

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

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, June 10, 2014
10:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR., CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL

BILL 140448 - An ordinance amending Title 19 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Finance, Taxes and Collections," by adding a new Chapter 19-4000, entitled "Income Inequality Initiative - Earned Income Tax Credit"...

BILL 140488 - An ordinance amending Chapter 17-1300 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Philadelphia 21st Century Minimum Wage and Benefits Standard," by further providing with respect to the application of the minimum wage and benefits standard to contractors...

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COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good

3

morning. This hearing is called to

4

order. This is a public hearing of the

5

Commerce and Economic Development

6

Committee on Bills No. 140448 and 140488.

7

My name is W. Wilson Goode, Jr., Chair of

8

the Committee.

9

I note that a quorum is

10

present. To my right is Councilwoman

11

Jannie Blackwell, Councilman Kenyatta

12

Johnson. To my left is Councilman Brian

13

O'Neill.

14

The title of Bill No. 140448,

15

amending Title 19 of The Philadelphia

16

Code, entitled "Finance, Taxes and

17

Collections," by adding a new Chapter

18

19-4000, entitled "Income Inequality

19

Initiative - Earned Income Tax Credit,"

20

providing for the implementation of a

21

policy and procedures to enable all

22

Philadelphia residents who are eligible

23

for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit

24

(EITC) to apply for and receive the

25

maximum credit to which they are

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 entitled, with particular focus on the
3 approximately 40,000 EITC-eligible
4 Philadelphians who have not yet applied;
5 requiring certain employers, and certain
6 persons or businesses that hire
7 non-payroll employees, to provide notice
8 concerning the EITC; and requiring the
9 Department of Revenue to report
10 periodically on the implementation of,
11 and results obtained from, such a policy;
12 all under certain terms and conditions.

13 The title of Bill No. 140488,
14 amending Chapter 17-1300 of The
15 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Philadelphia
16 21st Century Minimum Wage and Benefits
17 Standard," by further providing with
18 respect to the application of the minimum
19 wage and benefits standard to
20 contractors, subcontractors, recipients
21 of financial assistance, and
22 subrecipients of financial assistance;
23 and by revising the required Minimum Wage
24 Standard; all under certain terms and
25 conditions.

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.

2 Our first panel is the
3 Administration on both bills, Everett
4 Gillison, Mr. Afessa, and Ms. Gladstein.
5 (Witnesses approached witness
6 table.)

7 DEPUTY MAYOR GILLISON: If I
8 may. Thank you. Good morning,
9 Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee
10 on Commerce and Economic Development. I
11 am Everett Gillison, Chief of Staff and
12 Deputy Mayor for Public Safety. Thank
13 you for the opportunity to provide
14 testimony on Bill No. 140488.

15 The Administration supports
16 Bill No. 140488. As written, it will
17 amend the requirements of The
18 Philadelphia Code, Chapter 17-1300, The
19 Philadelphia 21st Century Minimum Wage
20 and Benefits Standard, to the employees
21 of subcontractors at any tier who are
22 involved in City contracts.

23 Additionally, it will increase
24 the current minimum wage standard to \$12
25 an hour. Starting with January 2016,

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 this amount will increase annually based
3 on inflation. This bill codifies and
4 makes permanent the Mayor's Executive
5 Order 3-14, which was issued on May 16,
6 2014. The Executive Order similarly
7 increases the minimum wage required in
8 City contracts, subcontracts, and other
9 agreements to \$12 an hour, with annual
10 inflation adjustments starting in January
11 2016. The Executive Order also makes
12 minimum wage and benefit requirements
13 applicable to subcontractors. Bill No.
14 140488 will codify these requirements of
15 the Executive Order and extend the
16 requirements to subcontractors at any
17 tier. With this bill, these requirements
18 can now carry across Administrations.

19 As Mayor Nutter has remarked
20 during the Executive Order signing
21 ceremony, "For decades, too many
22 Philadelphians have been trapped in a
23 cycle of persistent and pervasive
24 poverty. No person who works on a City
25 contract should live in poverty. We must

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 create ladders of opportunity."

3 The Administration shares
4 Councilman Goode's purpose in introducing
5 Bill No. 140488 - to support vulnerable
6 people, create economic vitality, reduce
7 poverty, and increase the opportunities
8 for success of every Philadelphian. I am
9 glad to be able to express our support
10 for this bill.

11 In closing, I would like to
12 thank Councilman Goode for introducing
13 this bill and for his leadership on wage
14 and benefit issues. As the Mayor has
15 recognized, Councilman Goode's advocacy
16 has had a real impact on City governance
17 and on the lives of the individuals and
18 families across Philadelphia.

19 Thank you for the opportunity
20 to testify this morning, and I would be
21 happy to answer any questions that the
22 Committee may have.

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
24 for your testimony, Mr. Gillison.

25 (Applause.)

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN GOODE: And the
3 Administration has a technical amendment
4 to the bill; is that correct?

5 DEPUTY MAYOR GILLISON: That's
6 correct. I believe a technical was
7 proposed. It was handed up and it has --
8 I would ask that the Committee consider
9 the amendment and seek its adoption.

10 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.
11 Mr. Afessa, Ms. Gladstein on
12 Bill No. 140448.

13 MR. AFESSA: Tilahun Afessa.
14 Good morning, Chairman Goode
15 and members of the Committee. I am
16 Tilahun Afessa, Director of Policy in the
17 Department of Revenue, testifying on
18 behalf of Clarena Tolson --

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Mr. Afessa,
20 can you pull the mic closer.

21 MR. AFESSA: Testifying on
22 behalf of Clarena Tolson, Revenue
23 Commissioner and Chief Revenue Collection
24 Officer, who is out of town today. I am
25 here to testify on Bill No. 140448. This

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 bill authorizes the development of a plan
3 for encouraging participation in the
4 federal Earned Income Tax Credit program
5 and would require employers to provide
6 notice to employees of the Earning Tax
7 Credit program with their W-2 or 1099.

8 The EITC provides federal tax
9 refunds to individuals and families with
10 income earned from employment with
11 certain income restrictions. The income
12 limits for 2014 will range from \$14,590
13 for a single person to \$52,427 for a
14 married couple with three or more
15 children. For 2014, the maximum credit
16 available will span from \$496 for a
17 single person to \$6,143 for a married
18 couple with three or more children.

19 EITC tax credits are a
20 significant benefit and can materially
21 improve the lives and financial
22 conditions of Philadelphians that apply
23 and receive them. Unfortunately,
24 according to the Shared Prosperity report
25 documenting poverty and economic

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 insecurity in Philadelphia, 40,000, or
3 18.6 percent, of eligible Philadelphians
4 that could get the EITC don't.

5 The City has provided support
6 for EITC programs in the past, and Bill
7 No. 140448 would authorize the
8 development of a policy to identify,
9 contact, and enroll eligible individuals
10 with a view toward increasing
11 utilization. This represents an
12 opportunity to return large tax refunds
13 to the pockets of Philadelphians without
14 foregoing local tax revenue. For this
15 reason, the Administration believes the
16 policy enunciated by Bill No. 140448 is a
17 positive one. We do request certain
18 amendments to the bill, primarily
19 regarding the timing and the content of
20 annual reporting, so that the City report
21 is in sync with the release and content
22 of Internal Revenue Service data
23 regarding the utilization of the EITC by
24 Philadelphians.

25 City engagement in the filing

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 of federal and state taxes may also
3 present an opportunity to counsel about
4 and enroll low-income Philadelphians in
5 programs available to them from the City,
6 like homestead, senior tax freeze, and
7 Water Revenue assistance programs at a
8 time where they are thinking about their
9 finances and have their financial
10 information with them. Additionally,
11 this could provide an avenue for
12 education and assistance for local tax
13 filing requirements.

14 Thank you for the opportunity
15 to testify in support of this bill. I am
16 happy to take any questions.

17 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you,
18 Mr. Afessa.

19 Ms. Gladstein.

20 MS. GLADSTEIN: Good morning,
21 Chairman Goode and members of the
22 Committee. My name is Eva Gladstein.
23 I'm Executive Director of the Mayor's
24 Office of Community Empowerment and
25 Opportunity, which I'll refer to as CEO

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 in the rest of the testimony. I'm here
3 today to testify in support of Bill No.
4 140448, which authorizes the development
5 and implementation of a plan for
6 encouraging participation in the federal
7 Earned Income Tax Credit program and
8 would require employers to provide notice
9 to employees of the EITC program with
10 their W-2 or 1099.

11 In July 2013, CEO launched
12 Shared Prosperity Philadelphia, our plan
13 to fight poverty. One of the five
14 strategies in the plan is to expand
15 access to public benefits and essential
16 services. Many Philadelphians are
17 unaware or have difficulty accessing
18 important entitlements and other benefits
19 that would help stabilize their lives.
20 For example, about 15 percent of adult
21 Philadelphians are without health
22 insurance and approximately 180,000
23 eligible Philadelphians do not enroll for
24 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
25 (SNAP) benefits or food stamps. In

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 addition, 18.6 percent of eligible
3 Philadelphians do not apply for EITC.

4 CEO is already working on this
5 issue, and we welcome the ability to
6 coordinate with even more efforts to
7 reach out to eligible residents about
8 EITC. For a number of years, we have
9 provided resources to the Campaign for
10 Working Families, which operates free tax
11 assistance (VITA) sites throughout the
12 City. In the most recent tax season, the
13 Campaign helped complete 17,220 federal
14 returns and 13,000 state returns. We're
15 waiting for the most recent report to
16 learn how many participants received
17 EITC.

18 Since last March, in
19 partnership with Clarifi, we've operated
20 Financial Empowerment Centers that
21 provide free one-on-one financial
22 counseling to help Philadelphia residents
23 improve their credit, reduce debt, and
24 begin to save. Financial counselors
25 encourage eligible participants to take

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 advantage of EITC. Nine centers are
3 operating throughout the City, and we
4 have attached information on the
5 locations and hours. The FECs have
6 provided 3,080 counseling sessions
7 serving 1,059 clients.

8 This month we are launching six
9 BenePhilly Centers, which will offer free
10 one-on-one professional support to help
11 Philadelphia residents enroll in
12 benefits. These centers are located at
13 the sites of non-profit organizations
14 that are already providing other services
15 to low-income residents and will operate
16 full time during the week, with some
17 evening and weekend hours. Individuals
18 will be able to visit these sites,
19 receive comprehensive screening for
20 benefits, and obtain assistance in
21 completing applications and providing the
22 necessary documentation. They'll also be
23 able to access support through a
24 telephonic system. The benefits
25 screening tool that they will be using

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 includes the ability to complete tax
3 forms through EITC -- including EITC. A
4 list of these locations and their hours
5 is attached to this testimony.

6 We welcome opportunities to
7 increase the City's role in encouraging
8 the filing of federal and state taxes and
9 stand ready to coordinate our activities.

10 Thank you for the opportunity
11 to testify today, and I'm happy to take
12 any questions.

13 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
14 for your testimony.

15 Are there questions for this
16 panel?

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Not a
18 question so much as just an observation.
19 This is terrific. This is money that
20 just is there, and our 100 percent goal
21 is still going to get us a lot further
22 than we are now. But this reminds me of
23 just a year or two ago when -- this is
24 analogous. It's not identical, because a
25 lot of people aren't homeowners in this

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 group, but the outreach issue is the
3 same. When we had people -- we still
4 have them -- with homes that haven't
5 applied for homestead, the District
6 Councilmen particularly had themselves
7 personally, their staffs coming up with
8 real creative ways to reach out to people
9 through district offices, through e-mail
10 databases. I mean, you name it. Door
11 knocking on days, phone calls. There
12 might be a way of coordinating it, that's
13 all I'm saying, adding to the Bene
14 Centers' impact by bringing in those
15 district offices, particularly the ones
16 that know that they have -- you can
17 actually identify for them how many
18 families and who they are pretty much,
19 and we're pretty good at meeting that
20 challenge.

21 Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

23 Any other questions or comments
24 for this panel?

25 (No response.)

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.

2 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Let me
3 say I totally agree with what the
4 Councilman said. Thank you.

5 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.
6 We will continue to take testimony, but
7 while we have a quorum, I'm going to move
8 from the public hearing into a public
9 meeting to consider Bills No. 140448 and
10 140488.

11 The Chair recognizes
12 Councilwoman Blackwell for a motion on
13 the amendment to Bill No. 140448.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
15 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the
16 amendment to Bill No. 140448 be adopted.

17 (Duly seconded.)

18 COUNCILMAN GOODE: All in
19 favor?

20 (Aye.)

21 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Those
22 opposed?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN GOODE: The bill is
25 amended.

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.

2 The Chair recognizes

3 Councilwoman Blackwell for a motion on

4 Bill No. 140448, as amended.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank

6 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.

7 140448, as amended, be reported out of

8 Committee with a favorable recommendation

9 and also a recommendation for suspension

10 of the rules so as to permit first

11 reading at our next session of Council.

12 (Duly seconded.)

13 COUNCILMAN GOODE: All in

14 favor?

15 (Aye.)

16 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Those

17 opposed?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Bill No.

20 140448, as amended, is reported out of

21 this Committee with a favorable

22 recommendation and suspension of the

23 rules to allow first reading at our next

24 Council session.

25 The Chair recognizes

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 Councilwoman Blackwell for a motion on
3 the amendment to Bill No. 140488.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
5 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the
6 amendment to Bill No. 140488 be adopted.

7 (Duly seconded.)

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: All in
9 favor?

10 (Aye.)

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Those
12 opposed?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN GOODE: The bill is
15 amended.

16 The Chair now recognizes
17 Councilwoman Blackwell for a motion on
18 Bill No. 140488, as amended.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
20 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No.
21 140488, as amended, be reported out of
22 Committee with a favorable recommendation
23 and also a recommendation for a
24 suspension of the rules so as to permit
25 first reading at our next session of

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 Council.

3 (Duly seconded.)

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: All in
5 favor?

6 (Aye.)

7 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Those
8 opposed?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Bill No.
11 140488, as amended, is reported out of
12 this Committee with a favorable
13 recommendation and a suspension of the
14 rules to allow first reading at our next
15 Council session.

16 We will move back into our
17 public hearing. Thank you very much to
18 this panel.

19 We will now take testimony on
20 Bill No. 140448. Montgomery Wilson,
21 Community Legal Services.

22 (Witness approached witness
23 table.)

24 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good
25 morning, Mr. Wilson. Please state your

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 name for the record and proceed with your
3 testimony.

4 MR. WILSON: Good morning,
5 Councilman. Thank you for having me here
6 today. My name is Monty Wilson. I am an
7 attorney at Community Legal Services in
8 Philadelphia, where I am a senior
9 attorney. I've worked in the
10 Homeownership and Consumer Unit since
11 2001. In my time at CLS, I have advised
12 and assisted over 1,300 Philadelphians on
13 a wide variety of legal problems. The
14 majority of those cases involved helping
15 homeowners who were struggling to pay
16 delinquent mortgages, more recently
17 delinquent real estate taxes, owed on
18 their homes. It won't surprise anyone
19 that 99 percent of the time their primary
20 question to me was, Where am I going to
21 get the money I need to? On more than
22 one occasion, the answer to my clients
23 has been the federal Earned Income Tax
24 Credit and the federal Child Tax Credit
25 for which they were eligible.

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.

2 I feel like I'm preaching to
3 the choir a little bit, but Bill 140448
4 takes a significant step towards
5 addressing the problem of where will they
6 get the money for this kind of problem.

7 Community Legal Services
8 supports this bill since it would create
9 an income inequality initiative and
10 create a City policy assisting thousands
11 of Philadelphians to apply for the EITC
12 and the CTC.

13 The Earned Income Tax Credit is
14 a federal tax for low- and
15 moderate-income working people.
16 According to the Center for Budget and
17 Policy Priorities, in 2013 tax year,
18 working families with children had an
19 annual income of about \$37,000 to
20 \$51,600. Also, some folks who are just
21 the working poor without children would
22 also be eligible for a small amount of
23 EITC. The EITC is often used together
24 with the CTC, the Child Tax Credit, to
25 help working people raise children.

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 Generally each child up to a maximum of
3 three is eligible for a benefit of about
4 \$1,000, which is credited towards taxes
5 owed or given to the homeowner or the
6 taxpayer as a refund.

7 The federal EITC is a financial
8 benefit to thousands of low- and
9 middle-income Philadelphians; in
10 particular, those households with
11 children. In 2012, the EITC, together
12 with the CTC, raised over 10 million
13 people out of poverty, including 5
14 million children nationwide. In
15 Pennsylvania, there were 230,000
16 individuals who received the EITC that
17 lifted their income levels above the
18 federal poverty income guidelines. That
19 included 120,000 children.

20 In 2013, the average mother and
21 father filing as a single head of
22 household with a household income of
23 about \$25,000 per year with one child
24 received an EITC credit of about \$2,050.
25 That adds up to about \$170 a month extra

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 in their pockets each month. For a
3 household with \$25,000 and three
4 children, the maximum eligible under the
5 EITC, the average credit was \$4,466,
6 effectively added \$372 each month into
7 their pockets.

8 This is real money that can
9 make a real difference in the lives of
10 working families. As Bill 140448 notes,
11 an estimated 40,000 Philadelphians that
12 are eligible for the EITC fail to apply
13 each year, leaving literally millions of
14 dollars unspent, money that could be used
15 to cover a wide variety of expenses, from
16 fixing a leaky roof or a leaky basement,
17 to school clothes, to fixing a car for
18 work, to catching up on the mortgage or
19 paying off delinquent real estate taxes
20 owed to the City, something near and dear
21 to my heart.

22 Several of my clients at CLS
23 have obtained mortgage loan modifications
24 and saved their homes from foreclosure,
25 only because they received a lump sum

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 EITC tax credit refund, which we could
3 then use to pay down the mortgage
4 arrears. I had one client this year
5 actually use his EITC refund to pay off
6 almost \$4,000 in taxes he owed on his
7 home. The foreclosure action against his
8 home has been dismissed and he is in a
9 payment plan now to pay back the City our
10 remaining balance of about \$800 left on
11 his taxes.

12 Obviously this is a significant
13 benefit to thousands of Philadelphians as
14 well as a potential benefit to the City
15 of Philadelphia. Community Legal
16 Services urges you to pass Bill 140448,
17 which will hopefully increase the number
18 of Philadelphians using these credits.

19 I won't bother to review the
20 bill since I know that I'm largely
21 speaking to the choir.

22 One suggestion I did have was
23 that CLS would recommend you might want
24 to consider language in the bill
25 explicitly referencing the Child Tax

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 Credit, which is often included with the
3 EITC.

4 In closing, I want to thank the
5 Committee again for hearing me today. I
6 think the EITC policy bill is another
7 step forward in Council's recent efforts
8 to help Philadelphians preserve their
9 homes, while at the same time making sure
10 that the City gets paid for property
11 taxes owed or other utility services.
12 For many low-income Philadelphians, an
13 extra \$2,050 in income from the EITC will
14 often allow them to pay this year's
15 property taxes or keep the water bill
16 current.

17 I am more than happy to testify
18 today on behalf of low-income
19 Philadelphians, and CLS will support the
20 City in educating your constituents about
21 the EITC and the CTC. We're already
22 doing that.

23 As a final note, I just want to
24 point out that this work, including our
25 outreach and advice to clients, our work

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 on the EITC, the work we do representing
3 clients for property tax problems, with
4 mortgage foreclosures, utilities, access
5 to health and welfare benefits, and a
6 host of other matters affecting your
7 constituents costs money, and CLS needs
8 City funding to do this work. Community
9 Legal Services this year is facing a loss
10 of \$500,000 in state IOLTA funding. I'm
11 aware that City Council is considering
12 funding this week which would help CLS
13 make up the difference and allow us to
14 continue our important work helping
15 low-income Philadelphians and, in many
16 ways, helping the City itself.

17 Along with my written
18 testimony, I have attached a memorandum
19 from my Executive Director, Cathy Carr,
20 regarding our budget shortfall. I urge
21 the Committee to vote in favor of this
22 bill today, but I also hope that you will
23 vote in favor of the budget support for
24 CLS to continue our important work this
25 week.

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.

2 Thank you very much. I'm happy
3 to answer your questions.

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
5 for your testimony, Mr. Wilson.

6 Any questions for this witness?
7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Seeing none,
9 again, thank you very much.

10 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Is there
12 anyone else to testify on Bill No.
13 140448, the Earned Income Tax Credit
14 bill?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Seeing none,
17 we will move to Bill No. 140488, the
18 minimum wage bill. The first witness is
19 POWER.

20 (Witness approached witness
21 table.)

22 BISHOP ROYSTER: Thank you,
23 Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to
24 testify before you today. My name is
25 Bishop Dwayne Royster. I'm the Executive

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 Director of POWER, Philadelphians
3 Organized to Witness, Empower, and
4 Rebuild, a 41 congregation faith-based
5 organizing movement here in the City of
6 Philadelphia who believe in using the
7 prophetic traditions of our faith to
8 speak truth to power and build a city of
9 opportunity that works for all, but
10 especially for those that have been
11 marginalized, systemically oppressed, and
12 denied opportunity over a period of time.

13 I first want to begin my
14 testimony today by saying thank you for
15 sending Bill 140488 out of Committee with
16 a favorable recommendation to City
17 Council. We believe that this bill is an
18 important piece of work to establishing a
19 city of opportunity that works for all.

20 I'm reminded from the Bible in
21 Second Thessalonians, Chapter 3, Verse
22 10. It says that if a person does not
23 work, they should not eat. And,
24 conversely, we believe that if people
25 work, they should be able to eat. For

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 far too long in the City of
3 Philadelphia --

4 (Applause.)

5 BISHOP ROYSTER: Amen.

6 For far too long in the City of
7 Philadelphia, it has often felt like
8 instead of a democracy, we were oligarchy
9 and business leaders were contriving to
10 make sure that they put more profits into
11 their pockets, but took more money out of
12 the pockets of Philadelphians who were
13 struggling to work every day.

14 It is our firm belief that when
15 people work in the City of Philadelphia,
16 strong, hard-working Philadelphians
17 should be able to work a 40-hour work
18 week, be able to feed their families, put
19 a roof over their heads, take care of
20 their most basic needs, without having to
21 struggle or fight, and we believe this
22 bill is moving us in that direction.

23 (Applause.)

24 BISHOP ROYSTER: But we're also
25 concerned. Most recently in the

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 newspaper was an article that talked
3 about in Burlington, Vermont that they
4 had a living wage bill on their books for
5 12 years that was not enforced, and we
6 hope that Council use whatever power it
7 has to make sure that the Administration
8 is enforcing this law so that those who
9 are subcontract workers here in the City
10 of Philadelphia are making sure that
11 their employers are paying them the wages
12 that are due them so that our community
13 as a whole is able to thrive.

14 However, we will partner with
15 you in this endeavor in making sure that
16 Philadelphians are aware of the
17 provisions of this law through our 41
18 congregations, our 40,000 members, but in
19 addition to doing that work, even over
20 the last few months, POWER reached out to
21 over 50,000 Philadelphians by phone
22 banking, door knocking, meeting folk
23 where they were, and getting commitments
24 of low propensity voters to vote in the
25 most recent referendum so that they could

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 see an increase and give themselves a
3 raise here in the City of Philadelphia.
4 We're proud of the 4,500 Philadelphians
5 that we got committed to vote who did
6 vote in this past election, and we look
7 forward to doing more of that work in the
8 future to make sure that we are building
9 a city of opportunity that works for all.

10 I'm also excited to be here --
11 (Applause.)

12 BISHOP ROYSTER: Amen.

13 We're also excited to be here
14 because not only are we working on this
15 issue, but we're partnering with folk
16 like SEIU 32BJ and the Working Families
17 party to make sure that work like this
18 continues so that we have a dream that
19 Philadelphia will be a city where folk
20 are able to work, to live decently, to
21 have a proper education, that they have
22 the healthcare that they need, that their
23 streets are safe, whether it's in the
24 middle of the day or in the middle of the
25 night. We will continue to work and

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.
2 endeavor that and encourage all of our
3 elected officials, business leaders, and
4 others to buy into this vision that
5 doesn't just benefit a few, but benefits
6 all.

7 Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Chairman and the Committee for
9 hearing this testimony today.

10 (Standing ovation.)

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
12 for your testimony, Bishop Royster, and
13 next week at this time, in this place, at
14 this table, POWER and SEIU will take
15 their seat on the Living Wage and
16 Benefits Review Committee. So we look
17 forward to our continued collaboration.

18 Thank you very much.

19 BISHOP ROYSTER: We look
20 forward to being here.

21 Thank you very much.

22 (Applause.)

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Any
24 questions or comments from members of the
25 Committee?

1 6/10/14 - COMMERCE - BILL 140448, etc.

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you
4 very much.

5 Is there anyone else to testify
6 on Bill No. 140488?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: If so,
9 please come to the table.

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Seeing none,
12 this concludes our public hearing and
13 public meeting.

14 Thank you very much.

15 (Committee on Commerce and
16 Economic Development concluded at 11:00
17 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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A ability 12:5 14:2 able 6:9 13:18,23 28:25 29:17,18 30:13 31:20 access 11:15 13:23 26:4 accessing 11:17 accurately 34:5 action 24:7 activities 14:9 added 23:6 adding 1:15 2:17 15:13 addition 12:2 30:19 Additionally 4:23 10:10 addressing 21:5 adds 22:25 adjustments 5:10 Administration 4:3,15 6:3 7:3 9:15 30:7 Administrations 5:18 adopted 16:16 18:6 adoption 7:9 adult 11:20 advantage 13:2 advice 25:25 advised 20:11 advocacy 6:15 Afessa 4:4 7:11 7:13,13,16,19 7:21 10:18 ago 14:23 agree 16:3 agreements 5:9 allow 17:23 19:14 25:14 26:13 Amen 29:5 31:12 amend 4:17 amended 16:25 17:4,7,20 18:15 18:18,21 19:11	amending 1:14,17 2:15 3:14 amendment 7:3,9 16:13,16 18:3,6 amendments 9:18 amount 5:2 21:22 analogous 14:24 and/or 34:22 annual 5:9 9:20 21:19 annually 5:2 answer 6:21 20:22 27:3 Applause 6:25 29:4,23 31:11 32:22 applicable 5:13 application 1:19 3:18 applications 13:21 applied 3:4 15:5 apply 2:24 8:22 12:3 21:11 23:12 34:20 approached 4:5 19:22 27:20 approximately 3:3 11:22 arrears 24:4 article 30:2 assistance 3:21,22 10:7,12 11:24 12:11 13:20 assisted 20:12 assisting 21:10 attached 13:4 14:5 26:18 attorney 20:7,9 authorize 9:7 authorizes 8:2 11:4 available 8:16 10:5 avenue 10:11 average 22:20 23:5	aware 26:11 30:16 Aye 16:20 17:15 18:10 19:6 a.m 1:8 33:17 B back 19:16 24:9 balance 24:10 banking 30:22 based 5:2 basement 23:16 basic 29:20 behalf 7:18,22 25:18 belief 29:14 believe 7:6 28:6 28:17,24 29:21 believes 9:15 Bene 15:13 benefit 5:12 6:14 8:20 22:3,8 24:13,14 32:5 benefits 1:19,20 3:16,19 4:20 11:15,18,25 13:12,20,24 26:5 32:5,16 BenePhilly 13:9 Bible 28:20 bill 1:14,17 2:14 3:1,13 4:1,14,16 5:1,3,13,17 6:1 6:5,10,13 7:1,4 7:12,25 8:1,2 9:1,6,16,18 10:1 10:15 11:1,3 12:1 13:1 14:1 15:1 16:1,13,16 16:24 17:1,4,6 17:19 18:1,3,6 18:14,18,20 19:1,10,20 20:1 21:1,3,8 22:1 23:1,10 24:1,16 24:20,24 25:1,6 25:15 26:1,22	27:1,12,14,17 27:18 28:1,15 28:17 29:1,22 30:1,4 31:1 32:1 33:1,6 bills 2:6 4:3 16:9 Bishop 27:22,25 29:5,24 31:12 32:12,19 bit 21:3 Blackwell 1:11 2:11 16:2,12,14 17:3,5 18:2,4,17 18:19 books 30:4 bother 24:19 Brian 1:12 2:12 bringing 15:14 budget 21:16 26:20,23 build 28:8 building 31:8 Burlington 30:3 business 29:9 32:3 businesses 3:6 buy 32:4 C called 2:3 calls 15:11 Campaign 12:9 12:13 car 23:17 care 29:19 Carr 26:19 carry 5:18 cases 20:14 catching 23:18 Cathy 26:19 Center 21:16 centers 12:20 13:2,9,12 15:14 Century 1:18 3:16 4:19 CEO 10:25 11:11 12:4	ceremony 5:21 certain 3:5,5,12 3:24 8:11 9:17 CERTIFICATE 34:2 certification 34:19 CERTIFY 34:3 certifying 34:23 Chair 1:11 2:7 16:11 17:2,25 18:16 Chairman 4:9 7:14 10:21 16:15 17:6 18:5 18:20 27:23 32:8 challenge 15:20 Chapter 1:16,17 2:17 3:14 4:18 28:21 Chief 4:11 7:23 child 20:24 21:24 22:2,23 24:25 children 8:15,18 21:18,21,25 22:11,14,19 23:4 choir 21:3 24:21 city 1:2,7 4:22 5:8 5:24 6:16 9:5,20 9:25 10:5 12:12 13:3 21:10 23:20 24:9,14 25:10,20 26:8 26:11,16 28:5,8 28:16,19 29:2,6 29:15 30:9 31:3 31:9,19 City's 14:7 Clarena 7:18,22 Clarifi 12:19 client 24:4 clients 13:7 20:22 23:22 25:25 26:3 closer 7:20
--	---	---	--	--

closing 6:11 25:4 clothes 23:17 CLS 20:11 23:22 24:23 25:19 26:7,12,24 Code 1:15,18 2:16 3:15 4:18 codifies 5:3 codify 5:14 collaboration 32:17 Collection 7:23 Collections 1:15 2:17 come 33:9 coming 15:7 comments 15:23 32:24 Commerce 1:3 2:5 3:1 4:1,10 5:1 6:1 7:1 8:1 9:1 10:1 11:1 12:1 13:1 14:1 15:1 16:1 17:1 18:1 19:1 20:1 21:1 22:1 23:1 24:1 25:1 26:1 27:1 28:1 29:1 30:1 31:1 32:1 33:1,15 Commissioner 7:23 commitments 30:23 committed 31:5 Committee 1:3 2:6,8 4:9 6:22 7:8,15 10:22 17:8,21 18:22 19:12 25:5 26:21 28:15 32:8,16,25 33:15 community 10:24 19:21 20:7 21:7 24:15 26:8 30:12	complete 12:13 14:2 completing 13:21 comprehensive 13:19 concerned 29:25 concerning 3:8 concluded 33:16 concludes 33:12 conditions 3:12 3:25 8:22 congregation 28:4 congregations 30:18 consider 7:8 16:9 24:24 considering 26:11 constituents 25:20 26:7 Consumer 20:10 contact 9:9 contained 34:5 content 9:19,21 continue 16:6 26:14,24 31:25 continued 32:17 continues 31:18 contract 5:25 contractors 1:20 3:20 contracts 4:22 5:8 contriving 29:9 control 34:22 conversely 28:24 coordinate 12:6 14:9 coordinating 15:12 correct 7:4,6 34:8 costs 26:7 Council 1:2 17:11 17:24 19:2,15 26:11 28:17 30:6 Councilman 1:11 1:12,12 2:2,11	2:12 6:4,12,15 6:23 7:2,10,19 10:17 14:13,17 15:22 16:4,5,18 16:21,24 17:13 17:16,19 18:8 18:11,14 19:4,7 19:10,24 20:5 27:4,8,11,16 32:11,23 33:3,8 33:11 Councilmen 15:6 Councilwoman 1:11 2:10 16:2 16:12,14 17:3,5 18:2,4,17,19 Council's 25:7 counsel 10:3 counseling 12:22 13:6 counselors 12:24 couple 8:14,18 cover 23:15 create 6:2,6 21:8 21:10 creative 15:8 credit 1:16 2:19 2:23,25 8:4,7,15 11:7 12:23 20:24,24 21:13 21:24 22:24 23:5 24:2 25:2 27:13 credited 22:4 credits 8:19 24:18 CTC 21:12,24 22:12 25:21 current 4:24 25:16 cycle 5:23	debt 12:23 decades 5:21 decently 31:20 delinquent 20:16 20:17 23:19 democracy 29:8 denied 28:12 Department 3:9 7:17 Deputy 4:7,12 7:5 development 1:4 2:5 4:10 8:2 9:8 11:4 33:16 difference 23:9 26:13 difficulty 11:17 direct 34:22 direction 29:22 Director 7:16 10:23 26:19 28:2 dismissed 24:8 district 15:5,9,15 documentation 13:22 documenting 8:25 doing 25:22 30:19 31:7 dollars 23:14 door 15:10 30:22 dream 31:18 due 30:12 Duly 16:17 17:12 18:7 19:3 Dwayne 27:25	educating 25:20 education 10:12 31:21 effectively 23:6 efforts 12:6 25:7 EITC 2:24 3:8 8:8 8:19 9:4,6,23 11:9 12:3,8,17 13:2 14:3,3 21:11,23,23 22:7,11,16,24 23:5,12 24:2,5 25:3,6,13,21 26:2 EITC-eligible 3:3 elected 32:3 election 31:6 eligible 2:22 9:3,9 11:23 12:2,7,25 20:25 21:22 22:3 23:4,12 employees 3:7 4:20 8:6 11:9 employers 3:5 8:5 11:8 30:11 employment 8:10 Empower 28:3 Empowerment 10:24 12:20 enable 2:21 encourage 12:25 32:2 encouraging 8:3 11:6 14:7 endeavor 30:15 32:2 enforced 30:5 enforcing 30:8 engagement 9:25 enroll 9:9 10:4 11:23 13:11 entitled 1:15,16 1:18 2:16,18 3:2 3:15 entitlements 11:18 enunciated 9:16
---	--	---	---	---

especially 28:10 essential 11:15 establishing 28:18 estate 20:17 23:19 estimated 23:11 Eva 10:22 evening 13:17 Everett 4:3,11 evidence 34:4 example 11:20 excited 31:10,13 Executive 5:4,6 5:11,15,20 10:23 26:19 27:25 expand 11:14 expenses 23:15 explicitly 24:25 express 6:9 extend 5:15 extra 22:25 25:13 e-mail 15:9 F facing 26:9 fail 23:12 faith 28:7 faith-based 28:4 families 6:18 8:9 12:10 15:18 21:18 23:10 29:18 31:16 far 29:2,6 father 22:21 favor 16:19 17:14 18:9 19:5 26:21 26:23 favorable 17:8,21 18:22 19:12 28:16 FECs 13:5 federal 2:23 8:4,8 10:2 11:6 12:13 14:8 20:23,24 21:14 22:7,18 feed 29:18	feel 21:2 felt 29:7 fight 11:13 29:21 filing 9:25 10:13 14:8 22:21 final 25:23 Finance 1:15 2:16 finances 10:9 financial 3:21,22 8:21 10:9 12:20 12:21,24 22:7 firm 29:14 first 4:2 17:10,23 18:25 19:14 27:18 28:13 five 11:13 fixing 23:16,17 focus 3:2 folk 30:22 31:15 31:19 folks 21:20 food 11:25 foreclosure 23:24 24:7 foreclosures 26:4 foregoing 9:14 34:7,19 forms 14:3 forward 25:7 31:7 32:17,20 free 12:10,21 13:9 freeze 10:6 full 13:16 fully 34:5 funding 26:8,10 26:12 further 1:19 3:17 14:21 future 31:8 G Generally 22:2 getting 30:23 Gillison 4:4,7,11 6:24 7:5 give 31:2 given 22:5	glad 6:9 Gladstein 4:4 7:11 10:19,20 10:22 goal 14:20 going 14:21 16:7 20:20 good 2:2 4:8 7:14 10:20 15:19 19:24 20:4 Goode 1:11 2:2,7 6:12,23 7:2,10 7:14,19 10:17 10:21 14:13 15:22 16:5,18 16:21,24 17:13 17:16,19 18:8 18:11,14 19:4,7 19:10,24 27:4,8 27:11,16 32:11 32:23 33:3,8,11 Goode's 6:4,15 governance 6:16 group 15:2 guidelines 22:18 H Hall 1:7 handed 7:7 happy 6:21 10:16 14:11 25:17 27:2 hard-working 29:16 head 22:21 heads 29:19 health 11:21 26:5 healthcare 31:22 hearing 2:3,4 16:8 19:17 25:5 32:9 33:12 heart 23:21 help 11:19 12:22 13:10 21:25 25:8 26:12 helped 12:13 helping 20:14	26:14,16 hire 3:6 home 24:7,8 homeowner 22:5 homeowners 14:25 20:15 Homeownership 20:10 homes 15:4 20:18 23:24 25:9 homestead 10:6 15:5 hope 26:22 30:6 hopefully 24:17 host 26:6 hour 4:25 5:9 hours 13:5,17 14:4 household 22:22 22:22 23:3 households 22:10 I identical 14:24 identify 9:8 15:17 impact 6:16 15:14 implementation 2:20 3:10 11:5 important 11:18 26:14,24 28:18 improve 8:21 12:23 included 22:19 25:2 includes 14:2 including 14:3 22:13 25:24 income 1:16,16 2:18,19,23 8:4 8:10,11,11 11:7 20:23 21:9,13 21:19 22:17,18 22:22 25:13 27:13 increase 4:23 5:2 6:7 14:7 24:17 31:2	increases 5:7 increasing 9:10 individuals 6:17 8:9 9:9 13:17 22:16 inequality 1:16 2:18 21:9 inflation 5:3,10 information 10:10 13:4 initiative 1:16 2:19 21:9 insecurity 9:2 insurance 11:22 Internal 9:22 introducing 6:4 6:12 involved 4:22 20:14 IOLTA 26:10 issue 12:5 15:2 31:15 issued 5:5 issues 6:14 J J 1:12 Jannie 1:11 2:11 January 4:25 5:10 Johnson 1:12 2:12 Jr 1:11 2:7 July 11:11 June 1:8 K keep 25:15 Kenyatta 1:12 2:11 kind 21:6 knocking 15:11 30:22 know 15:16 24:20 L L 34:14 ladders 6:2
---	---	---	--	---

language 24:24 large 9:12 largely 24:20 launched 11:11 launching 13:8 law 30:8,17 leaders 29:9 32:3 leadership 6:13 leaky 23:16,16 learn 12:16 leaving 23:13 left 2:12 24:10 legal 19:21 20:7 20:13 21:7 24:15 26:9 levels 22:17 lifted 22:17 limits 8:12 list 14:4 literally 23:13 little 21:3 live 5:25 31:20 lives 6:17 8:21 11:19 23:9 living 30:4 32:15 loan 23:23 local 9:14 10:12 located 13:12 locations 13:5 14:4 long 29:2,6 look 31:6 32:16 32:19 loss 26:9 lot 14:21,25 low 21:14 22:8 30:24 low-income 10:4 13:15 25:12,18 26:15 lump 23:25	marginalized 28:11 married 8:14,17 materially 8:20 matter 34:7 matters 26:6 maximum 2:25 8:15 22:2 23:4 Mayor 4:7,12 5:19 6:14 7:5 Mayor's 5:4 10:23 mean 15:10 means 34:21 meeting 15:19 16:9 30:22 33:13 members 4:9 7:15 10:21 30:18 32:24 memorandum 26:18 mic 7:20 MICHELE 34:14 middle 31:24,24 middle-income 22:9 million 22:12,14 millions 23:13 minimum 1:18,19 3:16,18,23 4:19 4:24 5:7,12 27:18 moderate-income 21:15 modifications 23:23 money 14:19 20:21 21:6 23:8 23:14 26:7 29:11 Montgomery 19:20 month 13:8 22:25 23:2,6 months 30:20 Monty 20:6	morning 2:3 4:8 6:20 7:14 10:20 19:25 20:4 mortgage 23:18 23:23 24:3 26:4 mortgages 20:16 mother 22:20 motion 16:12 17:3 18:2,17 move 16:7,15 17:6 18:5,20 19:16 27:17 movement 28:5 moving 29:22 MURPHY 34:14	offer 13:9 Office 10:24 Officer 7:24 offices 15:9,15 officials 32:3 oligarchy 29:8 ones 15:15 one-on-one 12:21 13:10 operate 13:15 operated 12:19 operates 12:10 operating 13:3 opportunities 6:7 14:6 opportunity 4:13 6:2,19 9:12 10:3 10:14,25 14:10 27:23 28:9,12 28:19 31:9 opposed 16:22 17:17 18:12 19:8 oppressed 28:11 order 2:4 5:5,6,11 5:15,20 ordinance 1:14,17 organizations 13:13 Organized 28:3 organizing 28:5 outreach 15:2 25:25 ovation 32:10 owed 20:17 22:5 23:20 24:6 25:11 O'Neill 1:12 2:13 14:17	11:6 particular 3:2 22:10 particularly 15:6 15:15 partner 30:14 partnering 31:15 partnership 12:19 party 31:17 pass 24:16 pay 20:15 24:3,5 24:9 25:14 paying 23:19 30:11 payment 24:9 Pennsylvania 1:7 22:15 people 6:6 14:25 15:3,8 21:15,25 22:13 28:24 29:15 percent 9:3 11:20 12:2 14:20 20:19 period 28:12 periodically 3:10 permanent 5:4 permit 17:10 18:24 persistent 5:23 person 5:24 8:13 8:17 28:22 personally 15:7 persons 3:6 pervasive 5:23 Philadelphia 1:2 1:7,15,18,18 2:15,22 3:15,15 4:18,19 6:18 9:2 11:12 12:22 13:11 20:8 24:15 28:6 29:3 29:7,15 30:10 31:3,19 Philadelphian 6:8 Philadelphians
M		N	P	
majority 20:14 making 25:9 30:10,15 March 12:18		name 2:7 10:22 15:10 20:2,6 27:24 nationwide 22:14 near 23:20 necessary 13:22 need 20:21 31:22 needs 26:7 29:20 new 1:15 2:17 newspaper 30:2 night 31:25 Nine 13:2 non-payroll 3:7 non-profit 13:13 note 2:9 25:23 notes 23:10 34:6 notice 3:7 8:6 11:8 number 12:8 24:17 Nutrition 11:24 Nutter 5:19	paid 25:10 panel 4:2 14:16 15:24 19:18 participants 12:16,25 participation 8:3	
		O		
		objections 34:4 observation 14:18 obtain 13:20 obtained 3:11 23:23 Obviously 24:12 occasion 20:22		

3:4 5:22 8:22 9:3,13,24 10:4 11:16,21,23 12:3 20:12 21:11 22:9 23:11 24:13,18 25:8,12,19 26:15 28:2 29:12,16 30:16 30:21 31:4 phone 15:11 30:21 piece 28:18 place 32:13 plan 8:2 11:5,12 11:14 24:9 please 19:25 33:9 pockets 9:13 23:2 23:7 29:11,12 point 25:24 policy 2:21 3:11 7:16 9:8,16 21:10,17 25:6 poor 21:21 positive 9:17 potential 24:14 poverty 5:24,25 6:7 8:25 11:13 22:13,18 power 27:19 28:2 28:8 30:6,20 32:14 preaching 21:2 present 1:10 2:10 10:3 preserve 25:8 pretty 15:18,19 primarily 9:18 primary 20:19 Priorities 21:17 problem 21:5,6 problems 20:13 26:3 procedures 2:21 proceed 20:2 proceedings 34:4 professional	13:10 profits 29:10 program 8:4,7 11:7,9,24 programs 9:6 10:5,7 propensity 30:24 proper 31:21 property 25:10,15 26:3 prophetic 28:7 proposed 7:7 Prosperity 8:24 11:12 proud 31:4 provide 3:7 4:13 8:5 10:11 11:8 12:21 provided 9:5 12:9 13:6 provides 8:8 providing 1:19 2:20 3:17 13:14 13:21 provisions 30:17 public 2:4 4:12 11:15 16:8,8 19:17 33:12,13 34:15 pull 7:20 purpose 6:4 put 29:10,18 Q question 14:18 20:20 questions 6:21 10:16 14:12,15 15:23 27:3,6 32:24 quorum 2:9 16:7 R raise 21:25 31:3 raised 22:12 range 8:12 reach 12:7 15:8 reached 30:20	reading 17:11,23 18:25 19:14 ready 14:9 real 6:16 15:8 20:17 23:8,9,19 reason 9:15 Rebuild 28:4 receive 2:24 8:23 13:19 received 12:16 22:16,24 23:25 recipients 3:20 recognized 6:15 recognizes 16:11 17:2,25 18:16 recommend 24:23 recommendation 17:8,9,22 18:22 18:23 19:13 28:16 record 20:2 reduce 6:6 12:23 refer 10:25 referencing 24:25 referendum 30:25 refund 22:6 24:2 24:5 refunds 8:9 9:12 regarding 9:19,23 26:20 release 9:21 remaining 24:10 remarked 5:19 reminded 28:20 reminds 14:22 report 3:9 8:24 9:20 12:15 reported 17:7,20 18:21 19:11 reporter 34:23 reporting 9:20 representing 26:2 represents 9:11 reproduction 34:20	request 9:17 require 8:5 11:8 required 3:23 5:7 requirements 4:17 5:12,14,16 5:17 10:13 requiring 3:5,8 residents 2:22 12:7,22 13:11 13:15 resources 12:9 respect 1:19 3:18 response 15:25 16:23 17:18 18:13 19:9 27:7 27:15 33:2,7,10 rest 11:2 restrictions 8:11 results 3:11 return 9:12 returns 12:14,14 revenue 3:9 7:17 7:22,23 9:14,22 10:7 review 24:19 32:16 revising 3:23 right 2:10 role 14:7 roof 23:16 29:19 Room 1:7 Royster 27:22,25 29:5,24 31:12 32:12,19 RPR-Notary 34:15 rules 17:10,23 18:24 19:14 S safe 31:23 Safety 4:12 save 12:24 saved 23:24 saying 15:13 28:14 says 28:22	school 23:17 screening 13:19 13:25 season 12:12 seat 32:15 Second 28:21 seconded 16:17 17:12 18:7 19:3 see 31:2 Seeing 27:8,16 33:11 seek 7:9 SEIU 31:16 32:14 sending 28:15 senior 10:6 20:8 Service 9:22 services 11:16 13:14 19:21 20:7 21:7 24:16 25:11 26:9 serving 13:7 session 17:11,24 18:25 19:15 sessions 13:6 Shared 8:24 11:12 shares 6:3 shortfall 26:20 significant 8:20 21:4 24:12 signing 5:20 similarly 5:6 single 8:13,17 22:21 sites 12:11 13:13 13:18 six 13:8 small 21:22 SNAP 11:25 span 8:16 speak 28:8 speaking 24:21 stabilize 11:19 Staff 4:11 staffs 15:7 stamps 11:25 stand 14:9
---	---	---	--	--

3:17,19,24 4:20 4:24 Standing 32:10 starting 4:25 5:10 state 10:2 12:14 14:8 19:25 26:10 stenographic 34:6 step 21:4 25:7 strategies 11:14 streets 31:23 strong 29:16 struggle 29:21 struggling 20:15 29:13 subcontract 30:9 subcontractors 3:20 4:21 5:13 5:16 subcontracts 5:8 subrecipients 3:22 success 6:8 suggestion 24:22 sum 23:25 supervision 34:22 Supplemental 11:24 support 6:5,9 9:5 10:15 11:3 13:10,23 25:19 26:23 supports 4:15 21:8 sure 25:9 29:10 30:7,10,15 31:8 31:17 surprise 20:18 suspension 17:9 17:22 18:24 19:13 sync 9:21 system 13:24 systemically 28:11	table 4:6 19:23 27:21 32:14 33:9 take 10:16 12:25 14:11 16:6 19:19 29:19 32:14 taken 34:6 takes 21:4 talked 30:2 tax 1:16 2:19,23 8:4,6,8,19 9:12 9:14 10:6,12 11:7 12:10,12 14:2 20:23,24 21:13,14,17,24 24:2,25 26:3 27:13 taxes 1:15 2:16 10:2 14:8 20:17 22:4 23:19 24:6 24:11 25:11,15 taxpayer 22:6 technical 7:3,6 telephonic 13:24 terms 3:12,24 terrific 14:19 testify 6:20 7:25 10:15 11:3 14:11 25:17 27:12,24 33:5 testifying 7:17,21 testimony 4:14 6:24 11:2 14:5 14:14 16:6 19:19 20:3 26:18 27:5 28:14 32:9,12 thank 4:8,12 6:12 6:19,23 7:10 10:14,17 14:10 14:13 15:21,22 16:4,5,14 17:5 18:4,19 19:17 20:5 25:4 27:2,4 27:9,10,22 28:14 32:7,11	32:18,21 33:3 33:14 Thessalonians 28:21 think 25:6 thinking 10:8 thousands 21:10 22:8 24:13 three 8:14,18 22:3 23:3 thrive 30:13 tier 4:21 5:17 Tilahun 7:13,16 time 10:8 13:16 20:11,19 25:9 28:12 32:13 timing 9:19 title 1:14 2:14,15 3:13 today 7:24 11:3 14:11 20:6 25:5 25:18 26:22 27:24 28:14 32:9 Tolson 7:18,22 tool 13:25 totally 16:3 town 7:24 traditions 28:7 transcript 34:8,20 trapped 5:22 true 34:7 truth 28:8 Tuesday 1:8 two 14:23	utilization 9:11 9:23 V variety 20:13 23:15 Vermont 30:3 Verse 28:21 view 9:10 vision 32:4 visit 13:18 VITA 12:11 vitality 6:6 vote 26:21,23 30:24 31:5,6 voters 30:24 vulnerable 6:5 W W 1:11 2:7 wage 1:18,19 3:16 3:19,23 4:19,24 5:7,12 6:13 27:18 30:4 32:15 wages 30:11 waiting 12:15 want 24:23 25:4 25:23 28:13 water 10:7 25:15 way 15:12 ways 15:8 26:16 week 13:16 26:12 26:25 29:18 32:13 weekend 13:17 welcome 12:5 14:6 welfare 26:5 we're 12:14 15:19 25:21 29:24 31:4,13,15 we've 12:19 wide 20:13 23:15 Wilson 1:11 2:7 19:20,25 20:4,6 27:5,10 witness 4:5 19:22	19:22 27:6,18 27:20,20 28:3 Witnesses 4:5 work 23:18 25:24 25:25 26:2,8,14 26:24 28:18,23 28:25 29:13,15 29:17,17 30:19 31:7,17,20,25 worked 20:9 workers 30:9 working 12:4,10 21:15,18,21,25 23:10 31:14,16 works 5:24 28:9 28:19 31:9 written 4:16 26:17 W-2 8:7 11:10 Y year 14:23 21:17 22:23 23:13 24:4 26:9 years 12:8 30:5 year's 25:14 \$ \$1,000 22:4 \$12 4:24 5:9 \$14,590 8:12 \$170 22:25 \$2,050 22:24 25:13 \$25,000 22:23 23:3 \$37,000 21:19 \$372 23:6 \$4,000 24:6 \$4,466 23:5 \$496 8:16 \$500,000 26:10 \$51,600 21:20 \$52,427 8:13 \$6,143 8:17 \$800 24:10 1
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1,059 13:7 1,300 20:12 10 1:8 22:12 28:22 10:30 1:8 100 14:20 1099 8:7 11:10 11:00 33:16 12 30:5 120,000 22:19 13,000 12:14 140448 1:14 2:6 2:14 3:1 4:1 5:1 6:1 7:1,12,25 8:1 9:1,7,16 10:1 11:1,4 12:1 13:1 14:1 15:1 16:1,9,13,16 17:1,4,7,20 18:1 19:1,20 20:1 21:1,3 22:1 23:1 23:10 24:1,16 25:1 26:1 27:1 27:13 28:1 29:1 30:1 31:1 32:1 33:1 140488 1:17 2:6 3:13 4:14,16 5:14 6:5 16:10 18:3,6,18,21 19:11 27:17 28:15 33:6 15 11:20 16 5:5 17,220 12:13 17-1300 1:18 3:14 4:18 18.6 9:3 12:2 180,000 11:22 19 1:14 2:15 19-4000 1:16 2:18 2 2001 20:11 2012 22:11 2013 11:11 21:17 22:20	2014 1:8 5:6 8:12 8:15 2016 4:25 5:11 21st 1:18 3:16 4:19 230,000 22:15 3 3 28:21 3,080 13:6 3-14 5:5 32BJ 31:16 4 4,500 31:4 40,000 3:3 9:2 23:11 30:18 40-hour 29:17 400 1:7 41 28:4 30:17 5 5 22:13 50,000 30:21 6 6/10/14 3:1 4:1 5:1 6:1 7:1 8:1 9:1 10:1 11:1 12:1 13:1 14:1 15:1 16:1 17:1 18:1 19:1 20:1 21:1 22:1 23:1 24:1 25:1 26:1 27:1 28:1 29:1 30:1 31:1 32:1 33:1 9 99 20:19			
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