  
17 the bond market and as an after-thought  
18 we talk about the citizens, because at  
19 the end of the day -- and I understand  
20 the Treasurer's position, that her  
21 responsibility is to make sure the money  
22 is good, and that's what we want you to  
23 do. And as it relates to the  
24 Commissioner and the Department, they  
25 want to make sure that we have safe

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2 drinking water. But at the end of the  
3 day, our primary responsibility as  
4 elected officials are to the citizens.  
5 So you'll understand why we may put them  
6 a little bit ahead of you guys and some  
7 of the bond market and some of the other  
8 individuals while still being  
9 responsible.

10 So I'm a little concerned about  
11 the constant references to those  
12 particular issues, because this whole  
13 issue about uncertainty I think is  
14 somewhat of a red herring.

15 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: May I  
16 respond to that?

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:  
18 After I finish, because I sat here very  
19 quietly, allowed everybody to speak.

20 So the reality is that this is  
21 a system that won't be in place until  
22 November, the best case, because this  
23 bill cannot pass and the Charter change  
24 will not be in a position to be voted on  
25 until November. So there should be no

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2 levels of uncertainty between now and  
3 during this current process.

4 I talked to members of the  
5 Administration, expressed at least from a  
6 personal perspective -- because I can't  
7 speak for other members -- a willingness  
8 to work on legislation that we can work  
9 together on that will put people at a  
10 comfort level, but have the necessary  
11 transparency and the necessary process in  
12 place that whenever we do what we do,  
13 people can have some level of comfort.

14 Now, some people will never  
15 feel comfortable about having to pay  
16 more, but the reality is, in today's  
17 world, at some point you're going to have  
18 to pay more. We're going through this  
19 now with the real estate tax issue, and  
20 it's going to be done in a very, very  
21 transparent way, as witnessed by the  
22 meeting that we had last night up at the  
23 Kroc Center where we had 100 people there  
24 and the people were raising those  
25 concerns.

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2 Now, with respect to some of the  
3 testimony today, I had a couple of  
4 questions and one referencing not only  
5 the testimony but the continued  
6 references to this current process. And  
7 correct me if I'm wrong, because  
8 sometimes we are wrong, in the last rate  
9 request increase in '08 that would have  
10 covered years '9 through '12, it's my  
11 understanding that the hearing examiner  
12 actually recommended zero rate increase  
13 in years '11 and '12, and the  
14 Commissioner summarily -- I hate to use  
15 the term "dismissed," but dismissed that  
16 particular recommendation and essentially  
17 granted close to 90 percent of that rate  
18 request.

19 So the suggestion that somehow  
20 the current process that has a hearing  
21 examiner that kind of makes a  
22 recommendation and people say, Okay,  
23 we're going to go along with that, just  
24 in this particular case, it's just not  
25 reality.

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2 So I'm a little concerned about  
3 that. What happens, when you get  
4 pushback from people, it causes you to do  
5 a little investigation, and I didn't know  
6 that before I started getting some  
7 pushback in terms of doing a bill that I  
8 thought was relatively reasonable.

9 I'd like to ask Ms. Winkler  
10 about the top five factors as it relates  
11 to bond markets and bond ratings. I  
12 mean, what exactly do they look at?  
13 Because I know it's not simply the  
14 ability for the entity to pass increases.  
15 Are there more factors than just that,  
16 and if there are, can you talk to me  
17 about them?

18 MS. WINKLER: Sure. As I  
19 mentioned in my testimony, there are  
20 qualitative and quantitative factors, and  
21 at the end of the day, it's not sort  
22 of -- I don't think there are five  
23 factors. And the analysts and the credit  
24 folks will each have their own sort of  
25 set of glasses that they put on, and I



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2 have -- and I can make available and  
3 share and should share with folks --  
4 credit analyst reports. I mentioned the  
5 Fitch report that discusses water and  
6 sewer revenue bond-rating criteria. It  
7 came out in August of 2010 -- I'm sorry;  
8 2011. And in that report -- I'm just  
9 flipping through it, but the first factor  
10 is governance and management. So they  
11 look at a whole host of things. So  
12 they'll be looking at the legal  
13 structure, the rate covenant. So, for  
14 example, it's quite common for water  
15 utilities to have very modest debt  
16 service coverage requirements. In other  
17 words, they don't have to collect a lot  
18 more revenue than needed to cover debt  
19 service legally, but operationally they  
20 often far exceed what's legally required.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Does  
22 the Water Department currently have a  
23 reserve?

24 MS. WINKLER: The Water  
25 Department currently is supposed to set

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2 rates and charges so that it gets to 1.20  
3 coverage, and the projection for the  
4 fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, we're  
5 projected to just hit that coverage,  
6 1.21, 1.21.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Does  
8 the Water Department currently have a  
9 reserve?

10 MS. WINKLER: The Water  
11 Department is drawing on a reserve to  
12 meet that coverage requirement for this  
13 year. So the Water Department -- I'm  
14 looking at the numbers here.

15 Joe, how much are they drawing  
16 from the reserve this year to hit the  
17 coverage?

18 Twenty-one million dollars.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I'm  
20 asking the question again. Does the  
21 Water Department --

22 MS. WINKLER: Yes, they have  
23 the reserve and they're drawing on the  
24 reserve.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I

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2 asked you the question three times, do  
3 they have a reserve. And the follow-up  
4 question is, how much is that current  
5 reserve?

6 MS. WINKLER: I'm seeing it's  
7 projected to be \$135 million at the end  
8 of Fiscal '12.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:  
10 Currently?

11 MS. WINKLER: Yes, and that  
12 reserve is --

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: So  
14 we have a reserve currently.

15 MS. WINKLER: And that reserve  
16 is planned to be spent down to 67 million  
17 in the next two years, according to the  
18 projections.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:  
20 Okay. So with respect to your other  
21 references -- and I'll go through this  
22 quickly because it was referenced early.  
23 When you talk about other municipalities  
24 as it relates to -- and I'll answer your  
25 question. I'll answer the question that

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2 was asked by the member -- about other  
3 municipalities, and we just go through  
4 the list, Baltimore, Detroit, Boston, San  
5 Francisco, Los Angeles, New York,  
6 Milwaukee, San Diego, Atlanta, Chicago,  
7 Phoenix, Houston, Washington. All of  
8 these entities have some level of  
9 independent process, be it a commission  
10 or be it a City Council.

11 So this notion that somehow  
12 there's some concern potentially by  
13 having this independent process -- and I  
14 know you're leaning towards having the  
15 uncertainty, and I hear you, and trust  
16 me, we are extremely responsible  
17 individuals. We will clear that  
18 uncertainty up. Trust me. I will not  
19 be, like my colleague, not a member of  
20 any board and commission that has to  
21 raise anybody's taxes beyond what we  
22 currently do, because we have enough as  
23 it relates to real estate.

24 So with respect to some of  
25 those municipalities, when you look at

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2 the ratings by S&P and Fitch and Moody's,  
3 Baltimore, AA; Detroit, little shaky, B,  
4 AAA --

5 MS. WINKLER: Excuse me?

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

7 Pardon me?

8 MS. WINKLER: I'm sorry. I  
9 didn't hear you.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I'm  
11 looking at some of the ratings of some of  
12 these municipalities who have these  
13 independent processes.

14 MS. WINKLER: And what did you  
15 say for Detroit?

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:  
17 Detroit, not too good, B, and they have  
18 small AAA, so I guess that's just B minus  
19 in layman's term.

20 Boston, AA by Fitch; San  
21 Francisco, AA; Los Angeles, AA; New York,  
22 AAA; San Diego, AA plus; Atlanta, A;  
23 Chicago, AA; Phoenix, AAA, and it goes  
24 on, AAA. Now, maybe this has improved.  
25 The City of Philadelphia is rated A plus.

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2 So it suggests that these municipalities  
3 that have this independent rating  
4 actually have higher credit ratings than  
5 we do. So this whole notion that some  
6 independent entity, be it in some cases  
7 City Council, will lower the rates, this  
8 doesn't appear to be the case as it  
9 relates to these other municipalities.

10 So I'm just a little concerned about --

11 MR. STOBBER: I don't -- I think  
12 we have to remember that in those  
13 ratings, there are a collection, as you  
14 pointed out, a collection of factors that  
15 influence that. So there are other  
16 dynamics. For instance, in a number of  
17 those cities, we know that they maintain  
18 significantly higher coverage ratios. So  
19 they may look at those cities and that is  
20 a check mark in their favor, not  
21 something that we have in our favor.  
22 There's no, I think, reason inherently  
23 why having an independent board would  
24 lower that rating. And, as you said, and  
25 I appreciate the comments on working

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2 together and understanding that, we want  
3 to do this work to establish who is on  
4 that board and make sure that that is a  
5 group that's going to be respected by all  
6 of the stakeholders.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

8 Okay. Well, I'm only putting this out  
9 here because I'm sensing while there has  
10 not explicitly been language in your  
11 testimony and in your comments that you  
12 are opposed to this -- and you said we  
13 actually could be for this particular  
14 bill -- it's just the overtone that  
15 concerns me, because you can be for  
16 something but not really be for it, and  
17 that's what I'm sensing.

18 So I'm required to respond to  
19 some of the things that you've said as it  
20 relates to what -- if nobody did the  
21 research or if I didn't do the  
22 research -- I asked my staff to do the  
23 research, because you know how it goes, I  
24 didn't do the research -- that I would  
25 not know any of this. So it's clear that

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2 what you've put out there, there are  
3 alternative viewpoints on this. So I  
4 just want to put that out there for the  
5 record.

6 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: And,  
7 Councilman, thank you very much, because  
8 certainly there are improvements that  
9 could be made to this process. I  
10 understand that. I hear you, and I agree  
11 with you. The question that we've been  
12 talking about with uncertainty is really  
13 the uncertainty as to what that new  
14 process is. That's the nugget that we're  
15 looking forward to working with you on  
16 and understanding what that board or  
17 independent entity would look like and  
18 making sure that we're all on the same  
19 page with that.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: And  
21 I concur, Commissioner. We do not want  
22 to put you in a position where you're not  
23 able to operate your department in a  
24 reasonable way.

25 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Thank



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2 you, Councilman.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: But  
4 I'm just a little concerned about some of  
5 the inferences as it relates to both  
6 process for this City Council and  
7 participation of this City Council.

8 Mr. Chairman, thank you very  
9 much.

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
11 you, Mr. President.

12 Councilman Green.

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,  
14 Mr. Chairman.

15 Could you just briefly describe  
16 what the agreement is that we just  
17 entered into with the EPA.

18 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: We just  
19 reached a partnership agreement with the  
20 EPA where basically they have agreed not  
21 to issue a new consent decree on the City  
22 of Philadelphia, where they've accepted  
23 the consent order that we have with the  
24 State of Pennsylvania to do a 25-year  
25 \$1.2 billion program to stop sewage from

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2 going into our rivers and streams. And  
3 EPA has reviewed our program. They said  
4 we have five or six items that we would  
5 like to see cleared up. That may cost us  
6 some more money. We're not sure. We're  
7 entering into negotiations with them on  
8 what's called an administrative order and  
9 consent, but they've agreed to work with  
10 us more in a partnership level than in a  
11 lawsuit level. Because the problem that  
12 we have in Philadelphia, which is the  
13 same problem that's throughout the  
14 country, is that every time it rains, raw  
15 sewage is going into our rivers and  
16 streams, and that's really not acceptable  
17 to me as Water Commissioner and not  
18 acceptable I think to everyone in this  
19 room and is certainly not acceptable to  
20 the regulators who have the ability to  
21 issue consent decrees and enforcement  
22 orders like they have for almost every  
23 major city in the United States.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And how does  
25 that relate to the rates that are set?

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2 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Well, it  
3 relates to the rates in terms of -- well,  
4 it's a 25-year program, so it doesn't hit  
5 the rates significantly in the next  
6 number of years, because we're in a  
7 ramp-up program. The first number of  
8 years of our program is really all about  
9 how do we streamline and implement a  
10 long-term solution to stormwater  
11 management for overflow protection. So  
12 the next few years we're really spending  
13 a lot of time and a lot of money looking  
14 to see how do we work with the Fairmount  
15 Parks Commission, how do we work with the  
16 Streets Department, the School District  
17 and others to manage stormwater, keeping  
18 stormwater out of our sewers. Because  
19 every time stormwater enters into our  
20 sewer during a rain event, it displaces  
21 sewage, and the sewage goes out into the  
22 river, and that's a very big part of what  
23 our problem is. It's comparable to the  
24 other big expenses that we're having most  
25 recently, which is with flooding in

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2 different parts of the City.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So the  
4 question, though, really is about money  
5 here, and I understand the policy issues  
6 and agree with them completely. So the  
7 question is about money, and the question  
8 is, how does that settlement -- I'm  
9 sorry; partnership agreement relate to  
10 what we are charging today in sewer and  
11 water rates, as you say, to spend a lot  
12 more money to prepare for that  
13 partnership? It's all part of one plan;  
14 they're not separate things?

15 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: That's  
16 correct, yes.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: So you  
18 unilaterally entered into an agreement  
19 which required -- right?

20 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Yes.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: That didn't  
22 go before the hearing examiner.

23 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: No.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So  
25 you unilaterally entered into an

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2 agreement, which then requires the cost  
3 be there, which then requires you to do  
4 whatever you have to do to be a  
5 responsible Water Commissioner to meet  
6 the obligation for the unilateral  
7 agreement you went into. I mean, it's  
8 part of the circular problem that we have  
9 here, is that you unilaterally go into an  
10 agreement and then unilaterally set rates  
11 to pay for that agreement. So that's  
12 just one small problem.

13 I do think that some of the  
14 examples of the changes for people are  
15 not fair and equitable. For example, if  
16 you have a factory on the edge of  
17 Fairmount Park that is three acres, four  
18 acres of impervious surface and there's  
19 an acre to the closest stream and it's  
20 somewhere in Cobbs Creek or somewhere, I  
21 don't know, and the water goes right into  
22 the park off that impervious surface and  
23 goes into the groundwater, et cetera,  
24 that plot of land is going to have a very  
25 different impact than, say, three acres

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2 or four acres of impervious surface in  
3 the middle of 500 acres of impervious  
4 surface; is it not? But they're going to  
5 pay the same thing, aren't they? So it's  
6 not fair and equitable. It's just a  
7 different way of collecting the same  
8 dollars that you need to collect based on  
9 the plan that you unilaterally entered  
10 into with the EPA, isn't it?

11 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: It's as  
12 fair and equitable as the process really  
13 can be. It's a really -- but --

14 COUNCILMAN GREEN: It's more  
15 fair and equitable in your view --

16 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: We're  
17 also dealing with other issues beyond  
18 again just the CSO consent decree issue.  
19 You're also dealing with flooding. So if  
20 you're by Cobbs Creek and you have a  
21 property that is discharging quickly into  
22 the creek, you may be impacting flooding  
23 in Eastwick.

24 I'm just trying to give the  
25 example that it's a little more obscure

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2 than just whether it's about water going  
3 to a drain.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: But,  
5 Commissioner, as you stated in your  
6 testimony, the impact of the fee is not  
7 enough to cause that factory owner near  
8 Cobbs Creek to actually mediate the  
9 runoff. Therefore, you're not solving  
10 the flooding problem. You're just  
11 distributing the fees in a different way.  
12 Isn't that -- I mean, you just found a  
13 different way to distribute fees, and the  
14 issue is maybe with a body of independent  
15 people who didn't come up with the plan  
16 in the first place, they would have found  
17 a different way to distribute the fees  
18 that are more fair and equitable than the  
19 one the Water Department started with.

20 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: And I --

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: That is  
22 certainly a possibility, isn't it?

23 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: It is  
24 certainly a possibility that no matter  
25 what group of stakeholders you get

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2 together to come up with the fees, you'll  
3 come up with a number of different  
4 solutions that are possible.

5 I would like to say that I  
6 don't think you could possibly have had a  
7 more fair and open, transparent  
8 stakeholder-led process than the two  
9 Citizens Advisory Committees that came up  
10 with the fee system back in the '90s and  
11 then reviewed them again in 2011.

12 So I agree with you, but -- I  
13 agree with you on your conclusion, but  
14 your premise is that there wasn't that  
15 process, and I respectfully disagree with  
16 that. There was that process in place.

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I wasn't  
18 there for that process, so I'll take your  
19 word for it that there was a fair  
20 process. I just think -- like I just  
21 walked through Pennypack woods for a  
22 candidate running for Council the other  
23 day and got to go through that entire  
24 area, and there's a lot of grass there.  
25 There's a lot of -- their monthly water



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2 bill is going from 3,700 to 18,000, for  
3 example. That doesn't seem to me fair  
4 and equitable. You've got all sorts of  
5 businesses going from zero to \$47,000 a  
6 month. You've got Arco going from 13,000  
7 to \$396,000 a month. I don't know  
8 whether that's the Sunoco property that's  
9 closing down. That's certainly not going  
10 to make it easy for people to come in and  
11 keep jobs there or create jobs if the  
12 bill is \$400,000 a month, et cetera.

13 And so I think it is pretty  
14 radical when you take people from 13,000  
15 to 400,000, just as one small example,  
16 and I guess the Department and I can  
17 disagree on that. All I can end up  
18 saying is, I look forward to working with  
19 you on a fair -- some sort of other fair  
20 different method where you have  
21 independence and a clear process of  
22 openness and transparency to set water  
23 rates.

24 COMMISSIONER NEUKRUG: Thank  
25 you, Councilman.

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2 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,  
3 Mr. Chairman.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
5 you.

6 Any other questions?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Seeing  
9 none, thank you all very much.

10 I'm going to call the next two  
11 witnesses, and that's Thu Tran of  
12 Community Legal Services. I hope I  
13 pronounced that correctly. And Lance  
14 Haver -- I know I pronounced that  
15 correctly -- if you could come up.

16 And while they're coming up,  
17 let me just -- on my list here, I have  
18 five other witnesses: Wesley Firkin,  
19 Daniel Lasdon, Michael Chapman, Kerry  
20 Pacifico and Alan Levin.

21 Is there anyone else that wants  
22 to testify other than the names I  
23 mentioned? If anybody else is  
24 interested, will you please tell  
25 Ms. Marconi over here and give her your

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2 name, please.

3 (Witnesses approached witness  
4 table.)

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And let  
6 me repeat what I had said earlier. If  
7 the witnesses could be as brief as  
8 possible -- we still have a lot of people  
9 who want to testify -- and try as best  
10 you can not to be repetitive, we'd  
11 appreciated it.

12 Also, if I could just put on  
13 the record, we have a letter from Phil  
14 Lord, Executive Director of Tenant Union  
15 Representative Network, TURN, who  
16 basically says he supports the testimony  
17 of Ms. Tran in support of the resolution,  
18 with some questions.

19 Ms. Tran, please.

20 MS. TRAN: Thank you. Good  
21 afternoon, Chairman Greenlee, Council  
22 President Clarke, Councilman Jones and  
23 members of the Committee. My name is Thu  
24 Tran. I'm a Senior Supervising Attorney  
25 at Community Legal Services.

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2 Utility service is of utmost  
3 concern to CLS. The cost of  
4 life-essential gas, electric and  
5 water/sewer services are often more than  
6 a quarter of a family's budget,  
7 especially a low-income family's income.  
8 For more than two decades, CLS has been  
9 appointed public advocate on behalf of  
10 residential water customers in cases  
11 filed by the Philadelphia Water  
12 Department. In the last two rate cases,  
13 in 2008 and in 2004, I served as public  
14 advocate co-counsel.

15 Currently, the Water  
16 Commissioner, who is also the head of the  
17 Water Department, has the final say in  
18 setting the rates for water, sewer and  
19 stormwater management charges. And I've  
20 already heard other comments and comments  
21 from the Committee that there is an  
22 inherent conflict of interest that exists  
23 in the current process.

24 So we're here to support  
25 Resolution No. 120188. It proposes an

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2           amendment to the Home Rule Charter which  
3           would allow City Council by ordinance to  
4           take this power away from the Water  
5           Commissioner and to transfer it to  
6           another existing or new City department,  
7           commission, board or agency. This  
8           transfer of power would be a step in the  
9           right direction.

10                     We don't want to underplay the  
11           important task of the Water Commissioner  
12           and the Water Department in providing  
13           safe, quality service or maintaining bond  
14           ratings, but, however, as Water  
15           Commissioner, in determining rates, he is  
16           required by federal constitutional law to  
17           balance the needs of the Department  
18           against the interests of its customers.  
19           So the Commissioner must also consider  
20           the fundamental interest of customers in  
21           affordable and high-quality service and  
22           having fair access to the services of the  
23           Water Revenue Bureau.

24                     Under current procedures, under  
25           the current process, the Water

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2 Commissioner is placed in the position of  
3 a judge ruling on his own case. The  
4 rate-setting process currently in place  
5 does not eliminate this conflict.

6 Mr. Stober described the  
7 process in detail, so I won't go through  
8 that. And the process was described as  
9 PUC -- very similar to the PUC process,  
10 but there's a very important distinction  
11 with that process. And it's a very  
12 important distinction. The hearing  
13 officer's recommendations in the water  
14 rate-making process is only advisory.  
15 Under the PUC process, the decisions are  
16 binding. In the process for the water  
17 rates, the Water Commissioner can accept  
18 or reject the hearing officer's  
19 recommendations, as Council President  
20 Clark has questioned about already. So  
21 at the end of the day, it is the Water  
22 Commissioner adjudicating his own  
23 department's rate increase request.

24 I had some comments regarding  
25 language of the ballot question and the

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2 language of the proposed Charter  
3 amendment, but they seem to be addressed  
4 in the document entitled -- that was on  
5 top of the paperclip packet that's  
6 available. I'm not sure who proposed  
7 that.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Does that  
9 say "amendment" on top?

10 MS. TRAN: Yes, amendment.

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That will  
12 be offered at the meeting after all --  
13 yeah.

14 MS. TRAN: Okay. Well, I'll  
15 speak in support of this amendment, if  
16 it's not too soon.

17 We are concerned that the  
18 ballot question didn't accurately  
19 describe the substance of the proposed  
20 Charter amendment. So I'm happy to see  
21 that the amendment now does make  
22 reference to an independent rate-making  
23 body and that the amendment now -- the  
24 proposed amendment does now have the  
25 language that City Council may by

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2 ordinance establish open and transparent  
3 processes and procedures. So we're glad  
4 to see that language in the proposed  
5 amendment.

6 We do share the concerns about  
7 uncertainty that was voiced here today  
8 also. We have not seen language that  
9 identifies or describes the agency to  
10 which such rate-making authority would be  
11 transferred or the processes and  
12 procedures which would be enacted to  
13 govern the rate-making process. We would  
14 be happy to be part of that process to  
15 work with Council in developing that  
16 process.

17 I don't want to repeat other  
18 comments that have already been -- we  
19 support Mr. Butkovitz's testimony. We  
20 support the proposed Charter amendment  
21 with the proposed language. We see it as  
22 an incremental step toward establishing a  
23 water/sewer rate-making body separate  
24 from the Water Commissioner and the Water  
25 Department. Such rate-making body



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2 potentially could provide the necessary  
3 check and balance that the Water  
4 Department's rate increase proposals --  
5 in the Water Department's rate increase  
6 proposals.

7 We would welcome an opportunity  
8 to, again, work with Council in  
9 formulating the processes and procedures.  
10 Water Department customers have seen  
11 repeated increases in their bill without  
12 such an independent review.

13 I'd like to thank you for the  
14 opportunity to testify today, and I'm  
15 available for any questions.

16 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
17 you. And I'm going to go to Mr. Haver,  
18 but just quick, I'm glad you stated the  
19 difference between the PUC process,  
20 because when I heard that, I was going to  
21 go back to that and it kind of got away  
22 from me. But that is a difference.  
23 PUC's decision is binding basically,  
24 where the Water Department is not.

25 And just as far as your concern

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2 about the more explicit guidelines and  
3 all, remember, this does not go on the  
4 ballot until November. So there are  
5 times for discussion and involvement for  
6 a lot of people, and I think the Council  
7 President stated that before.

8 Mr. Haver.

9 MR. HAVER: Yes. Thank you  
10 very much, Mr. Chairman. I'll be very  
11 brief.

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
13 you.

14 MR. HAVER: I support the bill  
15 and resolution. I urge you to vote for  
16 it. I personally find the current system  
17 unacceptable, and I would pose this  
18 question: If the CEO of PECO asked for a  
19 rate increase and the Public Utility  
20 Commission said, no, you're not entitled  
21 to it, and the next day the CEO of PECO  
22 said, I'm going to take it anyway, would  
23 anyone stand for that?

24 I do want to defend and make  
25 your lives a little more complicated the

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2 changes in how we collect for stormwater  
3 costs. I am one of the people  
4 representing in my past life an advocacy  
5 group that said it is unfair to charge  
6 poor and working people for stormwater  
7 collection based on the size of the inlet  
8 pipe to their homes, as if there's some  
9 combination between the amount of rain  
10 that falls on a property and the size of  
11 the pipe that goes into the home. The  
12 bad old system created an unfair charge  
13 on poor and working people.

14 Now, I think Councilman Kenney  
15 is not in the room and I think he'll be  
16 surprised to hear me say it. I do think  
17 he had the crux of the issue and a very  
18 wise comment. It is very difficult to  
19 switch from a broken system, the old  
20 system, to a new system without people  
21 being shocked. There may be room for  
22 improvement. There may be -- I took the  
23 liberty of bringing Councilmembers who  
24 had not seen some of the programs that  
25 were being offered to the property

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2 owners. So they're here for you to look  
3 at.

4 There may be better ways to do  
5 it. There may be better programs. An  
6 independent judge may find a better  
7 solution. But we cannot go back to the  
8 old ways of asking poor and working  
9 people to pay for stormwater collection  
10 based on the size of the pipe. It is  
11 unfair and it is unjust, and we should  
12 not go backwards.

13 With that, of course, I'm happy  
14 to answer any questions. I do have  
15 written testimony. I would ask it to be  
16 entered into the record.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: All  
18 written testimony that we received will  
19 be put into the record.

20 MR. HAVER: I would also ask  
21 Council to just take a note that our  
22 rates under the current Water  
23 Commissioner are lower than the rates  
24 surrounding us, and our water utility is  
25 so good that suburban companies actually

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2 pay us to process their water.

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Good

4 point. Thank you.

5 Let me just say on the one

6 issue, I don't know if anybody is

7 advocating we go back to the old system.

8 I think the concern has been -- and

9 Councilman Green gave the examples -- of

10 these huge increases are a lot to take,

11 and I think that's what Councilman Kenney

12 obviously was referring to.

13 So I don't think anybody is

14 going to advocate going back, because

15 you're right, it hurt a lot of poor

16 people, but the solution may not exactly

17 be the right one yet either.

18 MR. HAVER: I'll be honest, I'm

19 glad I'm not you today when the next

20 round of people come and testify, but I

21 would like them to also hear from a

22 consumer advocate that the old system was

23 broken and there has to be a better way.

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: All

25 right. Thank you. I think we might all

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2 agree with that. Thank you.

3 Any questions or comments?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you

6 both very much.

7 Let me call up -- I got six

8 left. I'll call up three at a time.

9 Wesley Firkin, Daniel Lasdon, Michael

10 Chapman. And then the other three will

11 be the next group, so we keep moving. So

12 the next group, just so you're ready,

13 Kerry Pacifico, Alan Levin, John

14 Strotbeck. I hope I pronounced that

15 right.

16 (Witnesses approached witness

17 table.

18 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

19 Mr. Firkin, I have you first, if you want

20 to go first.

21 MR. FIRKIN: Good afternoon,

22 City Council and fellow businessowners.

23 My name is Wesley Firkin and I'm on the

24 Executive Board of the Unified Business

25 Owners Association and I'm very honored

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2 to have this opportunity to speak to City  
3 Council today.

4 I'm here to ask the City  
5 Council to pass legislation to establish  
6 an independent rate-making body that is  
7 charged to regulate the Water Department  
8 and protect its customers. We, the  
9 people of Philadelphia, both residential  
10 and non-residential customers of the  
11 Water Department, must have a voice with  
12 respect to what we are being charged by  
13 the Water Department. Specifically as it  
14 pertains to the new and excessive  
15 stormwater rates.

16 It has recently come to my  
17 attention that the Philadelphia Water  
18 Department is the only public utility  
19 that does not have an independent  
20 rate-making body that is charged to  
21 protect and defend the public's  
22 interests. In other words, the  
23 Philadelphia Water Department can create  
24 totally self-interested policies and  
25 rates, and they can pass them and they

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2 can impose them on the customers at will.

3 They can create their own billing scheme

4 and approve it internally, no matter how

5 unfair and damaging it is to their

6 customers. As a businessperson, I can

7 only dream what it would be like to set

8 our rates without any resistance from our

9 customers, our competition or any

10 governmental body.

11 Without an independent

12 rate-making body, the Philadelphia Water

13 Department is totally unregulated, and

14 we, the Philadelphia property and

15 businessowners, are unprotected. We have

16 no voice and we have no choice but to pay

17 the stormwater bill, no matter how

18 excessive, illogical, unreasonable and

19 unscientific it is.

20 I'd like to take a minute now

21 to tell you how the excessive and unfair

22 stormwater fees have negatively affected

23 our business. I work for WTA Real Estate

24 and I manage a substantial portfolio of

25 industrial properties in the City of



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2 Philadelphia. The principal owners of  
3 these properties are also principal  
4 owners of the only family-owned crane  
5 rental business with its headquarters in  
6 the City of Philadelphia. Thackray Crane  
7 Rental started small in 1940 and has  
8 since grown in Philadelphia over the past  
9 70 years into a company with over 100  
10 employees, of which more than 60 are  
11 union operators.

12 Our real estate portfolio  
13 consists of industrial properties with  
14 very large parcels of ground, with very  
15 large buildings and very large parking  
16 lots. Some of our larger tenants include  
17 well-known companies such as AAA, as well  
18 as large international companies such as  
19 Hadco Metals of Israel, with over 60  
20 employees in their Northeast Philadelphia  
21 location, and more recently, Kuusakoski  
22 Recycling of Finland, who over the past  
23 two years has grown from ten employees to  
24 40 employees and who would like to  
25 establish the property we lease to them

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2 in Bridesburg as their U.S. headquarters.

3 I stress the words "would like"

4 to establish the property in Bridesburg

5 as their U.S. headquarters because they

6 may still choose another location outside

7 of Philadelphia. A big stumbling block

8 we are trying to overcome is the

9 additional increase of the stormwater

10 charges to the tune of over \$50,000 per

11 year for this property alone. Kuusakoski

12 is an international green business who

13 specializes in recycling computer and

14 other electronic devices. We want to

15 keep them in Philadelphia, and we need

16 your help to make that happen.

17 Of the 1,000 biggest losers on

18 the Philadelphia Water Department's list,

19 we own five properties, and our

20 stormwater fee for these properties have

21 increased an average of 1,000 percent,

22 which is an additional \$140,000 per year.

23 Over the past four years, we have cut

24 every expense possible to offset the loss

25 of revenue due to the Great Recession

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2 that we are in. The only area left to  
3 cut to offset the \$140,000 of stormwater  
4 fee increase is to cut jobs. I stand  
5 before you today to tell you that when a  
6 property or a business faces a \$30,000  
7 annual increase in an operating expense  
8 such as the water bill, the only way to  
9 deal with it is to lay someone off, and I  
10 am sad today I have had this experience  
11 and it is a shame.

12 I can assure you that if the  
13 stormwater fees are not corrected, more  
14 jobs will be lost. Some businesses will  
15 not survive. Other businesses will stay  
16 out or move out of Philadelphia. And I  
17 have also seen this happen several times  
18 over the past two years since the  
19 stormwater fees went into effect on July  
20 1st, 2010.

21 We want to continue to grow our  
22 business and we want to do this in  
23 Philadelphia, as we have for 70 years.  
24 The excessive stormwater fees are making  
25 this difficult to the point to which we

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2 are considering other options.

3 The Water Department credit  
4 system and alternative green  
5 infrastructure options are not  
6 financially feasible. When given the  
7 choice to spend over \$150,000 on a hole  
8 in the ground called a retention basin or  
9 to spend \$150,000 to simply purchase a  
10 property in another county that does not  
11 charge abusive stormwater fees, the  
12 choice is very easy to make.

13 What I am telling you is, the  
14 Water Department's credit system is  
15 designed to force property owners to  
16 either suck it up and pay the bill or go  
17 into debt and spend large amounts of  
18 capital on systems that are undesirable  
19 and economically unsound. We are here  
20 today to tell you that neither of these  
21 options are acceptable.

22 Finally, once again, we ask for  
23 City Council's help. Please help our  
24 businesses not only survive but thrive in  
25 Philadelphia by passing this legislation

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2 to establish an independent rate-making  
3 body.

4 On behalf of the Unified  
5 Business Owners Association, the Thackray  
6 Crane Rental family and WTA Real Estate,  
7 I'd like to thank Councilman Darrell  
8 Clarke, Councilman Bobby Henon and City  
9 Controller Alan Butkovitz.

10 Thank you very much.

11 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
12 you.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:  
15 Mr. Lasdon.

16 MR. LASDON: Good afternoon,  
17 Chairman Greenlee. Thank you for  
18 allowing me to testify today. My name is  
19 Dan Lasdon. I am the owner of Lasdon  
20 Real Estate. We've been developers and  
21 property managers in Philadelphia for  
22 over 40 years. I am here today on behalf  
23 of both my business and my fellow  
24 businessowners of the United Business  
25 Owners Association to support Council

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2 President Clarke's legislation to change  
3 how the Water Department sets its rate.

4 The current rate structure is a  
5 deterrent that will stifle future real  
6 estate development in the City of  
7 Philadelphia. I wish to especially thank  
8 City Council President Clarke,  
9 Councilmember Bobby Henon and the Council  
10 for giving us the opportunity to speak on  
11 this issue. We'd like to thank  
12 Controller Alan Butkovitz for his  
13 guidance and support of our organization,  
14 UBOA.

15 It is an inherent conflict of  
16 interest to have the party seeking the  
17 rate change decide the rate. It is  
18 imperative that we have an independent  
19 body overseeing the Water Department.

20 Lasdon Real Estate is developer  
21 and property manager of two large  
22 industrial properties. One of them is a  
23 4,000 square foot property at G and Erie  
24 across from Coca Cola that is right next  
25 to the Cardone space that we talked about

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2 earlier. It is not very easy when you  
3 have a lot of empty space, which we do,  
4 and have a huge building right next door  
5 totally empty. And also a 237,000 square  
6 foot property at State Road and Rhawn, as  
7 well as loft apartments here in  
8 Philadelphia.

9 In the industrial marketplace,  
10 it is difficult competing with the  
11 suburbs and South Jersey for tenants  
12 because of the City of Philadelphia wage  
13 tax and business privilege tax. To be  
14 competitive, our prices have to be a  
15 dollar and a half to two dollars a square  
16 foot less than our competition out of  
17 Philadelphia. The stormwater tax makes  
18 Philadelphia even more uncompetitive with  
19 a new hidden cost.

20 To give you some example of the  
21 impact, at our G and Erie complex, in  
22 2010 we paid \$231 a month. In 2014,  
23 3,404, a 1,500 percent increase in five  
24 years.

25 At our State Road and Rhawn

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2 complex, we were playing in 2010 \$115 a  
3 month, and that would go to 4,488 a  
4 month, or a 4,300 percent increase.

5 We also manage a six-story  
6 52-unit loft apartment building with  
7 adjacent 70-car parking with a monthly  
8 bill that will actually be reduced. This  
9 makes no sense. You are penalizing the  
10 industrial space for the land mass, which  
11 is a necessity for industrial use.

12 The availability of industrial  
13 jobs is one of the reasons to live in the  
14 City for many homeowners and renters. If  
15 the building operating cost in  
16 Philadelphia is high, not only would you  
17 not be able to attract new tenants to  
18 Philadelphia industrial buildings, but  
19 you would lose existing tenants also to  
20 the suburbs and South Jersey. And then  
21 if the jobs go, the homeowners and  
22 renters go where the jobs are.

23 It is imperative that we have a  
24 fair, independent rate-making body to  
25 oversee the Philadelphia Water Department



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2 future rate increases. It is a conflict  
3 of interest to have the Water Department  
4 seek a rate change and then decide the  
5 rate.

6 Thank you very much.

7 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
8 you.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And those  
11 numbers you gave are pretty illustrative,  
12 I would say.

13 Mr. Chapman.

14 MR. CHAPMAN: Good afternoon,  
15 Chairman Greenlee. Thank you for  
16 allowing us to testify today. My name is  
17 Michael Chapman. I am Chief Operating  
18 Officer of Chapman Automotive Group and  
19 also the Vice President of the Board of  
20 the Automobile Dealers Association of  
21 Greater Philadelphia, as well as a Board  
22 member of the UBOA.

23 I am here today on behalf of  
24 both my business, the UBOA and the ADAGP  
25 to support President Clarke's legislation

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2 to change the Home Rule Charter so that  
3 Council may appoint an independent  
4 rate-making body over the Philadelphia  
5 Water Department.

6 The Auto Dealers Association is  
7 a regional organization of 180 car  
8 dealers. Currently in the City of  
9 Philadelphia there's only 19 dealers  
10 left, down from 40. We employ about 180  
11 individuals -- I'm sorry; 1,800, most of  
12 whom live in the City of Philadelphia and  
13 pay Philadelphia City wage tax.

14 I also represent the UB0A, who  
15 has over 100 members across various  
16 industries who have about 18,000 local  
17 jobs.

18 Only two years ago did we start  
19 to hear about the Water Department's new  
20 stormwater management fee structure  
21 through an insert in our water bills.  
22 When we met with them, we were told that  
23 they had been working on this system for  
24 over ten years, but at no point did it  
25 occur to anyone to reach out to any of

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2 the industries that would be most  
3 negatively impacted despite their  
4 literature frequently citing our  
5 businesses and industries as the thousand  
6 biggest losers.

7 All of this was implemented  
8 during the worst economical conditions  
9 the nation has seen in years. Their  
10 proposal would increase rates on many of  
11 our members tenfold. On top of the  
12 Administration's recent property and  
13 sales tax increases, many auto dealers,  
14 manufacturers and distributors in the  
15 City are fearful for their ability to  
16 stay in operation. Our groups want to  
17 support the sustainability efforts of the  
18 Nutter Administration, but we do not  
19 support the idea the businesses on which  
20 the most rain falls must be the ones most  
21 penalized. So the Auto Dealers  
22 Association, the UBOA Council -- or  
23 support Council President Clarke's Bill  
24 120177 and Resolution 120188. It is  
25 clear that the Water Department cannot be

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2 trusted to make policy decisions on its  
3 own and instead an independent  
4 rate-making authority is necessary to  
5 ensure that all other public policy  
6 considerations are taken into account  
7 when setting water rates in an open and  
8 transparent fashion.

9 I'd like to thank President  
10 Clarke, Councilman Henon and the other  
11 gentlemen here today.

12 The Water Department talked  
13 about bond ratings and future  
14 certainties. I think us as  
15 businessowners need to have those kind of  
16 certainties from the Water Department for  
17 us as well as our employees. My family  
18 has spent and borrowed over \$10 million  
19 over the last 24 months and the next 12  
20 months to build and renovate dealerships,  
21 all of them union jobs, all of the  
22 companies out of the City of  
23 Philadelphia. My family has been  
24 operating car dealerships in the City of  
25 Philadelphia since 1955 at John B. White

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2 Ford.

3 Most businesses have the  
4 ability to leave the City and go across  
5 the bridge to New Jersey or go out to the  
6 suburbs. Car dealers are kind of deemed  
7 a market area and you're not allowed to  
8 move a mile either way due to state and  
9 manufacturers' rules and guidelines. So  
10 it's very difficult for us to leave. We  
11 either sell our businesses to somebody  
12 else and we move on or we close down  
13 shop.

14 Again, we appreciate your  
15 opportunity of hearing us out today.  
16 Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
18 you. Thank you all.

19 (Applause.)

20 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Hold on  
21 one second.

22 Councilman Henon.

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,  
24 Mr. Chairman.

25 I just want to thank you all

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2 for coming in and testifying here. These  
3 are tough decisions that confront us all.  
4 We don't want to see anybody leave. We  
5 don't want to see any shop closed. We  
6 understand each and everybody's -- each  
7 and every one of you have opportunities  
8 to go elsewhere. We don't want you to  
9 leave. We want you to stay.

10 This is a step in the right  
11 direction, I believe, for trying to  
12 create a process that is independent,  
13 more inclusive and respects  
14 family-sustaining businesses of the jobs  
15 here in the City of Philadelphia.

16 So I want to say thank you for  
17 coming in. And for the record, it was  
18 stated earlier that there hasn't been any  
19 drastic increases of any of the  
20 stormwater fee that has been imposed upon  
21 the City of Philadelphia here, and from  
22 hearing your testimony and conversations  
23 and many of your businesses and your  
24 organization and others throughout the  
25 City of Philadelphia, I don't think that

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2 is quite a true statement.

3 So we hear you loud and clear,  
4 and we take everything you say seriously  
5 as we move forward with this process.

6 Thank you for coming.

7 (Thank you.)

8 MR. LASDON: I have a question.  
9 In the suburbs, nothing has happened. We  
10 manage a couple industry buildings in the  
11 suburbs. They don't have a problem with  
12 stormwater. Why? Philadelphia has a  
13 problem with stormwater. The suburbs  
14 have none.

15 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, you  
16 know, I'm not going to speculate as to  
17 what's going on in the suburbs. I'm  
18 sorry I can't answer your question.

19 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: We can  
20 only talk about the City.

21 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Hold on.  
23 I think Councilman Green.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: I just want  
25 to say that there are many factors that

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2 go into stormwater runoff issues, one of  
3 course, which probably doesn't exist much  
4 in the suburbs or as much in the suburbs,  
5 is the level of impervious surfaces  
6 concentrated in particular areas, et  
7 cetera, which is obviously more a problem  
8 in the City than elsewhere. But, for  
9 example, if you take the entire built  
10 environment into account, there are lots  
11 of public buildings. There are lots of  
12 public streets that are all -- sidewalks,  
13 et cetera, that are all impervious  
14 surfaces and that the public uses,  
15 residents use to get to their jobs  
16 wherever they are. And so factors like  
17 that, who's responsible for all the  
18 impervious surfaces, who benefits from  
19 the impervious surfaces, residents  
20 getting to and from work, et cetera, were  
21 not taken into account in the  
22 distribution of this formula that  
23 penalizes industrial and commercial  
24 properties where those residents are  
25 going to work or not if we lose those



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2 businesses.

3 So there's many factors that  
4 would be brought out if we had an  
5 independent panel. And I want to thank  
6 you also for coming in and sharing your  
7 story with us.

8 MR. LASDON: One other quick  
9 point. The Philadelphia Code required up  
10 until recently that you must -- you had  
11 to have -- all of your water had to go  
12 into the City system. You are not  
13 allowed to have any system of your own.  
14 Everything had to go into the City  
15 system. And then all the sudden, two  
16 years ago, they said, Oh, no, no, no.  
17 Now we want you to keep your water.

18 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
19 you.

20 I have three more names here.  
21 I don't know if they're still here.  
22 Kerry Pacifico, Alan Levin, John  
23 Strotbeck.

24 Is there anyone else who wants  
25 to testify?

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2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I think  
4 you kind of see our feelings up here.

5 Mr. Pacifico, why don't you  
6 start. Go ahead. Thank you.

7 MR. PACIFICO: I'm Kerry  
8 Pacifico, Sr., better known as the old  
9 man of the Auto Mall and probably the old  
10 man of all the automobile dealers in the  
11 City. I've been a Ford dealer 58 years.  
12 Eight years before that I was a  
13 Kaiser-Frazer dealer, which you probably  
14 never even heard of. It was an ill-fated  
15 venture that I backed into it. My dad  
16 had an old building that he didn't put no  
17 use to it and nobody else wanted the  
18 Kaiser-Frazer franchise, so I became a  
19 dealer.

20 In 1954, I landed the Ford  
21 franchise. I'm still an operating  
22 dealer. I go to work every day, and I've  
23 been getting aggravated more and more. I  
24 listened to everybody here today, and  
25 it's mind boggling. It's beyond my

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2 comprehension. I'm not used to bond  
3 ratings and everything that goes on.  
4 It's over my head.

5 But I can tell you that  
6 February 2009, my Controller called me  
7 down and said, Boss, I got a stack of  
8 bills here from the Water Department.

9 I looked at them. I was more  
10 confused than he was. They look like  
11 aerial photos of all of my grounds that I  
12 own or rent or lease, and they were  
13 painted a pretty green and it says  
14 impervious water. Blacktop I understand  
15 and roof materials I understand, and that  
16 was the gist.

17 They said if you don't get rid  
18 of that water, it's my water, we're going  
19 to charge you \$7,150 a year the first  
20 year.

21 2009 was hectic. The Auto Mall  
22 and the auto industry was upside down.  
23 General Motors went bankrupt. Chrysler  
24 went bankrupt. Seventy-one hundred and  
25 fifty dollars was not my concern. I

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2 didn't pay attention to it.

3 2012, today, that number went

4 to 32,400. That caught my attention.

5 Because two more years from now, it goes

6 to \$106,800. I've got five lots, three

7 for the buildings, one for my airport

8 parking and one employee lot, \$106,000.

9 Tell them, I got to lay off ten

10 people. I got to raise the price of the

11 car \$50 if you got to buy a car in

12 Philadelphia. I don't know what we'll

13 do, but we'll survive, I hope. I've got

14 a young daughter 45 years old and I'm

15 hoping she follows in my footsteps.

16 She's already recognized as a dealer

17 between Hyundai, Mazda and Ford. She's

18 already on the paper.

19 This is really no notification,

20 no chatting, no description. We were

21 fortunate enough Council President Anna

22 Verna scheduled a short meeting with the

23 Water Department people, and they gave us

24 a lot of apologies. They didn't know we

25 had a beer association. They didn't know

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2 we had an Auto Mall association. We  
3 spent \$40 million trying to tell you  
4 where to come down east so you can buy a  
5 car. Forty million dollars, but she  
6 didn't know about it. I guess they  
7 didn't buy cars. Didn't they buy a car  
8 in the suburbs and see a parking lot?  
9 Didn't they know what effect this was  
10 going to have on us? You know, it's just  
11 mind boggling. I just can't picture it.

12 It gets worse, but I'm not  
13 going to bore you. I'm going to talk  
14 about two of the lots, one of the lots.  
15 I heard a lot of comments from the Water  
16 Department meeting. This is revenue  
17 neutral. They're not going to get a dime  
18 out of it. Everything go up on my lots,  
19 they're going to go down on somebody  
20 else's lots. That's revenue neutral.  
21 But when you're on the bottom end, you  
22 don't buy that.

23 I've got a lot 6701 Norwitch  
24 Drive. You'd have to put the GPS to find  
25 it. It's in back of my Ford building,

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2 and right across from there is the  
3 railroad tracks. The high speed line  
4 goes by every day. That's where it's  
5 located. It's only a three-block street  
6 named there, I think, of former Mayor  
7 Norwitch. Mayor Norwitch, it was named  
8 after him.

9 Now, the Water Department told  
10 me about the impervious ground. I'm  
11 computer illiterate. My daughter went  
12 into the Internet and she found me a  
13 whole half a dozen 106,000 square foot  
14 ground. I looked at one in particular  
15 and I was a little puzzled. I didn't see  
16 the lot. I said, Wait a minute,  
17 something has got to be wrong. I was  
18 dumb. It's got 106,000 square foot roof.  
19 No ground. And under this 106,000 roof,  
20 they got 35 stories. They got 1,200  
21 employees. They got 1,200 rooms, 1,200  
22 hotel rooms. They see -- 1,500 people a  
23 day they feed. I can go on and on and  
24 on. When they're filled up, they got  
25 2,000 bed sheets to wash and so forth and

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2 so forth.

3                   They pay exactly what I'm  
4 paying. I went from \$158 a year. I've  
5 only got one little bathroom. I had to  
6 build a little building, by the way, to  
7 comply with -- I bought it from PIDC. I  
8 couldn't just put blacktop. I had to put  
9 a building up, 10,000 square foot  
10 building. I put 30 foot piles under the  
11 building so I wouldn't sink. It's that  
12 kind of ground in Eastwick.

13                   So I get these numbers, I say  
14 it's impossible. How could I be paying  
15 \$158 in 2009 -- and this all came on the  
16 Water Department sheets. It goes to  
17 \$12,150 in 2014. Hundred fifty-eight  
18 dollars, I don't know whether it's 1,500  
19 percent increase or something. It sounds  
20 like it's more. You can't do it. I  
21 mean, I don't know where you find  
22 \$106,000 over night.

23                   Now, on one of the other  
24 conversations -- and I'll flash back to  
25 the Water Department -- she was a bright

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2 young lay. She was a PR. I think we had  
3 the Water Commissioner. And they kept  
4 apologizing. And she said to me, Well,  
5 she said, there's a way you can rectify  
6 all of this. We can get you back to the  
7 \$7,150 a month. I became all ears. We  
8 had a half a dozen members with us.

9 What do I do?

10 Well, I can't tell you what to  
11 do, but I can give you the names of three  
12 engineering companies. They do a lot of  
13 work for the Water Department. They're  
14 all reliable. I can't know to name one  
15 of them, but I'll give you the three.

16 I got the three names. 2009  
17 goes by. We beat the recession, the  
18 crunch. We're alive. We start  
19 circulating to get some numbers. We  
20 couldn't get numbers unless you advance  
21 some fees. So we advance the fees and we  
22 got some guesstimates. The guesstimates  
23 came back. Under each lot, have to be  
24 the equivalent of a swimming pool, 40  
25 feet long, 20 feet wide, 10 feet high. I



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2 would have to take one water off of those  
3 lots to fill my swimming pool. After  
4 that, the water goes into the regular  
5 drains. It cost \$400,000 a lot, \$2  
6 million to go back to \$7,100 a month.

7 Tell me what to do. How can I  
8 rationalize that? When I have a  
9 department head meeting, I can tell,  
10 we're going to carve this up and I'm  
11 going to charge you \$5 more for a brake  
12 job. We'll do it. We'll make it up.  
13 But I can't make up this kind of number.

14 One of the non-member dealers  
15 of the Auto Mall said he would like if I  
16 could just pass on his little story.  
17 Enterprise Rent-a-Car, they bought the  
18 Meissner Chevrolet building in 2008.  
19 They moved in 2008. Not a mention was  
20 made. They paid for their water business  
21 a number that is kind of impossible to  
22 believe. I've got it here somewhere and  
23 I will read it to you.

24 They're going to pay -- they  
25 started off at \$4,330 a year. They will

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2 be paying \$57,000 a year come 2014.

3 They're sorry they bought that building.

4 They used to be my tenants. They're

5 sorry they bought the building.

6 Now, when they moved out of my

7 building, I've got an empty building for

8 three years. What do I do with it?

9 And let me tell you another

10 true story. We got to look for a rent.

11 We haven't been very successful. We

12 wanted \$7,500 a month. Somebody came

13 down after a long wait, they offered us

14 six. We passed on it. We came down to

15 seven. They called and come back and

16 said, Hey, we'd like to talk to you

17 again.

18 I'm going to talk to them, with

19 my lawyers all ready, because how do I

20 talk to them? I come up and compromise

21 at 6,500, we sign a deal, shake hands and

22 put it on paper. They knew the real

23 estate taxes. They know the use and

24 occupancy. What do I tell them about the

25 \$21,000 that they're going to have to pay

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2 the water bill to get rid of the water on  
3 this track, \$21,000? That's 2,000 a  
4 month extra. There's no deal to be made.

5 Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like  
6 to thank all of you. I'd like to thank  
7 all of you, Councilman Henon, Councilman  
8 Greenlee Co-Chair and President Darrell  
9 Clarke. I'd like to thank you. At least  
10 you opened the door so we can have some  
11 conversation. It was a closed door  
12 prior.

13 Now, I hope I'm being recorded  
14 somewhere and I'm around when you guys  
15 get together and come on down and talk to  
16 us again or have us back in. But we need  
17 help, and I think you know my dilemma. I  
18 thank you very much.

19 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I  
20 understand. I appreciate that. Thank  
21 you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. PACIFICO: I apologize for  
24 getting emotional, but I'll tell you,  
25 it's hard to understand.

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2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: I

3 understand.

4 Mr. Levin.

5 MR. LEVIN: Wow, that's hard to  
6 follow. Good job. I only hope when I'm  
7 your age, I'm as sharp as you. I don't  
8 think I'm as sharp now.

9 Okay. Good morning, City  
10 Councilmembers. First, I'd like to thank  
11 President Clarke for allowing us to  
12 testify today in front of Council and  
13 also Councilman Henon for allowing us to  
14 present in front of the caucus a few  
15 weeks ago and City Controller Butkovitz  
16 for actually his guidance and support  
17 through this whole process, which most of  
18 us are businesspeople, we're not  
19 politicians. This is my first time ever  
20 in City Council Chambers. So I'm a  
21 little bit nervous here.

22 My name is Alan Levin. I'm the  
23 President owner of Northeast Building  
24 Products Corporation and I also sit on  
25 the Executive Board of the UBOA.

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2 Northeast Building Products is a  
3 second-generation wholesale manufacturer  
4 and distributor of energy-efficient vinyl  
5 replacement windows, entry doors and  
6 other home remodeling products. Our  
7 company was actually mentioned by  
8 President Obama in his 2009 State of the  
9 Union Address as a success story of the  
10 American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.  
11 President Obama also sent the Secretary  
12 of Housing and Urban Development, Shawn  
13 Donovan, into our plant with Mayor Nutter  
14 and Governor Rendell and Councilwoman  
15 Jannie Blackwell, because we were doing  
16 PHA work and they were trying to tout new  
17 jobs that were created from the stimulus.

18 Northeast Building Products,  
19 we've always been a proud Philadelphia  
20 manufacturer. We always tout that we're  
21 a Philadelphia manufacturer, and we never  
22 imagined that we would be under financial  
23 pressure from the City to move out to a  
24 more business-friendly geographic area.

25 As we are aware, it's tough

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2 economic times. We fight the fight every  
3 day, competition coming in from overseas,  
4 out of the City, out of the state, and  
5 also we're fighting tougher Philadelphia  
6 tax structure with City wage tax and  
7 business privilege tax. On top of that,  
8 we're now getting slammed with this new  
9 stormwater charge, which may just push us  
10 as well as other businesses outside the  
11 City.

12 It all started about two years  
13 ago when we received the topical surveys  
14 showing our properties with our new  
15 stormwater charges from the Philadelphia  
16 Water Department, with very little  
17 explanation. I couldn't believe it. The  
18 bill kind of got the ball rolling for the  
19 UBOA to start. This is why we're here  
20 today.

21 What my letter from the Water  
22 Department told me was that they were  
23 raising my bill a whopping 426 percent.  
24 They raised my bill on my properties from  
25 24,000 a year to \$128,000 a year,

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2 \$104,000 a year increase. My immediate  
3 reaction was, this is the final straw.  
4 I'm moving. We're getting our 300-plus  
5 manufacturing jobs, all City workers,  
6 we're going. We're moving to Pennsauken.  
7 They court us all the time. And now Rich  
8 Gorodesky from Colliers can explain that  
9 real estate agents are actually using the  
10 stormwater charge against Philadelphia.  
11 They actually send us flyers saying, Why  
12 pay stormwater charges? Come to  
13 Pennsauken. Come to Audubon. Come  
14 anywhere. Don't go to Philadelphia.  
15 Come and save a lot of money.

16 We truly don't want to move. I  
17 love Philadelphia. I was born and raised  
18 here. My father started his business in  
19 Bridesburg with one employee in an 1,800  
20 square foot garage with a lot of guts and  
21 stupidity, but that's why we're here  
22 fighting today. We're not ready to move.  
23 We're fighting because we want to stay in  
24 this city. We want to keep the people  
25 here.

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2 Mayor Nutter and the Water

3 Department talked about the green

4 initiative and being a greener city, but

5 what good is green roofs and planters and

6 porous concrete if we have no jobs left

7 in Philadelphia because every business is

8 going to pick up and move that can move

9 and we'll have 40 percent unemployment in

10 the City by the time we're done with

11 this?

12 So that's why there needs to be

13 an independent rate-making body for the

14 Philadelphia Water Department, such as

15 PGW and PECO, so these type of decisions

16 can be debated to the full effect and the

17 decisions can be weighed, not arbitrary

18 decisions by Mr. Neukrug without weighing

19 in the entire effects on businesses too

20 and the residents of Philadelphia.

21 So I look forward to Northeast

22 Building Products staying in Philadelphia

23 and thriving as a Philadelphia

24 manufacturer and Philadelphia really

25 continuing to become a premiere city.



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2 So I want to thank all the  
3 Councilmembers here today. Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank  
5 you, Mr. Levin. I appreciate it.

6 (Applause.)

7 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:  
8 Mr. Strotbeck.

9 MR. STROTBECK: Good afternoon.  
10 I'll be brief. It's late. First, thank  
11 you, Council, for having us in. I'm here  
12 in support of UBOA, and I am a  
13 manufacturer in North Philly. My name is  
14 John Strotbeck. I own Boathouse Sports.  
15 I started Boathouse Sports 20 years ago  
16 with one person. Today I employ 250.

17 I have a 120,000 square foot  
18 building that I invested in in 1999. At  
19 the time, I had 68 employees and I was  
20 being courted by the states of  
21 Mississippi, North Carolina, South  
22 Caroline and Tennessee to move the  
23 operation there. I decided to keep it in  
24 Philly because I've always been loyal to  
25 the City of Philadelphia. I have had

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2 wonderful luck and success in this city  
3 in numerous ways. I've served in many  
4 non-profits in the City to help mostly  
5 educate underprivileged and entrepreneurs  
6 in the inner city. The way I give back  
7 is education and creating jobs.

8 Simply, I want to throw some  
9 numbers out to you. My building is  
10 120,000 square feet. I'm on five acres.  
11 My water/sewage bill was probably in the  
12 low thousands from 2008 -- or 2007, 2008,  
13 2009. This year it's in the neighborhood  
14 of 14,000, and by 2015 it's supposed to  
15 be \$36,000.

16 That's simple numbers that I  
17 don't quite understand or can't quite  
18 comprehend.

19 The bigger one is this: I pay  
20 real estate taxes, business privilege  
21 tax, net profit tax, U&O tax. The  
22 stormwater tax, I'll call it, is nearly  
23 80 percent of those four combined. How  
24 can my four taxes that pay for police,  
25 roads, services, sanitation, I suppose a

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2 little bit of City Council, how can the  
3 stormwater tax be 80 percent of that when  
4 all it's doing is putting water down the  
5 drain? Somebody has to explain that to  
6 me. It just does not make sense to me.

7 That's it. Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you  
10 very much.

11 Councilman Green.

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,  
13 Mr. Chairman.

14 I want to thank you all for  
15 your testimony. You all are building  
16 owners, I think. You don't lease. If  
17 you did lease, it would be -- and had a  
18 triple-net lease, as most industrial  
19 tenants do, you would make a different  
20 decision perhaps at the end of your  
21 lease, and I think that's something that  
22 I haven't heard discussed here today,  
23 and, that is, first of all, you could  
24 avoid 36,000 or \$158,000 simply by moving  
25 outside of Philadelphia County into an

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2 industrial building that is probably  
3 newer, probably -- and about the same  
4 price per square foot.

5 So we are setting ourselves up,  
6 as people's leases end in industrial  
7 properties over the next five years, for  
8 mass defections for manufacturing  
9 operations that are capable of putting  
10 their equipment on a flatbed and moving  
11 it a very short distance, setting up and  
12 being in place. And that is not  
13 hypothetical. That is real and  
14 extraordinarily dangerous for jobs in the  
15 next economy.

16 Also, if you're in one of those  
17 situations and you don't own your  
18 building or if you do own your building,  
19 what are the -- and you can respond to  
20 this when I finish this statement. How  
21 much are you going to invest in fixtures,  
22 in new equipment from your manufacturing  
23 facility in Philadelphia County as you're  
24 considering whether or not this is going  
25 to continue or we're going to be able to

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2 do something about it? I'll stop there.

3 MR. PACIFICO: Councilman, I'd

4 like to address that just for a minute.

5 I wish I could put into words what you

6 just mentioned and what I am thinking.

7 There is a difference. I can't sign that

8 lease with that proposed tenant. I know

9 the \$22,000 bill he's going to get, he's

10 either going to sue me or shoot me,

11 either one. You got to figure it out.

12 That's \$2,000 more a month in rent. If

13 he couldn't pay me six, why is he going

14 to pay me eight?

15 One other thing. It might be a

16 little deep, but I think it's starting to

17 surface. You've devalued my value of my

18 property. Really devalued. So am I

19 going to go back to the tax board or real

20 estate board, Hey, you got to reduce

21 this, I can't do anything with it.

22 I can't take my franchise and

23 move it to the other side of town. Ford

24 Motor Company says you're there or you're

25 not there, period. I can't do it. So I

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2 can't pack up and go home. I can't tear  
3 up the blacktop. We got a problem,  
4 serious problem.

5 I'll get off the bandwagon.

6 MR. LEVIN: And where we're at,  
7 we're right at Aramingo and Church.  
8 Directly across the street from us,  
9 there's a building that's been empty for  
10 ten years. We looked at it on and off.  
11 We've talked, negotiated. It would be a  
12 tear-down, but it's all concrete,  
13 impervious surface. We talked about  
14 putting either a storage facility there,  
15 even manufacturing. I couldn't even  
16 consider that now. I mean, when I look  
17 at that building now, it literally is a  
18 dilapidated mess that will sit there for  
19 the next hundred years, because no one  
20 will ever buy a 118,000 square foot  
21 building like that. There's no selling  
22 feature to it.

23 If you look on the other side  
24 of me, we have two truck terminals, which  
25 are owned by the same gentleman, who has

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2 them up for sale now, because he has to  
3 get out because of stormwater charges,  
4 because it's all impervious, it's a  
5 trucking terminal.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: And for the  
7 record, industrial properties, commercial  
8 properties are valued based on the cash  
9 flow they can produce, and if you're  
10 taking a cash flow hit of \$158,000 a  
11 year, that property is worth a lot less.

12 MR. LEVIN: Right.

13 COUNCILMAN GREEN: It's worth  
14 at least two and a half million dollars  
15 less based on that payment. Is that a  
16 fair statement?

17 MR. LEVIN: Yes.

18 MR. PACIFICO: Never thought  
19 about that.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

21 MR. LEVIN: Thank you very  
22 much.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank you  
24 all very much.

25 (Applause.)

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2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: No one  
3 else here to testify?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That  
6 concludes our public hearing, and  
7 momentarily we'll go into the public  
8 meeting.

9 (Pause.)

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: That  
11 "momentarily" is over. This is the  
12 meeting -- we're almost finished, please.  
13 Because it's hard to hear up here.

14 This is the meeting of the  
15 Committee on Law and Government, and the  
16 Chair recognizes Councilman Kenney on  
17 Ordinance No. 120177.

18 THE CLERK: Thank you,  
19 Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.  
20 120177 be reported out of this Committee  
21 with a favorable recommendation and a  
22 request made for rules suspension to  
23 allow for first reading at our next  
24 Council session.

25 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Is there



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2 a second?

3 (Duly seconded.)

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: It's been

5 moved and seconded.

6 All in favor please say aye.

7 (Aye.)

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Opposed?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Hearing

11 none, Bill No. 120177 is reported out of

12 this Committee with a favorable

13 recommendation with a rules suspension.

14 Councilman Kenney on Resolution

15 120188.

16 THE CLERK: Thank you, Mr.

17 Chairman. I move that Resolution No.

18 120188 be amended accordingly as has been

19 circulated to the members of the

20 Committee.

21 (Duly seconded.)

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: It's been

23 moved and seconded.

24 All in favor?

25 (Aye.)

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2 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Opposed?

3 (No response.)

4 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Hearing

5 none, the amendment passes.

6 Councilman Kenney.

7 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,

8 Mr. Chairman. I move that Resolution No.

9 120188, as amended, be reported out of

10 this Committee with a favorable

11 recommendation.

12 (Duly seconded.)

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: It's been

14 moved and seconded.

15 All in favor?

16 (Aye.)

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Opposed?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Hearing

20 none, Resolution 120188, as amended, is

21 reported out of this Committee with a

22 favorable recommendation.

23 No further business before this

24 Committee, the meeting is adjourned.

25 Thank you all very much.

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2 (Applause.)

3 (Committee on Law and

4 Government concluded at 3:55 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the  
proceedings, evidence and objections are  
contained fully and accurately in the  
stenographic notes taken by me upon the  
foregoing matter on April 19, 2012, and that  
this is a true and correct transcript of same.

-----  
MICHELE L. MURPHY  
RPR-Notary Public

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