COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, April 2, 2018
1:50 p.m.

PRESENT:
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR., CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE L. PARKER
COUNCILWOMAN BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN
COUNCILMAN AL TAUBENBERGER

BILL 170956 - An ordinance amending Chapter 17-1300 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Philadelphia 21st Century Minimum Wage and Benefits Standard," by revising provisions...

RESOLUTION 170971 - Resolution authorizing the Committee on Commerce & Economic Development to hold hearings regarding initiatives to support employee ownership...

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Good afternoon. This hearing is now called to order. This is a public hearing of the City Council's Committee on Commerce and Economic Development. The purpose of this public hearing is to hear testimony on Resolution No. 170971 and Bill No. 170956.

I recognize the presence of a quorum with Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown, Councilman Green, Councilwoman Parker, Councilman Johnson, and Councilman Taubenberger, along with myself as Chair.

Would the Clerk please read the title of the bill and resolution.

THE CLERK: Bill No. 170956, an ordinance amending Chapter 17-1300 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Philadelphia 21st Century Minimum Wage and Benefits Standard," by revising provisions regarding waivers of minimum wage requirements, all under certain terms and conditions; and

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Resolution No. 170971, a resolution authorizing the Committee on Commerce & Economic Development to hold hearings regarding initiatives to support employee ownership, including as a retirement strategy for small business owners.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Ms. Williams.

Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for your patience. We had a full docket today, interesting testimony, and I don't see why that's not going to continue this afternoon.

I'd like to recognize Councilman Green, who is the author of the resolution we're going to hear today.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to thank the panel for being here this afternoon and my colleagues for being here for this testimony, and it deals with an issue of employee stock ownership programs, ESOPs.

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And coming from a banking background and at one point being a securities lawyer, I had one perspective of ESOPs, but having an opportunity to talk with Kevin McPhillips and the Pennsylvania Center for Employee Ownership as well as the Philadelphia Area Cooperative Alliance, I really got a new concept of how ESOPs could be used as a way to promote and continue entrepreneurship and address poverty.

As I have often said, the largest issue in the City of Philadelphia is poverty, and I think ESOPs are just one tool of addressing that issue. And for many business owners, and having represented business owners as an attorney or as a banker, sometimes when they come to the end of their entrepreneurship time, want to find a way to transition from being an owner to transition that business to some of their longtime employees and there's not all the resources able to do that. So I

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think ESOPs under the new concept of how we're using ESOPs -- and we'll talk about that today -- provides an opportunity to provide a transition from an employer to an employee to continue that business. Because what will happen sometimes, if an employer does not have sufficient resources, he or she may want to retire, but most of their wealth is in their business, and so they may not have the ability to retire like they want to or they may just close the business, which will then cause a challenge for those employees who now may become unemployed who may have worked at that business for a number of years.

So this is a way of transitioning to keep those businesses, especially in some of our commercial corridors -- I know Councilwoman Parker has been a strong component of commercial corridor development as well as Councilman Jones and Councilman Johnson, who are all District Councilmembers, and

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the at-large members here, both Councilwoman Brown and Councilman Taubenberger, who also come from a small business perspective, can really relate to that.

So I think using ESOPs as a way and bringing this concept to the City of Philadelphia is a good idea. I know that it's been used in other parts of the Commonwealth as a way of transitioning ownership from an owner to the employees and maintaining entrepreneurship and maintaining jobs and communities across the Commonwealth, but also hopefully going forward here in the City of Philadelphia.

So thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman, for raising this issue, a worthwhile transitioning of wealth and business and opportunity and jobs and taxation.

I see Councilman Taubenberger would like to be recognized.

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COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I look forward to these hearings, Mr. Chairman.

I do also want to acknowledge a very special guest and also a family friend from Windsor, Canada, Mr. Ray Dilessi (ph).

Mr. Dilessi, please stand and be recognized by my colleagues. So thank you for coming.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Welcome to the City of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Windsor, Canada.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman.

So, Ms. Williams, will you read -- are there any others to testify on the resolution or comment on the resolution?

(No response.)

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing none, can you read the first panel of witnesses to testify, Ms. Williams.

THE CLERK: Kevin McPhillips, James Steiker, and William Stockwell.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Again, welcome to City Council. Please have a seat at the witness table. Just remember when you begin your testimony, state your name for the record.

MR. McPHILLIPS: Good afternoon, and thank you for having us. My name is Kevin McPhillips and I'm the Executive Director and CEO of a relatively new non-profit organization called the Pennsylvania Center for Employee Ownership. We exist for one purpose, to raise awareness about a remarkable program that dramatically improves the lives of citizens in Philadelphia, throughout the Commonwealth, and the nation as a whole.

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It's called employee ownership and, in specific, the Employee Stock Ownership Plan, or ESOP.

We're here today because we want to ask you to allow us to help you and the City of Philadelphia.

I'd like to begin by thanking the distinguished members of Council for the opportunity to share a few thoughts, and I'd like to especially commend Councilman at-large Derek Green and his staff for taking the critically important step that you've done today to improve lives and decrease the wealth gap that is strangling so many of our citizens today. Employee ownership can help to do that.

I'd like to take just a moment for a personal note. I grew up in Northeast Philadelphia and I'm proud to say that my father was a dedicated member and leader in City government for over 25 years. The City and its many extraordinary offerings were centrally important to my family and to myself, and

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that's why we're here today. It's within that context that I'd like to share a couple stories.

In 2002, a man with a successful distribution company in the small town of Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania turned 75. It was time to sell his business and spend more time with his wife and his family. He had 40 employees, and he considered them family as well.

Unfortunately, as they were in a remote location, all offers to purchase the business included moving it away and laying off 40 people. He couldn't do that. These were his neighbors.

Instead, he learned about a plan that would work. He sold the business for the same amount of money offered to his employees. His employees paid nothing.

Fast forward 15 years to today, the business has over 200 employees, and all 40 of the original employees have

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more than enough funds to retire today, some with seven figures. That's warehouse workers, truck drivers, laborers, office assistants, as well as management.

In a Forbes Magazine story last year, it was related that two twin sisters graduated school in Oregon and went to work at a fast food establishment. After one year, they received a five cent raise. They knew that was not sustainable. So they went to a local grocery store called WinCo -- WinCo is kind of like an Aldi on the West Coast -- seeking employment. The grocery chain was an employee-owned company, but they only had one opening. So one sister took a job there stocking shelves and another sister took an administrative job at a law firm. Both worked hard and both prospered.

Fast forward 23 years, the sister at the law firm regularly contributed to her 401(k) program, and by

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the age of 43 had almost $70,000 saved. Very good for someone at such a young age. The sister of the grocery store, which was employee-owned, did not participate in their 401(k) plan, but rather did have an ESOP account. At the age of 43, still stocking shelves overnight, she had just over $1 million in her account and had contributed none of her own money.

So what is this program? Well, in 1974, Congress passed a law that is part of ERISA, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act. The law says that an owner can sell some or all of their business, 10 percent, 20 percent, 49 percent or even 100 percent, to their employees. The employees pay nothing. Rather, the business takes on a note, a mortgage, if you will, to pay off the owner over time. The federal government and the State of Pennsylvania turned around and said, look, if you do this and you meet certain business requirements,

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you never have to pay taxes again on your profits for whatever portion is owned by the employees. The tax savings serve to pay off the mortgage. Once paid, those funds can be used for any number of things, most particularly growth.

Some of the successful companies right here in Philadelphia that are employee-owned include Pennoni Associates, many of whom are here today, the Graham Company, also here today, McKean Defense down at the Navy Yard, Urban Engineers, Cardone, TransAmerican Office Furniture, ALMO Corp., and Crown Cork and Seal. Yet in all of Philadelphia, there are less than two dozen in total.

Other recognizable employee-owned companies include Wawa, Sheetz, which is the sort of Wawa of the Western PA, the Dansko Shoe Company in Chester County, Bradford White Water Heaters right in Montgomery County, New Belgium Beer, King Arthur Flour, and

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Publix, the largest grocery store chain in the nation.

And yet very few people know about ESOPs and even fewer of them understand them.

In private industry, the days of real pensions are largely over. As the baby boomers age, we're on the cusp of a silver tsunami. It's estimated that 4.5 million companies will transact over the next ten years, 4.5 million, and yet 30 percent of business owners over the age of 55 have no succession plan. None. Worse yet, 30 percent of employees over the age of 55 have zero retirement savings. None. And fully 60 percent of American workers over 55 have less than $50,000.

So what's going to become of our citizens? What's the future of Social Security? How will they be cared for and who is going to pay for it?

Employee ownership offers a stark contrast. Based on a recent report

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from the -- the report on economic well-being by the non-profit National Center for Employee Ownership out of Oakland, employee owners have 30 percent higher wages, 30 percent higher wages than non-employee owners; on average, two and a half times higher retirement; five times longer job tenure; and are 92 percent less likely to be laid off. Those numbers, Councilmember, are exaggerated within women and minority populations.

Today you're going to hear from a recognized national legal expert, my colleague James Steiker, on the community value of employee ownership. We're going to hear from a fourth-generation Philadelphia company CEO, Mr. William Stockwell, who chose to keep his company here in Philadelphia. And, most importantly, you're going to hear from the company employees whose lives have been changed forever.

Members of Council, here is

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what employee ownership can do for the City of Philadelphia: It will keep jobs and companies here. ESOP companies are on average much more productive, surprise, surprise. That means job growth. Job growth means an increase in the tax base.

Employee ownership will contribute to retirement and correcting wealth disparity, and it will not cost the City a thing.

We're asking the Council for four things. Number one, we ask you to put the full weight of your voices and your public relation engine behind supporting and getting people to know about an option, which is employee ownership.

Number two, we're asking the Council to connect us to City departments that can help us to get the word out.

Number three, we ask the Council to connect us to your partners outside of the City that may help us get

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the word out. We work closely with Rob Wonderling and the Philadelphia Chamber, but we would love some help in getting coordinated.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, we ask the members of Council to help us to identify the businesses within your districts. You know your neighborhoods. We don't know them. Help us to understand the businesses that might value hearing this message so that we can help them understand a really important option.

We're keenly aware that there are critical issues facing the City and Council - education, poverty, race, lead in the water we heard about this morning. We recognize that those are critical issues and by a far margin deserve your critical attention, but what's common about all of those issues is that the solutions are immensely complex. Employer ownership is low-hanging fruit. The program is there. The solution

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exists today, and it's just that no one knows about it.

The Pennsylvania Center for Employer Ownership is a volunteer collective of current and former CEOs with experience in employee ownership, quite frankly, just looking to pay it forward. We're supported by foundations like the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, universities such as Rutgers, the University of California, Chatham University in Pittsburgh, and by volunteer industry experts, many of whom are here today.

I want to ask the employee owners and the employee system, friends who are here, to just raise your hands and let the Council know that you're here today.

(Audience members raised their hands.)

MR. McPHILLIPS: Members of Council, together let's create a rational economy that works for everyone. We can

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make Philadelphia a vanguard city for employee ownership and a model for the rest of the country. Let's change some lives. We're here to get to work.

I thank you for your kind attention, and we're here at your assistance.

COUNCILMAN JONES: We're sitting here blown away as to the potential utility, a tool like this in economic development.

A couple of questions, if I could, Councilman Green.

How do you interact with the City of Philadelphia's Commerce Department today?

MR. McPHILLIPS: Thank you. A wonderful question, Councilman. Today our entire focus or our entire efforts have been thanks to Councilman Green, who reached out to us and said, I want to learn some more about it. And he was kind enough to suggest that we create some hearings.

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We're at the very start of something here. We're about a year and a half old, and we're kind of getting our feet on the ground right now. Our purpose here today is to ask you the same question, please.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. That's fair.

I want to recognize the presence of Councilman Domb and Councilwoman Blackwell who have joined us here today.

I knew you couldn't be far away.

One other question. So I think of companies like Toys "R" Us and others that have been in the news lately. Could something like this have helped Toys "R" Us if it was local and smaller?

MR. McPHILLIPS: If it was local and small, absolutely. You know, the issues around Toys "R" Us were immensely complex. They were owned by a large private equity firm. They had been

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a public company.

The answer to that question is it depends. But the answer to could have saved dozens of other companies, the answer is absolutely yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: All right. I'm going to stop, because I got too excited, and let the other panelists testify before we take questions. But I just want you to know you're on our radar now, so...

MR. McPHILLIPS: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I'm sorry. Please state your name and begin your testimony.

MR. STEIKER: Good afternoon. I'm James Steiker. I am the founding Chairman and CEO of SES Advisors and Steiker, Greenapple and Fusco. I'm a resident of Philadelphia since 1985 when I returned to the area to accept a position with Pace Philadelphia, a not-for-profit organization then that promoted employee ownership in

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Philadelphia. So I will say everything old is new again. Yesterday was actually the 30th anniversary of the founding of my firm as an enterprise dedicated to creating and serving employee-owned companies. Our firms currently assist more than 500 employee-owned companies across the nation, and over my career I've had the opportunity to assist hundreds of companies in the transition to employee ownership, including many of the companies testifying and present here today.

To me, the benefits of employee ownership to employees and local companies are obvious both to the eye and also from the available data. Research from and sponsored by the National Center for Employee Ownership, www.NCEO.org, which is a not-for-profit, shows an employee ownership makes companies more productive, more stable, less prone to bankruptcy or default on bank loans, and more likely to hire and grow.

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The same research also shows that employees in employee-owned companies have higher levels of pay and benefits, including conventional retirement benefits and significantly higher levels of overall wealth.

We live in an era where capital and jobs are highly mobile. I have the opportunity to present and roll out employee ownership to companies that choose this direction, like Bill Stockwell's company. He'll talk about this. The sense of opportunity is obvious, but so is the sense of relief that a business has committed to its people to rooting itself in the community as a stable and prosperous enterprise.

Our firm connects with many entrepreneurs, most of them aging baby boomers, considering what will happen to their companies as they age and transition. We see them often presented with fast money offers from private equity, parentheses like Toys "R" Us, and

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other buyers that tend to make major changes to the company, often to the detriment of current employees and the community. Many of these entrepreneurs have been unaware that there's another path that allows them to receive their value for their companies, but also reward their employees and anchor jobs in the community.

The federal government provides significant tax incentives to encourage ESOP formation. Our biggest obstacle is lack of knowledge in the business community of this alternative and the sense that this is not a mainstream choice. I talk every day to business owners who tell me they did not know about ESOPs and wonder why more people do not do this. This is where local governments can help at little cost. The City of Philadelphia already funds significant business development and business retention efforts. Simply providing information and legitimacy

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about the ESOP employee ownership alternative will cause more entrepreneurs and companies to be aware of this possibility and will create more stable and prosperous employee-owned companies in the City of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your testimony.

Sir, pull the mic to you. State your name for the record.

MR. STOCKWELL: William B. Stockwell. And I just realized I'm an aging baby boomer. Thank you, Jim.

Stockwell Elastomerics is a fourth-generation privately held manufacturing business founded in 1919 and located in Northeast Philadelphia. We have 85 full-time employees, including management, professional engineering staff, and production employees. Most of our employees live in the City. We are a successful urban manufacturing business.

We started in my great-grandfather's garage in Palmyra,

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New Jersey. In 1920, we moved to 6th and Arch Street. In 1950, we moved to a carved-out series of row homes on Shackamaxon Street in Fishtown. In 1981, we moved to our current location on Tolbut Street, which is close to the Academy Road exit of I-95 in Northeast Philadelphia.

My name is Bill Stockwell and I have been active in the business since 1978 and President of the company since 1980.

We have undertaken many strategic changes over the 99-year history, such as in 2001 through 2004 when we adopted a rapid response business model to successfully compete against Asian competition in the business-to-business technology equipment sector. In contrast, many other mid-sized manufacturers decided to set up production facilities in Asia during that same timeframe.

Our custom gaskets can be found

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on SpaceX Falcon 9 rockets, Baxter Healthcare's Renal Therapy devices, Raytheon's Excalibur-guided artillery, Hubbell Lighting's Outdoor LED lighting fixtures, and many other applications that we and our company often take for granted.

Our business is growing due to strengthening three strategic areas: by our selling efforts on key customers in niche markets within the technology sector; through developing an unmatched ability to serve key customers by institutionalizing a rapid response model to provide prototypes and initial production to EOMs in the business-to-business technology sector; and, third, by developing our workforce to help us grow our organization and more recently teaching holistic life skills to reduce absenteeism and build their success in business and at home.

At 63 years old and the last Stockwell in the business, I am still

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running the business while developing leadership to fulfill my succession for the next three to five years. I believe our business model is best served by having ownership on site. Leadership needs to have skin in the game to accomplish what we do daily in our fast-paced market.

A few years ago I began evaluating transition strategies that would provide the best opportunity for the company to continue its mission in Philadelphia for many decades to come.

I was, and still am, often approached by private equity groups and strategic buyers and financed management groups. However, none of those options would guarantee sustaining the legacy we choose to leave for future generations of Philadelphians. Our customers, the local business community, employees, and their families would be compromised if we were to downsize or be relocated. In fact, I have observed many ownership transitions

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to private equity that didn't turn out well for the remaining employees and customers of the business. An ESOP transition was the best alternative for our situation.

Some people told me, so what? What do you owe these people? Take the money. Take the best offer and run. You've done enough.

However, I believe the regularity of work and regularity of pay the company provides its production staff are the foundation for the successful lifestyles many of our employees have achieved for the first time in their lives. There are men and women in my company I have worked side by side with for 10, 20, and 30 years. So we have chosen a different path.

On August 10th, 2017, we closed our transaction to start the Stockwell Elastomerics Perpetuity Employee Stock Ownership Trust. We transitioned 30 percent of the stock into the trust, and

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over the next two or three years, we intend to transition more. None of the good we must accomplish in the business and the ESOP will happen without growth. Therefore, we also broke ground on an additional building to give the business the running room it needs to continue its growth.

We still have lots to do to become a mature ESOP. An ownership culture requires education. We are starting with the conversations about building culture, how to relate to each other. We have quite a melting pot in our business, but we're all Stockwell blue. We turn 100 years old next year, and we're still building our future.

In closing, I have spoken with other CEO owners with strong connections to their legacies, their people, and customers. I know of other CEO owners who recognize they have saved lives by hiring entry-level people from the neighborhoods. Philly manufacturers have

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an opportunity to make a hire and save a life, and thereby save a family and build a neighborhood.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Well, I'm going to let the author of this resolution -- I can only say thank you for what you're doing for the City of Philadelphia, but individuals, families as well. And is this a peculiarity of people who are like you, 100 years old, and you don't look a day over 35, but 100-year-old companies or is it just a phenomenon -- in your portfolio of companies that have participated, is it older companies who are like a part of the fabric of a community or is it just balanced?

MR. McPHILLIPS: It's very much a mix of companies, and I would say that most typically they're mid-sized companies with a minimum of, I would say, 25 employees, maybe up to a couple hundred employees. These are the more

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typical sort of environments. Bill has 85 employees. There are CEOs in our gallery here today who have companies that are between 50 and 300 employees. The Graham Company is represented here, a much larger firm, but I would say that it's in that range.

COUNCILMAN JONES: The Chair recognizes Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank all of you for being here, your testimony. Thank you for your investment not only in the City of Philadelphia but also an investment in your people.

A couple of questions. This concept of ESOPs, it's not a one-size-fit-all. There are certain industries and certain businesses that are more apt to be an opportunity for an ESOP. And Councilman Jones, Chair of this Committee, talked about the generational businesses, family-owned

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businesses that have grown.

Mr. McPhillips, you talked about businesses from 25 to 100. Are there certain industries that are better suited? From our conversation, it seemed like manufacturing may tend to be, but I don't want to make an assumption.

MR. McPHILLIPS: You're correct about that. I'm going to let Mr. Steiker answer that.

MR. STEIKER: If you looked -- I've seen almost every industry as sort of the front of the job as seeing the many things that people do that you had no idea they did until you walk in. But if you had to look at concentrations, you'd see three concentrations. One is manufacturing, particularly niche manufacturers who have found a way using quality service and delivery to compete in the global marketplace.

The second niche you'll see a lot of are engineering firms and other knowledge businesses where the assets,

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quote/unquote, walk out the door every night and they want to tie people to the company.

And the third, interestingly enough, is you'll see distribution businesses that are working both with manufacturers and then with end-user customers, and they tend to be a little bit more geographically rooted to territories and, therefore, tend to want to focus on employee ownership.

That being said, that -- those three pieces might be 70 or 80 percent, but literally almost every other industry you can think of is represented in one way or another.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Has there been any outreach to organizations locally? And I'm going to focus on the manufacturing side, the Manufacturing Alliance of Philadelphia, Steve Jurash and his group, to kind of let them know? Because I know one thing they've been trying to focus on is maintaining land in

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the City of Philadelphia for manufacturing and not get gobbled up by a lot of retail and development, which is housing, which is especially happening in the Northern Liberties area. But has there been any outreach to that organization at all?

MR. McPHILLIPS: It's very coincidental you should ask that. I had a note from Steve Jurash this morning. He heard about the hearings and he said, I really need to learn some more about this and would love to write an article on it. So it was an initial concept as a result, thankfully, of what the Council is doing today.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good. Because we worked with Mr. Jurash back in my time with Councilwoman Tasco trying to really promote manufacturing. I know Councilman Henon has also worked with him, considering his district has a large part of areas where you see a lot of industrial manufacturing activity in the

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City.

A question I had in reference to the financing. Give me some perspective the type of entities that provide the financing. And the reason I ask that question, because we've been doing some things -- I have been working with the Commerce Department where we created an initiative called the Capital Consortium, which provides lending to small businesses in the City of Philadelphia, almost like a Lending Tree-type of initiative for small businesses, pulling together about 30 different financial institutions to provide that type of financing, but there may be some of those banks in the institution that we're working with that may have an interest on the ESOP side. So if you can give me a perspective of some of the banks that have provided financing as well.

MR. McPHILLIPS: Thanks for asking that question. First of all,

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Councilman Green, we know you have very deep knowledge in the commercial banking industry and community banking, so we appreciate that. I just want to share -- I'm going to let Mr. Steiker answer that, but some of the lending institutions are actually here today, including Merrill Lynch, which is here.

Jim, you want to.

MR. STEIKER: Most ESOPs occur with companies that are, by and large, large enough to achieve some sort of conventional senior debt financing to put ESOPs together. And many of the large money center banks have specialists. We happen to have both Wells Fargo locally and PNC locally that have specialists that actually sit in Philadelphia. Merrill Lynch and Jeff Harvey, who is here today, and Bank of America specializes. M&T has become very knowledgeable, involved. Several of the other banks in the region are familiar with ESOPs.

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The most interesting thing happening nationally is, there was just recently a bill passed in committee in Congress unanimously to widen the Small Business Administration loan parameters for lending to ESOPs. So financing, at least on a conventional basis, is pretty well available.

Obviously when you're trying to save jobs with a company in distress and threatened with moving, it becomes a little bit more complicated, but for conventionally successful companies, which are the large majority of ESOPs, there's pretty good conventional financing available.

MR. McPHILLIPS: And, Councilman, just as a point of fact, employee-owned companies' default rates are significantly lower than non-employee-owned companies. So the banking industry has an interest in these kinds of loans. However, and part of our role is to try to teach as many in the

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expert community about these programs, because not every lending institution has a department today, for example, that focuses on this particular form of knowledge.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: One last question, because I know my colleagues have additional questions. Has there been any discussion of having any type of either an ESOP conference maybe with the City Commerce Department and the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, our ethnic chambers like the African American, Asian, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, as well as some of the financial institutions to kind of talk about these ideas to kind of raise some awareness? And also have there been any CLE or continuing legal education conferences on ESOPs? As an attorney, I would think that many attorneys that do either small business legal work or succession planning legal work, if they had a better idea of ESOPs as an exit

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strategy for some of their clients, that may be something that would be more attractive. And so maybe even having CLEs regarding that issue through even the Philadelphia Bar Foundation or other entities could also help raise the awareness of this as a tool for some businesses as they do succession planning.

MR. McPHILLIPS: Thank you for the offer. We would love to. So the short answer is, yes, we partner with a variety of organizations, economic development groups, chambers of commerce. In the Philadelphia area, we have not connected with a lot. We have, for example, connected with the African American Chamber in Pittsburgh, but we have not done it here in Philadelphia. And what we really do sort of for a living, we don't sell anything or charge anything for our services. We put panels together of experts and CEOs to sit down with interested parties and teach them.

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And so we are looking for every opportunity to do that with any organization, with any individual, with any group.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman.

I also want to recognize that we've been joined by Councilman Oh.

I think of companies -- in another life I worked for the Commerce Department for the City of Philadelphia, and I think of companies like Medley Tool and Die that used to be on Lindley Avenue, and they were a minority firm who created communication hubs where you built them inside of a tractor-trailer and then dropped them on the battlefield. They put up their antennas. This was a company that went out of business that probably could have benefited from a program like this.

The old Acme Bakery on Upland

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Way that -- you know, it was cheaper to do it elsewhere. But I wonder if those employees would have had an opportunity to purchase that company, maybe under another name, how that would work.

So this tool, we need to kind of let people know that it is there, and this tool probably could, I mean, if we market it right, generate a whole lot of interest in some areas that -- no disrespect to condos, but instead of the factories that they were meant to be or a high rise and -- I mean --

COUNCILMAN DOMB: They're called co-ops.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Say it again.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: They're called co-ops now.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Co-ops. I'm sorry.

But I'd rather have my cupcakes that were in the Acme warehouse on my way to school.

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So this is a useful tool, and I'm thankful to the author of this resolution for having the foresight to bring it to our attention.

Are there any other questions?

Councilman Domb.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Councilman Green, and good afternoon.

I have a few questions I just wanted to ask. I wanted to make sure I understood the program and give you some thoughts.

First of all, on the exposure, I'm sure you've gone to the Bar Association, and you should be hitting at the Bar Association attorneys who specialize in estate law and tax law, and the Accounting Association also. They should even offer CLE classes in this program so they take the course. They're going to want to take it. I mean, every lawyer has to do CLE. So you should make

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one of the CLEs, a continuing legal education, an ESOP course.

And, Councilman Green, this is great you brought it to Council.

So I would do that with the Accounting Association too. They have to take courses for certification.

So that's one way of just getting it fully exposed, because I think most people selling their businesses call their lawyer, who refers them to an estate lawyer or a tax lawyer or their accountant, and they're the point of contact who could then say this might be a good idea. Just as a thought.

Just so I can make sure I understand the program, which is fascinating, the federal and state taxes are waived for the whole life of the company or until the loan is paid off?

MR. McPHILLIPS: Well, the state and federal taxes on profits are waived for whichever portion is in the employee trust, the employee ownership

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trust.

And I want to clarify something. The circumstances that I described here are for Subchapter S companies. There could be a C Corp. There could be a Subchapter S. And there's -- I'm not sure I want to get into the weeds with you right now, but the benefits I described are for Subchapter S companies.

MR. STEIKER: I was going to simply make sure that we spoke correctly. Subchapter S companies, the income is attributed to shareholders, and ESOP is a tax-exempt pension trust. So hence the portion of income in an S corporation that goes toward the ESOP as a shareholder is not fundamentally taxed. Employees pay taxes later at some point when they have distributions from the trust.

MR. McPHILLIPS: And just if I could, Councilman, one other thing. Great ideas with the Bar Association,

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with estate. Two weeks ago I was out in Pittsburgh and we did a presentation to about 100 members of the Pittsburgh Estate Planning Council. Any help we could get in connecting with those kinds of organizations through Council would sure be appreciated.

And to your comment and to Councilman Jones' comments, continuing ed credits are a common thing with our programs and our industry.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. We can connect you to those organizations, no problem.

MR. McPHILLIPS: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: I have a question from the banking side of things. When the banks make a loan based on the employee ownership trust, I assume they're making the loan based on the income of the company, the current profits?

MR. STEIKER: Yes.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: And there's

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no guarantees required by any of the employees to loan?

MR. STEIKER: Never a guarantee by employees. In smaller companies, sometimes the selling shareholder will be asked to provide some sort of a guarantee. It would be the same kind of credit that a company could obtain conventionally in a conventional --

COUNCILMAN DOMB: So it's a corporate guarantee, not a personal guarantee?

MR. STEIKER: Correct.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: And do you know what the multiplier typically is or it depends on the business of the income? Any idea or range?

MR. STEIKER: Two and a half to three times. That would be the common parameter for senior lending. When we're selling more than a part of a company, typically the selling shareholders are providing subordinated seller financing as part of it.

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COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank you. That's a great program. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman.

The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Parker.

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you, Chairman Jones.

And just let me add my voice to the chorus in thanking you, Councilman Green, for bringing this concept and idea before us. I just saw Cardone Industries, and for those of you who don't know, they are the largest manufacturing firm, neighborhood-based, in the wonderful, awesome, mighty Ninth Councilmanic District in the City of Philadelphia. And so I'm happy to know that the tool is available, but I really got excited when you described on Page 2 of your testimony, Mr. McPhillips, its impact to retirement security. You know

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about the shift from defined benefit pensions moving over to defined contributions; therefore, shifting the risk of retirement security from the owners onto the workers.

And with that being said, we in the City of Philadelphia commissioned via the Schwartz Center for Economic Policy Analysis a report about are Philadelphians ready for retirement security, and we learned during that time that 48 percent of workers ages 25 to 64 work for an employer that sponsors a retirement plan compared to 53 percent nationwide.

So in our city, we were not doing as well as the national average. And you mentioned ERISA as the tool. So when I think ERISA, I never thought, Councilman Green, to connect ERISA to this kind of development. I immediately just thought about it from retirement security perspective.

So I want to say thank you, and

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I look forward to working with you, Councilman Green and Chairman Jones, and all of our colleagues to make sure that people know that there is another vehicle, another opportunity available to them for homeownership.

We talk about self-sufficiency. We talk about self-sufficiency. I'm going to tell my age, Councilman Jones, and you all don't laugh. Last night I was listening to WDAS radio station. They have a segment that's called The Oldies, and I listen to it because it reminds me of my grandmother. And I'm an English teacher, so I want you to know that I am simply repeating the lyrics that are in the song. If I would have written it, they would have been read a different way.

The song was written by James Brown and the lyrics went something like, "I don't want nobody to give me nothing. Open up the door and I'll get it myself." And as I'm listening to you and I'm

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looking at the employees who raised their hand and we talk about putting people on a path to self-sufficiency where they're not dependent on government or anyone else to take care of their families and work in dignity, you know, this is a potential path.

And so I just wanted to say again thank you, Councilman Green.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm looking forward to this.

MR. McPHILLIPS: Councilwoman, thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: There's a correction to the record. You're not telling your age. You just Googled that song; that's all.

MR. McPHILLIPS: Councilwoman, thank you for your comments. And if it's any consolation, just last week my wife was listening to an oldies station and asked me, why do they keep putting songs on here that aren't oldies?

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank

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you.

MR. McPHILLIPS: And I wanted to remind you, which I'm sure you're aware of, that in terms of retirement, the employees pay nothing. They put nothing into this as opposed to a 401(k), et cetera. How many 25 to 30-year-olds are putting money into savings accounts today? This is an assurance that you're going to be okay when you're in later life.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilwoman.

Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Mr. Stockwell, you kind of, I think, talked about this conversation as you're going through this process of ESOP. How do you train and educate the workforce on a culture of ownership? Clearly from your perspective and having employees who have been there for 10, 20, 30 years, they have an investment in Stockwell because they've probably grown their

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families and their relatives and friends and neighbors and have a deep connection from working there. But it's one thing to be an employee, but now you're transitioning to employer -- well, owner, excuse me, an owner of the company.

So give me some perspective on that transition of trying to better educate the employees that now you're about to become an owner and what steps need to be taken.

MR. STOCKWELL: Councilman, that's a great question. First of all, we have a quarterly gross margin distribution we make just to the staff every quarter. But the ESOP is different. They're basically gaining shares in the business, and at the end of the day, their valuation is based on a multiple of the value. And it could be, you know, four X, five X, whatever. So it's an interesting game. It's an interesting model where they're actually looking to improve the value of the

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shares. And so that dollar that they're saving, that that box that they're going to flatten and reuse later on, instead of putting it in the dumpster, all of that adds up.

Now, teaching that, okay, is a challenge. It takes a while to really inculcate that knowledge. So that's part of the cultural shift, if you will, part of the education process, and this doesn't happen overnight. I mean, it's going to take a little while for it to happen.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And this is a -- kind of broaden the question to other panelists. How does that impact the future productivity of the company? Because I could see once employees become owners, they may be a little more conservative going forward in running the business because they're saying, well, I don't want to invest new dollars in this new initiative because it may not be returned. So let's continue to do the

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things we've done historically. But then at the same point, any business has to change for the times and trends. So you may have to invest dollars in some new ideas, initiatives that employees, now owners, may say, wait a minute, if we spend that money here, we may not get that return and that may have a negative impact and may want to stay a little more conservative as opposed to investing into new technology and new business lines.

MR. STOCKWELL: Well, it's funny because what you're talking about is how any business owner wrestles anyway 11 o'clock at night when they can't sleep. Okay? That's why the education is so important. That's why having a broader conversation about the business, how we're going to grow the culture, whether you need to hire a couple more people or maybe we should just work overtime for a week. This is all the challenge that we face as business owners and managers every day and every week.

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And so opening up that scope so more people are in the conversation, it's very interesting. It's educating.

MR. McPHILLIPS: Councilman, your comment is a really important one. Most times employees are not born being owners. Okay? And there is an investment on Bill's part, on other companies' parts in really teaching employees what this means.

On average, employee-owned companies are 5 percent more productive than non-employee-owned companies. Over a ten-year period, that's 70 percent more growth over a ten-year period. But that doesn't come automatically. You've got to do the kinds of things that Bill is doing.

There are organizations in our network that are organizational development groups that we always recommend that do nothing other than work with ESOP companies to help employees understand what this all means.

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MR. STEIKER: I wanted to add just to clarify one thing. ESOP companies are conventionally managed and run. They have a board of directors. They have management. We don't have a vote every time we're going to buy a new machine or invest in a new piece. The data says that the highest productivity gains come from a high degree of employee involvement in a day-to-day basis, giving people more say and authority over what they do and what's around them, listening more to what's around them, educating them more on what makes a difference. As Bill said, when you get to the point when people understand that a dollar saved is $5 of value in the company and that everybody benefits from that, you get a very powerful engine and a very powerful sense of teamwork, and what we're seeing is even with the millennials, all of whom -- unlike us who played ball in the streets, were raised on all of the team sports and organized things, that that

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resonates a lot. When you tell people they're on a team and this is how the team wins, you get some very powerful responses.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

COUNCILMAN JONES: We are sitting here just marveling at the concept and can't wait to see how Commerce and the City of Philadelphia and the Chamber of Commerce interact with this powerful tool.

Are there any others on the panel that want to ask a question?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing none, thank you once again for your testimony, and I truly appreciate you being kinder, gentler capitalists. It's okay. It's okay to be that. You don't have to be a ruthless phenomenon. You can be thoughtful and still make a profit. So thank you.

(Thank you.)

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Ms. Williams, who do we have next?

THE CLERK: Kenneth Liszewski, John Dolan, and Mark Celoni.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, gentlemen. Please have a seat. Pull the mics to you, begin your testimony, and please state your name.

Good afternoon.

MR. LISZEWSKI: Good afternoon, members of the Council. My name is Kenneth Liszewski. I was born and raised and I still live in Philadelphia today. I am a key account manager for NewAge Industries and I work in the AdvantaPure division. It's located in Southampton, Pennsylvania, and we are a manufacturer. We manufacture plastic single-use systems for the biopharm and biotech market.

NewAge Industries is a family-owned business. Ken Baker's father, Ray Baker, was in business since

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1954. Since 2006, Ken Baker sold 49 percent of the company to the employees -- of the shares, I'm sorry, to the NewAge ESOP, ensuring economic and employment stability for the company. The ESOP provides me with a retirement plan as a team member owner. The ESOP stock ownership plan currently owns 49 percent of NewAge Industries.

I have been with the company for over 20 years. I started when I was young. I was in the warehouse. I was an order puller, order picker, QC. After a period of time, I was promoted to sales. I became very interested in the new product line that we ventured into, the AdvantaPure division. So when AdvantaPure was developed in early 2000s, I was promoted again to a technical sales representative. I accepted a role as a sales project manager, and I'm now currently a key account manager for two of our largest customers in the company.

My job, I interface with all

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aspects of the organization, from product engineering, supply chain, manufacturing, prototyping, credit management.

I had never heard of an ESOP program before I came to NewAge. When Ken Baker originally told us that he was moving to an ESOP company, I and many other employees were a little skeptical. Skeptical only because at first we did not know, we didn't have the knowledge of what this type of business model would bring, and to be honest, it seemed too good to be true.

Ken brought in some consultants, and we actually go through a training. The owner teaches the employees, as well as the consultants come in and they teach us what an ESOP means and what it can mean for us in our futures. Every year we get an ESOP statement with an account balance. We also have an ESOP month as well, so we celebrate the ESOP in October. The share price is determined by the outside

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evaluation firm and is based on how well the company does over time. I like this because in a way, I am in control of my retirement benefit. If the company does well, I do well, as well as all the other employees. If the company doesn't do well, I don't do well and my fellow employees don't do well. This makes me and the other employees take our work very, very seriously and we try to do our best at the company.

I have no control over failure of other companies in my 401(k) statement. I actually had to go to my dad and ask him for advice on my 401(k)s and I'm not the best 401(k) person. So I don't know the young people, how they even move stock around and do all that. So that's -- it helps.

Having worked with the company since the ESOP from when I started at NewAge Industries, there's been people there that have retired. They've actually retired a few years before they

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actually needed to retire because of the ESOP funds. They retired because they have a robust amount of cash in their program that they can actually retire early.

The company does get its tax benefit for being ESOP. Right now the company pays no tax on 49 percent of the company. This has allowed more money to flow into the ESOP and make our benefit accounts grow. We kid Ken every so often. Hey, Ken, when are you going to sell us the rest of the shares? He jokes and he says, I'm not ready yet because I'm afraid I'm going to get fired.

When we go to 100 percent ESOP, which Ken said he will do some day in the future, that will mean more retirement benefit and more cash for some of our expansion plans. We've already expanded three times already when we've had the ESOP, so we are expanding our company.

When I talk to customers, I always mention that we're an ESOP

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employee-owned company. Our competitors are big, worldwide, publicly traded companies. Our customers like the fact that we're an employee-owned business because we're going to stay there and they're going to have us as a supplier to them, and they feel that we're going to go above and beyond and they feel like they could call and talk to a person. And since people like myself were there 20 years, they feel comfortable. They feel like nothing is going to change. It's always going to be the good service that they provide. So our customers are even telling us that they like us because of that, and being a sales guy, that's a big benefit to the company.

Ken asked me to come and tell my ESOP story to you, because he is very passionate about the ESOP and because he has seen what it has done for NewAge. He told me that the City Council wants to look into promoting ESOP in the City to keep companies and jobs in the City.

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It's a pretty neat idea. I support the concept. It would be great if the City had more ESOP companies.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your story and your testimony.

MR. DOLAN: My name is John Dolan and I'm with Waste Gas Fabricating. Honorable members of City Council, thanks for having me today.

I was born and raised in the City and I'm proud to be a Philly guy. I was educated in the Philadelphia school system and graduated from Frankford High School. I'm a sales manger and one of the many owners of Waste Gas Fabricating located in Fairless Hills, PA.

Waste Gas is a steel fabrication business, which would be manufacturing. We have a customer base of over 400 accounts, many of whom are located within the City of Philadelphia. We also have many suppliers that are Philadelphia-based companies that we work

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with.

Waste Gas is an ESOP company that is 100 percent owned by its employees. We currently have 80 employees who participate in company ownership. We have 12 employees who are working towards their goal of meeting qualifications to participate in the program. I, for one, am very proud to be one of the owners of Waste Gas.

Waste Gas was founded in 1976 by Kyle Cloman and his father, James Cloman, as a small family business. Kyle is currently our President and CEO. In 2007, Kyle and his wife, Ruthann, decided they wanted to transition Waste Gas into an ESOP company to benefit the loyal employees and give them an opportunity to put money aside for their retirement. The initial offering to us in 2007 was 30 percent ownership of the company. In 2013, Kyle and Ruthann again awarded the employees with an additional 70 percent stake in ownership, making us a 100

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percent employee-owned company.

Kyle and Ruthann both understood the success of Waste Gas was only as good as its employees and wanted to reward their loyal employees with a secure future and were looking for a way to transfer ownership in the company while maintaining it for the employees and assuring them that the location would stay in Fairless Hills and continue to benefit them. Employee ownership was the vehicle that they chose to arrange these goals.

What has the conversion of employee ownership done for Waste Gas? I have four points. One is teamwork. Just like our Super Bowl champion Philadelphia Eagles, everyone plays together and works together as a team. Employee ownership enhances teamwork among employees. Our tenured employees mentor our younger and new employees. The workforce helps and assists each other when needed even if it's not their job. Our employees make

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it their job and jump right in to accomplish goals. Everyone has a stake in the game.

Job retention and stock shares. Employees are owners and now have a vested interest in the company. One of the benefits of ownership is having stock in the company. This stock is valued and it's based on the company's performance each year. Being an employee, we all understand that we need to perform our duties to the best of our ability to make the company and the ESOP prevail. Personally, I look forward to opening my ESOP statement at the end of the year. The fact that I'm being given this benefit at no cost to me, with the knowledge that I am saving money for my family and my future, gives me great sense of security and appreciation.

Productivity. Ownership creates personal attention and enhances buy-in. I am proud to say our employees have been a cut above over the years, but

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as owners now, we've moved to another level of responsibility and effort. Our attitude towards the whole business has evolved into a more positive environment of caring and sharing with one another. We are proud of the contribution, and it shines in our quality metrics and our positive customer feedback.

And then, finally, retirement planning, which is really tough these days. At the end of the day, the ESOP program has been a blessing for me. Paying a mortgage and college tuition, along with the normal everyday bills we all incur, make it difficult to save money and think about retirement without feeling the pressure. The ESOP has alleviated some of the pressures and concerns I have about my retirement. It has made my dream to retire and own a home at the shore with my wife a reality.

When I joined the company 26 years ago, it never occurred to me that I would be compensated for my years of

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service and be part owner of such a tremendous company. The ESOP has provided me with peace of mind, giving me confidence that in the future my family and I will have additional revenue that would not have been possible without the vision of Kyle and Ruthann Cloman initiating this ESOP program. I am thankful that I came to work for a company where the owners truly care about their employees.

I am proud to be an employee owner and part of a great company. I strongly endorse ESOP.

Thank you for your time today.

COUNCILMAN JONES: He strongly endorses it. I like that.

Councilman Green.

Oh, I'm sorry.

MR. CELONI: Good afternoon. My name is Mark Celoni. I'm a professional engineer, civil engineer, serving as Vice President and Philadelphia Office Director for Pennoni.

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Pennoni is a 100 percent employee-owned firm, and since 19 -- since 2015, I've also served as a trustee for Pennoni's Employee Stock Ownership Plan.

Our Founder and Chairman, Chuck Pennoni, submitted written testimony separate, which gave a lot of details and background about the company. I'm going to tell a more personal story as someone that's lived through the ESOP. But before I do that, I did want to recognize some of my few co-workers that are here as representatives from Pennoni. If they could stand while I read a statement.

(Audience members standing.)

MR. CELONI: There are several others here today who have collectively accumulated well into seven figures total in this part of their retirement planning.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Could you repeat that, please.

MR. CELONI: There are several others who are here today -- I said

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please stand to be recognized -- who have collectively accumulated well into seven figures total as part of their ESOP retirement planning. As you can see, they're at various stages of their professional careers. Like them, there are many other Pennoni employees at all levels of the firm that have similarly benefited and will continue to benefit from the ESOP program.

Thank you.

I was born and raised in the Roxborough neighborhood of Philadelphia and have lived and completed my education and worked in the City for my entire life. I began my engineering career in the mid 1980s as a Drexel co-op working first for the City of Philadelphia and then for Pennoni. I have worked full time at Pennoni since 1988.

My father was a war veteran and also lived in the City his entire life. He worked as a civil engineer for the Streets Department and Water Department

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for 30 years.

As a grandson of Italian immigrants to this great city, education and improving one's self and community has always been important in our family structure. Today I will give an example of how that lives on at Pennoni.

Pennoni, as many of you know, is a multi-disciplinary engineering firm with 1,200 employees working from 35 offices along the East Coast. Our firm was founded in 1966, more than 52 years ago, by Chuck Pennoni and has always kept its headquarters located here in Philadelphia.

Pennoni recently invested $1.5 million in a newly expanded headquarter space located at 1900 Market Street and is looking to grow by adding to the 180 employees at this location.

Pennoni's breadth of services include civil/site, construction services, environmental, geotechnical, landscape architecture, planning, MEP,

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structural, survey and geomatics, transportation, water resources, and water/wastewater.

The three founding goals of Pennoni are excellent professional reputation, profit, and growth. These goals, along with the pillars of honesty, integrity, and service, define the culture of Pennoni. Keeping that culture alive as the firm transitioned its ownership to an ESOP was really important.

I can remember attending a Saturday morning seminar in the early 1990s at the Community College of Philadelphia to learn more about ESOPs. As education is also extremely important to Chuck Pennoni, he asked an expert on the subject to explain how an ESOP works and how the ownership of the company would transition to the employees. It was the right choice, as the culture of the company remained unchanged as the ownership transitioned. This is often

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not the case if the owner decides to sell to another owner or outside investors.

Equally important, the ESOP allowed the company to continue to successfully grow, and right here in Philadelphia. The growth provided opportunity for employees that remained with the firm. The growth of the company has benefited the employee owners who have seen their ESOP retirement accounts increase in value. The Philadelphia community has also benefited from Pennoni's growth, as it has allowed the firm and its employees to participate in and donate to many charitable organizations and causes.

One of the reasons I am still employed at Pennoni after 30 years is due to the growth and success of our business. Unlike friends in many other companies, I did not need to leave my firm to find opportunity. I consider myself fortunate. I don't know if I would be part owner of a firm if I didn't

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work at an ESOP company. It has given me a retirement benefit that will greatly improve the financial stability of my family.

It also makes me proud to be able to work in the city that I grew up in at a company that serves the community well. With an ESOP in place, we dedicate ourselves daily to client service, to giving back to the community, and to nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit of our employee owners.

There is a very healthy culture and attitude at Pennoni, which can be credited to its founder and leadership. The ESOP has allowed this culture to continue because our employees recognize that the performance of their own accounts is directly related to the success of the firm.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,

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Mr. Chair.

Thank the panel for being here and showing representation in both the employees and also in the panelists.

Two things that came out in the testimony that I did not really think about. One, the different types of ESOPs in reference to some go 100 percent employee ownership, others take some time to transition. And I think you said that NewAge will be going to 100 percent in the future, but it's 49 percent.

MR. LISZEWSKI: Correct. It's 49 now. In the future it will be 100 percent, yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So was that a strategic decision to do 51/49 as opposed to a full 100 percent?

And then also you and I think others may have talked about the marketing aspect of them being employee-owned, and it makes me think of some years ago when I was in banking, the banking industry changed dramatically

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where you had at one point regional banks. I used to work for Meridian Bank. That was a regional bank that three smaller banks came together. But then you look at the late '90s through 2000, a lot of the smaller banks got acquired by much larger institutions, and now you're starting to see a reverse, whereas smaller banks are getting more interest. So you look at a Valley Green Bank that was recently acquired by Univest that was started by people locally in Mount Airy. You have other smaller banks that are moving into the City of Philadelphia, BB&T, Susquehanna, some others. So you're starting to see people want to have that personal touch, and when you have a large institution, people don't feel they have that same type connection.

In fact, there was an article today about Vanguard, who brings in about a billion dollars a day, and they're very successful because their fees are so low, but people are concerned from a customer

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service perspective because they can't reach anybody. So having that type of employee ownership and when you're in sales and you're saying that to your customers, I think it's a benefit.

So I'm curious from the perspective how that's changed going from being entrepreneur-owned to now employee-owned for all the businesses, how that's improved from a marketing business perspective as well as the diversity of 100 percent to 49 percent.

MR. LISZEWSKI: So as far as the marketing part of it for us is the -- so the shares have grown. So prior to that, when customers would talk to us, they have -- we call them the big boys in the industry, where they just eat up -- they come in with their checkbooks, they call on the phone, ask to buy, buy, buy. We want to buy you, we want to buy you. We want to subsidize. We just want your building. We just want your land. We just want your contact list.

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So a lot of our customers, they need us, so they -- and we do a good job for them. They make money because we make money for them. So what happens is is these big companies will come in. They'll buy the smaller company. They lay off all the employees. We deal with the biopharm, biotech industry, and if we just don't supply them products, it causes a big, big problem for them with validations and validating another customer. They know the employees very well. They come in, they visit. They tend to talk more about the ESOP sometimes than we even talk about actually doing the visits and doing the sales calls, because they're actually interested, and then they're actually going back to their employees and saying, hey, why can't we be an ESOP.

So I don't know if -- and as far as the hundred percent to the 49 percent, our CEO is over there. So I guess I can have one of these guys answer

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that question.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Got you.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

Are there any other questions for this group?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing none, thank you for your testimony.

Ms. Williams, are there any others to testify on this resolution?

THE CLERK: There are no other witnesses to testify on this resolution, but there will be written testimony submitted by C.R. "Chuck" Pennoni, Kenneth Baker, and Edward D'Alba.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Ms. Williams.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Mr. Chairman, if I could just --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I've been here now for over a decade. We'll say

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that. And I often get excited at new, innovative, out-of-the-box, novel business opportunities that really help those who live and work in Philadelphia. So this is a new concept for me. Councilman Green has worked in banking and so it's part of his DNA, but to have sat here and listened to the quiet energy but sense of humility and enthusiasm that an opportunity has been provided to people so that they can feed their families and -- because we know that owning a piece of dirt is the American dream. That's my mother's favorite term, owning a piece of dirt. And so to know that you have leaders, owners, who saw that as a good thing to do, a good business model, for me is exceedingly exciting, and I commend the owners and the employees who are fortunate to, by luck of the draw, end up with a company where the leadership and the ownership thought this is a good business model, let's do it.

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So hats off to all of you who have spoken on this very novel business idea. For Blondell, but I'm sure with Councilman Green, it will -- he's going to figure out a way to drill down so that it can manifest itself in so many other ways across the City.

Thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Your point is well taken. You don't want to be the employee of Blockbusters at the end of the day. So we thank you for your testimony.

Are there any other people here to testify on Resolution No. 170971?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing none, thank you again for your testimony.

Will the Clerk now read the title of the bill being considered today.

THE CLERK: Bill No. 170950, an ordinance amending Chapter 17-1300 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Philadelphia 21st Century Minimum Wage and Benefits

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Standard," by revising provisions regarding waivers of minimum wage requirements, all under certain terms and conditions.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Ms. Williams.

We'd like to hear from the author of this bill, Councilman Johnson.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Council President.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Who? Don't start nothing.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This bill focuses on bringing a particular company at the airport in compliance with the 21st century wage bill that we passed a couple of years ago. We worked diligently to address the issue of raising the airport workers out of poverty.

We talk about making sure that here in the City of Philadelphia we are producing jobs. We want to make sure

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that we're producing good-paying jobs. We want to make sure that individuals who are working at the Philadelphia International Airport, who are the backbone of their airport, have the opportunity to improve the quality of their lives and not live check to check in poverty.

And so I want to thank all -- thank you, Mr. Chairman, for bringing up this bill and this particular hearing, and we will hear from the individuals from the airport, we'll hear from the advocates who are organizing around this issue, and you'll hear from the actual company who hasn't been in compliance. But nevertheless our goal here today is to address this issue to do right by the workers at the Philadelphia International Airport.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman. And I think it's very important that as all boats float, the

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tide rises. How do you say that? And it's important to hear from all sides on this issue, and I appreciate you authoring this bill.

Ms. Williams, will you please read the names of the first panel to testify.

THE CLERK: James Engler.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Engler, how are you today?

DEPUTY MAYOR ENGLER: Mr. Chairman, how are you?

COUNCILMAN JONES: I'm good. Thank you for your patience. Would you state your name for the record and please begin your testimony.

DEPUTY MAYOR ENGLER: Thank you.

Good afternoon, Chairman Jones and members of the Commerce and Economic Development Committee. My name is Jim Engler and I am the Deputy Mayor for

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Policy and Legislation, and I am here today to testify on Bill 170956, which revises provisions regarding waivers of minimum wage requirements. I am joined here today by Manny Citron, Chief of Staff in the Office of Labor and Acting Chair of the Living Wage and Benefits Review Committee.

The Philadelphia 21st Century Minimum Wage and Benefits Standards was originally passed in 2005, and with subsequent amendments, this wage standard has been applied to the City and its contractors and subcontractors, with a goal of ensuring workers receive hourly wage that enables them to live with dignity and increase self-sufficiency. The Mayor joins with you on this Committee and all of Council in supporting a living wage for all workers in Philadelphia and, most specifically, those whose business is directly tied to that of the City or its contractors.

The code does, however,

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envision a number of situations that would allow for an entity to apply for a waiver from the requirement. This includes the allowance of a waiver if there is a bona fide collective bargaining agreement. Bill No. 170956 would remove from the exemption any agreements governed by the Railway Labor Act. As a note, since 2016 the Living Wage and Benefits Review Committee has granted five waivers because of the existence of a bona fide collective bargaining agreement.

Should this legislation receive the approval of City Council, the Administration and the Living Wage and Benefits Review Committee stand ready to enforce it.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and we're happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

Are you testifying today?

MR. CITRON: No, sir. Manny

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Citron, Chief of Staff in the Mayor's Office of Labor. I'm here if there are any questions.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. All right.

Are there any questions?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing none, Ms. Williams, will you please read the next panel to testify on this bill.

THE CLERK: Rosslyn Wuchinich and Daniel Bauder.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Folasade, you can come on up.

Welcome. Please bring the mic a little closer to you. State your name for the record and begin your testimony, please.

MS. WUCHINICH: I'm Rosslyn Wuchinich, President of Unite Here, Local 274.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Welcome.

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MS. WUCHINICH: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Begin your testimony.

MS. WUCHINICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development. We applaud the work of this Committee and the Philadelphia City Council in ensuring that more and more workers are covered by the 21st Century Minimum Wage Standard. The expansion of the minimum wage standard has transformed the lives of thousands of workers at the airport and the lives of their families as well as our communities in Philadelphia.

We are here today to close a loophole in that law.

For months airport workers employed by LSG Sky Chefs, who prepare meals primarily for American Airlines, have spoken to you and your colleagues about their pride in working at the Philadelphia International Airport, and you will hear again from them today.

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In December of 2017 when this group of workers spoke to the Living Wage and Benefit Review Committee, they spoke of earning as little as $7.90 an hour, well below the 21st Century Minimum Wage Standard, which is today 12.20 an hour. In fact, 79 percent of the LSG Sky Chefs employees earned less than the standard that you set. They have earned less than the standard ever since this Council acted to ensure that workers at the Philadelphia International Airport would finally earn a fair wage.

LSG Sky Chefs is exploiting the loophole that we're asking you to close today by passing this bill.

LSG Sky Chefs, like many airline-related contracts, is governed by the Railway Labor Act, or the RLA. Bargaining contracts under the Railway Labor Act differs significantly from bargaining under the National Labor Relations Act, or NLRA. However, the 21st century minimum wage law, as

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currently written, does not recognize that difference.

Under the RLA, terms of a contract do not expire. They merely become amendable in a long federally mediated process where workers do not have the right to strike. That means that workers do not have the same options to adapt their contracts to local laws upon a clear expiration of existing contract terms.

In the case of LSG Sky Chefs, the company has not agreed to the workers' ongoing demand to be paid the City's minimum.

No company should have the unilateral and unending right to impose a wage below the City's minimum for other airport workers. A simple amendment as proposed by Councilmember Johnson to close the loophole for the RLA context would ensure that workers seeking to be paid the minimum intended by law will be respected.

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Now, LSG Sky Chefs will most likely tell you today that the company is now planning to pay the minimum currently required by the law. Finally, after four years of paying over $4 an hour below the minimum set by the 21st Century Minimum Wage Standard and only after the hearing last December has the company now indicated a willingness to pay the current minimum wage as of this coming Friday, April 6th, 2018. But true to form, they have only agreed to do so for this year. They have refused to commit in writing that they will follow the law next year or the year after that or the year after that.

For workers who have already waited too long for a standard that should have been implemented by LSG Sky Chefs years ago, it is simply unconscionable that they will not commit to follow the law in the future and to make sure that workers are not left behind again. That's why even though the

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company has indicated a willingness to finally meet the minimum now, we continue to ask the Committee to move this legislation forward and to close the loophole once and for all permanently.

These workers have been left behind for too long. This company has shown over and over again that it will only respect the law if required to.

Thank you for your support and for making sure no workers are left behind in the future.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your testimony.

Are you testifying, sir?

MR. BAUDER: Yes, I am, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Bring that a little closer to you and then state your name for the record and begin your testimony.

MR. BAUDER: I am Daniel Bauder. Good afternoon, Chairman Jones and members of this Committee. As I

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stated, Daniel Bauder, Campaign Manager for the Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO. On behalf of our member unions and 150,000 workers in Philadelphia, I am here to testify in favor of Bill 170956.

In the last few years, workers have won hard-earned victories at our airport. I say "our airport" because, as you know, Philadelphia International Airport is a City-owned and operated facility. We're proud of our world-class airport that has such a talented and diverse workforce. We are proud that that workforce is earning a living wage and that our City Council continues to raise the standard of living for working people.

But this isn't the story for all workers at our airport. Unfortunately, hundreds of workers at LSG Sky Chefs are being shut out from the gains that others have made. These workers deserve equity and fair treatment by their employer.

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In other cities like Washington, DC and Los Angeles that have passed similar wage legislation, LSG Sky Chefs has followed the law and raised worker wages.

I have heard directly from workers that the turnover is so high at LSG Sky Chefs because of the low pay. I can't believe that a company wouldn't want to reduce their turnover and stop losing talented workers over the low market wages. That's why I'm here to testify in favor of Bill 170956 amending the 21st Century Wage and Benefit Ordinance to protect all workers at the airport.

Hundreds of workers for LSG Sky Chefs are being excluded from our city's living wage, and this body has the power to fix it. I urge Council to close this loophole to ensure that workers aren't being excluded from the gains that we have all worked for. The Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO stands with these workers

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and asks you to pass Bill 170956.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

Question, when did we pass the wage increase? I'm thinking, what, at least two years ago.

MR. BAUDER: 2013, I believe, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: 2013. And what is the difference between that minimum wage and what is proposed by law?

MS. WUCHINICH: What is proposed by law?

COUNCILMAN JONES: Our minimum wage. What was it? What have they been paid on average compared to what --

MS. WUCHINICH: The minimum -- the current minimum right now is $8.10 as of 2018 and the current rate is $12.20.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So multiply that by the time that they have not received it. That means individual workers lost how much money?

MS. WUCHINICH: We've done some

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just back-of-the-envelope calculations that a number of workers have lost probably as much as $20,000 over the last just few years, not since 2013 even. We were looking back just over the last two to three years. And, of course, as you know, when you're earning -- your wages are so low, $20,000 is a lot more to somebody that's earning $15,000 a year than to somebody earning $100,000 a year.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

Are there any questions?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing none, Ms. Williams, can you bring up the next panel of witnesses to testify.

THE CLERK: Folasade Olanipekun-Lewis and Bruce Murray.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And Alan Kessler.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

MR. KESSLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Welcome. Good afternoon. Thank you for your patience.

Folasade, you're no stranger here, so...

MS. LEWIS: Thank you for having me. Good afternoon, Councilmembers. Good afternoon, Councilman Jones, Chairman Jones, and members of the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development. I am Folasade Olanipekun-Lewis. I'm the new Regional Director for Government and Airport Affairs with American Airlines, and I'm here today to provide remarks regarding Resolution No. 170956.

This resolution would amend Philadelphia's 21st Century Minimum Wage and Benefits Standard Code by revising provisions regarding waivers of minimum wage requirements.

Currently, companies with collective bargaining agreements are allowed to seek a waiver from the City's

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living wage, which is discretionary under the Code. This amendment, however, would exclude any company that is governed by the Railway Labor Act and, thereby, unfairly singling out airline companies that conduct business with the City of Philadelphia.

While noticeably silent about the continued right to seek waivers by all other companies engaged in collective bargaining, this amendment unfairly and unnecessarily exclusively targets and penalizes airlines such as American Airlines engaging in collective bargaining and by eliminating any rights to similarly seek waivers.

It was not long ago American Airlines worked with the City to accept living wage standards and promote labor harmony. We agreed because we work in partnership with the City, positioning ourselves as a major international gateway and economic driver for Philadelphia's region.

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In short, airlines who have worked directly with members of Council and with the Mayor to address labor issues should not now be singled out from the discretionary waiver process under the City's Living Wage Code, as is so clearly and unambiguously the purpose of this amendment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

MS. KESSLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think Sade said it all. Now that she's sitting on the other side of the room --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, I'm noticing that.

MS. KESSLER: -- I'm just here as her --

COUNCILMAN JONES: It feels funny.

MR. KESSLER: I'm here as her protector, or maybe it's the other way around, she protects me.

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COURT STENOGRAPHER: Can you state your name. I'm sorry.

MR. KESSLER: Alan Kessler. I'm sorry. I'm outside counsel to American Airlines.

MR. MURRAY: Excuse me. My name is Franklin Bruce Murray. I'm here --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: State your name in the microphone.

MR. MURRAY: Franklin Bruce Murray. I'm here on behalf of LSG Sky Chefs, and thank you, Councilmembers and the Commerce and Economic Development Committee, for allowing us to speak to you today.

Here are the concerns that LSG Sky Chefs has with the proposed amendment to the Philadelphia 21st Century Minimum Wage and Benefits Standards Ordinance. The current ordinance acknowledges the right of employers and employees to negotiate in the area of wages and benefits and provides a venue for the

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employer and the union to waive the ordinance's wages and benefits requirements through the collective bargaining process.

The purpose of this amendment's targeted goal is to restrict the collective bargaining only for those employers who are governed by the National Railway Act, the National Labor Relations Railway Act, and by virtually dictating the result of collective bargaining in the areas while allowing those employers under the National Labor Relations Act to negotiate freely on these points as it was contemplated by federal law.

This effectively creates legislatively dictated terms of employment for certain unionized workforces but not for others. There is no legitimate or rational basis for the disparate restriction on bargaining for one group of unionized employers and employees over another.

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Carving out an exception to the ordinance for only RLA employers may seriously disadvantage certain unionized employees over the others. Since the National Labor Relations Act, employers will be able to freely negotiate in the areas of wages and benefits, and if RLA employers will not have this ability, employees recruitment and retention will be affected.

Collective bargaining negotiations are based on give and takes of dollar amounts and terms and conditions. If wages and benefits are not subject to negotiation because of this resolution, it leaves the union as well as the employer at a disadvantage, because there is less area for the parties to bargain over and limits the flexibility of bargaining parties and making -- arriving at an agreement much more difficult.

LSG Sky Chefs, an RLA employer, has been negotiating in good faith with

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Unite Here for years, and we believe that we're making progress in this area. If the resolution were to be adopted, the efforts of our negotiations will be severely impacted.

Thank you for listening to me today.

COUNCILMAN JONES: A couple questions. What is your official capacity with the company?

MR. MURRAY: I'm the Director of Labor Relations.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Director of Labor Relations. How many employees are we talking about exactly?

MR. MURRAY: In the United States?

COUNCILMAN JONES: No; in Philadelphia.

MR. MURRAY: In Philadelphia? Roughly about 300.

COUNCILMAN JONES: 300. And when did you raise the minimum wage? At what date did you acknowledge the law?

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MR. MURRAY: We raised it effectively April 6th. However, we've been --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Of this year?

MR. MURRAY: April 6th of this year. We've been negotiating with the union since December of '17 right after the hearing that took place here.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Is there anyone else to -- yes.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: We haven't had April 6th. He means of 2017?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: As of this Friday.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Oh, as of this Friday?

MR. MURRAY: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So we haven't gotten to it yet?

MR. MURRAY: The effective date is --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for clarifying that, Councilman.

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Councilman Domb.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon. I want to try to understand the situation for a minute. LSG Sky Chefs, you're in the business of supplying airlines with meals, and do you supply airlines other than American Airlines at the airport? You supply all the airlines?

MR. MURRAY: Yes, we do.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: All airlines, not just American?

MR. MURRAY: Yes. We have, I believe, 13 different customers at the Philly Airport.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: And you have services all over the country?

MR. MURRAY: That's correct.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: And in other parts of the country, are any of those airports paying the wages that are being paid in Philadelphia?

MR. MURRAY: There are some

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that are similar, yes.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Of a size of the City of Philadelphia, though?

MR. MURRAY: Some are greater than the size of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: And it's my understanding that you've been in negotiations and trying to work this out for a while, and do you think you're going to be able to get this resolved in the next week or two?

MR. MURRAY: We've been talking with the union about raising wage rates since December of '17. At my last visit here, I spoke to the Council and said that we were contemplating raising the wages prior to then, but our contract, or CVA, with the union gives them the right to ask for increased wages every 12 months and we had not heard from them.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Let me ask you another question, then. Based on the fact that wages are now $8.10, which is crazy low, but are you aware of the

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earned income tax credit?

MR. MURRAY: Am I aware?

COUNCILMAN DOMB: The earned income tax credit, the federal program.

MR. MURRAY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: And have we made sure that even if they're making 12 or 15 or 18 or whatever the number is dollars per hour and they have children, that they will qualify for federal dollars? I just want to make sure, if they're not getting the minimums that we want them to get, at least they should get the money from the federal government. Because last year in Philadelphia we still left $100 million that could go to 40,000 families who qualify, and these are people that are earning the minimum wage up to $22 to $23 an hour and have one, two or three kids. They can get checks from the federal government and file back three additional years. This is free money. So at a minimum, what I'd like to see is Sky

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Chefs promote this in their paychecks and get the word out, so at least the money from Washington comes back to Philadelphia.

MR. MURRAY: I clearly understand, and I've been personally approached by employees who are positively affected by us increasing wages but negatively affected by what they receive as benefits if we didn't. So I clearly understand what you're talking about, sir.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: I have actually, ironically, a packet of flyers for the earned income tax credit. I'm going to give it to you, and I'd like to make sure all the people get it. Okay?

MR. MURRAY: I will make sure they're distributed, sir.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: God loves consistency.

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Councilwoman Parker --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: If you don't mind, just one second, Mr. Chair.

I just wanted to go on the record and just clarify at least some of the information that I had, and if it's not correct, then I'll let the organizer come and correct the record.

But since December, there hasn't been any real negotiations with Unite Here. Is that correct or not correct?

MR. MURRAY: That is incorrect.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: That is incorrect?

MR. MURRAY: That is incorrect. There are two levels that negotiations happen or can happen. I negotiate with the Unite Here International Union, and we've been talking about Philadelphia long before December. However, I am not going to say the statement that was made earlier is incorrect, because the first conversation that I had with the local

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was here in this courtroom saying why haven't you asked for a wage increase, here's the process.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So if the City of Philadelphia passed the bill, right, that says here's a new 21st century wage across the board -- let's even take the union out of the picture, right? How come your company just didn't follow the law just for the simple fact of following the law and just saying, you know what, okay, the City of Philadelphia passed the bill, 21st century wages, now it's $12.20 an hour, we're going to follow the law to help our workers rise up out of poverty, be more competitive as it relates to operating our business at the Philadelphia International Airport?

MR. MURRAY: If I may answer this, and I don't want to go around the block with it. The 21st Century Minimum Wage Ordinance has been in several phases. There was a phase where it only affected people in the City and didn't

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affect the airport, I believe. And then I believe in 2015 it was rolled into one ordinance. So there was a time when we weren't affected by it, and then shortly after the change in the ordinance, we applied for a waiver, and at this point in time --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: A waiver to not pay the wages, correct?

MR. MURRAY: Correct.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: To not pay the wages?

MR. MURRAY: Wages and benefits, correct.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: All right. And one last thing, and the only reason why I get frustrated sometimes working with some of the major corporations, who I welcome to do business here in the City of Philadelphia, I want to be clear on that, because y'all do provide jobs, but the jobs mean nothing if they aren't good-paying jobs. I just want to say that for the record.

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How long have you known that this particular bill, this bill that we're discussing today, how long have you known about this bill?

MR. MURRAY: I'm not sure date-wise. I do know that it's been at least a year, maybe more.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. So you knew about this particular bill that's going to be proposed for --

MR. MURRAY: I'm sorry. This bill that's being proposed?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: This bill, this bill right here.

MR. MURRAY: I'm sorry. This bill, I only learned about it last week.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Oh, last week?

MR. MURRAY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. So you learned about this bill last week. However, this bill has been on the floor in terms of me advocating for it, right, and working with Unite Here for several

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months, and no one at Sky Chefs thought it was right to say, listen, let me reach out to the Councilperson besides today to express your issues or concern regarding this issue? We're not even talking about American Airlines. Let's take them out of the picture. We're talking about you negotiating with Unite Here knowing that this bill is on the floor. You didn't know anything about this?

MR. MURRAY: I absolutely did not know anything about this bill until late last week or the week before. I'm sorry.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: That's a problem with your company, then.

Okay. I'll defer to my colleague.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Councilwoman Parker and then Councilwoman Brown.

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and special thank you to the sponsor, District Councilman Johnson, whose district includes the

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airport. Thank you, Councilman Johnson, for your leadership.

I was just asking Mr. Chairman Jones for some clarity regarding this issue, because I am a freshman member here in Council. So I'm just trying to sort of catch up here.

I just wanted to make sure that I heard you correctly in your testimony where you noted that if this legislation was enacted, you talked about it having -- and just please correct me if I'm wrong. It could have a negative impact or negative unintended consequences relative to recruitment and retention. Did you say that that could be impacted?

MR. MURRAY: Yes, I did.

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay. Now, with that being said -- and, again, correct me if I'm wrong -- tell me is it true that with LSG Sky Chefs that in 2016 you had a turnover at the kitchen that was over 80 percent?

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MR. MURRAY: That is not correct.

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Okay. What I will ask you to do just for the sake of the record, if you have that number, that you could forward to Chairman Jones, along with the sponsor of the legislation, Councilman Johnson. Because when I heard you mention that Council's legislative action here could potentially have a negative unintended consequence of negatively impacting your recruitment and your retention efforts there, but then I looked at data that just said, wait, your turnover rate in 2016 was over 80 percent, that would seem to me that the lack of stability relative to your workforce had less to do with the action that Council would make here today and much more about the decision that the firm in and of itself would make.

And so I know, Councilman Johnson and Chairman Jones, if we could get that, I think that would be very

helpful.

In addition to that, I want to follow up on what Councilman Domb asked relative to wage policies at other airports. Now, help me, has Sky Chefs given raises in accordance to the wage policies at other airports like San Francisco, Los Angeles, and what about Washington Reagan National? Have you done that? And what do those numbers look like?

MR. MURRAY: There are a lot of questions in there, so let me see if I can recall each one of them.

In the City of San Francisco, there is a minimum -- a Quality Standards Act, QSP it's called, and it provides for wages, benefits, and some reporting activity. We pay the minimum -- we pay at least the minimum that meets the requirement of the Quality Standards Act. We have a waiver --

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: I'm sorry for injecting here. I just want you to

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help me, because we're here and I don't know the numbers. So if you've given raises in accordance with the wage policies at other airports, I guess for me I want to be able to get on the record what that number is in San Francisco, in Los Angeles, and I believe most recently Washington Reagan National. If there are numbers so I can correlate a number with the locale, if you would have that handy.

MR. MURRAY: I don't have that handy, not here in front of me.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Excuse me. I don't mean to interject. You're saying you don't know what the wage rate is in LA for your company?

MR. MURRAY: I do know that effective March 20th it was 12.08. We are paying 12.08.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And what about the other cities?

What are those, Councilwoman?

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: It was Washington Reagan National.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Washington, what is that?

MR. MURRAY: I don't want to misspeak.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Can you call somebody? Those are -- because we can get an intern to Google it, but, I mean, can you find that out?

MR. MURRAY: I have the information, just not here with me at this table. Again, I don't want to misspeak. I have 40 different locations throughout the United States.

COUNCILMAN JONES: We just want to know about three.

I'm sorry, Councilwoman.

MR. MURRAY: I believe Washington Reagan, MWAA, is at -- no. I better not. I'm not sure.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Rough guess.

MR. MURRAY: Roughly it's either 11.50 or $12. We pay that. Washington Reagan and Washington Dulles, they're part of MWAA, the Washington

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Regional Metropolitan Airport Authority.
COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: I appreciate you putting on the record for us, even if you just notice you were giving us a ball park figure relative to Washington. I know you'll get the actual number to Chairman Jones and the sponsor of the legislation. I guess it was important to me that you get that information on the record for the benefit of the public here and our residents in the City so that they will understand that the legislation that this City Council passed relative to the living wage was not in any way, shape or form out of the context regarding a national discussion and the impact that a living wage has on the quality of life for residents in the City of Philadelphia.
And that is important to me because, Councilman Jones and Johnson, we know that the majority of the workers here live in Philadelphia and they live in 29 different zip codes.

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Now, Councilman Johnson, we know that -- it was 19142. You know 19142 well, right? But it is not 19142 alone. These employees live in neighborhoods across the City of Philadelphia that are impacted by this, and it is with that in mind that I don't want anyone in the public who is just turning this on to think that this City Council of Philadelphia is attempting to enact any legislation that seeks to hamper the ability of business to be competitive in this market relative to this industry. And that is important in the context of economic discussions that we're having in the City about how to grow the pie and increase revenues and bring new businesses here.

So I'll be looking forward to getting that data to see how Philadelphia is faring with the other cities that have engaged in this kind of agreement so that we can get that on the record.

Councilman Johnson, I want to

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thank you so very much for your leadership.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Councilwoman Reynolds Brown.

Thank you, Councilwoman.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Good afternoon, everyone.

The point I want to make is the last remark that Councilwoman Parker just shared. It matters to us to see how Philadelphia ranks, to see how Philadelphia -- where Philadelphia stands with regards to cities that mirror us in population and/or ethnicity. So that information really gives us a picture of where we are and underscores why there's an interest to move us to a better place on this particular issue.

Are you at liberty to share with us, because I know that there are negotiations underway, what the potential impediments are towards reaching a better place with you and the sponsor of this bill? Are you at liberty to say --

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MR. MURRAY: Yes. Yeah, I'm at liberty to say.

I welcome your interest in the statistics. One statistic that I just did on the train here, from Washington to here was, I looked at what we voluntarily implemented for the lowest wage rate, and I understand it's the same rate that you have for your bill, your 21st century bill, and out of the 38 locations that we have in the United States, Philadelphia will be number eight. So the first of them are all West Coast cities, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Ana, and --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: San Diego maybe?

MR. MURRAY: San Diego. Then comes JFK, the New York, and then it's Philadelphia and it's followed by LA, et cetera. So your minimum standard is number eight in the hierarchy of the highest paid minimum standards that we have. There are roughly 30 that are below you in a minimum standards rate.

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COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see.

MR. MURRAY: That answers part of your analytical question.

The second part of your question, and I'm losing --

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Are you at liberty to share what the impediments might be --

MR. MURRAY: Yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: -- for coming to a common ground?

MR. MURRAY: The impediment to getting a deal, as I was told by the union, is that they want in writing that in Philadelphia we will pledge either to CPIU or whatever the minimum standard would be in the future. That is the only impediment that we have, I believe we have at this point.

We have put dollars on the table for the minimum wage to be at or above what you're asking now, and the only reason we don't have a deal at this point in time is that I don't have the

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ability to promise monies that the company hasn't authorized.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see. And my final question is --

MR. MURRAY: Future money. I'm sorry.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: In response to Councilman Johnson's question, when you learned about this particular legislative measure, what is the protocol or practice in your business when you learn and hear about legislation? Is there someone on the ground to be eyes and ears for you? Because that helps us in understanding why at least it appears that this --

MR. MURRAY: I'm glad you asked that question, because as I said, we're in 38 different locations with 40 different units. And we normally at the corporate level don't really hear about it until it's brought to our attention by the local people at the unit saying, hey, there's a possible hearing or there's a

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bill that's being put together.

We do have a source that monitors living wage ordinances, whatnot, but they come in so many forms that the words don't usually get through -- 21st century would be something we wouldn't hear unless we heard the last part of it, minimum wage ordinance. QSP, the Quality Standards Act in San Francisco, California, there is no way I could put a Google alert or anything on that knowing that that's their minimum wage standard.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see.

MR. MURRAY: So they come in all different forms, and the best information that we can get comes from our units.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Comes from?

MR. MURRAY: Comes from the local unit that's located in the city or the airport that's enacting the legislation.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Where are

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you headquartered?

MR. MURRAY: We're headquartered right outside Dallas, Texas.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: I see. Okay. My last encouragement is to Councilman Allan Domb, who has been exceedingly persistent and consistent in reminding us of the value of the EITC. And so your quote was that I understand its value. Are you persuaded to ensure that your membership, your staff, your organization gets the information and then urged to do the followthrough?

MR. MURRAY: I am more than urged and more than understanding and more than willing to make sure that happens.

COUNCILWOMAN BROWN: Terrific. Okay. Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilwoman.

Councilman Domb.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,

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Mr. Chairman.

Just to follow up my colleague, that EITC, by the way, while we're all Philadelphians, is nationwide. So you can incorporate that nationwide. And by the way, just so you know, the maximums, you can get up to over $6,000 a year and file back three additional years. So people working for Sky Chefs could get $24,000 from the federal government. They just don't know about it.

Let me ask you a question. I'm trying to break this down. Your new rate is going to be -- is it 12.20 an hour?

MR. MURRAY: That is the lowest minimum wage we have. Lowest wage we have.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: So when you put that through, do you then go back to the airlines and ask for an increase in your food cost to compensate for that?

MR. MURRAY: It wouldn't be in the food cost. Most of the airlines that I deal with -- or I'm sorry; that we deal

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with, I have a labor component and a food component. So it would be something that we would try to recover from the airlines. Now, having 13 different airlines at a location makes it very hard. No knocks on American. They've been pretty good at if in fact it's legislative and in fact -- and we have a brand new contract with them right now. We will be having the discussion in regards to the additional cost.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: So I guess where I'm trying to get to go to, to cut to the chase, if you're going to pass through this increase in labor -- I'm sure your company is not going to eat this increase. You're going to pass it through to the airlines, and then the airlines are going to pass it to the consumers. So if I'm the average consumer going on a plane from Philadelphia to Atlanta, Georgia, what does that look like for me and my cost of my ticket?

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MR. MURRAY: I don't know precise figures, but you're under the assumption -- or I may put you under the assumption that all of our airline customers are going to pay that. I will tell you when you have international airline clients, they're very unlikely to participate in something that they call your problem.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Are we talking a dollar a ticket, $2 a ticket or are we talking more than that? Do you have any idea?

MR. MURRAY: I don't. Maybe the airline has more information.

MS. KESSLER: Mr. Domb, I can't tell you categorically that those costs are going to be passed on or how much of those costs. That's not what I came prepared to talk about. What I can tell you is, as we've said, any number of times before this Council is the cost of flying is extraordinarily competitive. We exist between Washington, DC and New

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York. We exist between Baltimore and Newark. So to the extent all we do is pass on increased costs, we're going to find ourselves in Philadelphia in an uncompetitive position. So that's a significant factor in -- it may not seem that way, but it's a significant factor in our pricing.

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

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman.

And Councilman Taubenberger.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kessler, American Airlines, how many hubs do they have similar to Philadelphia in the United States?

MS. KESSLER: All together, nine hubs.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Nine hubs. And of those nine hubs, is Air Chefs used at all nine?

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MS. LEWIS: I'm not sure, but I don't believe so, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: You believe?

MS. LEWIS: I don't believe so, but I can confirm that.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I think that would be very helpful in the decision-making process and what the competitive costs are at your other hubs and what is paid there as well. I think that's very, very relevant, particularly to this Committee.

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman.

Councilman Johnson.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just a question about Sky Chef. How much revenue does Sky Chef make annually? Like how big is the company?

MR. MURRAY: Roughly about 1.3 billion in the U.S.

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COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Do you go beyond the U.S. as well?

MR. MURRAY: Excuse me?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Do you go beyond the U.S. as well, internationally?

MR. MURRAY: The Sky Chef brand exists in other places in the world. North America is a company within its own. It's called Sky Chefs, Inc., and it operates in the United States and its territories.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: But the one in America is you said how much billion? I didn't hear you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: 1.3.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: 1.3 billion for the United States?

MR. MURRAY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. I just wanted to get that for the record.

Thank you very much.

MR. MURRAY: And that's an approximate. So don't let the CFO fire me for telling you that.

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COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: That's all right.

COUNCILMAN JONES: It's a little harder living off of $8 an hour, pay the rent.

Councilman Taubenberger.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Just to follow up on Councilman Johnson's question about where else Sky Chef has operations. Are there European airports?

MR. MURRAY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: How many?

MR. MURRAY: I don't have the number. My functional area is North America.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Okay. I understand. Because to be very direct about it, European wages are paid significantly higher than American wages, and that will be interesting on what is done there. I think fairness has to be -- that's why we're here. We'd like to have fairness. And at this moment, I

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really don't see that, but prove me that it is fair.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman.

Are there any other questions?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing none, we will now -- thank you for your testimony.

We will now -- do we have others?

THE CLERK: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Ms. Williams, can you get us to the next panel.

THE CLERK: Isatu Sesay, Anna Constance, Mariam Magassa, and Ibrahim Jallo.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you all for your patience and welcome. Please state your name for the record and begin your testimony.

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MS. CONSTANCE: I'm Anna Constance.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Pull it a little closer to you.

MS. CONSTANCE: No problem.

My name is Anna Constance. I work at LSG Sky Chef at the Philadelphia Airport. I'm here today to testify especially -- I was here before another board not too long ago about turnover, the pressure on workers to work hard, but I want to go on record in saying I've lived and traveled a lot, but I've never met more dedicated and hard-working people than the people I've met, had the fortune at this time in my life's journey to meet at Sky Chefs, that no matter what weather conditions, they will show up for work and turn out the best quality product for the service that is being rendered by the company.

We do have a high turnover rate, and I believe due to Sky Chef not being competitive. It's like we're a

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training ground for the airport, American Airlines and other services at the airport, because being that they're trained to run efficiently on airline scheduled time, you are able to get jobs easier at the airport. They don't have to train you much because you're already at the level of being able to operate at the pace you're supposed to operate at.

So Sky Chef not being able to pay or unwilling to pay higher to be competitive with the airport creates a problem for us who love being at the company, love what we do, the service we do render.

So that loophole that is in the law -- in fact, I first asked about the Railway Act law, and I did research about it, because I kept hearing about it, what was -- that transportation workers somehow are not supposed to strike. And the question I asked the union was, well, what is the counter to that so that businesses won't always have the upper

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hand over workers where because they cannot strike, you are kept at a standstill?

And they said, well, the City of Philadelphia has a law in place, but there is a loophole that can be closed to force companies such as Sky Chef to follow the law and not hold its employees at poverty level.

The kind man that was just up here stated at the last meeting that nobody is forcing the workers to stay at that company. I remember him clearly saying that. And the Chairman of that committee asked him -- told him, well, they need jobs, which instills dignity to individuals.

Nobody is standing here asking for a handout. We are asking for a livable wage to be able to reside in the area, which is the Southwest Philly region, which because of its location with the airport and freeways that move easily in that area, having easy access

to getting out of Philadelphia and entering, cost of living has risen. Rent price, we're not able to pay that on what we're being paid. So most people with their children live in one rooms that they rent from somebody who has a house, and that is poverty.

Looking at the City of Philadelphia and what it has to offer, called the City of Brotherly Love, I don't think it's humane to sit and let a company that makes so much money deny its workers the ability to pay for a one-bedroom apartment or two to be able to meet some of the dreams of their children. I don't think that's being unfair to that company that it follows the law.

There is a law, and they are being -- they feel that they don't have to obey that law.

The reason we're here today, even with the $12.90, is to not have to go back to fighting again after the City

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has raised minimum wage again to go back to fighting a three, four-year battle to get them to catch up when the City has moved up again. That is why we're here today.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I will note for the record that the company left and didn't listen to this.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: He's here.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Where's he at? All right. I was getting ready to come at you hard. Thank you for being here, because it's important to hear what they go through and it's important if you value your labor, you at least want to hear. Even if you can't do everything, you can hear and understand their burden just to get to work.

If you have to choose between car fare and eating lunch or car fare and making sure your kids get to where they got to go, those are tough business and worker decisions made every day.

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I'm sorry for interrupting. Would you please state your name and begin your testimony, please.

MS. SESAY: My name is Isatu Sesay. I am a utility worker at the LSG Sky Chef Philadelphia. I am another person who has been earning poverty wages for doing valuable work at Sky Chefs. Let me tell you, it has been very grim and discouraging to work at Sky Chefs for a long time now. If I and my co-workers had been granted the $12 minimum wage back in 2015, each of us would have earned something like 20,000 more by now. That kind of income would have changed our lives. It would have allowed us to be less exhausted, to have better housing, to improve our lives in so many ways.

Three years later Sky Chef has finally risen our pay to the levels we should have reached years ago. We are pleased that Sky Chefs are finally implemented wages that look more like

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airport wages, but I have to tell you there is something painful when we have had to wait more than three years to finally have the chance to be given the respect of other airport workers. I have suffered greatly because I have earned so little.

My co-workers and I believe that Sky Chef is acting now because they know that we, the workers, are finally having a chance to share our stories before the elected leaders of this city. Now that we are speaking before you, we are afraid that if you do not act to help us secure our future now, when we are no longer in the spotlight, our wages and our standard of living will get back again and the progress we have made will be lost over time. Please act on our behalf so we can know that we are treated as equals with everyone who makes the airport work.

Thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

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Thank you so much.

Bring the mic a little closer.

MS. MAGASSA: My name is Miriam Magassa.

COUNCILMAN JONES: You got to bring it closer.

MS. MAGASSA: My name is Mariam Magassa. My job is to maintain the employee cafeteria at Sky Chefs Philadelphia. During my shift, I see my co-workers with this have a chance to rest. They work so much overtime, they are very tired all the time. We are tired of working so hard and being poor. We ask you to stand up for us and allow us to be treated as equals.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

Any questions of this group?

Thank you for -- Councilman Domb. Sorry.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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I have a question for the three of you. Have either of you heard of the earned income tax credit, EITC? Have you heard of it?

(Witnesses nod head in the affirmative.)

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Have any of you applied for it if you thought you were qualified?

MS. CONSTANCE: Not applied, no.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Were you notified by the company about it?

MS. CONSTANCE: No.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Do you know how it works?

MS. CONSTANCE: Why don't you explain.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: It's a federal program that helps those earning $8.10 to $23 an hour. If you have no children, the maximum check is like $508, but you can file back three additional years. So that's $2,000 you can get from

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the government just by filling out the forms, $2,000 if you have no children under the age of 18.

If you have one, two or three children under the age of 18, you can get checks up to $6,000. You may not have children in that category, but if you know people who do, they can get checks up to 6,000 and get up to three years filed back for 24,000. And let me just tell you the income. 44,000, single parent with two kids. 51,000 for a couple with two kids.

I mean, the numbers are pretty high, and I'm only sharing it because this is free money from the federal government that is not coming to our people in Philadelphia. So if you qualify, fill it out. If you know people, tell them about it. We'll give you the forms.

MS. CONSTANCE: All right.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Councilman, thank you. I think maybe Denny O'Brien was singular focused on one issue like you, but second to maybe Denny O'Brien.

Thank you all for your testimony.

Seeing no other questions, we will now recess our public -- I'm sorry. We have one more? I apologize. We're just trying to get there.

Welcome. Thank you, sir, for your patience. State your name for the record.

MR. JALLO: Good afternoon. Ibrahim Jallo.

I am here to tell you that on behalf of all my co-workers, we are tired of being second-class citizens in the airport and the City we love so dearly. Philadelphia airline industry could not function. The kind of contract which we have, the RLA contract, make it very hard for us to make demands in all the ways that most unions can. We absolutely need

your help as elected labor leaders of our city to make sure that all workers in the City airport can move forward together and treated as equals. We should be granted the minimum of standard that recognize the importance of our work.

Thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your patience. Can I ask you, what exactly do you do at your job?

MR. JALLO: I can't hear you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: What do you do at your job?

MR. JALLO: For now I build sodas and juice for Sky Chefs for the airport.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.

MR. JALLO: I'm a builder.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Got it. Thank you so much for your testimony.

Are there any other questions?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Are there any other panels?

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THE CLERK: No.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing none, Councilman.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just for the record, I'm going to ask for the bill to be passed out of Committee with a favorable recommendation without suspending the rules, so the two parties can continue engaging in their dialogue to come to some level of resolve. In the event that they don't, we will be voting on this officially on April the 19th.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman.

All right. We will now recess the public hearing to go into a public meeting to consider action to be taken on Bill No. 170956.

I'm looking for a motion on Bill No. 170956 from Councilmember Parker.

COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No. 170956 be reported from this Committee

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with a favorable recommendation.

(Duly seconded.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: It has been moved and properly seconded that Bill No. 170956 be reported from this Committee with a favorable recommendation. We are not asking for a rules suspension.

All those in favor will say aye.

(Aye.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: All those opposed?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: The ayes have it.

This concludes the business of the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development for today.

Thank you all very much for your patience.

Councilman Domb.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: I just have --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Wait a

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minute. We have a resolution. I don't recall us voting that resolution out.

We don't have to. All right.

Once again, this concludes our hearing.

Councilman Domb.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: I just have a comment for the gentleman from Sky Chefs.

I need you to do us a favor. It's clear to me that EITC is not part of the whole program. Okay? I need you to make a commitment to get the word out about the earned income tax credit to all of our people working at the airport at Sky Chefs and the unions, all the unions that are employed there, because we still have 40,000 people who are not getting this money from Washington. You can see the three people here didn't even know about it. So whatever you can do to make sure that happens, we would appreciate it, but I need a commitment from you to make that happen.

MR. MURRAY: You have my

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commitment.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman Domb, for your persistence in this. It's money in the citizens' pocket.

Thank you all.

(Committee on Commerce and Economic Development concluded at 4:15 p.m.)

- - -

CERTIFICATE

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

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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