

Committee of the Whole
May 27, 2020

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Wednesday, May 27, 2020
10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCIL PRESIDENT DARRELL L. CLARKE
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN KENDRA BROOKS
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILWOMAN JAMIE GAUTHIER
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILMAN BRIAN O'NEILL
COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE L. PARKER
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

BILLS: 200285, 200286, 200287, 200288, 200289
200290, 200291, 200292
RESOLUTIONS: 200307, 200331

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2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

3 Good morning, everyone. We're going to
4 get started. So first off, I have to
5 say a few things as required by state
6 law. The state law currently requires
7 that the following announcement be made
8 at the beginning of every remote public
9 hearing as follows: Due to the current
10 public health emergency, City Council
11 Committees are currently meeting
12 remotely. We're using Microsoft Teams
13 to make these remote hearings possible.
14 Instructions for how the public may view
15 and offer public testimony and public
16 hearings of Council Committees are
17 included in the public hearing notices
18 that are published in the Daily News,
19 Inquirer and Legal Intelligencer prior
20 to the hearing, and it can also be found
21 on phlcouncil.com.

22 I now note that the hour has
23 come. Mr. Stitt, will you please call
24 the roll to take attendance. Members
25 that are in attendance will please

1 indicate that you are present, and
2 obviously, say one or two words to make
3 sure that your picture or your voice is
4 ignited for this particular session.

5 Mr. Stitt.

6 THE CLERK: Councilmember
7 Bass.

8 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
9 morning. Good morning to all and
10 Mr. President. And Mr. Stitt, good
11 morning.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
13 Good morning.

14 THE CLERK: Good morning.
15 Councilmember Brooks.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Good
17 morning, Colleagues and Council
18 President. I hope you guys are having a
19 wonderful day so far.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
21 Yeah, I like the way you emphasized so
22 far, Councilwoman.

23 THE CLERK: Councilmember
24 Domb.

25 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good

1 morning, Matt and Council President,
2 Colleagues, Administration and the
3 public. I look forward to today's
4 session.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

6 Good morning.

7 THE CLERK: Councilmember
8 Gauthier.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good
10 morning, Council President. Good
11 morning, Colleagues. Happy to be here
12 today.

13 THE CLERK: Councilmember
14 Gilmore Richardson.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
16 RICHARDSON: Good morning, Matt. Good
17 morning, Council President and good
18 morning, Colleagues. Happy Wednesday.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

20 Yes. Good morning.

21 THE CLERK: Councilmember
22 Green.

23 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Good
24 morning, Council President. Good
25 morning, Colleagues. Looking forward to

1 another day of riveting budget testimony
2 and hearings.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: As
4 advertised, sir.

5 THE CLERK: Councilmember Gym.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Hi. Good
7 morning, everybody. Good morning,
8 Council President. Good morning,
9 Colleagues.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
11 Good morning.

12 THE CLERK: Councilmember
13 Henon.

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
15 morning, Council President. Good
16 morning, Colleagues.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
18 Good morning.

19 THE CLERK: Councilmember
20 Johnson.

21 Councilmember Jones.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
23 morning, Mr. President. Good morning,
24 Colleagues. And, Councilman Green,
25 riveting?

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I'm
2 going to leave that alone. Morning,
3 sir.

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember Oh.

5 COUNCILMAN OH: Good morning.
6 Good morning, Council President. Good
7 morning, Colleagues. Good morning,
8 Matt.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
10 Good morning, Councilman.

11 THE CLERK: Councilmember
12 O'Neill.

13 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Good
14 morning, everyone.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
16 Good morning, Councilman.

17 THE CLERK: Councilmember
18 Parker. Councilmember Parker.

19 Councilmember Quinones-
20 Sanchez.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
22 Good morning. Good morning. I'm going
23 to have to ride that positive wave
24 because it was a violent day in the 7th
25 Council last night. Thank you.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Oh,
2 my goodness. Not one of them,
3 Councilwoman. Not one of them.

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember
5 Squilla.

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
7 you, Matt, Council President and
8 Colleagues.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
10 Good morning.

11 THE CLERK: Good morning.
12 Councilmember Thomas.

13 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
14 morning, Council President. Good
15 morning, Colleagues. Thank you for all
16 your great work and I'm looking forward
17 to our dialogue today.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
19 Good morning, Councilman.

20 THE CLERK: Council President
21 Clarke.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: All
23 right. Before we dive into what I'm
24 sure will be a very informative session,
25 and as referenced by Councilman Green

1 also a riveting session, I'd like to say
2 a few words about today's process. The
3 coronavirus pandemic has changed the
4 world and that includes this Council.
5 We're not in the same room. And to be
6 honest, I really miss being in the room
7 with you guys but that's not something
8 that is available to us at this point in
9 time, but we have a job to do and the
10 technology that our IT team has
11 installed will let us do it in a way
12 that allows the public to watch and
13 participate.

14 This new environment comes
15 with some limits, however, which I want
16 to emphasize to you. Obviously, our
17 budget schedule is much more compressed
18 given the time frame. The revised
19 budget was given to us a relatively
20 short time ago so we will have to get as
21 much in as possible over a period of
22 approximately five weeks. So
23 understanding I want to thank all the
24 colleagues for really supporting our
25 efforts to move this along by a five-

1 minute question and answer.

2 I'm going to ask that the
3 members of the Administration give clear
4 and concise responses so we can take
5 advantage of what little time we have
6 left, so I want to thank you for that.
7 I also want to say that 1 o'clock every
8 day the Mayor gives his press conference
9 so we have been limited to around 12:30
10 before the feed from Channel 64 moves to
11 prepare for the Mayor's press
12 conference. So as quickly as we can get
13 in and out, the more we can cover.

14 I do want to say we do have
15 two callback days at a minimum, Matt.

16 THE CLERK: Three actually,
17 sir.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
19 Three, okay. In the event that we need
20 to have some callbacks of departments.
21 If you didn't get all of the information
22 or if there needs to be some additional
23 Q&A, so they are available to us and
24 built into our schedule, so there's a
25 lot to cover. And we will like to -- if

1 you have some additional questions, you
2 can please forward the questions to
3 Council's Finance and Budget team. We
4 will make sure that the Administration
5 receives them immediately and we will
6 get responses as quickly as possible.

7 So it's time for us to get
8 started. This is a public hearing of
9 the Committee of the Whole regarding
10 Bill Nos. 200285, 200286, 200287,
11 200288, 200289, 200290, 200291, 200292
12 and Resolution Nos. 200307 and 200331.

13 Mr. Stitt, will you please
14 read the titles of the bills and the
15 resolutions.

16 THE CLERK: Bill No. 200285,
17 an ordinance to adopt a Capital Program
18 for the six Fiscal Years 2021 through
19 2026 inclusive.

20 Bill No. 200286, an ordinance
21 to adopt a Fiscal 2021 Capital Budget.

22 Bill No. 200287, an ordinance
23 adopting the Operating Budget for Fiscal
24 Year 2021.

25 Bill No. 200288, an ordinance

1 amending Chapter 19-1200 of the
2 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Parking
3 Tax," by revising certain tax rates,
4 under certain terms and conditions.

5 Bill No. 200289, an ordinance
6 amending Chapter 19-1800 of the
7 Philadelphia Code, entitled "School Tax
8 Authorization," by revising certain tax
9 rates, all under certain terms and
10 conditions.

11 Bill No. 200290, an ordinance
12 amending Chapter 19-2600 of the
13 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Business
14 Income and Receipts tax," by revising
15 certain tax rates, under certain terms
16 and conditions.

17 Bill No. 200291, an ordinance
18 amending Chapter 19-1500 of the
19 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Wage and
20 Net Profits Tax," by revising certain
21 tax rates, under certain terms and
22 conditions.

23 Bill No. 200292, an ordinance
24 amending Chapter 19-1300 of the
25 Philadelphia Code, entitled "Real Estate

1 Taxes," to eliminate the discount for
2 early payment of real estate taxes, all
3 under certain terms and conditions.

4 Resolution No. 200307,
5 resolution providing for the approval by
6 the Council of the City of Philadelphia
7 of a Revised Five Year Financial Plan
8 for the City of Philadelphia covering
9 Fiscal Years 2021 through 2025, and
10 incorporating proposed changes with
11 respect to Fiscal Year 2020, which is to
12 be submitted by the Mayor to the
13 Pennsylvania Intergovernmental
14 Cooperation Authority pursuant to the
15 Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement,
16 authorized by an ordinance of this
17 Council, approved by the Mayor on
18 January 3, 1992 (Bill No. 1563-A), by
19 and between the City and the Authority.

20 Resolution No. 200331,
21 resolution approving the Director of
22 Finance's Budget Stabilization Reserve
23 Fund Withdrawal Certification for
24 purposes of allowing utilization of
25 \$34,276,000 in a Reserve Fund for

1 General Fund purposes in connection with
2 the FY2021 Operating Budget.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

4 Thank you, Mr. Stitt.

5 Before we proceed,
6 Councilwoman Parker, I believe you're
7 here?

8 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: I am,
9 Mr. President. Thank you so much. Good
10 morning, everyone.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
12 Good morning. I just want to make sure
13 that you're listed as being in
14 attendance. Thank you. Today we
15 continue the public hearing of the
16 Committee of the Whole to consider the
17 bills read by the Clerk that constitute
18 proposed operating and capital spending
19 measures for Fiscal Year 2021, a Capital
20 Program and a forward-looking Capital
21 Plan for Fiscal 2021 through Fiscal
22 2026.

23 Before we begin to hear
24 testimony from the witnesses we have
25 today, everyone who has been invited to

1 the meeting to testify should be aware
2 that the public hearing is being
3 recorded. Because a hearing is public,
4 participants and viewers have no
5 reasonable expectation of privacy. By
6 continuing to be in the meeting, you are
7 consenting to being recorded.

8 Additionally, prior to
9 recognizing members for the questions or
10 comments they have for witnesses, I'll
11 note for the record at this time that we
12 will use the chat feature available in
13 Microsoft Teams to allow members to
14 signify that they wish to be recognized.
15 In order to comply with the Sunshine
16 Act, the chat feature must only be used
17 for this particular purpose.

18 Today we will hear testimony
19 from the following City departments and
20 later this afternoon we'll be hearing
21 testimony in the public comment session
22 on proposed City budget matters. Today
23 from the Administration, we will have
24 the following departments: Department
25 of Health and Human Services and the

1 Office of Children and Families.

2 Mr. Stitt, who will be the
3 first individual to testify?

4 THE CLERK: Dr. Tom Farley and
5 Behavioral Health Dr. Jones.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
7 Thank you.

8 Good morning.

9 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Good
10 morning, Mr. Council President. It's my
11 understanding that I wasn't going to
12 have prepared testimony. I was only
13 going to answer questions. Have I got
14 that right?

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
16 Doctor, however you feel most
17 comfortable, we're okay. You can just
18 kind of go ahead and proceed. We
19 appreciate numerous questions that we're
20 going to be getting from Members.

21 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: All
22 right. I'll be happy to answer
23 questions, but I'm sorry if I
24 misunderstood those instructions. But
25 let me simply say that we are facing an

1 epidemic of magnitude that we see about
2 once a century, and that has caused up
3 to amend society, as you've seen, to
4 address that problem.

5 As everyone has seen, we have
6 gone into a stay-at-home order to reduce
7 the transmission from one person to
8 another. Over the short-term, we have
9 succeeded with that. We were first flat
10 and then reduced the number of cases
11 we're seeing every day. And with that,
12 although we have lost far too many
13 lives, at least 1200 lives we've now
14 lost, many people have become sick.
15 Many people have been hospitalized, but
16 the numbers are trending in the right
17 direction now and we are approaching in
18 what may be tougher to do, and that's
19 tougher decisions around what I'm
20 calling Phase 2, that is, how to
21 gradually restart activities that we
22 have stopped in the past in ways that
23 don't allow the virus to resurge.

24 It is very clear that the
25 virus is still here. People are still

1 people. People are still vulnerable.
2 If we go back to our previous way of
3 behaving, the virus can come back and
4 potentially could have an even greater
5 surge, which we've seen already. So we
6 must do this very carefully and we must
7 do it in ways that we measure our step
8 along the way, whether the virus is
9 starting to pick up speed again. So we
10 are approaching those issues right now,
11 at the same time starting to get back to
12 our regular work.

13 The rest of health has not
14 stopped. We need to make sure that
15 children are immunized and people are
16 seeking healthcare services for other
17 health problems. We deal with other
18 health risks. And so, we will do that.
19 And so, I'm sure there are many
20 questions about the epidemic, many
21 questions about how we as a City are
22 responding to that. And I'll be happy
23 to answer any questions that
24 Councilmembers have.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

1 Thank you, Doctor.

2 Dr. Farley, for purposes of
3 potential follow-up, it will be helpful
4 if you could have prepared testimony
5 forwarded at a later date. So as we
6 make these decisions about the budgetary
7 matters, we do have the ability to
8 review testimony that was given. We
9 have to make some very difficult
10 choices, as you know.

11 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I'll be
12 happy to.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: And
14 second, I'd like to thank you in
15 yesterday's event for opening up the new
16 testing site at 20th and Berks. It was
17 well received. Thank you for keeping
18 your commitment to expand those
19 opportunities allowing more and more
20 people just to get tested, so it was a
21 really good site to see those
22 individuals, municipal workers working
23 at the site. It was very familiar to
24 everybody and it's North Philadelphia
25 community and we're looking forward to

1 working with them in any way possible
2 that we can.

3 Doctor, I had a couple of
4 quick questions as it relates to your
5 budget proposal, and there's been this
6 conversation significantly about contact
7 tracing, obviously to help us reduce the
8 spread and get a real handle on this
9 virus. So can you talk to me about how
10 this particular budget proposal given
11 the challenges that we have with revenue
12 address the need for testing and
13 tracing?

14 And also can you add to that,
15 I know there's been a number of
16 questions about the hiring of contact
17 tracing, who's responsible, federal,
18 state or local government? You can add
19 that also.

20 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes. So
21 the expansion of testing, and we do need
22 to expand testing, and the creation of
23 the service of contact tracing is
24 totally a new service that adds real
25 cost to it. And so, we were -- I was

1 very concerned not long ago that really
2 we did not have City funds to do it. We
3 were asked like other agencies to cut
4 our budget because of the revenue loss
5 to the City.

6 However, the money that
7 Congress allocated has gone through CDC.
8 We received that grant from them to do
9 this. We do think that that grant will
10 be adequate for us to expand the testing
11 as well as the contact tracing. And so,
12 we're putting that in place right now.
13 So the contact tracing in the City of
14 Philadelphia, my department will take
15 the lead in, although we will work with
16 other organizations. A number have come
17 forward to have an interest in assisting
18 in some way. I think a lot of the work
19 we have, some might be done in
20 department organizations.

21 And we -- let me just say
22 there's a lot of questions and concerns
23 about contact tracing. Contact tracing
24 is something we in public health have a
25 long history of doing. We do it for

1 sexually-transmitted diseases. We do it
2 for HIV. We do it for tuberculosis.
3 I've learned a lot about how to make it
4 as successful as possible. One of the
5 key things is that it's a very personal
6 conversation. You're getting into
7 people's private business.

8 And so, you need to have
9 people -- you need to hire people who
10 have good interpersonal skills and who
11 the folks that they are working with are
12 comfortable dealing with. So it means
13 to me to hire people who are reflective
14 of the communities they serve. And so,
15 as the epidemic is affecting very
16 diverse populations of the City, our
17 contact tracers will be equally
18 reflective of that diverse population in
19 the City. And we think that's the only
20 way for it to be successful. So we're
21 building that team now and we will let
22 Council know as we go how this is all
23 going.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

25 Okay. What time frame do you anticipate

1 being in a position to have that up and
2 running?

3 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Right
4 now we are hiring staff and piloting our
5 protocols. We're hiring staff at maybe
6 20 per week. So I would say -- where
7 are we now, end of May, by late June
8 we're going to have a staff -- my goal
9 at that point would be to have staff to
10 where we get -- if the case counts go
11 down, we're interviewing essentially
12 everybody who has a positive test and
13 we're following up on as many of those
14 contacts as possible. We'll probably
15 continue to improve the coverage and
16 quality through the remainder of the
17 summer, but give us a month and we'll
18 have this in pretty good shape.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: So
20 give me the specifics of what happens if
21 there's an individual who's interested
22 in being a part of this process, i.e.,
23 working as a contact tracer? Where do
24 you call? Do you call the Department of
25 Health? Is there a notification for

1 opportunities for a month? Is there
2 criteria established in the document for
3 the individuals that are applying? Give
4 me a little more meat on the bone if you
5 can.

6 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes, so
7 there are job postings. These are all
8 being hired as contract staff in order
9 for us to hire them quickly. And so,
10 the job postings I believe through the
11 Public of Management Corporation and
12 PMHCC and I'm forgetting the words the
13 acronym stand for, but the two
14 contracting organizations. They're
15 posted on a number of websites. And I'm
16 sorry, but I have to get back to you on
17 the exact qualifications that are
18 required for that.

19 I would say the most important
20 skills we look for are interpersonal
21 skills. It's not really a technical
22 position. It's someone who can work
23 well with people. And so, I'll be happy
24 to circulate that information after this
25 as far as where it's posted and invite

1 anyone who feels that they have this
2 ability to apply.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: And
4 PMHCC has a contract with the City of
5 Philadelphia to provide this work?

6 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes, but
7 they're two organizations.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: And
9 how were they selected? Was it an RFP
10 put out?

11 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: You
12 know, we have existing contracts with
13 these organizations when we need to
14 quickly have staff on board to do
15 things, so we're working through those
16 existing contracts. And again, it's two
17 different staffing organizations.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Do
19 you know --

20 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Although
21 they will -- those people will have
22 their salaries paid by the organization,
23 but the City picks up the cost, and
24 they'll function as if they are full-
25 time staff.

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: And
2 the cost of the contract? I ask these
3 questions because we're in the budget
4 hearing, so it's about budgets.

5 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I'll be
6 happy to get back to you on that. Are
7 you looking for the total cost or what
8 specifically are you looking for?

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
10 Yes, we're in a budget hearing. This is
11 all about the money. It's clearly an
12 issue with respect to the public health
13 which is first and foremost for us.
14 There's money coming, as you said, from
15 the CDC and we're appreciative of that,
16 and how much of that money, what's the
17 contract, what's the process. You say
18 they are existing contracts. These
19 contracts should be amended, I'm
20 assuming. And I can understand if you
21 can't answer specifics right now.
22 You're focused on the public health
23 thing but...

24 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Mr. Sami
25 Jarrah is my Chief Operating Officer. I

1 believe he's on Teams, and I would
2 invite him if he can shed little or
3 light on the contracts we're using for
4 this and anything about that process.
5 Sami?

6 MR. JARRAH: Yeah. Are you
7 able to hear me okay?

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
9 Yes.

10 MR. JARRAH: So we have
11 contracted amended existing contracts,
12 both Public Health Management Corp. and
13 PMHCC, and they're each filling these
14 contact tracing positions as we've
15 described, that's funded via a grant
16 from the CDC. It's called an Expanding
17 Lab Capacity grant. We made notice
18 about that grant recently. That's a \$92
19 million grant that's spread out over two
20 and a half years, and it's partially
21 funding these two contracts.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: How
23 much did you say?

24 MR. JARRAH: 92 million.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: 92

1 million.

2 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: And just
3 to clarify, Mr. Council President, that
4 includes the expansion of testing as
5 well as the contact tracing and it's for
6 two and a half years, and we would think
7 that the biggest chunk of that would go
8 for the contact tracing because that's a
9 lot of staffing people involved in that,
10 so those are the costs.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
12 That's a pretty significant amount. And
13 I understand it's stretched out over two
14 years, but to simply do it as an
15 amendment to a contract is not normal in
16 some respects to me. I think it would
17 be a little more transparency associated
18 with that contract. But that's the way
19 you normally do business?

20 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Sami, do
21 you want to just answer that?

22 MR. JARRAH: Sure.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: No,
24 that's a big contract.

25 MR. JARRAH: Yeah, so the \$92

1 million is not going to these two
2 organizations alone. There are many,
3 many other functions that this 92
4 million is covering.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I'm
6 asking you to give me some specifics
7 because I'm kind of doing this on the
8 cuff without testimony. So it's 92
9 million. It's a federal grant?

10 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes.

11 MR. JARRAH: That's correct.

12 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: All
13 right. And that will cover a number of
14 things that we're going to be doing as
15 it relates to this issue?

16 MR. JARRAH: Yes. This is one
17 among probably a dozen functions that
18 that grant will be required to cover.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: It
20 will be helpful if you can provide that
21 to us in an expedited way.

22 MR. JARRAH: Sure. We would
23 be happy to do that. I could also just
24 say that we got notice of this grant
25 about a week and a half ago and haven't

1 yet prepared the budget. The budget is
2 due in about three weeks, so we're
3 working on development of that budget,
4 but we'll be happy to share it.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: All
6 right.

7 COMMISSIONER FARLEY:
8 Mr. Council President, also if I could
9 just point out we're in a real hurry to
10 get contact tracing up and running
11 because we want it to be functioning
12 really as we get into the yellow phase.
13 And so, using these existing contracts
14 enables us to move fast. You know, we
15 haven't even submitted the budget to the
16 Feds and we're already hiring folks.
17 And we have time later on for us to
18 think about things when we have more
19 time.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I
21 want you to move as expeditiously as
22 possible because it is impacting
23 significant parts of the community that
24 I represent as a District Councilperson,
25 but I do have a responsibility to make

1 sure that we know how this money is
2 being spent and who it's being spent
3 with.

4 As you know, being very
5 candid, the issue with respect to work
6 being performed on this very significant
7 issue, there's been some conversations
8 about certain organizations that tried
9 to be a part of this healthcare issue
10 and response, and there's been some back
11 and forth between members of Council,
12 members of outside organizations and
13 who's going to have an opportunity to
14 provide service. So I'm just trying to
15 do it in a way that it's not
16 contentious, but I need to get a sense
17 of how much of this money -- we want it
18 in and out as soon as possible, but how
19 it's being spent, because that's our
20 responsibility and when you can get it
21 to us, that's fine, but we do need to
22 have that information.

23 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: We'll be
24 happy to.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

1 I've pretty much taken up all my time on
2 that one question, but I had to do that.
3 That's one quick question. It's a
4 matter in the overall scheme of things
5 relatively small in terms of dollars but
6 this is a very significant issue.

7 There was a reduction of
8 200,000 in your housing lead
9 remediation. Is that going to be
10 backfilled in another way? Because this
11 whole issue with respect to lead
12 mediation is obviously very important
13 and precedes the issue with respect to
14 COVID, but it's still very important.
15 Do we have a sense of that?

16 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So we
17 had to make a number of very difficult
18 budget cuts and I believe that was one
19 of them, at a period of time when we
20 hadn't been able to get into the homes
21 to do lead remediation. We're starting
22 that now. And so, I don't know if Sami
23 Jarrah has any more light to shed on
24 that. We certainly -- it's our
25 intention to do all the remediations

1 that we can and hopefully that the
2 budget will not limit us there, but I
3 think that that was one of the top calls
4 we had to make, and I think we can
5 handle that.

6 Sami, do you want to talk more
7 about that?

8 MR. JARRAH: I think what
9 Dr. Farley said is correct. I think it
10 was two things. One, it was a planned
11 expansion that we felt like we could cut
12 only because the reality of COVID makes
13 it difficult to get into families' homes
14 so we felt like it was reasonable to
15 give ourselves a few months of a cut
16 given the reality of social distancing.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

18 Okay. Thank you. I'll come back.

19 I understand now, Mr. Stitt,
20 we have circulated the written
21 testimony. All right. Thank you.

22 Let me start on Councilmembers
23 first up. We have Councilwoman Gilmore
24 Richardson.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

1 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Council
2 President.

3 And thank you, Commissioner
4 Farley, for your work during this time.
5 A special kudos to Jane Baker on your
6 team for her responsiveness and for
7 always taking my calls no matter the day
8 or the hour.

9 So we know that the Health
10 Department continues to be a vital part
11 of the City's continued response to
12 COVID-19 and you already went through
13 the testing and contact tracing in
14 trying to mitigate further spread. But
15 I think it's important for us to go back
16 in order to go forward. So on April
17 6th, there was an article in the
18 Inquirer that detailed the analysis of a
19 Drexel University epidemiologist who
20 analyzed the data from your department,
21 wherein Philadelphians who live in
22 higher income neighborhoods had gotten
23 tested for the coronavirus six times
24 more frequently than those in lower
25 income communities, which is a social

1 inequality that continues to need to be
2 addressed. So can you speak to how you
3 have expanded testing since that time
4 across the entire City, particularly in
5 lower income communities and what your
6 plans are for continued expansion?

7 And then my next question is,
8 can you provide us an update I had on
9 the RFP for community-based testing?
10 And then lastly, and I'll have more
11 questions after you answer that, your
12 interface with the Black Doctors
13 COVID-19 Consortium. I continue to feel
14 as though there's a level of resistance
15 from working with this organization, and
16 you just talked about receiving
17 \$92 million in CDC dollars in order to
18 expand testing and contact tracing and
19 that you have to ramp that up very
20 quickly, but I think it's important that
21 we talk about something that we haven't
22 heard. We cannot act in haste and
23 repent in leisure. So can you just
24 speak to some of those questions?

25 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes.

1 Thank you very much. So let me try to
2 remember them all as I go through here.
3 As far as testing, when the virus first
4 arrived in the City, we had no testing
5 available. Then we had very little
6 testing available. Then we had just the
7 one drive-thru site at Citizens Bank
8 Park. And ever since that time, we've
9 been trying to increase the number of
10 sites where testing is available and
11 making it increasingly available to
12 populations that were underserved.

13 We are now -- well, the way
14 that we have increased the number of
15 sites is working with providers that
16 have the ability to do testing and to
17 say, how can we facilitate that. For
18 the most part, those providers what they
19 mainly needed from us was the test swabs
20 because the rest of it they could do
21 them -- in some cases, personal
22 protective equipment, because the
23 testing itself they can do on their own.
24 They can bill for the testing and get
25 reimbursed.

1 And so, we initially worked
2 with the hospital systems to set up
3 testing sites. So the University of
4 Pennsylvania has testing sites. Temple
5 has testing sites. Jefferson has
6 testing sites that we coordinated with.
7 Then to make greater access to
8 low-income populations, underserved
9 populations, we worked with the
10 federally qualified health centers and
11 made a similar offer, you know, we'll
12 provide swabs as needed and if
13 necessary, PPE, can you ramp up testing.
14 They've done that, and they've done that
15 and they paid for that through billing.
16 So we have not had to pay them to do
17 that, which is good because we did not
18 have funding to provide them to do that.
19 We also worked with some of the
20 pharmacies that have offered testing, so
21 there's a big testing site at the Rite
22 Aid down --

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Mr. Commissioner, I
25 apologize. I think you said you did not

1 have funding. But just for the record,
2 you do have funding now, right, with the
3 \$92 million from the CDC?

4 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: That is
5 correct.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: It's
9 changed quite a bit. We heard about
10 that funding about 10 days ago and the
11 ramp-up I'm talking about now happened
12 before we heard about any of that. So
13 we worked with the pharmacies. Also,
14 there are other neighborhoods that are
15 underserved that you can provide
16 testing. So through that, we're now up
17 to about 50 testing sites across the
18 City, which is pretty good. We need to
19 do more. And we've increased the number
20 of tests we do per day, to that from a
21 few hundred a day to about 1700 a day.
22 Total number of tests done in the City
23 since the beginning of the epidemic now
24 is about 80,000. We definitely need to
25 do more on testing.

1 One of the things we did,
2 because we knew there was an interest in
3 getting more testing and a need for more
4 testing, we put out a request for
5 proposals, as you mentioned. That was
6 on May 12th, to say if you are an
7 organization that provides testing to
8 underserved populations, populations in
9 particular high need, then please put in
10 an application. We were very clear at
11 that time. We said, we do not have
12 funding at the moment to do this.
13 However, we had heard that funds were
14 coming. And so, we said in anticipation
15 that we wanted to get applications in
16 now so we can get the funding, we could
17 offer that. So that RFP has gone out.

18 The organization you
19 mentioned, the Black Doctors Consortium,
20 had done some testing before. They
21 requested funding. At the time we
22 didn't have it. And other sites were
23 doing testing without any additional
24 funding. They received the RFP and they
25 have to put in an application and we are

1 reviewing it.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you so much.

4 And I heard the bell so I'll
5 come back on the next round. Thank you,
6 Mr. President.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

8 Thank you, Councilwoman.

9 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
10 Parker.

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
12 you, Mr. President.

13 And to Dr. Farley, let me say
14 what I said to you privately, Doc. At a
15 national level, it's Dr. Faucci. I
16 think the state level, I hope I'm not
17 chopping up this name, Dr. Levine --

18 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: That's
19 correct.

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: -- at
21 the state level, and yourself.
22 Listening to the advice of medical
23 professionals and trusting the science,
24 that has been our focus to stop the
25 spread. And I want to thank you, Jane,

1 and all members of your team for the
2 work you've done.

3 But I've got to go back, Doc.
4 This is in my craw now relative to this
5 response about amending existing
6 contracts with PMHCC along with the
7 other organizations because we had to
8 get this set up and standing up
9 immediately. One of the things that was
10 said when the Mayor introduced his
11 budget is the City's focus on public
12 health, public safety and education and
13 that we would be using a racial equity
14 lens in all that we did relative to this
15 budget. But to find out that we would
16 simply amend an existing contract and
17 that organizations like the Black
18 Doctors COVID-19 Consortium where
19 they've been doing this work from the
20 very beginning, that there was no way
21 prior to the RFP being issued for them
22 to be added in some way for the work
23 that they were conducting in the
24 communities they were conducting that
25 work in. I am right now appalled by

1 that.

2 Let me ask this question
3 specifically: You noted that about
4 80,000 tests have been conducted in the
5 City of Philadelphia. Do you know the
6 number that were conducted by hospitals
7 and then the number that were conducted
8 by the City of Philadelphia?

9 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I can
10 get back I think -- when you say the
11 City of Philadelphia --

12 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: So, Doc,
13 hospitals are doing testing, right, and
14 that is hospitals. But we as the City
15 of Philadelphia, I heard when I was
16 talking to different members of the
17 Administration about the Black Doctors
18 Consortium, they were telling me we were
19 ramping up testing in our public health
20 centers. I was talking about the
21 African-American community. There's a
22 lack of trust historically based on
23 science and medicine, and I don't have
24 to go back through the history because
25 you know that well via your knowledge of

1 the healthcare industry. But I want to
2 know how many have we conducted as a
3 City at our public health locations
4 because I want that number?

5 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Okay. I
6 don't have that number right now. I can
7 get that for you. I can tell you that
8 as far as hospitals they're not just
9 offering testing within the roles of the
10 hospital. They, at our request and they
11 really stepped up, they're offering
12 testing to the community. So, for
13 example, the University of Pennsylvania
14 has a site in West Philly that is the
15 busiest site in the City. They're doing
16 on a typical day more than 200 tests.
17 It's drive-thru, it's walk-through, so
18 they are serving that community. That
19 was the way we got high volume up as
20 quickly as possible and --

21 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Doc,
22 what I will ask is I'll wait for you to
23 get that very specific number, what the
24 hospitals have done via all of their
25 vehicles along with what the City has

1 done with City facilities. And I'll
2 tell you why: The Black Doctors
3 Consortium, they broke 4500 and they've
4 done this with basically no support.
5 Don't get me wrong, Doc, I heard you
6 talking about that we provided some PPE
7 where we could. We provided access to
8 some swabs. But the mobility, the
9 mobility and the trust factor associated
10 with where they've established these
11 sites and getting to a constituency,
12 that is not the constituency that has
13 access or regular communication with a
14 primary care physician. So once you get
15 the test, they've also been able to
16 recommend and attempt to connect people
17 to get primary care follow-up.

18 And so, I would like to know
19 because it's frustrating to me that we
20 have African-American healthcare
21 organizations in existence, but when it
22 comes time to utilize dollars, we will
23 amend and extend an existing contract
24 without trying to figure out how we can
25 navigate in a very transparent manner to

1 provide access to other organizations,
2 because they are also getting paid to
3 administrate this process. So how are
4 we attempting to build the capacity of
5 existing African-American organizations
6 that may not be as large but have a
7 trust factor, that quite frankly PMHCC,
8 they don't have when they go into the
9 community. So I want to make sure I get
10 that on the record.

11 I have a number of other
12 questions that I want to send to you,
13 but I also want to ask if you can
14 provide us with a listing of testing
15 sites by zip code so that we can map
16 where are the tests being provided by
17 zip code. In addition to that, Governor
18 Wolf has just proposed that Philly move
19 to yellow on June 5th. I want to get
20 your opinion about whether or not we
21 have enough sites open and protocols in
22 place, and to get racial and ethnic data
23 relative to the private testing labs and
24 whether or not they are mandated to
25 report this information. And I'll send

1 the rest of the questions to you in
2 writing because I don't think we'll get
3 to a second round. But if we do, I have
4 more.

5 Thank you, Mr. President.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

7 Thank you, Councilwoman.

8 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Council
9 President, can I respond to that or
10 shall we move on? I'm happy to respond.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: I
12 need you to be quick.

13 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So just
14 on a couple of -- there's testing and
15 there's contact tracing. And so, the
16 contracts we talked about with PHMC and
17 PMHCC are for staffing for contact
18 tracing. The testing we've talked
19 about, the scaling up of testing --

20 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER:
21 Dr. Farley and Mr. President, I
22 apologize, but I need to state this for
23 the record. I respected a thousand and
24 one percent, Doc, your perspective that
25 the people doing the contact tracing

1 should look like and have the
2 interpersonal skills and have a certain
3 level of trust with the individual that
4 they are working to trace.

5 In any African-American
6 community, I want you to tell me how
7 PMHCC is the best vehicle to hire the
8 people and have relationships within the
9 community to get that model standing up?
10 If we're using the racial equity lens
11 that was promoted when this budget was
12 proposed to us in the midst of this
13 crisis, we should have been intentional
14 to make sure that including, as we begun
15 the process, even if we had to use those
16 two because we had large existing
17 contracts with them, we should have made
18 sure that we found a way to bring
19 minority firms, there are minority
20 African-American, Hispanic, other firms
21 that we could have brought in on the
22 front end to participate in the process.
23 Because with all due respect, PHMC and
24 the others, they are not the be-all,
25 end-all with access to the minority

1 community.

2 And, Mr. President, I
3 apologize for overstepping my time here,
4 but this is very frustrating. 4500
5 tests in Black communities with people
6 who are never going to step foot in the
7 City of Philadelphia Public Health
8 Center. People who don't go to a
9 primary care center, but they trust
10 those churches, they trust the partners
11 of the Black Doctors COVID-19
12 Consortium, and they have to wait for a
13 darn RFP while PHMC and the other ones
14 get access to a damn extended contract.
15 Now, that's wrong.

16 I'm sorry, Mr. President.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

18 That's okay, Councilwoman.

19 COMMISSIONER FARLEY:

20 Councilmember, if I could just again
21 clarify. Those contract organizations
22 are providing an administrative function
23 for hiring contact tracing staff.
24 They're not involved in testing. As far
25 as the testing, the scaled-up sites of

1 the 50 sites has been done without any
2 expenditures from this Health
3 Department. This is sites -- because
4 testing itself can be reimbursed through
5 insurance. Testing is a medical service
6 and it's reimbursable.

7 And so, a very large scale of
8 testing occurred without any dollars at
9 all. That is not -- so these are a
10 separate process. And as far as
11 testing, I do need to point out the
12 total number of tests is roughly 80,000.
13 Of those, we don't know the exact racial
14 breakdown of all of that because our
15 data from the lab test is incomplete.

16 About 25 percent of those we
17 don't know the race. But about 30, 35
18 percent of those -- 35 percent were
19 African-American. So probably about
20 30,000 tests were done at a minimum that
21 have been African-Americans. And this
22 organization, Black Doctors Consortium,
23 did some testing for African-Americans
24 and we think that is great. We're
25 appreciative of that, but it wasn't like

1 they're the only organization out there
2 offering testing to African-American
3 populations in the City.

4 We need to do more. We need
5 to expand the number of tests. We did
6 not have funding in the past for
7 testing. We now have funding for
8 testing. We put out a request for
9 proposals, but that is separate for the
10 contact tracing.

11 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: PMHCC,
12 if they were smart, they would be
13 calling the Black Doctors Consortium now
14 and every other African-American-owned
15 healthcare agency to say we're standing
16 up contact tracing and we need you to be
17 a part of the structure of this process.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
19 Thank you, Councilwoman.

20 There will be clearly
21 significant follow-up on this particular
22 issue because I know that a lot of
23 members of Council are very concerned
24 about this traditional issue with
25 respect to expediting contracts that

1 traditionally go to the ones that always
2 are the go-to people and it never opens
3 up opportunities for new vendors, so to
4 speak, but we'll talk about that a
5 little further in length. We do have
6 limited time today so I'm going to move
7 along.

8 Chair recognizes Councilman
9 Green.

10 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
11 Council President.

12 Thank you, Dr. Farley, for the
13 work that you've done in reference to
14 addressing this pandemic. You mentioned
15 80,000 tests have been done in the City
16 of Philadelphia. How many tests have
17 been done by the City of Philadelphia?
18 Not other health systems, just the City
19 of Philadelphia whereas to COVID-19.

20 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I don't
21 have that number. I will get that back
22 to you. I should be clear, that our
23 testing --

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: No, no, no.
25 My question is very specific. You said

1 80,000 and you're including a number of
2 other entities. I'm saying specifically
3 the City of Philadelphia, how many tests
4 as Health Commissioner has the City of
5 Philadelphia done for COVID-19?

6 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: As I
7 said, I don't have that number right
8 now. I'll be happy to provide that to
9 you. I would say that the testing done
10 by the City of Philadelphia is done in
11 our eight health centers. Our eight
12 health centers just represent a fairly
13 small fraction of the healthcare
14 providers that provide services for
15 low-income populations across the City
16 --

17 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right. The
18 reason I asked that specific question is
19 because you made reference to all these
20 groups of testing, and then you had the
21 perspective to say that the Black
22 Doctors COVID-19 Consortium has done
23 some tests. And as my colleague
24 Councilwoman Cherelle Parker correctly
25 stated, they've done about 4500 tests.

1 And so, to be very somewhat dismissive
2 and say that they've done some when the
3 City of Philadelphia has done, I'm not
4 sure what the number is because you as
5 the Health Commissioner don't have that
6 information, but you do have the
7 information for all the other
8 organizations in the City of
9 Philadelphia that are providing testing.
10 So I think it's very inaccurate to take
11 the Black Doctors and say they've done
12 some at 4500 and then extrapolate all
13 the other organizations that are doing
14 testing some 80,000 tests, and that
15 tends to be people on healthcare
16 networks that also have insurance in
17 those networks and those providers, but
18 I'll move on from that issue.

19 I want to move on to contact
20 tracing. Early on -- as you know, I'm a
21 member of the National League of Cities.
22 I've been providing a lot of information
23 to the Administration that's been very
24 narrowly focused on contact tracing,
25 specifically because we have a high

1 level of unemployment in the City of
2 Philadelphia. Council President alluded
3 to this earlier. I've provided a very
4 laser focus on contact tracing. I've
5 talked about other cities, the
6 Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well as
7 cities around the nation have started to
8 focus on putting together contact
9 tracing.

10 You've stated in your
11 1 o'clock press briefings that you don't
12 feel comfortable developing a contact
13 tracing system until we get close to
14 about 50 new infections per day.
15 However, we're learning today that
16 you're amending two contracts, two
17 reputable organizations. But we could
18 have been ahead of the game in reference
19 to setting up opportunities for those
20 people who have become unemployed due to
21 COVID-19 to possibly apply for these
22 jobs of contact tracing.

23 So I don't understand how the
24 CARES Act was prepared weeks ago. You
25 knew it was coming. Other cities and

1 states were preparing. At the point
2 when it was asked about, you said we had
3 to wait until a later point. Now, we're
4 finding out that this process is already
5 set up for contact tracing. And I know
6 Penn Health worked with the City on
7 contact tracing. So can you explain
8 that?

9 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I'm not
10 sure I fully understand the question,
11 but let me just try to --

12 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, the
13 question is we knew funding was coming
14 from the CARES Act. You said we had to
15 wait for a while to develop contact
16 tracing, but now we're understanding
17 that a contact tracing system is being
18 put together by amending two contracts.
19 Why did we not start to be proactive and
20 tell people what are some things we need
21 for them to be hired via contact
22 tracing?

23 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: The
24 funding for this, we received notice of
25 it about 10 days ago. We already

1 started putting this in motion to hire
2 people, even though anticipation of the
3 funding arrived. And we are now hiring
4 now and putting our protocols in place,
5 that is, to scale up as quickly as
6 possible. As the case counts are down,
7 then we hope that we scale up our
8 ability to do this and we'll meet around
9 50 cases per day, I hope so. I will say
10 that we're doing this as quickly as we
11 can. Doing this as quickly as we can as
12 you see involves using existing
13 contracts rather than writing new
14 contracts, which can take a long time to
15 do. So I know --

16 COUNCILMAN GREEN: You're
17 obfuscating the question. You as a
18 health professional know contact tracing
19 has been used by health professionals
20 for numerous years, HIV and other areas.
21 It's always been said from the very
22 beginning of this pandemic, we need to
23 make sure we have testing and contact
24 tracing. So when you have an
25 opportunity to start putting together

1 and start looking at a system of contact
2 tracing, knowing that money was coming
3 through the CARES Act or CARES 2, why
4 did we not -- the fact that we're just
5 learning now that PMHCC is hiring people
6 for contact tracing is crazy. The fact
7 that we have high unemployment in the
8 City of Philadelphia and we are now just
9 finding out this stuff on their website
10 for people to get hired, why was this
11 information not out ahead of time? We
12 have to be able to chew gum and walk at
13 the same time. So why are we just
14 putting this together now when we knew
15 it was needed weeks ago?

16 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Well,
17 I'm going to say when -- there's no
18 amount of staffing we could have that
19 would enable us to do contact tracing in
20 an adequate way when we had 500 cases
21 per day. That was the -- we were at
22 that point, our basic strategy was
23 social distancing. The recommendation
24 that everybody essentially was to --

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Dr. Farley,

1 we all know that. But at the same point
2 you knew it was coming because every
3 other jurisdiction was also focusing on
4 both testing and contact tracing, so we
5 knew we were going to have a system of
6 contact tracing set up in the future.
7 Why were we not starting to tell people
8 if you want to indirectly become a
9 contact tracer, you need to have a
10 certain skill set, certain background,
11 start engaging people about this
12 opportunity?

13 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I don't
14 have an answer other than when it was
15 clear that we had the funding to hire
16 people, as quickly as possible we got
17 job announcements out there and were
18 hiring people as quickly as possible.

19 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Where are
20 those job announcements placed?

21 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: They
22 were circulated widely. I would have to
23 get you details of where they are
24 placed.

25 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. If

1 they were circulated so widely, how come
2 the Legislative branch of this City is
3 just learning about it today?

4 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I can't
5 answer that.

6 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
7 Council President --

8 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I'm
9 happy to give you more information about
10 how --

11 COUNCILMAN GREEN: -- my time
12 is up. We'll come back for more
13 questions. Thank you.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
15 Thank you, Councilman. I'm sure there
16 will be some follow-up on that one also.

17 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
18 Quinones-Sanchez.

19 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
20 Thank you, Council President.

21 Thank you, Dr. Farley, and all
22 of your team for all of the work that
23 they have done throughout this. I think
24 the frustration you hear from our
25 Council colleagues is as a Legislative

1 branch, we have a responsibility and an
2 obligation to work with the Executive
3 branch, but we are not being consulted.
4 We are being informed.

5 The last act that Council did
6 before we started working remotely, we
7 authorized an \$85 million emergency
8 COVID fund. Do you know why we
9 established that fund?

10 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I don't.
11 I have not been involved in those
12 conversations.

13 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
14 The \$85 million fund was so that we as a
15 City could do whatever was necessary to
16 meet the healthcare pandemic needs of
17 the City of Philadelphia. Do you not
18 think that testing of the minority
19 population given the national statistics
20 was considered an emergency and,
21 therefore, whether we had federal
22 funding or not should have been funded
23 from the \$85 million allocation?

24 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: It seems
25 reasonable. Again, I do want to point

1 out that testing is a reimbursable
2 medical expense and in general, we don't
3 use City funds to pay for medical
4 services. Medical services can be quite
5 expensive and to the extent you can have
6 insurance companies pay for that, which
7 is you get the money --

8 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

9 That is --

10 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: --

11 that's a good thing and --

12 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

13 It is. We have that challenge in our
14 prisons, in our congregate care as we
15 try to get reimbursed for all of that.
16 But in our work with vulnerable
17 populations, there's many things that
18 are not funded but are a responsibility
19 and an obligation, particularly when
20 we're talking about a pandemic.

21 I really need the
22 Administration to own the fact when you
23 look at the COVID-related expenses,
24 White minority firms across the board,
25 when the question was asked of the Chief

1 of Staff of the Mayor, the response was
2 we were acting quickly and, therefore,
3 we picked firms, we are going to
4 continue to be more deliberate around
5 this equity lens, and we have not met
6 that challenge. And it is very, very
7 difficult for us to want to support,
8 prop up, send a common message that we
9 have the leadership in place and that
10 we're working together when we continue
11 to make decisions that do not reflect
12 that equity lens, do not reflect the
13 numbers, your own numbers and your own
14 statistics. \$85 million in emergency
15 funding that we were willing to put on
16 the table whether we were going to get
17 reimbursed or not, and yet this
18 challenge was not considered a priority.

19 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: If I can
20 also --

21 MR. ABERNATHY: Dr. Farley, if
22 I could jump in. It's Brian Abernathy,
23 Managing Director. And, Councilmembers,
24 your points are certainly well-taken.

25 I think there are a few things

1 that we can do better. I think you're
2 right, we could be more deliberate in
3 our contracting in making sure that we
4 provide more opportunities and we will
5 certainly own that criticism. I think
6 it's well-deserved. And I also think we
7 can be -- Council President made this
8 point yesterday, Councilmember Parker
9 made it as well, that we should be more
10 deliberate in our partnership with all
11 of you. You have given us great trust
12 and put a lot of faith in the
13 Administration in how we responded to
14 this crisis, and we certainly appreciate
15 that.

16 And as we move from crisis to
17 recovery, we need to start to operate
18 differently, be more deliberate and be
19 more thoughtful in how we work with
20 Council and make sure that again we're
21 not just speaking to you, but we're
22 actually working with you as we move the
23 City forward. So again, I appreciate
24 those comments. I appreciate the
25 frustration --

1 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

2 Nothing's changed, Brian. We've been in
3 this for two months and time and time
4 again it is don't ask for permission,
5 beg for forgiveness. And when we hold
6 you accountable, we seem like we don't
7 understand what's going on. This is a
8 crisis. We understand that. But how we
9 run government speaks to the values that
10 we share, and this is consistent in all
11 of the decisions that the Administration
12 continues to make around that equity
13 lens when it doesn't recognize the
14 historical disparities that exist in the
15 City.

16 MR. ABERNATHY: Understood.

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

18 So as it relates to that, what, if any,
19 opportunities have been offered to the
20 people that are being laid off from the
21 City, particularly frontline staff, for
22 this contact tracing since you made a
23 deliberate decision that you didn't want
24 to go through your own internal hiring,
25 you wanted to use these vendors which we

1 all know what the issues are as it
2 relates to that, how, if any,
3 opportunities have been offered to the
4 folks that are being laid off to the
5 City?

6 MR. ABERNATHY: So for every
7 opportunity that has been made
8 available, whether it's related directly
9 to the COVID crisis or for other
10 positions within the City, an internal
11 portal has been created for any worker
12 who was laid off. That link has been
13 sent to all of our staff that have
14 suffered a layoff, and they can
15 certainly apply to those positions and
16 will be given first priority over the
17 public. So we have tried to take those
18 steps to make sure that there are other
19 opportunities for those who have
20 suffered layoffs.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
22 Okay. And then my last question since
23 Brian took a little bit of my time --
24 thank you, Brian -- one of the
25 challenges we had during the entire

1 crisis was with limited testing
2 available in the beginning, we had many
3 countless, countless folks leave
4 hospitals with COVID-like testing
5 symptoms but could not get tested. Do
6 we have any idea the amount of people
7 that we think may have had the COVID,
8 but were not tested because of limited
9 testing, because that gives us a better
10 idea?

11 I'm very, very concerned
12 around the narrative about our numbers
13 and our numbers being low when, in fact,
14 for weeks people were not offered the
15 opportunity for testing. Do we have any
16 idea and why did we not require
17 hospitals to give us those numbers so
18 that at least we get a gauge at who we
19 think has been exposed?

20 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So,
21 first of all, we do get the results of
22 any test that is done and any laboratory
23 that does a test on a Philadelphia
24 resident, we get that data. We know
25 that there are many people who had this

1 infection that are not counted in our
2 numbers. Some of that is because many
3 people have this infection and have no
4 symptoms whatsoever and no reason to
5 think that they should have it, so they
6 don't come forward for testing.

7 We also know that there was
8 certainly a period of time there where
9 testing was very limited. Labs could
10 only do so many samples. There were
11 only so many swabs. That was our
12 biggest limitation. And so, I can
13 certainly tell you the total number of
14 people infected is far greater than the
15 numbers we're counting. I can't tell
16 you how much greater it was. And I can
17 tell you we're going to increase testing
18 as much as we can from here. But it
19 will always be far greater for all those
20 people who never show symptoms.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

22 Thank you, Council President.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

24 Thank you, Councilwoman.

25 Chair recognizes Councilman

1 Jones.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
3 Mr. President.

4 I'm going to shift directions
5 because I think you have gotten the
6 point about contact testing and about
7 the equity lens and about the
8 African-American doctors who stepped up
9 in a vacuum to do testing. So I'm going
10 to shift and say something that you did
11 right.

12 We have -- first of all, when
13 I look at the national picture of who's
14 driving the science, I would match you
15 up there with any of them by way of
16 confidence in what you're saying. You
17 got ahead of the curve. It could have
18 been a lot worse in Philadelphia had we
19 not done social distancing in a timely
20 manner, not like other people. But I do
21 not want you to not hear, to unhear,
22 what my colleagues have said.

23 Giving also the credit to your
24 staff, there's a part of my District up
25 in Wynnefield Heights, that if you stand

1 on a parking lot of Target and throw a
2 rock, you're going to hit 5,000 senior
3 citizens in any direction, in the Inglis
4 House, in Simpson House, in Hayes Manor
5 and they have been hard hit by COVID.
6 You and your staff helped my staffer
7 work on a collective Zoom call to talk
8 about common threads of problems and
9 common solutions, and we were able to
10 deal with issues like shrinking staff
11 due to COVID impacts. We were able to
12 talk about state standards that we all
13 need to go by.

14 Your staff sent up PPE
15 equipment to facilities that did not
16 have any. So with the bitter comes the
17 sweet. And in this case, thank you for
18 what you and your staff did for those
19 5,000 plus seniors that live in one
20 square mile of each other and that
21 needed your guidance, your help to do
22 that.

23 Now, having said that, that's
24 all the compliment you're getting out of
25 me today. Maybe this is a good time to

1 ask for that health center in the 4th
2 District which I never had, but I'll
3 save that question for another day.
4 What I do want to talk about is how are
5 we preparing to reopen? How is your
6 department preparing to work with small
7 businesses to give them guidance about
8 what the new post-COVID norms are?

9 How do we get those
10 regulations in a handbook in enough time
11 to people so that they can begin to do
12 the things, make the construction,
13 outdoor seating or distance abilities
14 for people to serve people? We need
15 guidance to the small businesses in the
16 City of Philadelphia on how they should
17 operate post-COVID. That's my question.

18 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So,
19 first, thank you about the facilities
20 where seniors live. I'll say that that
21 has really been ground zero for this
22 epidemic. Nursing homes have been the
23 worst and then other facilities where
24 elderly people live have really been hit
25 hard. So we tried to make sure they all

1 had adequate PPE, so we tried to limit
2 the spread within those facilities and
3 we're going to need to continue to try
4 to do that.

5 As far as your question, we
6 are hopeful that if the numbers continue
7 to look good and we can go to what the
8 Governor calls the yellow phase on June
9 5th, that would involve more retail
10 stores being able to open up, for
11 example, among other activities. We
12 hope to have guidance that we will be
13 putting out before the end of this week,
14 so that's just the next two days, to
15 give people guidance as to how to do
16 that. It's not a requirement, but it's
17 guidance.

18 I think that just based on
19 what I'm seeing there, most of the
20 businesses that do that will probably be
21 very pleased to see that. I think that
22 there will be more concern about it
23 being more onerous than it is, but it
24 will include things like barriers at
25 cash registers so that people don't, you

1 know, have the droplets hit one another
2 when they're paying for their item.
3 It's going to include requiring masks in
4 stores. That's going to be something
5 very strong. But we'll try to be very
6 specific so people know exactly what
7 they need to do and hopefully, that's in
8 enough advanced time so they can be
9 prepared to open on June 5th.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I hear
11 your suggestions. That's the carrot.
12 You also are going to need a stick. And
13 when people violate social distancing
14 rules, we need to be prepared to address
15 that. I saw nightmare scenarios in
16 other cities where people were in pools
17 and other -- that doesn't have anything
18 to do with small businesses, but the
19 Health Department will be playing a role
20 post-COVID in how we operate social
21 distance -- all right, all right.

22 Matt, I'm telling you. I
23 know -- I know you're doing it, Matt.

24 THE CLERK: Councilman Jones,
25 it wasn't me. I promise you.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: All right.
2 Okay. So in conclusion, we need clear
3 guidance also in events. We can't have
4 events like we used to have, so your
5 guidance on how we rewrite those regs on
6 how many people can be at the Mann Music
7 Center, the Dell, Susquehanna Day. And
8 what's your -- wait a minute. What's
9 yours, Council Pres?

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
11 Strawberry Mansion Day.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Strawberry
13 Mansion Day. We need to have guidance
14 on how we can engage those activities
15 safely.

16 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So, yes,
17 what I mentioned earlier, we will be
18 putting out guidance by the end of this
19 week. Some of that guidance will turn
20 into regulations and requirements, and
21 there will be some cases where the
22 Health Department's sanitarians are
23 enforcing those requirements.

24 As far as events, let me tell
25 you that those large events are the

1 things that worry me the most and that's
2 certainly not going to be allowed in the
3 yellow. I think we're a long way off to
4 saying that we can have 20,000 people in
5 an arena. That is way down the line.
6 We're going to start with the lowest
7 risk activities. Let them start, see
8 how this works. And if we're still
9 seeing good numbers as far as the
10 disease, then we can go into slightly
11 higher risk activities and work our way
12 down by the very gradual sequential
13 process.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

15 Thank you.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
17 Mr. President.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

19 Thank you, Councilman.

20 Chair recognizes Councilman
21 Domb.

22 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
23 Council President.

24 And good morning, Dr. Farley.

25 And I want to --

1 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Good
2 morning.

3 COUNCILMAN DOMB: -- thank you
4 and your team for all the work you're
5 doing. I'm going to include Mayor
6 Kenney's Administration and Managing
7 Director Brian Abernathy. And look,
8 none of us expected this to ever happen.
9 This is new territory for all of us and
10 I believe you all are trying the best
11 you can, and I recognize that and I
12 think so do my colleagues recognize
13 that.

14 I would like you to
15 collaborate more with Council and I want
16 to stand with my colleagues on the
17 issues that they've previously
18 discussed. So whatever we can do going
19 forward and be collaborative and
20 cooperative, I will stand with them and
21 hope we can get this resolved. I look
22 forward to that.

23 On the smart restart which
24 we're hoping to get our economy going,
25 including the City and our tax

1 collections and our tax revenues for the
2 City, I want to just ask a few
3 questions. Number one, are you in
4 agreement with, I know there's a
5 hospitality group that wants to close
6 streets to allow either restaurants or
7 whatever to expand and have more social
8 distancing, which I think's a good idea
9 and I wanted to hear your thoughts on
10 that?

11 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Brian
12 Abernathy may want to weigh in on this
13 as well. I'd simply say that we're
14 looking into whether that could be done
15 and there's more implications than just
16 the impact on the epidemic. So I can't
17 give you an answer on that yet.

18 MR. ABERNATHY: And just to
19 add, Councilmember, we are actively
20 reviewing those types of proposals. We
21 have certainly seen what other cities
22 have done. My Deputy Mike Carroll is
23 working through those issues with the
24 Streets Department, Health Department,
25 Police and a number of our commercial

1 corridors and the Commerce Department to
2 understand exactly what that proposal
3 looks like and hopefully we'll have
4 something in more detail for you all to
5 review in the next few days.

6 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. I
7 know many of my colleagues, I know
8 Councilman Jones and Councilman Henon
9 and several others, Councilwoman Parker
10 and Councilwoman Sanchez are all on
11 board to try to get this help for our
12 local small businesses to get back on
13 track, so that will be very helpful. In
14 many cities -- I get articles every day
15 from whether it's the Washington Post or
16 other cities where they're doing this
17 already, so we should get in front of
18 this.

19 MR. ABERNATHY: Understood.

20 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. Thank
21 you.

22 Dr. Farley, one last question.
23 I had a friend unfortunately who had a
24 stroke and it was a serious stroke, and
25 they thought maybe they'd have a week to

1 live and they died within three to four
2 deaths, and the cause of death was the
3 coronavirus, okay. And my question to
4 you is I was just thinking about that
5 situation. Do we have any idea if the
6 number of deaths non-coronavirus for the
7 City of Philadelphia from March 17th to
8 today are up or down or the same?

9 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So the
10 death certificate data has a further
11 along lag before we get it, so we don't
12 have any numbers for that. I can tell
13 you that each year we have an epidemic
14 of influenza across the City and across
15 the world and we count a certain number
16 of influenza cases. But then when you
17 look back when you have all of your
18 death certificates in there, you can see
19 that there's a rise in deaths even for
20 causes that may appear to be unrelated.
21 It clearly must have been prompted by
22 influenza. So I think when this is all
23 over and when we look back on this data,
24 we will see more deaths that might have
25 been labeled as a stroke or something

1 else, that probably COVID was part of
2 that.

3 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. All
4 right. Well, thank you and I look
5 forward to working with you all.

6 Thank you, Council President.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

8 Thank you, Councilman.

9 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
10 Gauthier.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
12 you, Council President.

13 Good morning, Dr. Farley. I
14 wanted to follow up on this conversation
15 about reopening. I think the last day
16 that I personally was in City Hall was
17 March 13th. If I'm remembering
18 correctly, we had about four cases at
19 that time and it's been terrifying to
20 see over a two-month or a little over
21 two-month period, that that's ballooned
22 to over 20,000.

23 So I wanted you to explain in
24 detail from a public health perspective
25 all of the reasons that we would be

1 ready to move into a less restrictive
2 phase of opening. And I was hoping that
3 you could speak to both our ability
4 in -- our success in flattening the
5 curve as well as our preparedness to do
6 testing and contact tracing in the way
7 that we would need to really open up.

8 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So the
9 epidemic rose very quickly. And even
10 though we took some, you know, closed
11 business for the most part of March
12 17th, the epidemic peaked almost a month
13 later, so there was a fair amount of
14 continued transmission for at least two
15 to three weeks after that closure, but
16 it is coming out very nicely now. So
17 what we show now is that the way that
18 we're behaving right now, we were able
19 to really slow the spread of this. On
20 average, any infected person infects
21 fewer than one person. If we keep that
22 up, the numbers will continue to go
23 down. So we could just stay where we
24 are.

25 On the other hand, there are

1 some serious consequences to maintaining
2 a closure as tight as we are right now.
3 I do worry about unemployment. I do
4 worry about poverty. I do worry about
5 hunger in ways I've never worried about
6 before. And so, I do think it's
7 appropriate for us to try to very
8 gradually, very carefully see if we can
9 ease back in some of these restrictions
10 to allow people to start to make an
11 income again, to try to solve those
12 social problems without igniting the
13 virus, because a lot is unknown here.
14 We don't know.

15 So what the key is that for us
16 to measure every step along the way,
17 whether we have gone too far too fast.
18 We do have systems in place that we
19 didn't have before to be able to measure
20 that, and I think we do need to be
21 prepared. If the virus circulates
22 again, we may need to shut down again.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: I
24 guess what I'm asking is from a doctor's
25 perspective if you had to make this

1 call, is this the call that you would
2 make, and as you've indicated that you
3 would want to see in the City in terms
4 of us going into a less restrictive
5 phase of shutdown?

6 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I do. I
7 support it. And because, you know, I'm
8 not an economist. Let the economists
9 worry about that, but there are health
10 consequences to unemployment and poverty
11 as well that I worry about. To put it
12 bluntly, poverty kills too. The virus
13 kills, poverty kills too. So we're
14 trying to figure out what's the right
15 balance there so that we don't -- I
16 guess these two health risks. And no
17 one knows exactly what the right balance
18 is.

19 I definitely think there are
20 states that are opening up too fast and
21 I'm not supportive of that. I think for
22 this first step to yellow, this is an
23 appropriate thing to try. And if I'm
24 wrong, we will at least have numbers to
25 identify the fact that we've opened up

1 too soon quickly.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Okay.

3 Are we in your perspective where we need
4 to be from a testing and contact tracing
5 perspective to open up by June 5th? And
6 what if we're not, then what happens?

7 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So as
8 far as testing, I should say we're
9 testing more people per capita than most
10 of the big cities in the country and
11 almost all of the counties in
12 Pennsylvania. So we need to test more,
13 but we do have a lot of testing out
14 there now. The contact tracing, we are
15 just getting started now. I want to do
16 more than that.

17 I do think that we're safe
18 enough to take this first step. I would
19 not call going to yellow opening up.
20 We're still -- for example, at that time
21 I would strongly recommend that we not
22 have social gatherings of any size. So
23 we're talking about people can go to a
24 store. We're recommending that they do
25 curbside pickup. If people go to a

1 restaurant, they can do take-out but
2 recommending they wait outside, so it's
3 a pretty limited easing back of
4 restrictions in the hope of trying to
5 get people's jobs back without getting
6 people in contact with each other.

7 We also -- we'll be pairing
8 this with a very strong message around
9 wearing masks. And on that is South
10 Korea, which I think has done the best
11 job that I've seen around the world on
12 this, has a very strong social law that
13 everybody wears masks in public. And
14 they've been able to open the economy
15 pretty well and their virus levels are
16 very low.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
18 you. Can you also talk about our
19 ability to do broad testing in our
20 homeless shelters?

21 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So we
22 have been working in homeless shelters
23 that have problems to do testing. We
24 need to do more when testing homeless
25 shelters. Our ability to do testing

1 continues to increase. And so, I think
2 we're not there yet, but I think we're
3 quickly getting there.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: When
5 do you think we will be where we need to
6 be?

7 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Let's
8 say three weeks.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
10 you.

11 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Thank
12 you.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
14 Thank you, Councilwoman.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Thank
16 you.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
18 Chair recognizes Councilwoman Gym.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
20 very much, Council President. I also
21 want to affirm all my other colleagues
22 in raising concerns about equity and the
23 health outreach, especially in outreach
24 to our African-American and other
25 communities that have traditionally been

1 left out. I think it's a very serious
2 concern about questions that
3 Councilmembers Gilmore Richardson and
4 Cherelle Parker and Councilmember Jones
5 have all raised and I also want to
6 follow up with some of the questions
7 that Councilmember Gauthier raised about
8 the reopening.

9 So among the things that's
10 been discussed is not only whether the
11 reopening is safe, but it's also about
12 whether we have the capacity to enforce
13 existing health mandates. I don't agree
14 actually that people know what to do
15 right now. I think it's been very clear
16 from numerous conversations that we had
17 both with businesses and workers that
18 there's been a lot of concern about what
19 the guidelines are, how they will be
20 met, whether what people do to meet them
21 will be adequate or not. So it seems
22 like there will be a need for the Health
23 Department to be active and engaged.

24 So can you confirm whether the
25 public safety mandates will apply to

1 City workers and to City workplaces, for
2 example?

3 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes,
4 they will. So we will be providing
5 guidance to a variety of different sorts
6 of organizations and different settings,
7 including that of the office-based
8 settings. And so, City offices will be
9 following those same guidelines. I
10 agree with you that I don't think people
11 know yet what they need to do to operate
12 safely. As I said, we hope to get a
13 guidance out by the end of this week so
14 people know exactly what we will
15 consider to be the best practices.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And in
17 addition to guidance, I think part of it
18 is also around enforcement of some of
19 these workplace safety guidelines. How
20 many complaints has the Health
21 Department received so far about
22 workplace safety?

23 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I don't
24 know and I'm not sure that those would
25 all be going to the Health Department.

1 They may go to other places. We could
2 see if there's a way to log in for 311.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Can we find
4 out whether the City is receiving
5 complaints about workplace safety and
6 get a sense of the numbers? Could you
7 get back to us on that?

8 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Sure.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: And can you
10 also get back to us a summary of any
11 responses or enforcement activities that
12 have gone on?

13 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: For
15 example, I was shocked to hear at a
16 particular nursing home where two staff
17 members had died and a number of
18 individuals and occupants at that
19 nursing home had died, that staff
20 members who had been tested positive for
21 coronavirus were being ordered to come
22 into work. I assume that would violate
23 almost any kind of public health safety
24 standard.

25 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Well,

1 certainly we have strongly encouraged
2 the nursing home industry, we don't have
3 regulatory authority on. We encourage
4 them to have strong sick leave policies
5 so that when people are sick, they
6 should not come to work. I honestly
7 think that they should not be working.
8 We can't force that, but I do agree with
9 you that is a problem.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So can I
11 clarify. The individual wasn't sick.
12 They had coronavirus, and they were
13 asked to be showing up to a nursing home
14 facility where two of their staff
15 colleagues had died of the coronavirus
16 in a nursing home where multiple
17 occupants had died of the coronavirus.
18 I think that's elevated above paid sick
19 leave, wouldn't you agree? That's
20 actually a danger to other members of
21 the community and it is a danger if that
22 individual chooses or needs to take, for
23 example, public transit or hires an Uber
24 driver or exposes themselves to other
25 people. So I think this is more than

1 just a paid sick leave violation.

2 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I agree,
3 it is. I guess the point is that I have
4 heard of some nursing homes saying, you
5 need to come to work, we need you
6 because we're short-staffed even though
7 you may be sick or have the infection
8 and we have strongly said, no, they
9 should not do that. We can't -- we
10 don't have regulatory authority over
11 nursing homes, but we have communicated
12 that as clearly as we could.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So you feel
14 your position is that the City of
15 Philadelphia or just the Health
16 Department can't enforce those kinds of
17 standards? You can just give
18 guidelines, but you can do no
19 enforcement?

20 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: For
21 nursing homes specifically, it's
22 setting-specific. We can regulate
23 restaurants, but the healthcare system
24 is regulated by the State.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: That's

1 helpful to know. If you could just give
2 me a summary and share with Council a
3 summary of any response or enforcement
4 and it would help to know if there are
5 carve-outs or other areas. That will be
6 helpful to know.

7 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Okay.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So can you
9 speak to the -- one of the things that
10 we've been talking about a lot on
11 Council is the importance of
12 stay-at-home orders and the importance
13 of being able to have a home in order to
14 follow and abide by the stay-at-home
15 orders.

16 Can you talk about the extent
17 to which homelessness, housing
18 insecurity and evictions are part of
19 your department's COVID mitigation and
20 response plan and whether you're
21 collecting data on the health impacts of
22 housing insecurity and evictions during
23 this time period?

24 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So
25 that's something that's part of the

1 City's response. It's not something the
2 Health Department is doing. Brian
3 Abernathy may be able to answer that
4 question.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Brian and I
6 have definitely been down this road
7 already. We'll be following up with
8 him, but I think the real question is
9 whether the Health Department is going
10 to take any ownership or exploration of
11 this area.

12 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I would
13 prefer it be done by other agencies.
14 There are other things that we are --
15 we're quite busy in having staff
16 response and there are other agencies
17 working with housing and homelessness.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay.
19 Thank you very much.

20 MS. GLADSTEIN: If I could
21 speak for a minute, this is Eva
22 Gladstein?

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
24 Hey, Eva. Go ahead.

25 MS. GLADSTEIN: Just to tell

1 the Councilwoman that representatives of
2 the Health Department are working very,
3 very closely with folks in the Office of
4 Homeless Services and other housing
5 organizations in terms of providing
6 guidance and support, particularly
7 around shelter operations. Your point
8 is made. I just didn't want to leave
9 that unsaid.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: That's a
11 much more helpful answer. Thank you.
12 Thank you, Eva.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
14 Thank you, Councilwoman.
15 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
16 Brooks.

17 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank
18 you, Council President.

19 Dr. Farley, I really want to
20 commend the work your office has done to
21 protect Philadelphians during this
22 crisis. But I want to follow up on the
23 conversation with Councilwoman Gym about
24 the type of spreading that can happen
25 when you go to work with the

1 coronavirus. Can you tell me what your
2 office has done to ensure that workers
3 who get sick can get paid time off to
4 take care of themselves as we move
5 closer to reopening?

6 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I don't
7 know that we have the authority to order
8 that. The other --

9 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: What
10 about recommendations? Any
11 recommendations, strong recommendations?

12 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes.
13 The guidance that you'll see coming out
14 later this week will be -- I think we
15 already have guidance, but the clearer
16 guidance that we strongly recommend that
17 people who are sick not come to work and
18 we recommend that employers have
19 liberal, nonpunitive sick leave policies
20 so that they don't suffer economic
21 consequences if they don't come to work
22 when they're sick.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: So are
24 you saying that the safety guidance that
25 will be disseminated by your office as

1 my colleagues asked earlier, will paid
2 leave be encouraged in that guidance?

3 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes.

4 Again, I think the wording will be just
5 as I said there, that we recommend that
6 people who are sick not work and we
7 recommend that employers have policies
8 that are liberal, nonpunitive so that
9 they can continue to be paid if they
10 can't come to work because they're sick.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Okay.

12 And another thing, it was reported by
13 the unions representing healthcare
14 workers and transportation workers that
15 they had to fund-raise to pay for their
16 members PPE as the pandemic began. Does
17 the Department intend to issue
18 guidelines or mandatory requirements for
19 businesses to provide adequate PPE to
20 workers?

21 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So yes,
22 there was definitely a period of time
23 when there was severe shortage of PPE
24 everywhere. It's gotten a lot better.
25 PPE is -- different PPE is appropriate

1 in different settings. So a healthcare
2 worker dealing with a sick COVID patient
3 needs to be wearing an N95 mask. In
4 other settings, you may be wearing a
5 paper surgical mask. In regular
6 workplaces, they should probably be
7 wearing a cloth mask, so we will be
8 making recommendations about PPE in
9 different settings.

10 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: I'm a
11 former healthcare worker and a member of
12 1199C and I remembered that PPE was
13 something you wear one day, one time and
14 you throw away. Now, we're recommending
15 people reuse things that were previously
16 disposal. So it's a severe concern with
17 that because that violates all of the
18 guidelines that I remember working in
19 health care, so I really think we should
20 really put emphasis in making sure the
21 employers are providing adequate
22 protection for workers. I --

23 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: If I
24 could say, there's still -- like I said,
25 we're better with PPE. Nationwide and

1 worldwide there's still a shortage. And
2 so, we're encouraging everybody to use
3 PPE-conserving techniques. There are
4 ways to safely reuse these supplies, and
5 we're all going to have to reuse the
6 supplies in every setting.

7 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Okay.

8 Also, echoing Councilmember Gym earlier,
9 is there a way for a worker to report
10 anonymously to the City if a hospital or
11 a healthcare setting violates these
12 rules, and can we be informed about how
13 the City will be responding to those
14 things?

15 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I'll
16 have to see -- I'm sure there's a way
17 for them to put in their complaint at
18 311. I'm not sure exactly what the
19 process is for responding to those
20 complaints. I'll have to look at that
21 and get back to you.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Earlier
23 you talked about some other consequences
24 in terms of poverty around this
25 coronavirus and being stuck in the

1 house. Is there anything the City is
2 doing to address the mental health of
3 first-line healthcare workers that are
4 experiencing death regularly?

5 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: If there
6 are things that are being done, that's
7 the responsibility of Commissioner Jones
8 in the Department of Behavioral Health
9 Services -- Department of Behavioral
10 Health and Intellectual disAbility
11 Services. So I know there are things
12 happening. I don't know the details of
13 it, so I will just defer to him. I'm
14 not sure if he's on the panel today or
15 not. I --

16 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Will
17 these things be included in the
18 recommendations that we're offering as
19 we begin to open up?

20 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: The
21 current draft does not address the
22 mental health issues. It's really much
23 more focused on prevention and spread of
24 the virus itself. I recognize that's an
25 important issue. But we wanted to get

1 out the key thing about how to prevent
2 the virus to spread quickly.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: And one
4 other thing, the morgues and the funeral
5 homes around the City have been
6 overwhelmed due to the unprecedented
7 numbers of Philadelphians passing away.
8 We know that the City is enduring many
9 public catastrophes at the moment, like
10 COVID-19, gun violence and opioid
11 epidemic. Constituents have reported
12 that an overflow has caused a backlog of
13 bodies being transported to proper
14 facilities, and I'm deeply concerned
15 that the delay has increased the cost of
16 storage for grieving families that have
17 to carry the burden of that expense, and
18 we know that victims of the current
19 pandemic are disreporting Black and
20 Brown.

21 Can you say what steps the
22 City is doing to ensure that the
23 overburdened morgues and funeral
24 services aren't shipping the cost of
25 storage to families of the deceased, and

1 has the Department explored whether
2 federal funds can be used to mitigate
3 these increasing costs of storage?

4 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: We do
5 know there has been more bodies in
6 morgues and hospitals as well as medical
7 examiners, not so much for COVID, but
8 just the fact that people are not going
9 to funerals because of our stay-at-home
10 order, and so, that is their problem.
11 So the City has leased trailers for
12 additional storage until people can
13 start having funerals for that. I was
14 not aware of what implication of that is
15 being a financial burden on families,
16 and I do not know whether some of the
17 federal funds could be used for that,
18 but we can certainly look into that.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: I have
20 other questions, but I'll submit them in
21 writing because my time is up. Thank
22 you.

23 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Thank
24 you.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

1 Thank you, Councilwoman.

2 Chair recognizes Councilman

3 Squilla. Councilman Squilla. He

4 stepped away.

5 Chair recognizes

6 Councilwoman --

7 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: I'm here.

8 I'm here. I'm unmuting.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Go
10 ahead, Councilman.

11 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: I kept
12 unmuting. I kept getting muted. I
13 guess we were doing it together.

14 But thank you, Dr. Farley, and
15 thank everybody for your questions and
16 the concerns that were rehashed. My
17 question is basically as we go through
18 and we're doing the testing, once we do
19 the testing, is this going to be a daily
20 testing we do every day for folks to be
21 able to manage this until a virus --
22 because we know that if you test
23 negative one day, the next day you could
24 be positive. So is it an everyday test
25 that we're going to be doing when we do

1 blow out our testing?

2 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Well,
3 testing will be available every day. No
4 matter how much we scale up, we're never
5 going to get to where 1.5 million
6 citizens of Philadelphia get tested
7 every day. My goal is to get up to
8 5,000 tests a day. We're now at 1700.
9 And so, our testing needs to be
10 available to anybody who is concerned,
11 they can come and get a test. And then,
12 it will also be more targeted. So with
13 the contact tracing, we'll identify
14 places and situations where someone's
15 unknown case was and then recommend the
16 people who might have been exposed that
17 they be tested -- I'm sorry. Did you
18 hear that?

19 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes. I
20 got it. I got it. So then I know as we
21 got back out -- so we're going to open
22 up gradually and do this. So we'll
23 never get to a point like LA or
24 somewhere where they're testing every
25 day for their residents?

1 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Even LA
2 is not testing every resident every day.
3 Anybody who wants to can be tested, but
4 then they have more specific people that
5 are recommended to be tested. And with
6 our testing, we want to identify as many
7 infections as possible. We recognize
8 we're not going to identify them all.
9 Many of them will show no symptoms and
10 it will be impossible. And so, the
11 testing and contact tracing is a piece
12 of the strategy. The social distancing
13 is another piece of the strategy and we
14 need to have the two in combination.

15 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay. So
16 the contact tracing will allow us to
17 test other folks and anybody who wants
18 to get tested could go to these sites
19 and get tested, so that will be our
20 progress moving forward.

21 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes.

22 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: And then
23 as we deem that, do we see our
24 numbers -- because you're testing people
25 who most likely are positive. Our

1 numbers will then try to maintain, stay
2 the same or will they go up as far as
3 positive results?

4 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So we're
5 tracking not only the total number of
6 positive -- tracking not only the total
7 number of people who test positive, but
8 the percent of people who tested
9 positive. And so, if our number of
10 people -- can you hear me,
11 Councilmember?

12 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes. I'm
13 sorry. Go ahead.

14 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So if
15 we're seeing increasing numbers of
16 people who tested positive and wondering
17 maybe it's just because we're doing more
18 testing, we can look at the percent of
19 all tested are positive and if that
20 number continues to go down, then we
21 feel like we're doing well. So I can
22 tell you right now the percent of people
23 tested is going down in parallel with
24 the total number of cases going down.
25 So all of the indicators right now is

1 we're going in the right direction, and
2 we're going to just watch that. If they
3 start going in the wrong direction, it
4 will raise alarm bells.

5 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Okay.
6 Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
8 Thank you, Councilman.

9 Chair now recognizes
10 Councilwoman Bass.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
12 Mr. President. Good afternoon -- almost
13 good afternoon. It feels like
14 afternoon. Good afternoon to everyone.

15 I had a couple of questions
16 that I wanted to get to. But first, I
17 just wanted to -- number one, I want to
18 start by saying thank you to Dr. Farley
19 for the work that you all have done and
20 these are trying times for all of us.
21 And certainly, as the Chair of Health
22 and Human Services and we've worked
23 closely together on so many things, that
24 you're handling of this I would say is,
25 you know, it's led us to having not the

1 levels of death and infection that some
2 had predicted for our City and that's a
3 good thing. That's always a good thing,
4 so we thank you for that.

5 I do have some concerns though
6 because I think that process matters,
7 and we could have done things in a way
8 that would not only be effective and
9 even more effective but would be
10 inclusive as well. And what we find is
11 that so often in Philadelphia, we're
12 really a tale of two cities. And I've
13 said this so many times before, where we
14 have one part of the City operating one
15 way and having absolutely no idea what
16 it's like to be on the other side and
17 vice versa. And, so this is a time when
18 I just think that we can't afford to go
19 backwards. We have to move forward. We
20 have to move forward in a very robust
21 way that's going to bring everyone along
22 finally, and it can't just be lip
23 service.

24 So when we have these
25 conversations and we say that, oh, we're

1 going to do everything through a racial
2 equity lens and we do this nearly \$100
3 million contract selected by whom, big
4 question mark there, the actions and the
5 words don't even come close to matching.
6 And so, we want to get that right and we
7 want to get it right as quickly as
8 possible.

9 Councilwoman Parker asked that
10 we ask for a list, and I think this is
11 an excellent point, that we get a list
12 of all minority firms that the Health
13 Department has contracted with during
14 this crisis; because this happens over
15 and over and over again. It's been my
16 frustration for the length of my time on
17 Council where we say that we want to do
18 things through a racial equity lens, we
19 talk about inclusion and involvement
20 from all sectors of our City. And then
21 when it comes time to issue a contract
22 rather than making an effort, what we do
23 often is we say, oh, well, it was an
24 emergency so we had to do this or this
25 was important so we had to do that.

1 We'll do it next time, we'll always get
2 to it next time. And for those who are
3 like myself, we're sick and tired of
4 hearing next time. No, this time.

5 And so, I think that we need
6 to go back, look at that contract and
7 look at what we're doing over and over
8 again and stop wondering why we keep
9 getting the results that we keep getting
10 in terms of the lack of participation in
11 African-American and Latino communities.
12 We don't get the participation because
13 we don't reach out. We don't do our
14 work. And so, it's never going to get
15 better until we make it better. And we
16 rely on our Administration to make it
17 better. So we certainly hope that we
18 can have that list by the day's end.

19 I also wanted to ask you a
20 question in reference to a meeting that
21 I had suggested that you would attend
22 with myself and some other folks from
23 District Council 33. And it's my
24 understanding to date that that meeting
25 still has not taken place, and I just

1 don't understand the lack of
2 availability to people who are working
3 and trying to be helpful and trying to
4 work together. I do not understand the
5 lack of availability for some people and
6 not for others.

7 So if you could explain that
8 to me as to why is it a problem. Why is
9 this an issue, because it seems like a
10 very simple thing to me. As a public
11 servant, we meet with people that we
12 might not want to meet with all of the
13 time and it's just part of the job.
14 Some of the people we meet with, we
15 know, we love. And then some of the
16 people we meet with, they don't like us,
17 they don't want to deal with us, but
18 meeting is a necessity. So I don't
19 understand why the meeting request that
20 we have put forth to date with members
21 of District Council 33 to discuss
22 conditions in City health clinics and
23 City health centers, why that has not
24 occurred?

25 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So,

1 Councilmember, if I can address your
2 first question first.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Certainly.

4 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: And to
5 just correct one thing, I don't want
6 anyone to take from this that there's a
7 \$92 million contract with any
8 organization. We have contracted out
9 with our managing existing contracts to
10 hire contact tracing staff right now.
11 The 92 million is for two and a half
12 years. It will be used for many
13 different purposes over that two and a
14 half years.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I
16 understand. It's not even about that.
17 It's really about the way that this was
18 handled --

19 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes.
20 And then --

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: -- and the
22 lack of transparency thereof.

23 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I'd say
24 if these organizations are providing
25 administrative services for hiring

1 staff, if any Councilmember has a
2 minority firm that can provide
3 administrative services for hiring
4 staff, we will be happy to hear about
5 that and see going forward that's an
6 appropriate mechanism for doing the same
7 thing.

8 As far as your second point,
9 I'll just say my Chief of Staff Jane
10 Baker deals with union issues. We deal
11 with lots of union issues. We deal with
12 a lot of workplace questions. I frankly
13 am not an expert in that and I am
14 occupied these days to try to figure out
15 how we fight this epidemic. And so, I
16 did ask and would ask, Jane Baker is
17 happy to meet with any union members
18 that have concerns, anything that -- and
19 she can always be a spokesman on my
20 behalf. She's fully empowered to do
21 that. So that I can work with folks on
22 the epidemic, I would ask if we can deal
23 with it that way.

24 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I would
25 say to you that with all due respect,

1 Doctor, that you being a medical
2 professional, we certainly want to use
3 your expertise to fight COVID. There's
4 no doubt about it. We're doing I would
5 say relatively somewhat well as a city
6 in terms of maintaining and keeping the
7 COVID-19 at bay and at the same time, I
8 certainly do believe that you have a few
9 minutes that you can spare to sit down
10 and meet with the troops.

11 These people are the troops.
12 And so, they're offering to be helpful
13 to you. They're offering their
14 services. They're offering their
15 guidance. And at the same time you as a
16 leader, your presence is requested. And
17 so, I just think of myself as a member
18 of Philadelphia City Council when people
19 ask for my presence, when people request
20 my presence, they're not requesting my
21 legislative director, my communications
22 person, they're requesting me. And so,
23 this request has been made over and over
24 and over again.

25 And I really don't understand

1 is there some reason why we cannot meet
2 with this woman, who is a lifelong
3 Philadelphian African-American labor
4 leader here in the City of Philadelphia
5 and why we are so hesitant to give her
6 the consideration as someone who is
7 working on the front lines along with
8 the other folks who are working in those
9 clinics. She is working on those front
10 lines and is assisting and trying to be
11 helpful to you.

12 And so, I think that not
13 giving her the time requested is very
14 dismissive and quite frankly,
15 unacceptable. And I certainly hope that
16 you will reconsider that. I've had
17 several calls with several people from
18 the Administration who have all said,
19 yeah, well, this person will meet with
20 her or that person will meet -- no, no,
21 no, she's asking for a meeting with the
22 Commissioner. And I don't think that
23 that is so far out of reach that it's
24 unacceptable. And I think unfortunately
25 it's even blown more out of proportion

1 because you don't won't to meet with
2 folks. And as a leader, I think you are
3 responsible to have that meeting.

4 Thank you, Mr. President.

5 I'll come back around for my next
6 question.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

8 Thank you, Councilwoman.

9 Chair recognizes Councilman
10 Thomas.

11 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
12 morning. I'm going to be very brief
13 because I know I'm not going to get a
14 second round, so I'm just going to ask
15 for 20- to 30-second responses.

16 The first question is
17 Councilmember Katherine Gilmore
18 Richardson talked about the 6 to 1
19 number as it relates to people who are
20 socially economically advantaged
21 compared to people who are socially
22 economically disadvantaged getting
23 tested, specifically referring to the
24 Drexel study. Can you just give the
25 audience as well as the members of

1 Council a 20- or 30-second explanation
2 as to why that took place or how that
3 took place?

4 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I don't
5 -- although I saw a news story about the
6 study, I have not read the study itself.
7 I would simply say that early on testing
8 was not adequately available in any
9 population. As I said, we had a testing
10 site at Citizens Bank Park and, you
11 know, were looking to put up other
12 sites. People in lower-income
13 neighborhoods, I would not be surprised,
14 maybe did not get as much testing as
15 other folks. It was very limited.

16 Now, at the peak of this
17 epidemic when people are thinking about
18 this, testing -- we certainly want to
19 test more people, but let's recognize
20 there was a limited value to that. If
21 you have a positive test, we will tell
22 you stay at home. And if you have
23 difficulty breathing, go to the
24 hospital. So that's for everybody
25 anyway. We're under a stay-at-home

1 order. So, yes, we want to do more
2 testing. Yes, it was not adequately
3 available, but that's the situation we
4 were under at the time. Now, we have
5 been working hard since that time to
6 make it more available in low-income
7 populations and in other underserved
8 populations and we're going to continue
9 to work on that.

10 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So I think
11 there's a commonality that -- you know
12 what, I'm not even going to go there.
13 Let me stick to the questions. The next
14 question, when you look at what's going
15 on as it relates to mental health, you
16 talked about that being a specific
17 issue, what is the timeline -- again 20
18 to 30 seconds please, what is the
19 timeline as it relates to availability
20 to grooming initiatives? When will
21 people be able to get their nails done?
22 When will people be able to get their
23 hair done? And what will the
24 recommendations be around what that
25 stuff will look like? Again, 20 to 30

1 seconds please.

2 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So
3 personal care like barber shops and
4 salons are not included in the yellow
5 phase. I would think that's a high risk
6 activity. That would be when we get
7 closer to what the Governor is calling
8 the green phase. We're not putting any
9 timeline on that. It really depends on
10 whether the numbers continue to look
11 good. So I know people want to be able
12 to do that and I'm sympathetic to that,
13 but I feel like it's too high risk an
14 activity at this point.

15 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Next
16 question, so we're looking at the
17 possibility of different professional
18 sports opening up. That's going to send
19 a message to constituents all across the
20 City of Philadelphia, but especially our
21 young people. What mechanisms are the
22 Health Department essentially looking to
23 put in place so that young people could
24 participate in some level of activity
25 this summer while properly social

1 distancing?

2 The attachment to that
3 question is, has the Health Department
4 looked into the idea of having some type
5 of social distancing champions or
6 advocates that enforce social distancing
7 so we're not relying on police officers
8 to do that? Please try to answer that
9 one in about 30 seconds because I do
10 have to make one more statement before I
11 close out.

12 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: In the
13 yellow phase, I believe the outdoor
14 group activities for children are
15 permitted and there will be guidance in
16 there about how that can be done in a
17 safe way. It's something we need to be
18 very careful about, but I do think that
19 that would be permitted. That's very
20 different from a professional event.
21 There's not a competitive event.
22 There's no spectators there, so it's a
23 very limited way to allow children to
24 get some physical activity and the
25 benefits of that. And we'll put

1 guidance out there. We're not in a
2 position to be able to enforce that. We
3 welcome any suggestions people have
4 about how people involved in those
5 activities can enforce the rules.

6 MR. ABERNATHY: And,
7 Councilmember, the City is actually
8 exploring social distance ambassadors,
9 to get to your point about the Police
10 Department not just enforcing those
11 rules so stay tuned on that, but that is
12 coming down the pike.

13 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank you.
14 I appreciate it. As I close out, I just
15 want to again put the emphasis on the
16 importance of collaborating versus
17 consulting. A number of Councilmembers
18 made some passionate speeches today that
19 were actually similar questions and
20 concerns that I had, not just as it
21 relates to how we're distributing
22 contracts which is very important, but
23 the overall message that we're sending
24 the City of Philadelphia.

25 When we communicate numbers

1 like 6 to 1 as it relates to the
2 disparity in testing, when we talk about
3 the issues that we're seeing with
4 contracts and the unemployment issue
5 that we're seeing, we have a lot of
6 members of City Council who on a
7 consistent basis are actually being
8 ridiculed and slammed by the public for
9 decisions that we are essentially not a
10 part of. And I think the frustration
11 that you're hearing right now is that
12 people have been entrenched in different
13 areas of this work and the fact that we
14 sometimes find out information very late
15 because it's communicated and there's
16 not collaboration, I think that's the
17 frustration that you're hearing right
18 now.

19 So I just want to echo the
20 sentiments of several of my colleagues
21 who communicated the frustration that
22 we're seeing. And I, again, want to
23 reiterate the importance of some type of
24 taskforce, specifically focused on the
25 African-American community until we get

1 to a deep dive into the issues that
2 people are essentially dealing with, but
3 mostly so the African-American community
4 in the City of Philadelphia has and
5 recognizes that there are people that
6 are out there that's fighting for them
7 and that are advocating for them. My
8 time is up. Thank you. I appreciate
9 it.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

11 Thank you, Councilman.

12 Dr. Farley, I have a couple of
13 quick questions before your second
14 round.

15 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Sure.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

17 Phase Yellow, the Governor, personally I
18 think it's a little too soon but I'm not
19 a healthcare professional. I just
20 happen to be a person that's a citizen
21 of the City of Philadelphia. But there
22 were numbers that were given by the
23 Governor early on about the numbers we
24 should achieve prior to us moving to the
25 next phase. I don't think we're at

1 those numbers in the 14 successive days,
2 correct me if I'm wrong.

3 And in addition to that, I
4 guess I need to know what level of
5 flexibility, with all due respect to the
6 Governor understanding that he
7 represents the State of Pennsylvania,
8 City of Philadelphia, Montgomery County,
9 close proximity, but there are
10 differences, there are differences in
11 terms of the conditions in the City of
12 Philadelphia, differences in the people,
13 differences in those impacted by this
14 particular virus. So I'm concerned
15 about the decision that was made to move
16 to yellow in this particular time frame.

17 So can you tell me what level
18 of flexibility, if any, we as the City
19 of Philadelphia have, and not
20 necessarily going as far as Montgomery
21 County or Berks County or some of the
22 other counties that are not as impacted
23 as we are?

24 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes,
25 that's a very important question. The

1 Governor put out the one metric of 50
2 cases per 100,000 cumulatively over 14
3 days, as kind of the one metric out
4 there. I was always uncomfortable that
5 we follow just one number and I think
6 that there's probably a group of numbers
7 we ought to be following. I did look at
8 the metrics that were recommended by
9 various national bodies about what
10 should be used to determine when it's
11 okay to open, and there was a lot of
12 variety to it. But one of the metrics
13 was if your case numbers are falling for
14 14 straight days. Well, we've been
15 falling now for more than a month, so by
16 that criteria we're ready to move. So I
17 think there's room for -- it's enough
18 uncertainty here where there's room for
19 judgment about whether we're ready at
20 that time. In my judgment we are, to
21 take this very first step in trying to
22 restart some of our businesses in a very
23 safe way.

24 As far as your second
25 question, though, I think you should

1 talk to the Chief of --

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

3 Before you go to the second part of your
4 response, I'm not only talking about
5 businesses. I'm talking about
6 gatherings. I believe that -- there are
7 other aspects of the businesses. For a
8 lot of different reasons, I would like
9 to see us get back to work, I would like
10 to see us get some additional revenue in
11 the City because we're bleeding. But
12 some of the other aspects of what the
13 Governor is proposing I'm a little
14 concerned about, so it's not just
15 businesses. Are you comfortable with
16 25 --

17 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I
18 completely share your concern. My
19 understanding is that gatherings of 25
20 people are allowed in yellow, and it
21 would not be my recommendation as the
22 Health Commissioner that we have
23 gatherings of up to 25 people. A social
24 gathering where people are not wearing
25 masks, that could be a very high-risk

1 situation right now. A CDC report of a
2 choir practice had about 60 people, and
3 in a couple of hours 50 of them got sick
4 and two of them died. So a social
5 gathering can be quite a risky
6 situation. So whereas that would be
7 allowed by the Governor in yellow, I'm
8 not recommending that.

9 And that leads to the second
10 half of the question and, that is, my
11 understanding is that we can be more
12 restrictive, but we certainly can't be
13 more liberal. And so, I do think as we
14 get into these phases we need to look
15 and see do we think what the Governor
16 allows is what we should allow or should
17 we be more restrictive. Certainly, on
18 the social gatherings, I believe as a
19 recommendation we should certainly be
20 more restrictive. And as we go forward,
21 there may be other circumstances where
22 we should be more restrictive.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: All
24 right. And the other part of my
25 question, I don't know, it may require

1 City Solicitor or Legal in some
2 respects, the ability to impose certain
3 mandates like going into facilities
4 without masks, do we have the ability
5 locally to require every indoor facility
6 that has certain capacity, people wear
7 masks because that's clearly something
8 that's been discussed? And in terms of
9 if we do have the ability, I guess the
10 enforcement side, I'm not sure who will
11 be more -- Mr. Abernathy or the Health
12 Department, but we can have all the
13 rules that we want but if there's no
14 real enforcement, then it really doesn't
15 matter.

16 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: So I
17 would say as the Health Commissioner I
18 think we should have it be where
19 everybody that's going into an indoor
20 environment is wearing a mask. And I
21 think we do need to bring in the City
22 Solicitor about exactly what our
23 authority is to mandate that. I do
24 think that we can make a social norm so
25 that that's what people do and the way

1 it's enforced by other people around
2 there.

3 The analogy I used the other
4 day was I want to get to where people
5 wouldn't walk in a place without a mask
6 in the way now they wouldn't walk in
7 there without a shirt. There's probably
8 no law that says that, but it's just not
9 done. If you did that, probably the
10 owner of the business of the place would
11 say get out of here. That's where we
12 need to get with masks, and I think we
13 can get there.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: All
15 right. Mr. Abernathy, do you want to
16 talk about the enforcement side?

17 MR. ABERNATHY: Sure. So I do
18 believe that we have some enforcement
19 capacity and capability. So whatever
20 executive order we issue, we'll have
21 some enforcement guidelines in part of
22 that order as well. Enforcement's going
23 to be challenging and I just want to put
24 it out there. I don't think we want our
25 police officers to try and enforce the

1 wearing of masks with actually physical
2 force or arresting individuals. I don't
3 think that is the message we want to
4 send to our citizens. So we are going
5 to have to try and find that balance and
6 we're going to make some mistakes as we
7 go through the enforcement, but I think
8 we're all committed to make sure we do
9 this, we do it to the best of our
10 ability and we make sure that folks
11 comply, because this is not -- as we saw
12 the other night up in your District, we
13 still have some real challenges that
14 people don't understand the danger that
15 this virus causes and we need to make
16 sure that behaviors start to change.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

18 Well, I wasn't going to bring this up,
19 but I think the police response to that
20 particular incident was a little
21 overdone. So since you brought it up,
22 my District encompasses Rittenhouse
23 Square where you see gatherings every
24 day on any warm day that are beyond
25 recommendations. So I don't think you

1 should have used that as a particular
2 analogy.

3 MR. ABERNATHY: That's fair.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

5 I've talked to the Mayor once and asked
6 him about some sort of enforcement. I'm
7 just concerned we're sending a signal;
8 then you walk in a building, you have a
9 mask on and some people do have masks,
10 some people don't. Depending on the
11 degree of the mask, if it's an N95,
12 whatever, you're protected to a large
13 degree from other people. But if you
14 have a mask that people are selling at
15 these small corner stores, limited.
16 Cloth masks, bandana, Doc, you know that
17 you're really only to some degree
18 stopping the droplets from coming from
19 yourself and they're not necessarily
20 protecting you from incoming at any real
21 degree.

22 So I would like to see us have
23 a little more thought process and I know
24 you all are thinking about that, but a
25 little more guidelines as we move to the

1 next phase because some people are just
2 not going to comply. That's just the
3 nature of who we are as human beings,
4 but we really need to let people
5 understand. I'm not asking police
6 officers to arrest anybody not wearing a
7 mask because police officers don't
8 arrest people smoking weed on the
9 corner, so clearly I'm not thinking that
10 that will be the case. But we need to
11 establish some sort of guidelines. All
12 right. Thank you.

13 COMMISSIONER FARLEY:
14 Mr. Council President, if I could
15 just -- one point of clarification.
16 When we're telling everybody to wear a
17 mask all the time, it's really about
18 protecting the people around them. The
19 principle is my mask protects you, your
20 mask protects me. And with that in
21 mind, a cloth mask is adequate to that.
22 It stops the droplets, most of them,
23 from coming out. It doesn't protect you
24 so much, but it does protect the people
25 around you and because we can't give

1 N95s to everyone anyway and people
2 wouldn't want to wear them, we're fine
3 with cloth masks in the typical
4 workplace setting.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

6 Right, but that requires everybody to
7 wear a mask.

8 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes, it
9 does. Absolutely.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

11 Okay. All right. Thank you, Doc.

12 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
13 Gilmore Richardson.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

15 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much, Council
16 President. I wanted to just circle back
17 to a few things before I move on and
18 quickly get this on the record. I just
19 wanted to say that if we are serious
20 about combating institutional racism,
21 generational poverty and lack of
22 inclusion, we must all agree not just
23 from a Council perspective, but from the
24 Administration's perspective, we must
25 agree that we have to do better.

1 So particularly on the issue
2 around the contracts with PHMC and
3 PMHCC, I wanted to know if we can get a
4 commitment on the record today for the
5 Administration to support a process for
6 both organizations to hire community-
7 based businesses and individuals who are
8 skilled in that line of work. And are
9 they planning to partner with some of
10 those community-based organizations or
11 are they just going to take the
12 contracts specifically for their
13 organizations?

14 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Those
15 organizations in this context are
16 serving as administrative function to
17 hire staff and we choose the staff that
18 we hire, okay. They pay the bills. We
19 choose the staff that we hire, so
20 they're not going to be subcontracting
21 with other organizations. They're just
22 going to be hiring staff.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Okay.

25 MR. JARRAH: I'd like to just

1 jump in briefly. So of the staff we
2 hired thus far, we've only hired 13
3 staff -- are you able to hear me?

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Yes, I can hear you.

6 MR. JARRAH: Yes, we've only
7 hired 13 staff thus far. Of the staff
8 that are hired through those agencies,
9 majority are people of color. 38 are
10 multilingual and we've hired 3
11 supervisors, all of whom are Black women
12 so --

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: I appreciate that
15 information. I really, really do. But
16 we have to understand the way really to
17 combat generational poverty and assist
18 individuals with generational wealth is
19 by ownership opportunities and getting
20 a chance at those contracts, okay. So I
21 just want to move on so I can get to my
22 additional questions. I wanted to
23 thank --

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

25 Councilwoman, one second. I've just

1 been informed by the public hearing
2 police that our timeline -- a little
3 levity never hurts. We still have two,
4 three actually departments so we have to
5 kind of limit on this second round to
6 like three minutes and as quick as
7 possible get in and get out because we
8 still have Behavioral Health, Office of
9 Children and Families and DHS, and we
10 only have an hour left.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you, Council
13 President.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

15 Sorry.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: No, thank you so much. And
18 just quickly, I'll put these on the
19 record. To echo the sentiments of my
20 colleagues Parker and Bass, if we can
21 get a list of all the contracts in the
22 Health Department, every contract,
23 whether it's amended, the date of the
24 contract, the length of the contract,
25 the amount and the reason.

1 And then also quickly around
2 the data, like my colleague
3 Councilmember Brooks, I too am a former
4 healthcare worker, and wanted to know
5 how we look at the numbers to ensure
6 that our numbers match with the state
7 numbers knowing that our reporting times
8 are different. If you could explain how
9 the City is prioritizing testing for the
10 long-term care healthcare workers and
11 how the data is reported.

12 And then lastly, I wanted to
13 follow up on a question from
14 Councilmember Domb around how we are
15 ensuring diseased individuals are not
16 being misclassified as COVID cases. So,
17 for instance, when I worked at the
18 hospital, I was a unit secretary. I was
19 in charge of preparing the death
20 certificate. So the doctor would put
21 down the diagnosis or list them in
22 order. So how do we ensure that
23 individuals aren't being misclassified
24 as COVID cases, when, in fact, they died
25 from another cause, and that's the end

1 of my questions. Thank you so much.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

3 Thank you, Councilwoman.

4 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Now, do
5 you want me to respond them, Council
6 President, or --

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: As
8 quickly as possible. Yes, please.

9 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: As far
10 as the classification, the hospital is
11 required -- they fill out the death
12 certificate. But even with that, there
13 may be people who died from COVID but
14 are not recognized because they weren't
15 tested, for example. So I do expect
16 that when we ultimately look back and
17 estimate, that there will be deaths that
18 must have come from COVID and they were
19 never classified as such. And I don't
20 think there's any way for us to solve
21 that on each case basis going forward.

22 As far as the long-term care
23 facilities, let me say we are working
24 with the long-term care facilities city-
25 wide to help them implement facility-

1 wide screening of residents and staff.
2 That's a strong recommendation which may
3 become later a requirement. We think
4 it's a good thing. There's fully-
5 staffed nursing homes in the City,
6 there's a lot of them. They have
7 limited resources. We are going to
8 assist them as much as we can. We think
9 that's a good thing.

10 And as far as contracting
11 them, let me just again -- if there are
12 organizations, minority organizations
13 that you feel can serve the
14 administrative function that we're using
15 PHMC for, PMHCC for, we're happy to look
16 at that and see whether that would be an
17 appropriate way to channel these funds.
18 It's --

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: Council President, I
21 apologize. I have to say this, but I
22 think we have to continue to open up the
23 opportunities for other individuals. We
24 can't always rely on referrals from
25 members of Council when you don't let us

1 know until we find out in a public
2 hearing.

3 Thank you, Council President.
4 My apologies.

5 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
6 It's okay. We'll follow up on that one.
7 Thank you, Councilwoman.

8 Councilman Green. And three
9 minutes, we got to move it along.

10 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
11 Council President. I will be somewhat
12 brief.

13 Dr. Farley, in the budget
14 detail on I believe Page 146 you have
15 allocated some funds for the Black
16 Philadelphia Health Initiative, to be
17 determined. What is that line item?

18 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: I'm
19 sorry. I'm going to ask Sami Jarrah if
20 you can enlighten here.

21 MR. JARRAH: Yeah, so that's
22 an initiative focused on reducing health
23 disparities in the City run out of our
24 Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention
25 Program, and no vendor has been

1 selected. That's a planned expansion
2 for the new fiscal year.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay.

4 Also, I just find it very interesting
5 that the Health Commissioner's staff was
6 able to quickly put together numbers
7 that has been hired by PHMC or PMHCC,
8 but we still don't know the number of
9 people that have been tested in the City
10 of Philadelphia, but I'll move on.

11 On Page 37 of the budget
12 detail, \$3.9 million is allocated to a
13 new City health center. Can you give
14 some perspective of where this new
15 health center will be located?

16 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Yes.
17 We've long advocated for and the Mayor
18 announced in the past there would be a
19 health center in the Northeast, in an
20 area there that is very much
21 underserved. Health Center 10 there
22 sees roughly twice as many patients as
23 every other health center in the City
24 and it still is overwhelmed and we have
25 very long waits. And so, we would serve

1 the additional patients that need to be
2 served in that population.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Council
4 President, I have a number of other
5 questions, but myself and Councilmember
6 Bass have co-sponsored a resolution
7 regarding the disparities based on
8 ethnicity and COVID-19 response and I'll
9 explore those issues at that time.
10 Thank you, Council President.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT. Thank you,
12 Councilman.

13 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
14 Parker.

15 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
16 you, Mr. President.

17 A number of questions for
18 Dr. Farley. I will submit them to you
19 in writing. But I wanted to emphasize
20 on the record what Councilmembers Jones,
21 Squilla, Domb, Sanchez, Johnson and
22 Green and I have been consistently
23 talking about relative to guidance for
24 neighborhood-based small businesses.
25 Right now as they have been trying to

1 access dollars via loans and via grants,
2 they're trying to figure out what they
3 need to invest in.

4 Last week I circulated to
5 members of the Administration and my
6 colleagues just a general outline of
7 what Tampa has done relative to its
8 reopening in a pilot area relative to
9 restaurants, so we need to get that done
10 as soon as possible and your guidance is
11 extremely important.

12 In addition to that,
13 Councilmembers Brooks and Gym noted that
14 the calls, and I know all of my
15 colleagues have gotten these,
16 Dr. Farley, I won't name the firm that
17 my constituent worked at, but she called
18 me on the telephone via cell to say, I'm
19 at work and we are working around food
20 and all of us don't have on gloves and
21 masks. I said, well, did you go tell
22 your supervisor that you're concerned?
23 She said, someone did that and they were
24 fired.

25 And so, with that being said,

1 I want to affirm the need for a hotline
2 and oversight about what the
3 repercussions will be when we find out
4 any firm doing business in the City of
5 Philadelphia is not doing it with public
6 health in mind and the public safety of
7 its workers. Even though the healthcare
8 industry is regulated by the State, as
9 we are working via our intergovernmental
10 cooperation and planning, we need to
11 tell them that we need a standard
12 operating procedure that we can
13 establish across the board, because
14 employers need to know the rules and
15 regs as well.

16 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Thank
17 you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
19 you, Mr. President.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
21 Thank you, Councilwoman.

22 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
23 Gym. Councilwoman Gym.

24 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Council
25 President, I'm withholding my question

1 and I'll submit it in writing.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

3 Okay. Thank you, Councilwoman.

4 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
5 Brooks.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Council
7 President, I'm also withholding my
8 questions and I will submit them in
9 writing.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

11 Okay. Thank you. Thank you all so
12 much.

13 Dr. Farley, thank you. We
14 will be following up with a number of
15 those very important issues either in
16 the callbacks or based on the responses
17 we get from questions asked at the
18 hearing.

19 COMMISSIONER FARLEY: Thank
20 you very much.

21 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

22 Thank you, Doctor.

23 Not clear -- next up we're
24 going to have the Behavioral Health and
25 DHS and also Children and Families.

1 Who's testifying exactly?

2 COMMISSIONER JONES: I believe
3 I -- Council President, this is
4 Commissioner Jones. I believe I'm up
5 next.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
7 Commissioner, you're testifying for
8 Behavioral Health?

9 COMMISSIONER JONES: Correct.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: And
11 then who will be testifying for DHS?

12 MS. FIGUEROA: President
13 Clarke, this is Cynthia Figueroa, Deputy
14 Mayor, I'll be doing the introductory
15 statements for the Office of Children
16 and Families and DHS and I will have Kim
17 Ali with me.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
19 Okay, cool. Thank you.

20 Thank you. Please proceed,
21 sir.

22 COMMISSIONER JONES: So good
23 morning again, Council President Clarke
24 and members of City Council. I am again
25 David T. Jones, Commissioner for the

1 Department of Behavioral Health and
2 Intellectual disAbility Services. On
3 the call with me are both my Deputy
4 Commissioners Roland Lamb and Jill
5 Bowen, along with the CEO for Community
6 Behavioral Health Donna Bailey. We
7 actually -- I have submitted my written
8 testimony. And so, I will make just a
9 few very brief statements in the
10 interest of time.

11 I want to certainly
12 acknowledge the DBHIDS staff, who just
13 really under this pandemic has really
14 performed exceptionally well, so I just
15 want to acknowledge them. And I also
16 want to acknowledge the network of
17 Mental Health, Addiction, Intellectual
18 Disability and Early Intervention
19 providers who have continued to render
20 services during this pandemic. As
21 understandably so, a number of the
22 questions have really focused around the
23 response to the pandemic.

24 There are two things in
25 particular that I would like to point

1 out that the provider network -- I think
2 that we put in place to support the
3 provider network. And it's important
4 because while certainly there has been
5 emphasis on what the response has been
6 and it's the response relative to kind
7 of all of the other things that are
8 occurring, one of the things that we did
9 as a department and obviously very much
10 in collaboration with the Administration
11 was to put in place what we refer to as
12 an alternative payment arrangement for
13 provider networks, particularly the
14 mental health and addiction providers.

15 The reason that APA
16 arrangement was critical is that we had
17 conversations as the pandemic hit with
18 our provider network and what they said
19 to us was, so, Commissioner Jones, we
20 feel like we may be able to get through
21 the end of March but by the time we get
22 to April recognizing that there won't be
23 the same number of kind face-to-face
24 visits and that we feel like we won't be
25 able to provide services in the same

1 way, we may have to in fact lay off
2 staff.

3 So this was a concern that
4 they were expressing around having to
5 reduce the number of clinicians that
6 would be able when we knew that there
7 would be a surge in terms of anxiety,
8 stress and kind of other behavioral
9 health needs coming to the forefront.
10 We were able to work with the State.
11 And certainly, Community Behavioral
12 Health did an exceptional job of issuing
13 what again became an alternative payment
14 arrangement where we were able to look
15 at this vast array of providers, their
16 annual kind of -- or monthly, I should
17 say, expenses.

18 We arrived at kind of an
19 average and then added 3 percent. That
20 allowed those providers to keep staff
21 employed, who then in turn provided
22 various behavioral health, mental health
23 and addiction services obviously to
24 Philadelphians. Obviously, that was not
25 an appointment to be able to be done

1 face-to-face, and we feel like we were
2 real fortunate in working again with the
3 State and others where they relaxed the
4 regulations around telehealth.

5 And so, the services that have
6 been provided have continued to be
7 provided more telephonically through
8 various video conferencing platforms, so
9 whether you're talking about some of the
10 work in terms of -- we know that there
11 were questions around ongoing support
12 for students, ongoing support for people
13 who had kind of various behavioral
14 health diagnoses. We certainly looked
15 at the -- as we continued, we looked at
16 the triangle where there tends to be an
17 80, 15, 5, which is 80 percent of the
18 population doing pretty well, generally
19 experiencing obviously heightened
20 anxiety and stress during the COVID; 15
21 that were more at risk and that they had
22 had actually previous challenges; and
23 that top 5 percent where they actually
24 had ongoing both a mental health
25 diagnosis and addiction challenges.

1 And so, what we're able to do
2 through that network of providers is
3 really move forward with implementing
4 telehealth in a way that would be
5 responsive to the broader community, so
6 that again we instituted programs
7 where -- or we worked with providers to
8 institute programs where they were able
9 to do again more call-in to folks who
10 had more ongoing addiction issues, that
11 we increased mobile capacity. So in
12 some instances, we actually were having
13 medication be transported to individuals
14 who may have had, for example, opioid
15 use disorder.

16 So I wanted to just let
17 Council know, and we certainly tried to
18 do that in a way where we were in a
19 spirit of keeping you guys informed and
20 updated in a collaborative way, we sent
21 over letters or certainly information to
22 convey what we were doing, the actions
23 that we were taking so that you all
24 could be informed and certainly would
25 then have the opportunity to reach out

1 and ask questions as they may have come
2 up.

3 And so, I will pause there,
4 Council President, and certainly am open
5 to receiving any questions. The only
6 other thing I would say is that I want
7 to circle back to the question
8 eventually that was asked from
9 Councilwoman Brooks of Dr. Farley, who
10 just -- by the way just for my
11 colleague, I just want to say I really
12 feel like he has been doing an
13 exceptional job in leading through this
14 pandemic. He has, as he always is, been
15 present. He cares deeply and always is
16 willing to kind of step up sometimes and
17 carry the load to take sometimes some of
18 the hits for some of us that, you know,
19 I just want him to know that it's
20 appreciated and want to be on public
21 record of stating that.

22 So again, I will pause and
23 open up for any questions from Council.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

25 Thank you, sir. And we concur with

1 respect to Dr. Farley, but we all take
2 hits with the job we do and that's a
3 part of why we do what we do. As
4 leaders, leaders take hits. You take
5 them and you keep it moving, but thank
6 you for that comment.

7 So, Commissioner Jones, the
8 HealthChoices fund, is that within your
9 jurisdiction?

10 COMMISSIONER JONES: Yes,
11 Council President. So the way that
12 works as you know, Community Behavioral
13 Health serves as the behavioral health
14 managed care organization for the City
15 of Philadelphia. It is both -- it's
16 essentially kind of quasi government in
17 that it's a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Just
18 to put some numbers on it, so you
19 know -- as you very well know, the City
20 of Philadelphia, over 1.5 million
21 Community Behavioral Health provides --
22 kind of oversees Medicaid. And so, for
23 any Philadelphians who are eligible for
24 Medicaid, they would really be the payor
25 for behavioral health services. At last

1 count in terms of eligibility, we were
2 upwards of about 718,000 Philadelphians
3 eligible for Medicaid, so representing
4 about 46 percent of the population,
5 again as you well know it speaks to the
6 remarkable resiliency of Philadelphians
7 and then clearly, the deep need as
8 evidenced by you guys' antipoverty plan.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

10 Okay. And we really appreciate that and
11 your participation in that program. The
12 Managed Care funding from the State has
13 a budget increase of \$100 million that
14 will bring the FY21 proposal to 1.3
15 billion, is this funding stream
16 threatened by the COVID-19 crisis as a
17 number of other commitments are?

18 COMMISSIONER JONES: So this
19 is actually -- our Medicaid funding and
20 part of what you see in terms of the
21 increase is an appropriation of what we
22 would anticipate receiving if there are
23 additional Philadelphians who become
24 eligible for Medicaid, so it's part of
25 the Affordable Care Act as you well

1 know. And presumably, as long as that
2 continues to move forward if we get
3 additional, again, Philadelphians who
4 become eligible, we want to be able to
5 pay for their behavioral health
6 services, and that's the purpose of that
7 appropriations request for increase.
8 But again, it's all Medicaid dollars.
9 And I should also quickly say that just
10 as a reminder to Council the DBHIDS
11 budget, it's about 56 percent state
12 fund, 43 percent federal and then the 1
13 percent that's about almost 15.5
14 million, that is the General Fund, and
15 those are match dollars of the grants in
16 terms of both the Medicaid and primarily
17 the grant dollars require in order for
18 us to draw down the funds. So for
19 essentially every \$1 that Philadelphia
20 puts in for the General Fund, you get a
21 \$9 return from our various state and
22 federal dollars.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: And
24 the 16.8 million budget increase
25 described as contractual cost for

1 potential expansion, is that a part of
2 match requirements?

3 COMMISSIONER JONES: That
4 is primarily -- that would be Medicaid
5 dollars.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
7 That would be Medicaid dollars. Okay.
8 All right. Thank you. And you've
9 always been very responsible and I
10 appreciate the good work that you've
11 been doing.

12 So let's see where we are.
13 Chair recognizes Councilwoman Parker.

14 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Thank
15 you, Mr. President.

16 And to you, Commissioner Jones
17 and Bailey who's on the line and all
18 members on your team, thank you so much
19 for your work.

20 Commissioner, I just need to
21 state to you on the record and publicly
22 that preCOVID-19 in January we were
23 talking -- we, meaning my staff and my
24 team, were having a conversation with
25 two long-term employees and mental

1 health professionals and Nicole Connell
2 and LeVan White about the number of
3 constituents who were coming into our
4 office with mental health challenges and
5 that we wished that there was a way for
6 us, even as frontliners who interact
7 with the public, to know how what we
8 should do and what should be our
9 standard operating procedure, and they
10 were knocking our doors down saying,
11 what you need is something called the
12 Mental Health First Aid training. You
13 have to get this Mental Health First Aid
14 training.

15 So February 24th, I along with
16 all of my staff went through the Mental
17 Health First Aid training provided by
18 your team. A Malik Gray was the person
19 who facilitated our day-long training
20 and he did an awesome job. We didn't
21 know that he would be helping us in
22 advance of this, when people call
23 afraid, scared about some of the trauma
24 associated with COVID-19, but it was
25 very helpful. But I want to say to you

1 and your team thank you for that,
2 Dr. Jones. I wanted to say it publicly.

3 With that being said, I also
4 want to ask you the first question. And
5 the first question is about what I
6 mentioned in my conversation to
7 Dr. Farley. What is being done during
8 this time to provide support to
9 providers, in particularly

10 minority-owned-and-operated providers?

11 Since we know the trauma added on to
12 what people were already experiencing,
13 this COVID-19 pandemic, what kind of
14 supports are being offered? Because I
15 was as a result of Dr. Farley's

16 testimony, I went back, Doc, and you
17 know this well, the 1932 Tuskegee

18 experiment. And there is a lack of
19 trust in minority communities relative
20 to government and traditional supports.

21 So what are we doing to support minority
22 providers who are on the front lines in
23 providing supports to the constituency
24 that has been disproportionately
25 impacted by coronavirus and COVID-19?

1 What are we doing to support those
2 providers?

3 COMMISSIONER JONES: So first
4 of all thank you, Councilwoman Parker,
5 for your ongoing leadership and your
6 staff's participation in Mental Health
7 First Aid. I think that we more and
8 more want to encourage as many
9 Philadelphians to participate in Mental
10 Health First Aid. And just to be real
11 clear, Mental Health First Aid helps,
12 provides information so that people are
13 better able to understand kind of the
14 psychiatric -- when somebody presents in
15 psychiatric crisis, how to respond to
16 that individual, how to offer some
17 support and then how to direct that
18 individual to the support and services
19 they need.

20 I think that -- so I want to
21 thank you for that, Councilwoman Parker,
22 again for your staff participating. And
23 also, that's also part of how we're
24 responding, whether in terms of various
25 behavioral health providers. We are

1 continuing to take the approach where we
2 are looking at kind of a prevention and
3 intervention and then making sure that
4 folks get connected to treatment. And
5 so, we understand the disparity that
6 exists between certainly communities of
7 color and connecting with behavioral
8 health services.

9 We have really done a lot to
10 really try to combat the stigma that
11 prevents folks from seeking treatment.
12 And again, with part of our strategy has
13 really been -- and this is both -- it's
14 a strategy as it pertains to getting
15 people connected to behavioral health,
16 but it's also kind of an economic
17 strategy and, that is, we have partnered
18 with people with lived experience. So
19 whether we're talking about peers who
20 are certified, peer specialists who are
21 certified, recovery specialists, to then
22 have those folks more out in the
23 community and even during this pandemic,
24 to have them on virtual networks sharing
25 information about what's available to

1 address and deal with the additional
2 anxiety and certain stress that the
3 pandemic has provided. So --

4 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER:

5 Dr. Jones, the buzzer just went off so
6 my time is up. Again, I want to just
7 commend you and your team for your work.
8 I want to just note for the record that
9 we have to be very intentional in
10 relying and including minority-owned-
11 and-operated providers. One I think is
12 in Councilwoman Gauthier's District, the
13 Consortium. I know I have one in my
14 District and they have multiple
15 locations called WES in the Logan area.
16 And I don't want to see us commit the
17 same faux pas that I think we have
18 already made. I want us to be
19 intentional about making sure that any
20 emergency response that we provide to
21 address supports and services for those
22 in need, that we include those people.

23 In addition to that, I want to
24 get this on the record. Before COVID-
25 19, trauma was a huge issue here in

1 Philadelphia and you can respond to this
2 in writing. How is DBHIDS continuing to
3 address the issue of trauma amidst the
4 COVID-19 pandemic? And you can respond
5 to that in writing.

6 Thank you so much,
7 Mr. President, for your leeway and the
8 time.

9 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
10 Thank you, Councilwoman.

11 COMMISSIONER JONES: If I can
12 just again thank Councilwoman Parker.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
14 Quickly.

15 COMMISSIONER JONES: We will
16 get those responses in writing. I just
17 want to be real quick, that it be on the
18 record that we certainly have been very
19 intentional engaging with providers that
20 Councilwoman Parker mentioned, WES,
21 Consortium, CCTC, other minority
22 providers, we have been very
23 intentional. As I said, even as we
24 develop the alternative payment
25 arrangement, we actually had

1 conversations with some of them and they
2 were ones that said this is the kind of
3 action that we would need to take in
4 order for us to be able to provide
5 service through the pandemic. So I just
6 want to be clear that we were very
7 intentional and thank you.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

9 Thank you, Commissioner. We're at three
10 minutes now because we still have
11 Commissioner Figueroa to testify.

12 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
13 Quinones-Sanchez.

14 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

15 Thank you and good afternoon,
16 Commissioner Jones. I too want to just
17 echo the sentiments and confirm what you
18 have just finished saying, your
19 willingness over the last few years to
20 really work with some of these providers
21 and around building capacity and quality
22 cultural competency and language access
23 have been huge in districts like mine
24 and I appreciate it, particularly
25 appreciate the alternative payment as

1 people move to telephonic services and
2 telemedicine in communities where the
3 accessibility we've seen be highlighted
4 during COVID-19, so thank you.

5 I would be remiss and I'll
6 have to use some of my time and I'll
7 leave you with the question that you can
8 submit in writing. We've spent quite a
9 bit of years talking about
10 trauma-informed care and intervention
11 strategies at the School District. And
12 I know during this budget crisis people
13 are not going to see one of the major
14 accomplishments that with your support
15 and your collaboration from your
16 department with the School District and
17 our ability to have intervention
18 specialists at the elementary and high
19 school level to support our children,
20 and it's going to get lost in all of
21 this.

22 I will assure you as Chair of
23 Education, I will remind folks the value
24 of that because having participated for
25 many years to get to this point has been

1 huge, and I just really want to thank
2 you and I look forward to that process.
3 I know it's going to be bumpy as we look
4 at the new normal and when and where
5 children will be in our school
6 facilities, but I look forward to that
7 challenge and that conversation, so I
8 really wanted to just highlight that
9 because it's so important for principals
10 and others to be able to count on some
11 of these providers that we are talking
12 about, right, being able to provide that
13 culturally competent intervention at the
14 schools is going to be huge for
15 families, so thank you very much.

16 I have a question. I know you
17 don't always get consulted on some of
18 these decisions around how we move
19 around some of the addictive services
20 and the intervention strategies, but I
21 watched as we put into action the
22 removal of the homeless population at
23 the airport and I know you've been
24 working with us in Kensington.

25 But I really wanted to ask,

1 you know, I've been saying this for
2 years, the notion that until we get
3 housing for all of the folks in
4 Kensington is the only way that we're
5 going to be able to restore Kensington
6 is one that I have rejected. I continue
7 to push back on the Administration who's
8 allowed these 300 folks to live, many
9 who are not from the City. And again, I
10 will push back on the Administration in
11 their position, particularly when they
12 changed policy around getting people's
13 original address. But what, if
14 anything, can we do moving forward
15 around providing support for families to
16 take their loved ones back?

17 I am of the belief that we
18 really need to pilot something different
19 that helps us meet families where they
20 are, but this notion that the only way
21 I'm going to clean up Kensington is if
22 we get housing for those 300 people when
23 we have 17,000 peopling waiting in PHA
24 is quite daunting. And so, I really
25 want to work with you this year on what

1 does that look like and how do we work
2 with some of our advocates on the
3 ground. I don't always agree with all
4 of the advocates on the ground, but I
5 absolutely do not deny their intent,
6 their good intentions and their love and
7 commitment to the folks that are in
8 Kensington. But I represent the people
9 who live in the buildings in Kensington,
10 and I just feel like we have had an
11 unbalanced approach.

12 So please submit to us what
13 we're going to do different about
14 providing support to families for them
15 to take their loved ones back home as
16 opposed to us with this policy that
17 we're going to house everybody. Thank
18 you very much, Dr. Jones.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
20 Thank you, Councilwoman.

21 COMMISSIONER JONES: If I
22 could just say, just to express my
23 gratitude to Councilwoman Sanchez for
24 working with our office. I certainly --
25 I hear you. I think that we had really

1 tried to be accommodating in terms of
2 doing some things specific for District
3 7, recognizing some of the longstanding
4 challenges. Your leadership has been
5 great.

6 What I will say is that the
7 idea around permanent supported housing,
8 there being a pathway is something that
9 we agree about and we'll certainly come
10 to the table bringing all innovations
11 that we can to kind of help solve the
12 problem.

13 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

14 Thank you. Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER JONES: Yes, sir.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

17 Chair recognizes Councilman Jones.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
19 Mr. President.

20 And thank you for all you do.
21 I, too, my office also had that mental
22 health emergency kit treatment and it
23 was phenomenal. It prepared us for a
24 great deal of the public concerns that
25 walk through our door every day, but it

1 did not cover what we anticipate and
2 will have post-COVID.

3 So I have a couple of quick
4 questions. Number one, have you
5 developed a plan for when people come
6 out of lockdown?

7 COMMISSIONER JONES:

8 Councilman Jones, so first of all, I
9 live in District 4 so I always
10 appreciate your work. And so, I want to
11 put -- to be on record with that and
12 certainly appreciated your staff's
13 participation in MHFA. You guys were
14 early and I appreciate it. So, yes,
15 obviously we feel like will help us in
16 terms of strategy moving forward, what
17 we hope and what we can also use you
18 all's help is that they continue in
19 terms of relaxing the regulations around
20 telehealth. We feel like that that is
21 actually the way behavioral health
22 services will be delivered going
23 forward, will be a much heavier reliance
24 upon those platforms. And so, what we
25 need to have is the availability, that

1 additional -- whether it's Microsoft
2 Teams, Zoom, FaceTime, whatever it may
3 be, that there's legislation and
4 regulations that allow that.

5 We anticipate that there will
6 be a pretty significant surge actually
7 once we get on the other side around
8 again with increased anxiety. Part of
9 what we want to be able to do is to use
10 the provider network that we have to
11 then allow them to be able to be
12 responsive but not be in a place where
13 they are, until this is kind of figured
14 out, putting their staff more at risk in
15 terms of kind of that face-to-face.

16 Obviously, they'll be practicing
17 physical distancing. They will continue
18 to make sure that all the other
19 preventative measures that the Health
20 Department and others have suggested,
21 that we are practicing those. But we
22 really feel like the telehealth in terms
23 of the strategy going forward is really
24 going to be the platform that we build
25 behavioral health services on and we

1 need your help.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: So all of
3 us in this Council knows somebody that
4 has been impacted by COVID-19. One of
5 the individuals that I knew, grew up
6 with, came off of it and then after the
7 shock of the fact that he was in a coma
8 for 11 days, felt very weak and
9 vulnerable mentally. Is there some kind
10 of post-COVID, you come off of that
11 ventilator, how do you suggest people
12 help folks other than them getting on
13 their knees thanking God that they
14 survived it, how do they get their
15 confidence back that when they walk out
16 of the door they're not going to
17 contract it again?

18 COMMISSIONER JONES: So two
19 resources that I wanted to be on record
20 as stating. So, first of all, through
21 Community Behavior Health we continue to
22 have that 888-545-2600, so 888-545-2600.
23 That number is personed 24 hours, 7 days
24 a week, 365 days a year, so that as
25 individuals come out if they feel like

1 they need support, they can call that
2 number and then get connected,
3 particularly if they have public health
4 insurance, get connected to treatment.

5 The other piece is that even
6 as we are, you know, we have taken
7 advantage of May is Mental Health month
8 and we are pushing out
9 mindPHLtogether.com; mindPHLtogether,
10 that's m-i-n-d-P-H-L-together.com. It
11 is a website that actually has a lot of
12 information and in part, it actually
13 includes an online screening that an
14 individual can go on anonymously, take
15 essentially a checkup from the neck up
16 that will then say, the anxiety that I'm
17 continuing to experience, is that
18 typical under the circumstances or is it
19 really exacerbated and maybe I need
20 support. It gives you -- after you take
21 it, it's a very brief screen. After you
22 complete it, it's a recommendation
23 around whether you need additional
24 support or not. So those are just two
25 resources that are readily available

1 right now.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
3 Mr. President.

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
5 Thank you, Councilman. Yeah, we're
6 running out of time.

7 Chair recognizes Councilman
8 Domb.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you,
10 Council President.

11 I'm going to try to keep this
12 to two minutes. If you could,
13 Commissioner Jones, and good morning and
14 thank you for your team, your response
15 in 30 seconds would be great. So here's
16 my question, it's a budgeting question:
17 The City's on shaky ground this year
18 financially. One way the Administration
19 has said they'll make ends meet is by
20 eliminating unfilled positions and
21 instituting a hiring freeze. The budget
22 details tell a different story. In DHS
23 we're budgeting for more than 1800
24 employees even though the Department
25 only had 1500 employees back in

1 November. DBH had 270 employees in
2 November. They're currently budgeted
3 for about 300. Public Health had 750
4 employees paid through the General Fund
5 in November and now we're budgeting for
6 820. That makes for about 400 unfilled
7 positions that we're keeping in the
8 budget, and that's just for today's
9 departments. Why are we doing layoffs
10 of some of the lowest-paid workers while
11 we're budgeting millions of dollars for
12 positions that have never been filled?

13 COMMISSIONER JONES: So I
14 think as it has been expressed, and
15 thank you for the question, Councilman
16 Domb, I think that we are in a situation
17 where you're having to make really
18 difficult decisions that are far less
19 than -- under far less than ideal
20 circumstances. As Brian and others have
21 indicated, I think there will be every
22 effort made to have any displaced
23 workers have an opportunity to apply for
24 those vacant positions and I think that
25 will be the strategy that we try to move

1 forward on. Obviously, we are committed
2 to being a great fiduciary in terms of
3 our fiscal responsibilities and that
4 will continue.

5 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay. I
6 will just ask this one question and the
7 second question just to confirm. We
8 have 400 unfilled positions that we're
9 keeping in the budget currently; is that
10 accurate?

11 COMMISSIONER JONES: So to be
12 clear, Councilmember, I can't speak to
13 the positions that are in Health nor
14 DHS. You have I think both Cynthia and
15 Kim who are right behind me and I'm sure
16 they can speak to that or we can respond
17 to it.

18 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Okay.

19 COMMISSIONER JONES: And for
20 us, for the Department of Behavior
21 Health and Intellectual disAbility
22 Services, really we were budgeted
23 previously for I believe it was 291. In
24 this current, we increased by 7 to take
25 us to 298. Most of those, in fact all

1 of those are kind of essential
2 positions, a lot where our acute
3 services, so it's the unit where we
4 have -- who responds when there are
5 people who are expressing suicidal
6 ideations and that kind of thing, that's
7 where most of our vacancies are and
8 we're trying to fill those.

9 COUNCILMAN DOMB: All right.
10 Do me a favor. Just send us your answer
11 to the Council President and thank you
12 very much.

13 Thank you, Council President.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
15 Thank you, Councilman.

16 I believe those are all the
17 questions for you, Commissioner Jones.
18 Thank you very much. I'm sure we'll be
19 getting back to you because we had a lot
20 of questions that we needed to follow up
21 on.

22 COMMISSIONER JONES: Thank
23 you, Council President.

24 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Council
25 President?

1 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Oh,
2 Councilman Green, somebody told me you
3 left.

4 COUNCILMAN GREEN: No, I'm
5 here. I was after Councilmember Domb.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
7 Okay. I'm getting bad intel. Sorry.
8 Go ahead, Councilman.

9 COUNCILMAN GREEN:
10 Commissioner Jones, real quick, thank
11 you for your work you've done throughout
12 your tenure with the City, especially
13 during this pandemic. You as well as
14 Donna Bailey from CBH has always been
15 very responsive. I can say the same
16 thing for Cynthia Figueroa and her
17 office. I know I probably won't get a
18 chance to ask questions to them during
19 this time.

20 But I do want to echo what
21 Councilmember Parker talked about in
22 reference to culturally competent
23 providers. And so, you know my thoughts
24 regarding that issue, but I do have just
25 a general concern regarding mental

1 health and drug and alcohol concerns
2 coming out of this COVID-19 pandemic.
3 It's an article in the Inquirer about
4 outreach and the concern that because of
5 sheltering in place, people don't have
6 the traditional supports, drug and
7 alcohol support for those who are
8 recovering as well as for those that
9 have any physical learning differences
10 like autism. I just want to get your
11 thoughts briefly regarding how we're
12 dealing with COVID-19 from those two
13 communities, especially with the
14 sheltering in place and that completes
15 the question.

16 COMMISSIONER JONES: I'm
17 sorry, Councilman Green. I couldn't
18 hear the tail end of your question. You
19 kind of trailed off a bit.

20 COUNCILMAN GREEN: My general
21 concern is what are your thoughts in
22 reference to those with drug and alcohol
23 challenges as well as those that have
24 physical or learning differences,
25 especially like autism which is a

1 community I represent? How will we be
2 able to address those issues during
3 COVID-19 and as we move forward beyond
4 COVID-19?

5 COMMISSIONER JONES: So very
6 quickly, Councilmember Green, we
7 certainly have appreciated working with
8 you and your leadership in particular
9 with people who are on the autism
10 spectrum. I think that, again, we
11 certainly are going to have a more
12 heavier reliance on telehealth,
13 particularly to get us through the
14 pandemic. We have had a provider
15 network. They have continued to deliver
16 services again through that platform.

17 I think that part of what we
18 certainly will have to do is continue to
19 work with families and providers to see
20 what they feel like works best for them
21 under these circumstances. We'll
22 continue to work in a collaborative
23 manner as possible. And then I don't
24 want to shortchange your response, so
25 what I'd also like to do is just offer

1 additional feedback via a written
2 response, Councilman Green.

3 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
4 Council President.

5 Thank you, Commissioner Jones.
6 That concludes my questions.

7 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
8 Thank you, Councilman.

9 Thank you, Commissioner. We
10 appreciate you. We'll be following up
11 with a number of other issues. Thank
12 you very much.

13 COMMISSIONER JONES: Thank
14 you, Council President.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: We
16 believe we do have -- Ms. Figueroa is up
17 next and we'll probably not be able to
18 get all of our questions in for
19 Ms. Figueroa. So again, we do have
20 callback time.

21 Ms. Figueroa.

22 MS. FIGUEROA: Yes. So we're
23 happy to take any questions in writing
24 and we'll respond as soon as we receive
25 them. Good afternoon, President Clarke

1 and members of City Council. My name is
2 Cynthia Figueroa, Deputy Mayor for the
3 Office of Children and Families, and I
4 also have with me today Kimberly Ali,
5 the Commissioner of DHS and Nadine
6 Perese, who's the CFO of our office.

7 The Office of Children and
8 Families is comprised of the Department
9 of Human Services, PHLpreK, Community
10 Schools and Out-of-School Time. We also
11 partner with the School District,
12 related to the Education Support Center
13 and our truancy intervention providers.
14 We've also worked really hard during the
15 COVID pandemic. As many of you are
16 aware, we've collaborated with the
17 School District to ensure there's youth
18 meals and worked in partnership with the
19 Managing Director's Office to make sure
20 that there are general food distribution
21 sites as well as food for vulnerable
22 communities.

23 We're also working hard to
24 make sure that there is, in fact, a
25 summer. We haven't given up on summer

1 and working diligently with the Health
2 Department and the Managing Director's
3 Office to support this work. We are
4 happy to report that our revised budget
5 while it demonstrates some confusion
6 from the budget numbers, I want to be
7 very clear that it eliminates any
8 planned expansions. There is no
9 expansion of PHLpreK slots and there's
10 no expansion of the Community Schools.
11 We're actually going to remain at
12 current levels in those programs.

13 The Department of Human
14 Services continues tremendous progress.
15 Four years ago I testified about the
16 double-digit increases of children
17 placed with the Department, and today
18 I'm proud to report that based on all
19 the strategies, there's 11 percent fewer
20 children in DHS placement than one year
21 ago today. The majority of children are
22 with kin. We've dropped our congregate
23 care rate below the national and state
24 average of 9.4 percent and we continue
25 to support the work of our young people

1 who are in the Juvenile Justice Center.
2 So I'm making my comments very brief
3 because I know there's a few people that
4 have questions and recognize that we
5 have about eight minutes to do the
6 impossible. So I thank you and I thank
7 all the Councilmembers who have been
8 incredibly supportive of our office
9 during this development and during the
10 key strategies during this pandemic.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

12 Thank you. Thank you very much.

13 Chair recognizes Councilwoman
14 Gym.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you
16 very much, Council President, and thank
17 you, Cynthia. I'm sure we'll just put
18 on the record that I think we'll do a
19 callback for DHS because we can't
20 possibly cover all the questions right
21 now.

22 But very quickly, a couple of
23 highlights to hit. One, I'd love to
24 talk to you just separately about a
25 complaint we've been receiving that CUA

1 workers are scheduling visits during
2 school time. And so, because school is
3 so compacted right now, there's only a
4 few opportunities for children to get
5 online. They don't have school all day
6 long. For example, they may only have
7 one class at a time. When a CUA visit
8 conflicts with schooling, that becomes a
9 real problem and we've seen a little bit
10 of reluctance or what appears to be some
11 anecdotal indication that there's been
12 not a lot of flexibility on that front
13 so if we can work with you on that
14 privately offline, that would be great.

15 I wanted to thank you for the
16 work that you've done in terms of
17 reducing young people in placement, in
18 particular after the death of 16-year-
19 old David Hess at Wordsworth. CBH and
20 DHS have really worked hard to address
21 the situation within many of our
22 residential treatment facilities. I
23 know we've done a significant and heroic
24 amount of work together, not only on the
25 local level but on the state level, and

1 I really want to thank all my colleagues
2 on Council who's been an advocate on
3 that, particularly Councilmember
4 Johnson. Safety is our number one
5 concern. But as the coronavirus
6 lockdown has really impacted a lot of
7 young people, as we see facilities and
8 counties all across the state of
9 Pennsylvania really taking radically
10 different approaches towards how
11 seriously they're taking the impact of
12 the virus, have we been able to go out
13 and visit these facilities to determine
14 whether or not appropriate safety
15 measures are in place? Has DHS been
16 able to ascertain what the contracting
17 protocols, for example, are going to be
18 or will be in the future? So if you can
19 address that.

20 And then, Council President,
21 I'm going to submit the rest of my
22 questions in writing.

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
24 Thank you so much.

25 MS. FIGUEROA: I'm going to

1 have Commissioner Ali talk about the
2 congregate care providers and what's
3 being done in regards to the COVID
4 response. I know that there's been
5 ongoing communications with the
6 provider. So, Kim?

7 COMMISSIONER ALI: Yes, good
8 afternoon, Councilmen. In terms of our
9 response as it relates to the COVID-19,
10 the Department of Human Services have
11 been working very closely with our
12 congregate care providers, that also
13 includes our detention center, the
14 PJJSC, in which we looked at every young
15 person who was placed in congregate care
16 to determine whether or not they were
17 able to either be discharged to a
18 community-based alternative or returned
19 home to their family.

20 I'm happy to report in terms
21 of the PJJSC alone, that 185 young
22 people were reviewed by the court and 76
23 percent of them were discharged from the
24 PJJSC. That is 141 young people. And
25 some of the congregate care facilities,

1 we did that also on both the dependent
2 as well as the delinquent side and have
3 been successful in discharging young
4 people who were able to return home.
5 All of the congregate care providers
6 have submitted to the Department as well
7 as to the State a continuity operations
8 plan that we have on file at the
9 Department. We've also been meeting
10 with them once a month to determine what
11 does their recovery process look like,
12 so the congregate care providers as we
13 speak are working on their recovery
14 plans.

15 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

16 Thank you.

17 Chair now calls Councilman Oh.

18 COUNCILMAN OH: All right.

19 Thank you very much, Council President.

20 For anyone representing DHS,
21 Deputy Mayor Figueroa or Commissioner, I
22 want to know about like where
23 Philadelphia is regarding the Family
24 First Prevention Services Act. And in
25 particular, has the City of Philadelphia

1 made an application for Family First
2 transition funds?

3 MS. FIGUEROA: So I'll take
4 the first part and, Kim, if you want to
5 add anything. So the Family First
6 Prevention Services Act, Federal
7 legislation and the State has to make
8 the determination to opt in. The State
9 has now pushed back its implementation
10 of Family First for almost about another
11 year, so originally it was supposed to
12 be implemented in October of 2020, and
13 now it's pushed back to July so we are
14 working closely with the State and we've
15 been preparing for quite some time.

16 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. I'll
17 let, you know, the question be answered.
18 I just want to narrow it down a little
19 bit. So my understanding about states
20 as you described, but also the
21 counties -- so the funding of \$500
22 million to assist states also goes to
23 counties. New York City, in particular,
24 has applied and anticipates \$40 million
25 to \$50 million this year, \$40 million to

1 \$50 million. And in the meantime while
2 it did join the 38 other states to
3 request a waiver, the consequences of
4 the Family First Prevention Services Act
5 is in play with funding available on the
6 front end and limitations for group
7 housing, which is wherein New York is
8 coming up with the reimbursement of 90
9 percent of its losses, anticipated
10 losses in its current system. So could
11 that be explained, because my
12 understanding is it's a limited pot of
13 money?

14 MS. FIGUEROA: So, Councilman,
15 and I just want to clarify because there
16 is what is called the Family First
17 Prevention Services Act and then the
18 Family First CARES Act that was related
19 to the COVID, and I think there's been
20 sometimes confusion between these two
21 different funding streams.

22 COUNCILMAN OH: Yeah, I'm not
23 confused. Family First Preventive
24 Services Act, which then is being
25 supplemented through funding of \$500

1 million which goes through state
2 application through the Family First
3 Transition Act.

4 MS. FIGUEROA: So that's
5 correct. We can't draw down any money
6 unless the State has opted in, and the
7 State is not opting in. If the State
8 doesn't opt in, the County cannot draw
9 down any of the prevention resources
10 available.

11 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. If
12 someone can explain to me later because
13 I'm running out of time, how is it that
14 New York State has applied for waiver,
15 they didn't opt in -- well, they applied
16 for a waiver. They should be in. Maybe
17 they did and then New York City has made
18 an application. So I'll let you answer
19 that offline.

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
21 It's almost 12:30 --

22 COUNCILMAN OH: Okay. Thank
23 you. Thank you very much.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
25 Deputy, we're going to call you back.

1 MS. FIGUEROA: Okay.

2 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: We
3 have a lot of questions. I know some
4 members opted out because of the time
5 frame.

6 But real quick, Councilwoman
7 Brooks and Bass, if you can just quickly
8 ask your questions and we can get
9 responses in writing. And then we'll
10 have you back. Councilmember Brooks and
11 then Councilmember Bass. And then
12 Channel 64 is going to bump us off of
13 here.

14 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: All
15 right. Philadelphia has already had the
16 highest rate of child removal of any big
17 city in the country. I want to commend
18 your Office's stated commitment to
19 reducing the number of children in
20 placement and reducing the number of
21 young people housed by JJSC. When the
22 young people are able to stay safe and
23 home and healthy with their families,
24 everyone benefits. However, as parent
25 and grandparent, I worry about the

1 destabilizing effects including the
2 massive wave of unemployment and
3 increased housing insecurity that COVID-
4 19 has had on families.

5 What proactive strategy is
6 your Office using to reduce the number
7 of youth in foster placement and JJSC
8 and how are you adapting these
9 strategies in light of COVID-19 crisis
10 and its aftermath?

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

12 Thank you.

13 MS. FIGUEROA: So I would just
14 say quickly that I started my opening
15 testimony by saying that we've reduced
16 by 11 percent year-over when the
17 Administration started with double digit
18 increases, so we're pleased that we --
19 and I'm happy to put in writing all of
20 the strategies. So thank you for the
21 question. We're 100 percent committed
22 to the same issue.

23 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Thank

24 you.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

1 Thank you. Thank you Councilwoman.

2 And, Councilwoman Bass.

3 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
4 Mr. President.

5 Thank you, Cynthia. Actually,
6 I had the exact same question in terms
7 of we had the highest displacement,
8 particularly of African-American and
9 Latino youth and the re-unification in
10 the face of a pandemic, what does that
11 look like? And so, I look forward to
12 getting something in writing that really
13 details and outlines what your strategy
14 is for continuing that in a much more
15 robust way. I think 11 percent is okay.
16 But if you're a family member who has
17 been away from your child for a long
18 time, then it's forever. So if you
19 could address that in writing, I would
20 appreciate it.

21 Thank you, Mr. President.

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

23 Thank you, Councilwoman.

24 And again, I want to apologize
25 for having this very limited

1 opportunity. I was trying to get as
2 best possible callbacks, but it's out of
3 all of our control. So, Deputy, be
4 prepared to be called back because I
5 know yours is one of the departments
6 that there's going to be a lot more
7 questions.

8 MS. FIGUEROA: Okay. Thank
9 you.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: So
11 thank you very much. And with that, we
12 will stand in recess until 3 o'clock for
13 public testimony. And I must warn you
14 all, you should eat lunch because
15 there's a lot of people that have signed
16 up. Thank you. See you at 3:00.

17 COUNCILMAN OH: All right.
18 Thank you.

19 (Afternoon Recess.)

20 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
21 Thank you. We will now reconvene this
22 morning's hearing.

23 Mr. Stitt, will you please
24 call the roll to take attendance. And
25 for the members in attendance, please

1 indicate by saying present.

2 Mr. Stitt?

3 THE CLERK: Sorry. Sorry. I
4 was on mute. My apologies for that.

5 Councilmember Bass.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
7 afternoon and looking forward to this
8 afternoon's testimony. Good afternoon.

9 THE CLERK: Councilmember
10 Brooks.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BROOKS: Good
12 afternoon.

13 THE CLERK: Councilman Domb.

14 COUNCILMAN DOMB: Good
15 afternoon, Matt, Council President and
16 Colleagues and the public.

17 THE CLERK: Councilmember
18 Gauthier.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GAUTHIER: Good
20 afternoon, Council President. Good
21 afternoon, Colleagues and the public. I
22 look forward to this afternoon's
23 testimony.

24 THE CLERK: Councilmember
25 Gilmore Richardson.

1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Good afternoon, Matt. Good
3 afternoon, Council President and
4 Colleagues and general public. Thank
5 you so much for being here this
6 afternoon. I look forward to hearing
7 your testimony.

8 THE CLERK: Councilmember
9 Green.

10 COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you,
11 Matt. Good afternoon, Council
12 President. Good afternoon, members of
13 Council. Looking forward to today's
14 public testimony.

15 THE CLERK: Councilmember Gym.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Good
17 morning, Council President. Good
18 morning, Colleagues.

19 THE CLERK: Councilmember
20 Henon.

21 Councilmember Johnson.

22 Councilmember Jones.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
24 afternoon, Mr. President, my fellow
25 colleagues, to the testifying public.

1 Looking forward to an invigorating, I
2 think the word was, discussion.

3 THE CLERK: Councilmember Oh.

4 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
5 much and good afternoon, Council
6 President and Colleagues.

7 THE CLERK: Councilmember
8 O'Neill.

9 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Good
10 afternoon, everyone.

11 THE CLERK: Councilmember
12 Parker.

13 COUNCILWOMAN PARKER: Good
14 afternoon, everyone, Council President.
15 Looking forward to hearing the voice of
16 the people. Thank you.

17 THE CLERK: Councilmember
18 Quinones-Sanchez.

19 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
20 Good afternoon. Thank you, everyone,
21 for your patience.

22 THE CLERK: Councilmember
23 Squilla.

24 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Good
25 afternoon, Council President, Matt and

1 Colleagues, and welcome to the public
2 forum for our budget hearings.

3 THE CLERK: Good afternoon.
4 Councilmember Thomas.

5 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
6 afternoon, Council President. Good
7 afternoon, Colleagues. Thank you to the
8 tech staff for making this happen.
9 Can't wait to listen to the general
10 public and, again, I appreciate
11 everybody's patience, looking forward.

12 THE CLERK: And, Council
13 President Clarke.

14 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
15 Thank you and good afternoon to you all.
16 Thank you for participating in today's
17 public testimony. We will now resume
18 the public hearing and begin taking
19 testimony from the public on the FY21
20 budget. Before proceeding, however I
21 will lay out a few ground rules on how
22 we will proceed with public testimony
23 this afternoon.

24 We are here today to hear from
25 you about the proposed FY21 budget and

1 we believe the FY21 budget should focus
2 its spending priorities. Due to the
3 COVID-19 emergency, we have implemented
4 special procedures with respect to
5 public comment which were advertised and
6 posted on Council's website and sent out
7 in a press release.

8 Speakers interested in giving
9 testimony were asked to call or email us
10 by 3:00 p.m. yesterday so that they
11 could take the technical steps necessary
12 to provide an opportunity for public
13 comment in a virtual environment. To
14 ensure that there is an opportunity for
15 everyone here to be heard, certain
16 ground rules have been established as it
17 follows: Your testimony should be about
18 the FY21 budget and proposed spending
19 priorities; all those who signed up to
20 give public comment will telephone at
21 the beginning of this hearing and
22 invited to join the hearing, so please
23 make sure that your phone is muted at
24 this time and until it's your turn to
25 speak, your name will be called in the

1 order in which you signed up.

2 Once your name is called,
3 please unmute your phone and you will
4 then have two minutes to speak. And I
5 want it to be fair to all of those
6 wishing to speak. I intend to hold that
7 faithfully to the two-minute limit. We
8 have a lot of people that have signed up
9 today and we generally appreciate you in
10 your interest as it relates to what
11 we're doing, but we do have limitations
12 on time.

13 Once you are asked to begin
14 your testimony, a timer will be started
15 and when there's 30 seconds remaining to
16 your testimony and your time, you will
17 be reminded of this. Once your allotted
18 time has passed, you will be asked to
19 conclude your remarks. At that time,
20 please mute your phone and stay on the
21 line until the hearing is concluded, if
22 you so wish to.

23 I will ask Mr. Stitt to please
24 read the name of our first speaker.

25 THE CLERK: Ava Blitz.

1 MS. BLITZ: Hello. Can you
2 hear me?

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
4 Good afternoon. We hear you. Please
5 proceed.

6 MS. BLITZ: Okay. My name is
7 Ava Blitz and I'm speaking as an active
8 artist in support of keeping the Office
9 of Arts and Cultural Economy and the
10 Cultural Fund. To eliminate it instead
11 of an understandably 20 percent decrease
12 in funding across the board used for
13 other entities, I feel is a draconian
14 and damaging action that would put
15 Philadelphia's economy, health and
16 education, all considered worthwhile
17 endeavors, at risk.

18 I would also like to thank the
19 Council for their effort that I hear
20 there will be a new review of this
21 action to put these resolutions on hold
22 and allow time to review from all
23 viewpoints. From an artist's point of
24 view, I have been involved in several 1
25 Percent for the Arts projects with the

1 Office of Arts, Culture and Creative
2 Economy and I have shown with numerous
3 nonprofit organizations that the
4 Cultural Fund support. The Office also
5 takes care of the conservation of an
6 amazing and vast collection of public
7 art, as the Philadelphia Museum does,
8 but without the funding capabilities
9 through wealthy donors.

10 Their staff works tirelessly
11 and professionally to facilitate the
12 sharing of ideas through art to create
13 warm and welcoming landmarks that add
14 beauty, vitality and excitement to the
15 City. The Office is an equal
16 opportunity employer and works long and
17 hard in creating Calls for Artists and
18 in choosing the most-qualified artists
19 to compete for their opportunities, not
20 based on who the artist knows, but based
21 on their work.

22 As an older female artist
23 where the discrimination in the field is
24 historically high, I was given the
25 opportunity to make a mark on

1 Philadelphia's health, well-being and
2 education while actually making a living
3 for a short time. These organizations
4 support not only their own
5 administrative jobs, but the work of --
6 the work supports the work of countless
7 artists.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

9 Ma'am --

10 MS. BLITZ: Yes.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: So

12 it doesn't really sound like it, but
13 that was actually the bell. It's
14 traditionally a little louder but
15 because of the environment and the
16 virtual nature of it. So when the bell
17 rings, that means your time has run out.
18 So we're going to ask everybody -- I
19 know you may have a significant amount
20 of testimony to give in a public way,
21 but you can forward your information and
22 your testimony and it will be a matter
23 of record and we will ensure it's in the
24 document. But again, we're only going
25 to have two minutes to testify for each

1 individual.

2 MS. BLITZ: I see. Was that
3 the 30-second one or is that over?

4 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
5 That's actually not clear to me, but I
6 heard it twice so I'm assuming that's
7 the second one because --

8 MS. BLITZ: Oh, okay. All
9 right. So I can forward the rest of my
10 statement?

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
12 Absolutely, and we will put it in the
13 record, in the document that has all
14 records of the public testimony and the
15 budget process.

16 MS. BLITZ: Okay. All right.
17 Thank you very much.

18 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
19 Thank you.

20 THE CLERK: Deborah Diamond.

21 MS. DIAMOND: Hello?

22 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
23 Good afternoon.

24 MS. DIAMOND: Good afternoon,
25 Council President Clarke and members of

1 the Philadelphia City Council. Thank
2 you for the opportunity to provide this
3 testimony as part of your Fiscal Year 21
4 budget hearing. My name is Deborah
5 Diamond and I'm --

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

7 Ma'am, just -- okay. I'm sorry. Go
8 ahead. I'm sorry. I'll give you that
9 10 seconds back for interrupting you.
10 Go ahead, ma'am. I'm sorry.

11 MS. DIAMOND: Thank you. My
12 name is Deborah Diamond and I'm the
13 President of Campus Philly. Campus
14 Philly has been the driving force of
15 Philadelphia's retention of young
16 college graduates and the population
17 growth the City has experienced as a
18 result. 25- to 34-year-olds with
19 college degrees increased 115 percent
20 between 2000 and 2017. Philadelphia's
21 growth of college-educated young people
22 is the most racially diverse in the
23 country and the result has been an
24 economic resurgence of Philadelphia, one
25 that has created the surpluses of

1 previous budgets. An additional \$140
2 million annually is generated in the
3 City taxes by these additional 25- to
4 34-year-olds with college degrees.

5 Campus Philly programs have
6 been supported by the City through a
7 contract with the Commerce Department
8 for \$563,000 a year. This allows us to
9 leverage an additional \$800,000 every
10 year on top of that money from partners
11 in both the City and suburbs. Our
12 contract has been zeroed out of the
13 Commerce Department and I'm requesting
14 that it be reinstated at the amount of
15 at least 50 percent.

16 Campus Philly has been a
17 lifeline to college students during this
18 current crisis. We provide online job
19 and internship board for students,
20 that's seen a 200 percent increase in
21 traffic, and a 1400 percent increase in
22 traffic to our website that provides
23 resources for students on both
24 emotional, physical health during this
25 time. College students are going to be

1 a critical part of the City's recovery.
2 Approximately, 50,000 college students
3 graduate from regional colleges and
4 universities each year. Whether they
5 stay in Philadelphia is up to us. I ask
6 that you consider reinstating Campus
7 Philly's budget contract with the
8 Commerce Department so we can serve
9 these students and continue our City's
10 growth. Thank you.

11 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

12 Thank you for your testimony. We really
13 appreciate you.

14 MS. DIAMOND: I appreciate
15 you.

16 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

17 Mr. Stitt, next person.

18 THE CLERK: John McInerning,
19 McNerning, McInerney. I'm sorry.
20 Apologies if I messed up the last name.
21 Is John here?

22 Sally Malenka.

23 MR. MCINERNEY: Hello, this is
24 John.

25 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE: Hi,

1 sir. Please proceed. State your name
2 for the record and welcome.

3 MR. McINERNEY: This is John
4 McInerney. Thank you very much for
5 letting me speak today, Council
6 President and all the Councilmembers.
7 I'm speaking today in my role as the
8 Vice-chair of the Board for Eastern
9 State Penitentiary, a City-owned
10 historic site. It is not only one of
11 the top ten tourist attractions in the
12 City but a nonprofit committed to
13 historic preservation and social
14 justice.

15 Eastern State is just one
16 example of the range of committed arts
17 nonprofits across Philadelphia who
18 contribute to the health and vibrancy of
19 our communities. Most of those groups
20 have budgets under \$100,000 a year, with
21 three out of every five of them focused
22 on serving and providing direct services
23 to children. For many of these groups,
24 the Philadelphia Cultural Fund is the
25 key source of support that is critical

1 to their operation. I strongly urge the
2 Council to restore the Cultural Fund.
3 The Cultural Fund is a critical resource
4 and unlike almost any other source of
5 funding, it's committed to supporting
6 all arts nonprofits in the City,
7 particularly the smallest and most
8 vulnerable that are located outside
9 Center City.

10 As we slowly emerge from this
11 pandemic, I truly believe that our
12 community arts organizations will be
13 critical assets that will provide a safe
14 and welcoming environment for children
15 and families as they begin to rebuild a
16 sense of community that is so essential
17 to what makes Philadelphia such a
18 special place to live. Along with our
19 community-based arts groups, the City is
20 also blessed with one of the oldest
21 public arts programs in the country,
22 which is carefully steward in the
23 largest collection of public art of any
24 major city.

25 One of my favorite is El Gran

1 Teatro de la Luna by Raphael Ferrer, a
2 sculpture that celebrates Philadelphia's
3 rich Latino and Puerto Rican culture and
4 it was absent in Fairhill Park for 14
5 years. It was only through the
6 dedicated work of the City's public arts
7 program that the sculpture was able to
8 be restored and reinstalled in Fairhill
9 Square. The City's public arts program
10 was able to leverage core City funding
11 to get both state and federal support to
12 restore this iconic and joyful sculpture
13 to bring Fairhill back into a safe and
14 friendly gathering place. We are living
15 through a generation-defining moment
16 like no other in our lives. I
17 understand the incredibly difficult
18 challenges the City and the Council are
19 facing. They are now two worlds, the
20 one before the virus and the one after.
21 I urge you to restore these cuts as the
22 arts continue to be a resource for
23 reflection and healing for celebration
24 and commemoration. Our public art, our
25 parks and our community arts

1 organizations are the delicate thread
2 that we put together as a community.
3 Please preserve these modest, but
4 incredibly important programs. Thank
5 you.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

7 Thank you for your testimony.

8 THE CLERK: Sally Malenka.

9 Jill Sablosky.

10 Penny Bach.

11 MS. MALENKA: Hello. This is
12 Sally Malenka. I believe you skipped
13 over me.

14 THE CLERK: No, we called your
15 name a couple of times, ma'am, but it's
16 your turn.

17 MS. MALENKA: Okay. I must
18 have been on mute. My apologies. So
19 good afternoon. My name is Sally
20 Malenka and I'm testifying in response
21 to Bill Nos. 200287 and 200307. I have
22 worked as an arts conservator at the
23 Philadelphia Museum of Art since 1989,
24 and it's by deeply held belief that even
25 in difficult times we must never fully

1 abandon or defer the public trust that
2 we hold both for creation and
3 preservation of works of art.

4 I've worked closely with the
5 public arts staff in the Office of Arts,
6 Culture and the Creative Economy through
7 the Conservation Advisory Committee for
8 the past four years and through the
9 Percent for Art Program for the past 20
10 years. The City's quest of public art
11 is the oldest and largest in the nation
12 and the Advisory Committee is a model
13 for good collection stewardship. We
14 evaluate and review proposals and
15 preservation initiatives for collections
16 across the City, as guided by the
17 expertise of the public arts staff.
18 Their guidance requires an informed
19 understanding of City's collections, the
20 state of preservation and a pragmatic
21 sensitivity to resources available.
22 High conservation standards are achieved
23 by attentive oversight to ensure the
24 best return on investment of long-term
25 outcome.

1 Nowhere is this more evident
2 in projects like the preservation of
3 William Penn on top of City Hall but as
4 you've heard, there's many other
5 examples. The Percent for Art Program
6 recently celebrated its 60th
7 anniversary. It was the first program
8 of its type in the nation. The program
9 is a complex multi-step process where
10 artists respond to a proposal and
11 present to a jury of stakeholders and
12 the expected project is shepherded
13 through steps for approval and
14 realization. The Percent for Art sites
15 range from the Philadelphia
16 International Airport and Independence
17 Hall to police buildings, playgrounds
18 and recreation centers. I personally
19 witnessed only a small part of the
20 process and always find it incredibly
21 moving. Everyone at the table, and most
22 especially the representatives of the
23 communities, is completely about the
24 selection of the artwork. In its
25 current, the Percent for Art Program is

1 structured as an intensive and dynamic
2 process that ensures all voices are
3 heard and respected. I sincerely thank
4 you for this opportunity to speak and
5 take great pride in an office that
6 benefits so many Philadelphians. Thank
7 you.

8 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

9 Thank you for your testimony.

10 THE CLERK: Jill Sablosky.

11 And for all of our speakers, this is
12 just a reminder when your name is
13 called, to unmute your phone by pressing
14 star 6.

15 Is Jill Sablosky still on the
16 line?

17 MS. SABLOSKY: Can you hear
18 me? Hello?

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

20 Yes. Please proceed.

21 MS. SABLOSKY: This is Jill
22 Sablosky. Can you hear me?

23 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

24 Yes, we can.

25 MS. SABLOSKY: Oh, great.

1 Thank you. Thank you. I speak in
2 support of maintaining funding for the
3 Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative
4 Economy, and specifically as an artist
5 in contract with the Percent for Art
6 Program. I have completed public art
7 projects for the City of Philadelphia,
8 other cities in the nation and for the
9 Federal art program through the GSA. At
10 present, I've been contracted to produce
11 outdoor sculptural scenes for Engine 37,
12 the historic Firehouse of Chestnut Hill
13 which is being restored and receiving an
14 additional building to help the fire
15 trucks.

16 The process on this two years
17 thus far is a collaboration involving
18 various City agencies, the Fire
19 Department, architects, landscape
20 architects and the Chestnut Hill
21 community. The artwork is designed
22 specifically for the site acknowledging
23 the historic elements, practices of the
24 firefighters and the essence of
25 Firehouse 37 as a community hub. At the

1 helm are the art experts of the Public
2 Art Office. Integral to the management
3 and communication for our artworks'
4 process and projects, my deepest concern
5 is to retain our respected areas of
6 expertise, therefore, enabling the best
7 practices the production of art projects
8 which we'll endure, along with
9 initiating and overseeing the creation
10 of artworks in the public realm. The
11 staff of the Public Art Office oversees
12 the care and maintenance of over a
13 thousand works of art. The Percent for
14 Art Program is a part of Philadelphia's
15 legacy, having been borne here and
16 reproduced throughout the United States
17 and within the Federal Government. Let
18 us preserve and keep alive the seminal
19 program which gives jobs to artist
20 makers. The arts in all manifestations
21 bring soul and spirit to our
22 communities. Thank you, Councilmembers,
23 for hearing my testimony.

24 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

25 Thank you so much for your testimony.

1 MS. SABLOSKY: Thank you.

2 THE CLERK: Penny Bach.

3 And again, a reminder to push star 6 to
4 unmute your phone.

5 MS. BALKIN BACH: Can you hear
6 me? I pressed star 6.

7 THE CLERK: Yes.

8 MS. BALKIN BACH: Okay.

9 Great. Good afternoon, virtual Council
10 President Clarke and Councilmembers.
11 Thank you for the opportunity to express
12 my concern and support for the Office of
13 Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy,
14 the Philadelphia Cultural Fund and the
15 City's public art program which all face
16 elimination in the revised budget. My
17 name is Penny Balkin Bach. I'm the
18 Executive Director of the Association
19 for Public Art, a recipient of support
20 from the Philadelphia Cultural Fund.

21 Like many of you, I wear a few
22 hats. I'm a proud native Philadelphian.
23 I'm the Chair of the City's Public Art
24 Advisory Committee and I served on the
25 Mayor's Cultural Advisory Council over

1 the course of five mayoral
2 administrations. Accordingly, it
3 troubles me to think that after all this
4 time, progress and public appreciation
5 and Council support, that we may be
6 facing a devastating blow to the support
7 of the cultural community and the
8 neighborhoods and communities who
9 benefit from our creative work, and I do
10 mean work.

11 The arts and culture community
12 not only offers creative approaches to
13 civic life so dearly in our current
14 environment, but collectively, we are a
15 job-creating engine, a unifying and
16 humanistic force, a tourism catalyst, an
17 education provider and an all-around
18 economic benefit to the City. I
19 understand that extremely difficult
20 pulsating decisions must be made.
21 However, cuts to arts and culture will
22 have an adverse trickle-down effect on
23 the well-being and economic health of
24 the City. I'll leave it to others to
25 explain how the sectors drive billions

1 in economic impact. Importantly, as it
2 has been mentioned, Philadelphia has one
3 of the largest and most important
4 collections in public art in any
5 American city. And as Chair of the
6 City's Public Art Advisory Committee, I
7 urge support of this program. It
8 manages the commissioning, conservation
9 and collection management which includes
10 donation to the City and relocation of
11 artwork, and this program is the steward
12 of over 1,000 works of public art that
13 are located throughout neighborhoods in
14 the City. Thank you, and I again urge
15 you to continue financial support for
16 arts and culture in Philadelphia. I
17 know we have your ear and I hope we have
18 your vote. Thank you.

19 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

20 Thank you for your testimony.

21 THE CLERK: Sarah McEneaney.

22 I'm sorry. I think the name might have
23 been misspelled. It's either McEneaney
24 or McEneaney.

25 MS. MCENEANEY: This is Sarah

1 McEneaney. Can you hear me? This is
2 Sara McEneaney.

3 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

4 Yes. Please proceed.

5 MS. MCENEANEY: Good
6 afternoon, Council President Clarke and
7 all Councilmembers. Thank you for the
8 opportunity to testify today. I'm a
9 65-year-old working artist and community
10 activist. The proposed budget would
11 eliminate our Office of Arts, Culture
12 and the Creative Economy and the
13 Philadelphia Cultural Fund.

14 I urge you to not support any
15 budget that would do this. The One
16 Percent for Art Program which manages
17 and implements public art commissions as
18 well as taking care of Philadelphia's
19 public art, I know the body of this
20 program firsthand having been a
21 recipient of a One Percent for Art
22 commission and served on committees in
23 support of other One Percent for Art
24 projects. The arts support thousands of
25 jobs in all kinds of businesses. Our

1 City's modest investment of public money
2 yields a huge return. We will come back
3 from this health crisis. We need the
4 arts for a healthy return and when I say
5 healthy, I mean in body, spirit and
6 economically. Artists care deeply about
7 Philadelphia. We invest in the City.
8 We are civically engaged. We are
9 community activists. We volunteer. We
10 give back.

11 Forty years ago, artists after
12 graduating from the many prestigious art
13 programs at our colleges and
14 universities more often than not would
15 leave Philadelphia for other cities and
16 states. That has changed significantly
17 in the last 20 years. Artists are
18 staying here, making their careers and
19 raising families here. And people of
20 all professions are moving to
21 Philadelphia in large part because of
22 the arts here. That was recognized in
23 2008 when the City created the Office of
24 Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy.

25 I know and accept that some

1 cuts need to be made, but respectfully
2 ask please do not eliminate our Office
3 of Arts, Culture and the Creative
4 Economy and its hard-working barebones
5 staff. Thank you.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

7 Thank you for your testimony.

8 THE CLERK: Tristan Lowe. A
9 reminder to push star 6 to unmute your
10 phone.

11 MS. LOWE: Hello. This is
12 Tristan Lowe. Can you hear me?

13 THE CLERK: Yes, we can hear
14 you, Tristan.

15 MR. LOWE: Oh, okay. Hi.
16 Thank you, President Clarke and all of
17 the Councilmembers. I really appreciate
18 this opportunity as a citizen and
19 working artist in Philadelphia for over
20 29 years to participate in this healthy
21 democratic process.

22 I would like to focus a little
23 bit more on the economic impact that the
24 arts has. It's a \$763 billion industry
25 for the U.S. It yields more than the

1 agricultural and transportation does in
2 our whole country. It earns more than
3 370 billion. The amount of money that
4 the U.S. -- all of the governments put
5 in, the three levels of government put
6 in annually is only 4 billion. Yet it
7 yields 30 billion in revenue exported
8 out of the country. I don't understand
9 how we see all over the country the
10 investment in the arts and what the
11 artists do in blighted areas.

12 I, myself, moved here in 1991
13 to East Dauphin and Coral. And at that
14 time, it was very blighted, crime,
15 crack, it was pervasive. But there were
16 several artists of all different age
17 groups and genders that lived around me.
18 And now that area is called Fishtown and
19 was rated in 2018 by Forbes as the
20 hottest new neighborhood in the country.
21 Feeding the arts, all of the arts
22 throughout the communities in
23 Philadelphia is essential. Just look to
24 what we've already had and what we've
25 talked about, that this country holds

1 the greatest public art fund -- I mean,
2 public art works of any city in the
3 nation. Look to our own City. You
4 know, when you go on the website, what
5 is it that attracts people to this City,
6 it's our culture, it's our art. We have
7 the greatest institutions, art
8 institutions in the country and we need
9 to help support them and feed the local
10 communities. That's what's going to
11 bring us out of this devastating time.
12 And what brings people together is the
13 arts and the culture in all of the
14 different neighborhoods of this great
15 City that I call my home. Thank you
16 very much, everyone.

17 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

18 Thank you so much for your testimony.

19 THE CLERK: Hillary Jay.

20 MS. JAY: Yes, this is Hillary
21 Jay. Council President Clarke and
22 Councilmembers, thank you for this
23 opportunity to testify today, and thank
24 you for introducing the resolution
25 calling for the Kenney Administration to

1 delay the elimination of the Office of
2 Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy
3 and the Philadelphia Cultural Fund until
4 Council has had time to review the
5 entire 2021 budget.

6 I'm a forty-year resident of
7 Philadelphia city. I built a national
8 multi-million dollar fashion business on
9 North American Street in the 1980s and
10 helped lay the foundation for
11 Kensington, Fishtown enterprise zone. I
12 covered design in architecture for the
13 Philadelphia Inquirer before finding
14 DesignPhiladelphia, America's first
15 design festival and a national model for
16 festivals across the country.

17 Currently, I'm Director of
18 Education for the Society of Experienced
19 Designers, an international membership
20 organization headquartered in
21 Washington, D.C. I choose to live in
22 Philadelphia because of our history,
23 heritage and culture. I choose to live
24 here because of the first Walker Center
25 Art program and thousands of pieces of

1 public art that rival any other across
2 the United States. I choose to live in
3 Philadelphia because of our wealth of
4 historic houses, our well-renowned
5 museums, stellar jazz heritage and
6 internationally regarded dance groups.
7 Along with thousands of other people
8 like me, I choose to live in
9 Philadelphia because I have been able to
10 prosper through creating culture here.

11 Philadelphia has never been a
12 sixth borough of New York or any other
13 city. It is a unique and vibrant place,
14 the birthplace of democracy and it's
15 still evolving in telling a very
16 American story. Philadelphia is a
17 world-class city. World-class cities
18 are rich in cultural resources. That is
19 how world-class cities attract and
20 maintain citizens, raise their tax base,
21 elevate their education systems and
22 create desirable, livable urban
23 communities. Without Philadelphia's
24 arts and cultural wealth, there would be
25 no reason to come here as a tourist or

1 move here to go to college, relocate
2 here to work with or raise children.

3 I am more than aware of the
4 vulnerable situation so many people are
5 in today causing tremendous challenges,
6 pressures and challenges to the City.
7 The creative community may look like an
8 expandable extra from certain seats in
9 this theater, but the amount of money
10 saved by eliminating the Office of Arts,
11 Culture and Creative Economy and the
12 Cultural Fund is a drop in the City's
13 budget. The City's \$4 million
14 investment provides a return on
15 investment of \$3.4 billion. How do we
16 save money by throwing it away? I keep
17 wondering when we reach the other side
18 of this health crisis will Philadelphia
19 be a vivid leader, a 21st century
20 example of best practices or will we be
21 culturally bankrupt. The way forward is
22 not back, especially if it means going
23 back to a time when the City is not
24 among the vanguard of innovative
25 American cities.

1 I've watched Philadelphia grow
2 exponentially through the arts in my 40
3 years here. While we continue to
4 struggle with economic disparity, let us
5 not throw away what distinguishes this
6 City from every other. Our creative
7 economy supplies the fundamental tools
8 for Philadelphians to become better-
9 educated, healthier and safer. Our
10 creative economy is the gateway that
11 enables us to do good work with and for
12 our fellow citizens, work valued locally
13 and pride (inaudible) respectfully. And
14 on behalf of thousands of children, 2100
15 artists, 1800 arts organizations,
16 protect the Office of Arts, Culture and
17 the Creative Economy, the City's public
18 art program and the Philadelphia
19 Cultural Fund, thank you for recognizing
20 the creative sectors significant to
21 Philadelphia's economic viability now
22 and in the future and for hearing my
23 testimony.

24 THE CLERK: Councilman Jones,
25 I think you're still on mute.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.

2 Thank you for your testimony.

3 And, Mr. Stitt, would you
4 please read the next person to testify.

5 THE CLERK: Absolutely. It's
6 Louis Massiah.

7 MR. MASSIAH: Thank you very
8 much, Council President Clarke and other
9 members of Council. My name is Louis
10 Massiah and I'm offering testimony in
11 consideration of the ordinances related
12 to the amending of the Fiscal Year 2021
13 budget. Specifically, I'm quite
14 concerned about the proposed elimination
15 of funding for the Philadelphia Cultural
16 Fund, along with the hundreds of
17 neighborhood cultural organizations that
18 it supports, the funding of the African-
19 American Museum of Philadelphia and the
20 closure of the Office for Arts, Culture
21 and the Creative Economy.

22 I'm the Director of the Scribe
23 Video Center, a media arts center
24 located in West Philadelphia for serving
25 neighborhoods throughout the City

1 through our community history projects,
2 neighborhood screenings, youth media
3 programs and our community radio
4 station. Our programs directly involve
5 over 5,000 Philadelphians each year. We
6 have been the proud recipients of
7 Councilman David Cohen Award made by the
8 Philadelphia Cultural Fund.

9 We know that one of
10 Philadelphia's greatest assets is the
11 culture that emanates from the
12 neighborhoods. Community culture is a
13 key reason that Philadelphia is a
14 healthy and livable city. The history
15 of accessible cultural institutions goes
16 back to the earliest days of the City.
17 And I'll skip my allusions to Benjamin
18 Franklin and AME Mother Sarah Bass
19 Allen. And then today throughout
20 Philadelphia there are places like the
21 Taller Puertorriqueno, Asian Arts
22 Initiative, PhilaDanco, Brandywine Print
23 Archive, the Cleft Club and Scribe,
24 which are very much part of this
25 tradition.

1 Philadelphia distinguished
2 itself nationally when it created the
3 Cultural Fund as a peer review rather
4 than a patronage-based way of
5 strengthening community culture. The
6 Office of Arts, Culture and Creative
7 Economy through the robust programs that
8 it manages has been pivotal in helping
9 ordinary citizens and small community
10 groups avail themselves to the rich,
11 cultural resources of the City. We are
12 aware of the huge impact that COVID-19
13 pandemic has had on our health, our
14 lives and our work and that there may be
15 a need for spending contractions to keep
16 the City on solid financial footing.
17 But culture, creating it, sharing it is
18 part of our identity, part of life. It
19 is essential for a livable, healthy
20 city. It is what keeps us civilized.
21 Support provided by our tax dollars to
22 the Cultural Fund is sometimes the main
23 source of funding for the many community
24 arts organizations in every councilmanic
25 district. Although many are quite

1 small, these organizations have an
2 outsized effect and impact on community
3 life.

4 I also want to make a special
5 plea to abandon -- plea not to abandon
6 support for the African-American Museum
7 of Philadelphia, one of the most
8 important and certainly the most visible
9 cultural institution for a huge
10 percentage of Black Philadelphians.

11 Beyond a place of exhibition, it is a
12 place of gathering, creation and
13 learning. I hope the decisions about
14 rebudgeting how revenues are spent will
15 take into account the importance of
16 community-based arts to the life-blood
17 of the City and that these vital
18 organizations and taxpayer support is
19 not eliminated. Thank you.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
21 so much for your testimony.

22 Mr. Stitt.

23 THE CLERK: Valerie Gay.

24 MS. GAY: Good afternoon.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good

1 afternoon.

2 MS. GAY: My name is Valerie
3 Gay and I have the privilege of serving
4 as Deputy Director of Audience
5 Engagement and the Chief Experience
6 Officer at the Barnes Foundation and I'm
7 Treasurer of the Board of the
8 Philadelphia Cultural Fund. I'm also a
9 native Philadelphian and I'm a proud
10 alumna of Girl's High, Temple University
11 and the University of New York where I
12 studied and earned degrees in music from
13 both institutions.

14 I also founded Fortress Arts
15 Academy, a small arts education program
16 serving primarily marginalized youth and
17 adults in West Philly. I'm here to
18 testify against Ordinance 200287 and
19 Resolution 200307 and the defunding of
20 the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, the
21 African-American Museum and the Office
22 of Arts, Culture and the Creative
23 Economy. We are all painfully aware of
24 the need to reduce the City's budget and
25 I do not envy your task, nor that of the

1 Mayor's Finance Department. But I ask
2 you to please reconsider the funding
3 needs to these entities, as there will
4 surely be lasting ramifications in some
5 of the most vulnerable communities. As
6 you know, the Cultural Fund grant
7 program is unparalleled to providing much-
8 needed general operating funds to nearly
9 350 arts organizations, many of whom
10 served and are lead by people of color
11 and undoubtedly, the City's premier
12 Black culture institution and it's not
13 just for people of African decent, and
14 the OACCE plays a vital role in
15 connecting the City's artist programs
16 and organizations with the broader
17 community. These defundings signal a
18 rollback of some of the strides that
19 we've made in the City over the past few
20 years around creating greater equity and
21 access to funding, particularly in the
22 arts across the City.

23 The Cultural Fund, for
24 example, is diligent in making sure that
25 it is inclusive in its grant-making and

1 collect detailed data to make sure the
2 Fund represents communities across the
3 City. By eliminating this crucial
4 funding, we have basically wiped these
5 gains off the table and it can be very
6 well be the death for several
7 organizations and, therefore, the
8 communities they serve who don't
9 otherwise have access to the art and
10 culture.

11 Additionally, the proposed
12 defunding of AAM sends a negative
13 message about the City's commitment to
14 fairness in funding. In fact, by
15 defunding AAM organizations that means
16 so much to so many people, you are
17 messaging that the rich culture and arts
18 of the City's largest racial demographic
19 is not important. I don't think this
20 body nor the Mayor's Office believe the
21 narrative that these proposed defundings
22 represent. And, therefore, I ask that
23 you amend these budget line items so
24 that everyone in the City can continue
25 to be impacted by AAM, PCF and OACCE.

1 Thank you.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
3 for your input.

4 Mr. Stitt, please read the
5 next name.

6 THE CLERK: Thomas Devaney.
7 Thomas, if you're on the line, press
8 star 6 to unmute your phone.

9 Karyn Olivier.

10 MS. OLIVIER: Good afternoon.
11 My name is Karyn Olivier.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
13 afternoon. Please begin your testimony.

14 MS. OLIVIER: Can you hear --

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, we can
16 hear you.

17 MS. OLIVIER: I vehemently
18 oppose the defunding and elimination of
19 OACCE and the Philadelphia Cultural
20 Fund. I'm an artist, professor and
21 resident of Germantown. I received a
22 tenure track post at Tyler School of
23 Arts, but resisted moving to
24 Philadelphia for many years and instead
25 choosing to commute from Brooklyn.

1 Though our graduate program at Tyler
2 attracted the most talented artists
3 around the country, most would leave
4 when they graduated. That changed about
5 seven years ago, but now choose to
6 remain. That retention of creative
7 capital equates to money in the City's
8 pockets. I chose to move to
9 Philadelphia nine years ago for the same
10 reason many students are staying because
11 of the art opportunities offered by the
12 OACCE and PCF.

13 I think I vividly remember a
14 resident in Germantown thanking me for
15 making a public artwork I created in
16 Germantown. She said, if the City
17 allowed you to make this piece and gave
18 you the money to make it, they must know
19 we're still here. They haven't
20 forgotten us. This artwork served as
21 one reassurance that our economically
22 depressed neighborhoods still matter to
23 the City. Most artists are resilient,
24 resourceful, inventive and know how to
25 stretch a dollar. But no dollars? No

1 acknowledgement that the nicknaming of
2 Philadelphia as the sixth borough was
3 not a direct result of the artistic
4 community and the success of many arts
5 and cultural organizations would be
6 disingenuous and morally corrupt. The
7 elimination would severely impact the
8 artistic and cultural fabric of the
9 City.

10 I also think about another
11 public artwork I created through the
12 OACCE at Stenton Park in Nicetown, which
13 consisted of engraved pavers with quotes
14 from important historical figures
15 significant to the area, and a large
16 blackboard. Recently I saw penned on
17 the blackboard the words, when things go
18 wrong, don't go wrong with them. I'm
19 asking you today to think of those
20 words. Things have gone horribly wrong.
21 The strength of the healthcare systems
22 and the incomprehensible death toll, the
23 intense sadness and personal losses in
24 many ways, the economy which has
25 stripped the arts, will only strike

1 another horrible to blow to the City.

2 Thank you, Council President Clarke and
3 City Councilmembers.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
5 so much for your testimony and we
6 appreciate your patience.

7 Mr. Stitt, next name to
8 testify.

9 THE CLERK: Stacy Levy.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Ms. Levy?
11 Ms. Levy, are you in mute?

12 Mr. Stitt, the next name to
13 testify.

14 THE CLERK: Susan Miller-
15 Davis.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Ms. Davis?
17 Ms. Davis, are you there? Going once --

18 MS. MILLER-DAVIS: Can you
19 hear me?

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, we
21 hear you now.

22 MS. MILLER-DAVIS: Okay.
23 Great. Good afternoon, Council
24 President Clarke and members of City
25 Council. My name is Susan Miller-Davis.

1 I'm an architect and former Director of
2 the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
3 Public Art Program. I'm here to testify
4 about Ordinance 200287 and Resolution
5 200307, specifically to express my
6 opposition to elimination of the Office
7 of Arts, Culture and the Creative
8 Economy, the Philadelphia Cultural Fund
9 and the Public Arts Office.

10 As you are -- I believe we all
11 share the understanding that
12 Philadelphia has a long and respected
13 history of the arts being available to
14 all citizens. Creation of the
15 Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
16 Public Art Program, the first publicly
17 mandated such program in the United
18 States and its sister program, the
19 City's own Percent For Art Program are
20 both now over 60 years old and have led
21 to a wealth of public art and cultural
22 programs and activities throughout the
23 City. Philadelphia is widely known and
24 respected for its wealth of arts,
25 culture and creativity accessible to all

1 citizens all ages in all neighborhoods.
2 This goes back to the founding of this
3 great City, that all citizens are equal
4 in the eyes of God and of government and
5 share the same rights and access to the
6 benefits of good governance, including
7 access and exposure to a range of arts,
8 cultural and creative activity.

9 Sonny Rollins, the jazz
10 saxophonist was asked recently, why does
11 art matter? And his response was, "Art
12 both inspires us to go out and find
13 something new and highlights what we
14 don't know. When I look at a work of
15 art or hear music, I'm transported. I
16 don't know how or where, but I know that
17 it's not part of the material world. It
18 is beyond modern culture's political and
19 technological soul. We're not here to
20 live forever. Humans and material
21 things die, but there is no dying in
22 art." Thank you for this opportunity.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
24 so much for your testimony.

25 Mr. Stitt.

1 THE CLERK: Thomas Davaney.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES:

3 Mr. Davaney.

4 MR. DAVANEY: Good afternoon,
5 Council President Clarke and City
6 Councilmembers. I'm here to testify
7 about Ordinance 200287 and 200307. My
8 name is Thomas Davaney. I teach at
9 Haverford College and I'm speaking as an
10 artist, professional and an active
11 member of the cultural community. I am
12 a lifelong Philadelphian and I love this
13 City. I recently had a book published
14 called Getting To Philadelphia and I
15 just completed a documentary film
16 called, Bicentennial City, which I
17 co-directed, on the Bicentennial 1976.
18 And one footnote about that, is that our
19 LOVE statue, our Closepin and our Flags
20 of the World in the Parkway all come out
21 of that difficult time for our City.

22 I have two comments. The
23 first is that I completely disagree with
24 the elimination of the Office of Arts,
25 Culture and Creative Economy and the

1 Philadelphia Cultural Fund, and I urge
2 you to hit pause and delay on the
3 elimination of these offices at least
4 until June 1st to have some deliberation
5 and reflection. My second comment is
6 just to put the conversation into
7 perspective, that with a budget that's
8 currently one-half of 1 percent of the
9 City's budget, the Office of Arts and
10 Culture and the Cultural Fund have
11 created remarkably effective and
12 meaningful programs that touch, and this
13 is the important thing, every corner of
14 this City. This is exactly the kind of
15 thing the City should be doing and the
16 people who live here want it.

17 The Arts Office really is
18 people working with other people and
19 they are top-level professionals with
20 deep roots in the City and all of its
21 diverse arts communities. They're well-
22 respected and have great credibility and
23 that is no small thing. Let's celebrate
24 and become proud of their work. Let's
25 give ourselves some credit too as a

1 city. We know how much poverty is here
2 and we know how much great need is here,
3 but there's only so much possibilities
4 here too. But America's poorest city
5 would be all the poorer without our
6 intentional support of the arts.

7 Let's not fool ourselves into
8 thinking that somehow that the core
9 functions of this Office will continue
10 without the Office. Let's not fool
11 ourselves about that. The Arts and
12 Cultural Office is a meeting place
13 inside the most significant meeting
14 place in this City. The shining example
15 itself is City Hall. The building is
16 more than a building. City Hall
17 embodies convergence of the civic and
18 the cultural. This is an emotional
19 time. We all know there's going to be
20 some cuts, but we need to use all of our
21 resources and the Arts and Cultural
22 Office is one of them. I applaud you
23 and thank you for all your work. It's
24 no small thing. I thank you very much.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

1 And we appreciate your testimony.

2 Mr. Stitt.

3 THE CLERK: Barbara Silzle.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Ms. Silzle
5 or Silzul. I'm going by you, Matt.

6 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:

7 Yes, Barbara --

8 MS. SILZLE: Hello. Great.

9 Thank you. Hello. I'm Barbara Silzle,
10 the Executive Director of the
11 Philadelphia Cultural Fund. I speak
12 today to implore the City to restore
13 funding to the Cultural Fund so that we
14 can continue to support the City's
15 nonprofit arts and culture community.
16 The Mayor's budget zeroes out funding
17 for the Philadelphia Cultural Fund.

18 The Cultural Fund is the way
19 the City supports the arts in Philly and
20 it has since 1994. It has earned its
21 reputation for equity, access,
22 transparency and integrity. 349
23 Philadelphia arts organizations received
24 a Fiscal Year '20 grant. 76 percent of
25 them are led by women. 36 percent of

1 them are led by people of color. Over
2 60 percent provide access to the arts to
3 Philly's children in and out of school
4 and these groups are in neighborhoods
5 throughout the City in every Council
6 District.

7 The Cultural Fund is a
8 nonprofit that the City contracts to
9 provide annual general operating grant
10 to Philly arts organizations. We have a
11 Board of Directors comprised of arts
12 leaders, community members and
13 representatives named by the Mayor and
14 City Council President. We hire a firm
15 to audit our finances annually. Grant
16 applications are reviewed through a
17 transparent and robust process that
18 includes site visits and peer panels.
19 This operational structure enhances the
20 integrity of the grant-making process
21 and ensures continuity across Mayoral
22 administrations, in terms of PCF-grantee
23 relationships and funding practices.

24 I'd like to say the Cultural
25 Fund disperses City funds in a way that

1 truly is of the people, by the people
2 and for the people. And the City can be
3 proud of that. Our allocation for the
4 past six years has been \$3.4 million.
5 While a cut of 20 percent would be
6 difficult, eliminating funding would be
7 devastating to the arts in Philly. Many
8 of our smallest neighborhood-based
9 organizations would not survive and 45
10 percent of our grantees are very small,
11 operating budgets under 150,000. The
12 economic and social return on the City's
13 financial investment is immense and as
14 Philadelphia emerges from this crisis,
15 the arts must be here for Philadelphians
16 and the Philadelphia Cultural Fund must
17 be here for the arts. I hope City
18 Council will ensure that the Cultural
19 Fund is maintained through this
20 financial crisis. Thank you all so much
21 for your time and service.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: And thank
23 you for your testimony.

24 Mr. Stitt.

25 THE CLERK: Tara Mullen.

1 MS. MULLEN: Hello?

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Hello. We
3 can hear you.

4 MS. MULLEN: Good afternoon.
5 My name is Tara Mullen, Board Chair of
6 the Philadelphia Adult Literacy
7 Alliance. The Alliance supports adult
8 education practitioners and
9 organizations. On behalf of all members
10 of the Alliance, I'm grateful for the
11 opportunity to speak today. Council
12 President Clarke's inaugural address on
13 January 6th talked about the skills gap
14 in Philadelphia.

15 Councilman Clarke, you said we
16 need more adult education classes and
17 curriculum offered to citizens across
18 our city. You continue to state we need
19 more access to classes for adults who
20 want to work, but need to learn the
21 skills to get the technology and
22 healthcare jobs of today. I'm giving
23 testimony today because of the proposed
24 budget that has eliminated the Office of
25 Adult Education, OAE, in the City.

1 The Office of Adult Education
2 has a \$1.1 million budget that accounts
3 for less than 1 percent of the School
4 District's total budget. This Office
5 has been relegated over the past two
6 years to sit within the Office of
7 Workforce Development. Although there
8 is a recommendation to shift Workforce
9 work to the Commerce Department, there's
10 been no discussion of keeping the Office
11 of Adult Education.

12 I'm happy to have heard that
13 there is now consideration to keep the
14 Office. Five Councilmembers, Gilmore
15 Richardson, Domb, Green, Quinones-
16 Sanchez and Bass, have all expressed the
17 dire need for adult education services
18 to remain an Office of this City. I
19 hope the remaining Councilmembers do the
20 same. Last year OAE served 5,000 adult
21 learners through myPLACE, the flagship
22 program established in 2014. That is
23 the only one of its kind in the country.
24 And it's had hundreds of volunteers
25 successfully complete tutor trainings to

1 serve our adult learners which is a free
2 service.

3 In addition, OAE operates 50
4 KEYSPOTS with over 58,000 visits.
5 KEYSPOTS are a step in the right
6 direction to address the digital divide
7 in Philadelphia. They offer free
8 computer access. This has resulted in
9 providing 1100 individuals with digital
10 literacy training. What would we do
11 without this infrastructure?

12 Councilmembers, if you truly believed we
13 needed more adult education prior to the
14 COVID-19 pandemic, as we continue to
15 watch the unemployment rate skyrocket,
16 now is the time to invest in adult
17 education. We again urge you and all
18 Councilmembers to reconsider eliminating
19 this crucial Office for the most
20 vulnerable Philadelphians. Thank you
21 for your time and opportunity to speak.
22 Please stay safe.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.
24 You stay safe as well. Thank you for
25 your testimony.

1 Mr. Stitt.

2 THE CLERK: Lance Haver.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Haver.

4 Lance Haver.

5 MR. HAVER: Good afternoon,
6 Councilman Jones.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: How are
8 you?

9 MR. HAVER: I'm all right.
10 Thank you, sir.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good.

12 MR. HAVER: And thank Council
13 for taking the extra precautions to
14 allow us to testify. My name is Lance
15 Haver. I would like to thank the City
16 workers who have continued to provide
17 necessary services, sometimes placing
18 their health at risk so the City can
19 continue to function. I urge Council to
20 reject the Mayor's proposed budget. It
21 will not solve our economic difficulties
22 and will only make our economic recovery
23 harder.

24 Over the last 30 years, we
25 should have learned that addressing

1 economic downturns with layoffs, cuts in
2 services and greater burdens on working
3 people is counterproductive. The way to
4 revitalize our economy is by investing
5 in our people and small businesses which
6 create jobs. The only thing that
7 Council should cut is the payments to
8 the stadium and Convention Center
9 bondholders. Because the debt is the
10 debt of the Authorities, not the City's
11 debt, the City is not legally mandated
12 to pay it this year. If we can ask
13 landlord and mortgage companies to
14 forgive some payments, certainly we can
15 ask the bondholders to do the same.

16 Let's redirect the bond
17 payments to our City and our schools.
18 Because our deficit is not a structural
19 but situational deficit, we can and
20 should borrow at historically low
21 interest rates to close the deficit and
22 continue to keep people working, provide
23 necessary service and do whatever we can
24 to lower the burdens on Philadelphia.
25 That should include in exchange for

1 funding 80 percent of SEPTA local match,
2 requiring SEPTA to allow unemployed
3 Philadelphians to ride for free while
4 they look for work.

5 We must realize the tremendous
6 challenges our small businesses and art
7 venues will face as they try and reopen.
8 Part of the desirability of living in
9 the City are the restaurants, bars and
10 art venues. If we want to continue to
11 grow Philadelphia's economy and our
12 population, we must do what we can to
13 help them succeed. Council should form
14 a small business committee, meet with
15 small businesses and find ways to change
16 the zoning and tax structures. We can
17 reward developers who dedicate 50
18 percent of their retail space to
19 independent businesses and use Homestead
20 provisions to give those stores a more
21 equal playing field.

22 Council should also help by
23 stopping a net bid process. This means
24 the low bid to the City would be the
25 price bid plus the taxes paid to the

1 City. Businesses that pay City taxes
2 would no longer be at a disadvantage to
3 businesses that moved away escaping the
4 City taxes. Thank you again for my
5 opportunity.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Mr. Haver,
7 I thank you for your input and
8 contribution to the City.

9 Mr. Stitt.

10 COUNCIL PRESIDENT CLARKE:
11 Rachel Garland.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES:
13 Ms. Garland. Ms. Garland.

14 MS. GARLAND: Good afternoon.
15 This is Rachel Garland from Community
16 Legal Services. I'm the Managing
17 Attorney of the Housing Unit at
18 Community Legal Services, and I
19 appreciate the opportunity to testify
20 this afternoon. I'm here to encourage
21 you to maintain able funding both for
22 the Philadelphia Eviction Prevention
23 Project, known as PEPP, as well as to
24 return the General Fund dollars
25 committed to the Philadelphia Housing

1 Trust Fund for Fiscal Year 2021.

2 PEPP was created by City
3 Council in 2017, recognizing that not
4 only does poverty cause evictions, but
5 evictions also cause prolonged poverty.
6 Additionally, the Mayor's Eviction
7 Taskforce found that evictions are a
8 serious racial justice issue, as
9 Philadelphia households headed by Black
10 women with children are most likely to
11 face forced move, exacerbating racial
12 disparity. In this fiscal year, PEPP
13 received 2.1 million for critical
14 eviction prevention work, but the
15 Mayor's budget proposes only 500,000
16 gutting representation of and support
17 for tenants facing eviction in the midst
18 of a pandemic. For what truly amounts
19 to a drop in the budgetary bucket, PEPP
20 has been incredibly successful.

21 Over the past two and a half
22 years, the data shows that 95 percent of
23 tenants helped by PEPP have successful
24 outcomes for their families. PEPP
25 tenants are twice as likely to obtain

1 agreements that stipulate that their
2 landlords make repairs, keeping families
3 safe and improving housing conditions
4 throughout the City. PEPP attorneys
5 help clients negotiate agreements with
6 their landlords to work out an
7 affordable payment agreement or reduce
8 the amount of rent owed, which increases
9 the value of rental assistance when
10 available.

11 PEPP has made a lot of
12 progress over the past three years and
13 Philly was in a better position to deal
14 with a pandemic because of PEPP. During
15 this pandemic, PEPP is assisting
16 hundreds of renters who were facing
17 illegal lockouts, ensuring that their
18 homes were safe and helping
19 Philadelphians who have lost their
20 income to negotiate with their landlords
21 so they will not face eviction when the
22 courts reopen.

23 Maintaining PEPP also makes
24 sense from a budget standpoint. A
25 recent report shows that for every

1 dollar invested in legal representation
2 for renters, the City sees an economic
3 return. We urge you to keep full and
4 stable funding of PEPP in the City
5 budget to prevent homelessness, a costly
6 court backlog and economic devastation.
7 We also urge you to return the General
8 Fund dollars committed to the
9 Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund for
10 Fiscal Year 2021. Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
12 and thank you for what you do for the
13 renters.

14 Mr. Stitt.

15 THE CLERK: Susan Teegan.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Ms. Teegan.

17 MS. TIGAN: Good afternoon,
18 Council President Clarke and all City
19 Councilmembers. I'm so grateful to
20 advocate today for historic funding for
21 the Philadelphia Cultural Fund. I'm the
22 founder and Executive Director of
23 ArtWell, a midsize nonprofit. In the
24 last 20 years, ArtWell has served more
25 than 37,000 students K through 12,

1 primarily in North, West, Southwest and
2 Northwest Philadelphia in partnership
3 with schools and neighborhoods.

4 Support from the Philadelphia
5 Cultural Fund is critical to ArtWell
6 providing sustained arts education with
7 students who face overwhelming
8 challenges and disinvestments. And yet
9 through the arts, discover the power of
10 imagination, healing, equity,
11 resilience, celebration in communities.
12 We believe our education is a civil
13 right and necessary for a free and fair
14 education.

15 Studies have proven that
16 students who participate in arts
17 programming are three times more likely
18 to go and graduate from high school and
19 exponentially more likely to graduate
20 from college and go and volunteer. At
21 James Rhoads Elementary in Mill Creek,
22 we realized our students couldn't write
23 poems because they couldn't read. So
24 for the past five years, we've tutored
25 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders in reading so

1 they can all read by 4th.

2 At Parkway Northwest High in
3 Olney, our teaching artists helped these
4 students create their own Black Joy
5 Project and lead townhall meetings.
6 Right now we're all aware of how this
7 pandemic strengthens the breath of life.
8 ArtWell provides spaces for students to
9 breathe. Even as now in our virtual
10 programs, they help students express
11 their fears, find healing, tap their
12 strengths, find their voices, celebrate
13 their cultures and communities.

14 When the brother of an ArtWell
15 student was a victim of gun violence, he
16 decided to write a poem instead of
17 retaliating with a gun. Art literally
18 saves lives. And when we invest in
19 arts, we're investing in our students'
20 learning and leadership development
21 instead of supporting a school-to-prison
22 pipeline. I urge you to help students
23 have the space to dream boldly, breathe
24 freely and develop into creative
25 citizens. Please restore funding to the

1 Philadelphia Cultural Fund so hundreds
2 of organizations like ArtWell can help
3 our youth and communities thrive and
4 lead. Thank you so much.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
6 for your testimony.

7 Mr. Stitt.

8 THE CLERK: Julia Guerrero.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES:
10 Ms. Guerrero. Ms. Guerrero.

11 THE CLERK: And we also have
12 Libby --

13 MS. GUERRERO: Hi. This is
14 Julia Guerrero. Can you hear me?

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, we
16 can.

17 MS. GUERRERO: Great. Thank
18 you. I'm here in support of the Office
19 of Arts, Culture and the Creative
20 Economy, Art in City Hall, the Percent
21 for Art Program, the Collection
22 Management Program and the Cultural
23 Fund. The office was formed at the
24 start of the Great Recession at a time
25 when people were thinking big about the

1 role of culture and urban life, and how
2 the arts could be one of the beacons to
3 get us out of those dark days.

4 Investing in the arts and encouraging
5 this young office to grow was a forward-
6 looking idea by Philadelphia's
7 leadership and the Office grew despite
8 the bleak landscape in 2008.

9 The Office put the arts and
10 the City's support on full display and
11 the poetic implications of the City
12 moving their art office literally out of
13 the attic and putting it on display in a
14 central place in City Hall was something
15 that could only be achieved by
16 understanding that the arts are a vital
17 civic service.

18 Now, here we are on another
19 dark day. And instead of thinking big
20 and being a thought leader, we have this
21 cut to the Office which means that we
22 are moving backwards. Just like moving
23 the Office out of the attic and to the
24 ground floor was more of a statement
25 than a physical move, so too is this

1 proposed cut. What does this say about
2 the City's support of the arts and the
3 small arts organizations that make this
4 City so great. Members of City Council,
5 I ask you to maintain our Office of
6 Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy.
7 Thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
9 for your testimony.

10 Mr. Stitt, next person to
11 testify.

12 THE CLERK: Libby Rosof.

13 And this will be the last
14 person in the first group. After this,
15 we will have to take a brief break,
16 about a five-minute break to get the
17 second group lined up, Councilmember
18 Jones.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you,
20 Mr. Stitt.

21 MS. ROSOF: Hello. This is
22 Libby Rosoff. Should I go ahead?

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes,
24 Ms. Rosof. Please testify.

25 MS. ROSOF: Thank you. Good

1 afternoon to everyone in City Council.
2 I'm one of the cofounders of
3 theartblog.org, which at 17 years old is
4 one of the oldest, most widely respected
5 art blogs on the Internet. What I want
6 to know is when the COVID lockdown is
7 over, do you want a city with theater,
8 with dance, with art on the street and
9 in the galleries, with young families
10 reviving aged-out neighborhoods, with
11 restaurants and bars teeming with life
12 and joy, with community art centers
13 where anyone of any age or any income
14 level can make art? Or do you want the
15 kind of Philadelphia I moved to in 1967,
16 the Philadelphia that was the punchline
17 to a W.C. Fields' joke. That joke city
18 grew into the 21st century artist mecca,
19 nurtured in part by the Office of Arts,
20 Culture and the Creative Economy.

21 The OACCE oversees the widely
22 democratic Philadelphia Cultural Fund,
23 which gives operating funds to 350 small
24 and midsize art organizations,
25 including Artblog, that brings art into

1 the lives of rich and poor, young and
2 old in every Councilmanic district.
3 Also, the Art and City Hall Program
4 displays art made by citizens from
5 school children to the Fire Department
6 to professional artists. OACCE also
7 oversees two important public art
8 programs that are national models. One
9 maintains the oldest and largest
10 collection of public art in the nation
11 and the other commissions new public art
12 via the widely copied Percent For Art
13 Program. Not only is art a civic good
14 and a source of joy and pride, it is
15 also profitable.

16 The City's arts sector
17 generates \$3.4 billion in economic
18 activity, generating 157 million in City
19 tax revenue. The cost to the City is
20 only one-tenth of 1 percent of the
21 City's budget according to PEW, et al.
22 Cutting the arts budget is penny wise
23 and pound foolish. Unless we recognize
24 the complexities that make our City
25 great, we will be undercutting the

1 conditions that fuel our vibrant City
2 life. I want to add that you can read
3 more testimonials from all of the public
4 at the artblog.org on the Internet.
5 That's it. Thank you. Thank you for
6 listening.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
8 so much for your testimony.

9 Mr. Stitt, this is the last
10 one or the break?

11 THE CLERK: Yeah, so this is
12 the break. Our tech team needs about
13 five minutes to bring on the next group
14 of callers for testimony.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: And so,
16 people can stay on this call or rejoin?

17 THE CLERK: The Members can
18 stay on. All of the callers are free to
19 leave who has testified thus far.
20 Anybody who's on the line who has not
21 testified can also stay on the line.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you
23 so much, sir.

24 THE CLERK: No problem.

25 (Brief recess.)

1 THE CLERK: Councilman

2 Squilla?

3 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes.

4 THE CLERK: Are you available
5 to Chair the hearing?

6 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Yes, we
7 can start. I know Councilmember Sanchez
8 also was going to follow up, but we can
9 get started and have the testimony. If
10 you want to call the first person.

11 THE CLERK: Absolutely. Sean
12 Kelley.

13 MR. KELLEY: Thank you so
14 much. Thank you for your time, members
15 of Council, Council President Clarke. My
16 name is Sean Kelley. I'm the Senior
17 Vice-president at Eastern State
18 Penitentiary Historic Site. I also
19 served as Vice-president of the Board of
20 Directors of the Philadelphia Cultural
21 Fund from 2009 to 2012.

22 When I started at Eastern
23 State Penitentiary as its first full-
24 time employee in 1995, our annual budget
25 was less than \$100,000. The first grant

1 that we ever received was from the
2 Philadelphia Cultural Fund. 25 years
3 later in an era when many Americans
4 believed that mass incarceration was the
5 civil rights issue of our times, Eastern
6 State has become the closest thing our
7 nation has to a national prison museum.
8 We're also proud second-chance
9 employers, believing that people who
10 have experienced incarceration need to
11 play a central role connecting the
12 general public to complex and emotional
13 topics.

14 During our quarantine, our
15 programming has shifted to focus on the
16 impact of COVID-19 on incarcerated
17 Americans. Today we employ 68 people.
18 Last year we hosted 310,000. That's
19 not -- that's just daytime Historic Site
20 visitors, 310,000, making us one of the
21 most popular visited cultural attractions
22 in the region. Our success story with
23 its critical early supports from the
24 Philadelphia Cultural Fund is not
25 unusual. In fact, it's typical. It's

1 how the Cultural Fund has always worked.

2 To this day, about half of the
3 Fund's grantees have operating budgets
4 of less than \$150,000 with little or no
5 paid staff. The Cultural Fund's
6 rigorous peer review process encourages
7 professionalism and structure to small
8 and emerging organizations and
9 critically, it provides peer support
10 even as it evaluates for excellence.
11 The Cultural Fund often serves as a
12 gateway to larger funding. Many larger
13 funders see the Cultural Fund as a seal
14 of approval, a first step towards
15 increased capacity.

16 In fact, the Philadelphia
17 Cultural Fund's peer-reviewed focus on
18 small and medium, community and
19 neighborhood-based organizations. It's
20 a strategy that many larger funding
21 organizations are moving towards today.
22 In other words, the structure and
23 priorities of our City's Cultural Fund
24 have been 30 years ahead of their time.
25 We urge the Office of Arts, Culture and

1 the Creative Economy and Philadelphia
2 Cultural Fund be maintained at
3 meaningful levels so our City's small
4 and neighborhood cultural organizations
5 are not left completely without support
6 during the greatest economic downturn in
7 living memory. Many of them will simply
8 not survive.

9 Additionally, our City needs
10 to be in a position to return full
11 investment in this critical Office and
12 this critical Fund in the coming years
13 without having to rebuild them from
14 scratch. Thank you so much, President
15 and members of City Council, for your
16 time and careful consideration.

17 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank
18 you, Matt. Do you want to call the next
19 person to testify?

20 THE CLERK: Antoinette Coward-
21 Gilmore. Is Antoinette on the line?

22 MS. COWARD-GILMORE: Can you
23 hear me?

24 THE CLERK: Yes.

25 MS. COWARD-GILMORE: Greetings

1 to Council President Clarke and all who
2 serve Philadelphia City Council. Thank
3 you for this opportunity to speak with
4 you and thank you for Barbara Silzle for
5 giving me this opportunity to represent
6 Philadelphia artists today.

7 Again, this is Antoinette
8 Coward-Gilmore. I am the founder, CEO
9 and Artistic Director of Danse4Nia
10 Repertory Ensemble. Danse4Nia is a
11 contemporary, modern nonprofit
12 professional dance company and
13 organization. Coming this July, we
14 celebrate 15 years located in the
15 Germantown West Oak Lane section of our
16 City. However, we've conducted many
17 performances and programming all over
18 Philadelphia, the Mid Atlantic corridor
19 and I'm proud to say (inaudible).

20 Some of you may know that Nia
21 is the fifth principle of Kwanzaa and it
22 means purpose. Therefore, our company
23 name is Danse4Purpose. We've been a
24 Cultural Fund grantee since 2007. We
25 are a small organization and we are

1 greatly appreciative of the funding that
2 we received from the Philadelphia
3 Cultural Fund because it provides our
4 population with quality programming and
5 allows us to maintain our studio in
6 historic Germantown, which is the studio
7 of Danse4Nia. We provide programming to
8 a very diverse, multicultural population
9 here in our City.

10 The arts brings pride and we
11 pride ourselves in giving holistic
12 programming to our population. The arts
13 is the tapestry of Philadelphia. I've
14 traveled through my artistic ventures as
15 a professional dancer and choreographer
16 in the United States as well as
17 international. If you did not know,
18 Philly is known for our artistic
19 landscape, and the arts is a main
20 corridor ambassador and the heartbeat of
21 our City.

22 Defunding the Philadelphia
23 Cultural Fund will silence our voice,
24 take away many jobs, programming for our
25 community and not provide the mental,

1 social, spiritual and personal pride of
2 our population that we serve. As you
3 know, Philly is a trailblazer. And what
4 better time to continue to be a
5 trailblazer by standing by your artists
6 and continue to fund what is the
7 tapestry of our City.

8 As some of you may know, the
9 legendary Johnny Allen, Jr. and Robert
10 Leslie, they started or helped to start
11 the Philadelphia Cultural Fund. I come
12 from that long legacy of Freedom Theater
13 under their leadership and they were
14 very determined to make sure that the
15 voice of Philadelphia artists had a
16 voice in our City. I implore you, along
17 with many of our artists, to continue
18 that voice and to keep our community
19 thriving through the arts and the
20 culture. I thank for your time.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

22 Thank you, ma'am. We appreciate your
23 testimony and your time this evening.

24 Matt, can you announce the
25 next speaker, please?

1 THE CLERK: Amy Ballard.

2 MS. BALLARD: Thank you all
3 for having me today to testify regarding
4 Bill 200287 and Resolution 200307. My
5 name is Amy Ballard and I work for the
6 Helms Academy in West Philadelphia and
7 I'm here today to oppose the proposed
8 elimination of the Office of Adult
9 Education in the City budget.

10 I want to be very clear, that
11 the future of Philadelphia will suffer
12 deeply without the Office of Adult
13 Education and their 37 years of guidance
14 and experience and institutional wisdom
15 and the relationship they have built
16 across the City among education
17 providers. One of the City's greatest
18 concerns right now as we approach the
19 postCOVID-19 time is our economic
20 rebuilding. And to rebuild a city, you
21 need to start with the people.

22 We've already seen the
23 devastating effects of unemployment
24 during this time, both to our economy
25 and to our citizens' well-being and it's

1 evident that those who have the least in
2 our society have been affected the most.
3 So the recovery is about more than just
4 getting jobs, but it's about providing
5 career pathways and educational
6 opportunities. Some estimates suggest
7 that over half a million adults in
8 Philadelphia lack the skills that are
9 required by employers. So the question
10 is who is stepping up to fill that gap.
11 It's the adult ed. providers in the
12 City. And each year 5,000 adults are
13 connected to these programs through the
14 Office of Adult Education. So with the
15 already high levels of poverty in this
16 City and our current almost unfathomable
17 level of unemployment, thousands of our
18 citizens need adult education now, and
19 the knowledge and work and dedication of
20 the Office of Adult Education staff is
21 not replaceable through a website or
22 (inaudible). I do not have to tell all
23 of you how important education is. I
24 only want to state that education is a
25 right to all people of all ages and all

1 communities. It transforms our City, so
2 I'm asking you to keep the Office of
3 Adult Education in the budget. Thank
4 you.

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 Thank you, ma'am. We had a lot of
7 discussion about that Office earlier
8 today in our budget hearings. We
9 appreciate your testimony.

10 Matt, will you call the next
11 testifier.

12 THE CLERK: Jamie Song. Jamie
13 Song. Jamie, if you're on the line,
14 remember to press star 6 to unmute
15 yourself.

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

17 Proceed with the next person and we'll
18 come back to them.

19 THE CLERK: Beth McConnell.

20 MS. McCONNELL: Good evening.
21 This is Beth McConnell, Policy Director
22 with the Philadelphia Association
23 Community Development Corporation
24 testifying on Bill 200287. PACDC urges
25 Council and the Administration to

1 restore funding to the General Fund's
2 commitment to the Philadelphia Housing
3 Trust Fund. Bill No. 180744 approved by
4 Council in 2018 as the compromise to the
5 construction impact passed legislation
6 required an appropriation to the Housing
7 Trust Fund at least equal to expiring
8 tax abatements in the preceding year.

9 The Mayor's proposed FY21
10 budget to eliminate that General Fund
11 commitment is in contrast with that
12 statute. This will eliminate more than
13 9.8 million for rental housing
14 production and preservation and zero out
15 the successful Philly First Home Buying
16 Program that distributed more than 5.7
17 million over the last year in grants to
18 first-time homebuyers. This will
19 negatively affect our lowest-income
20 tenants who desperately need a safe,
21 affordable home and hurt low- to
22 moderate-income buyers who deserve a
23 shot at the stability homeownership
24 provides in these trying times. These
25 programs are important for our economic

1 recovery, creating jobs and tax revenue.

2 Philadelphia should ensure a
3 minimum Housing Trust Fund commitment of
4 20 million this year. If legislation
5 pending and Council is adopted, that
6 will extend moratoriums and prevent rent
7 increases for 12 months. These Housing
8 Trust Fund dollars will be needed to
9 stabilize affordable housing units that
10 operate without profit margins and with
11 razor-thin cash flows to ensure that
12 tenants are living in units that are
13 well-maintained and operated.

14 We do applaud Mayor Kenney for
15 proposing to continue funding for most
16 of our commercial corridor programs.
17 They are vital to ensure that we have
18 the staff on the ground in our
19 neighborhoods helping businesses reopen
20 safely, access grants and loans they
21 need to survive and keep the corridors
22 clean and safe. We also urge Council
23 and the Administration to direct more
24 funds from the PHL COVID-19 fund that
25 has been run by Congress and CIDC to

1 quickly and effectively provide vital
2 support during the shutdown. Targeting
3 funds to those businesses that cannot
4 access state or federal programs is
5 critical to create more equity in the
6 recovery process. We are also concerned
7 about the decrease in Commerce
8 Department funding and staff that could
9 hamper many of these programs.

10 Finally, we hope Council will
11 continue to support the CDC Tax credit
12 program and ensure that all of the
13 participants were able to continue at
14 full staff functioning during this
15 crises. Thank you for the opportunity
16 to testify.

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
18 Thank you, Beth, for your work and your
19 advocacy. We appreciate that.

20 Matt, will you call the next
21 person.

22 THE CLERK: Certainly. Vashti
23 Dubow -- Dubois.

24 Lanise Miller.

25 MS. DUBOIS: Greetings. This

1 is Vashti. Greetings, Council, and
2 thank you for the opportunity to speak
3 addressing Bill No. 200287. My name is
4 Vashti Dubois. I am the Executive
5 Director and founder of the Colored
6 Girls Museum in Germantown. September
7 11th we celebrate our fifth birthday.
8 TCGM's primary audience are ordinary
9 Black women and girls, but not only
10 Black women and girls. The museum has
11 in the last five years attracted
12 national and international interests.
13 She is the first institution of her kind
14 to celebrate, document and archive the
15 story and perspective of ordinary
16 Colored girls.

17 TCGM attracts school groups,
18 universities, classes, sororities
19 women's groups, churches, families and
20 friends. I heard a professor say that
21 she tells her graduate students that a
22 budget is an express of our priorities.
23 As we try to imagine what the future
24 will look like not just in our City, but
25 in the world, we only know that we do

1 not know. This pandemic has been so
2 very humbling. I have already lost
3 friends and family. I am waiting right
4 now for a family member to be released
5 from the hospital.

6 It is the arts that will
7 continue to ground us in our humanity.
8 It is the music we play in the morning
9 that makes it possible for us to face
10 another day of social distancing and
11 more deaths. It is the photograph, the
12 oil painting, the garden that reminds us
13 to take a deep breath when we didn't
14 even know we were holding our breath.
15 It is the cloth against our skin. A
16 quote we own, a sculpture we pass, a
17 poem we hear that sums up to perfection
18 our fear and our faith. Arts are
19 medicinal, diagnostic, therapeutic. Art
20 heals and we need the medicine. We
21 need the hospitals and clinics they work
22 from to survive. Yes indeed, our
23 classrooms and our public spaces, our
24 museums and our homes, these are
25 hospitals and clinics too. These are

1 urgent care facilities too. Art is a
2 practitioner. Art is an essential
3 worker. Obviously, like many other
4 businesses, this pandemic has closed the
5 door but the work of this institution
6 continues. Thank you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

8 Thank you so very much. We share your
9 concerns.

10 Matt, the next person.

11 THE CLERK: LaNeshe Miller.

12 MS. MILLER-WHITE: Hello.

13 Thank you for allowing me to testify
14 today. My name is LaNeshe Miller-White
15 and I am the co-founder and Executive
16 Director of Theatre in the X. Theatre
17 in the X is a theater company founded in
18 2013 to provide access to quality arts
19 experiences in West Philadelphia. We
20 provide this access by removing the
21 barriers of location and price from the
22 community, offering programming at no
23 cost in their own neighborhood.

24 Many residents in our
25 community in West Philadelphia do not

1 have access to mainstream Center City
2 venues so we bring the arts to them.
3 Our main programming is an annual
4 production in August in Malcolm X Park
5 at 52nd and Pine Street, which sees over
6 600 attendees each year of all ages and
7 walks of life. We present everything
8 from new plays to musicals, like our
9 production of the Wiz in 2018.

10 The Philadelphia Cultural Fund
11 has been a funder of Theatre in the X
12 for four years. We're currently in Year
13 2 of a three-year general operations
14 grant, and it is the only general
15 operations grant our organization
16 received. The investment of the City
17 through the Cultural Fund is essential
18 to our budget as a small organization,
19 especially the restricted nature of the
20 Fund.

21 We are also first-time
22 recipients of a Cultural Fund, Youth
23 Enrichment Grant. Those funds will go
24 directly toward building out our
25 education program curriculum to provide

1 underserved neighborhood schools with a
2 six-week theater education program for
3 free. We hope that the City of
4 Philadelphia will continue to maintain
5 the Philadelphia Cultural Fund so that
6 they are able to continue to support
7 small organizations like ours that
8 provide free and accessible theater to
9 the community. Thank you.

10 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

11 Thank you so very much.

12 The next person, Matt.

13 THE CLERK: Meredith Foote.

14 Meredith Foote.

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

16 Unmute your phone. Proceed.

17 THE CLERK: Jacqueline

18 Williams. And reminder, it's star 6 to
19 unmute.

20 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

21 You want to provide the next two names
22 so people can start lining up.

23 THE CLERK: Absolute --

24 MS. FOOTE: This is Meredith

25 Foote.

1 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

2 Thank you. Proceed.

3 MS. FOOTE: Can you guys --

4 okay. Good afternoon, Councilmembers.

5 I'm speaking today in reference to Bill

6 No. 200289. Please hear our plea for

7 keeping the Arts budget intact. My name

8 is Meredith Foote. I'm the principal of

9 Overbrook Educational Center. In 2014

10 when I was hired, we had no music

11 teacher, no drama program and no student

12 choir. Our overall school progress

13 report score or SPR was 29 percent. As

14 a result of not having these things, we

15 had poor student attendance. Only 56

16 percent of students were attending 95

17 percent or more of school days. With no

18 music, no drama and no choir, students

19 were unmotivated to come to school.

20 There was minimum joy in their day and

21 the climate rating showed. We scored 65

22 percent.

23 Fast-forward to 2020, we have

24 a full-time music teacher, a thriving

25 drama program and a glorious choir. Our

1 student attendance has increased 19
2 percent. 75 percent of students
3 attending 95 percent or more of school
4 days. Our climate score has risen 30
5 percent to 95 percent. In the past five
6 years, our SPR score has jumped every
7 single year. We have grown 39 percent
8 overall from 29 percent to 68 percent.
9 Our success is directly attributed to
10 integration of the arts. The number one
11 reason for our increase in attendance,
12 our increase in climate and our increase
13 in overall student achievement is
14 because we have the funds to hire and
15 support our music teachers, our drama
16 teachers and our afterschool programs
17 with the help of PCCY.

18 OEC serves the vulnerable
19 students in the City, the blind and
20 visually impaired. Imagine being blind
21 or visually impaired during this time
22 and having to participate in online
23 learning. Imagine having an
24 intellectual disability or ADHD, minimal
25 movement of your low limbs or having to

1 use a machine as your voice. Now,
2 imagine being at home or at school with
3 no way to express yourself, no way to
4 feel joy, no way to use your voice.

5 Now, imagine the combination of a loss
6 of sight and a loss of a music teacher,
7 a drama program and a school choir. In
8 one word if budgets were cut for the
9 arts, the results would be devastating.

10 When we think and plan for our
11 most vulnerable students first, we plan
12 and prepare what's best for all
13 children. I urge you to please maintain
14 our budget for the Arts, not just for
15 OEC students, but for all children.
16 It's what's fair; it's what's equitable;
17 it's what's right. Thank you.

18 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
19 Thank you so much and thank you for your
20 service.

21 Matt, you want to call out the
22 next two names so the person can line
23 up?

24 THE CLERK: Absolutely.
25 L. Dominique Howell, Gary Williams.

1 MS. HOWELL: This is
2 L. Dominique Howell. Good afternoon,
3 Councilmembers. I am an independent
4 living specialist and Liberty Resources,
5 the Leading Center for Independent
6 Living in Philadelphia. I am testifying
7 on behalf of myself and our members,
8 many of which live in subsidizing to
9 oppose the Mayor's cuts towards the
10 Housing Trust Fund. Liberty Resources
11 is also a member organization of the
12 Philadelphia Coalition for Affordable
13 Communities.

14 Liberty Resources has existed
15 for nearly four decades and is run by
16 people with disabilities. At LRI we
17 help consumers get out of nursing homes
18 and back into the community, but the
19 City's severe shortage of accessible
20 units make it very difficult to locate
21 housing and get out of nursing homes.
22 If you have not lived in a nursing home,
23 you have no idea how awful it is,
24 especially given this kind of pandemic.
25 Over half of the deaths from the virus

1 city-wide has been in nursing homes.
2 There are also many people with
3 disabilities who are currently homeless
4 with nowhere to live because of lack of
5 accommodations and ADA-accessible
6 housing. I along with my daughter used
7 to be one of them. I could not even
8 begin to imagine how much more difficult
9 my situation would be during a pandemic
10 such as this one.

11 With more money in the Housing
12 Trust Fund, we can transition nursing
13 home residents and homeless people back
14 into their own homes. The Mayor's
15 proposed cuts to the Housing Trust Fund
16 will result in a 33 percent reduction in
17 the number of affordable units that the
18 City can build this upcoming year. On
19 top of that, the Mayor's proposed cuts
20 cutting 3 million for wheelchair-
21 accessibility modification in the fiscal
22 year for 2021. That means that more
23 than 150 people with disabilities will
24 be trapped in nursing homes unable to
25 find accessible housing.

1 We have been working on making
2 the Housing Trust Fund one that meets
3 our City's needs for over 20 years. We
4 live in a city where over half of its
5 residents are renters, where 16 percent
6 of people are disabled and many are on
7 fixed income, making anywhere between
8 \$738 to \$1200 a month.

9 Hold on for a second.
10 Councilmembers, I am asking you to stand
11 with us and to continue to put money in
12 the Housing Trust Fund, which responding
13 to this pandemic should mean investing
14 more affordable accessible housing, not
15 less. Please help move us forward in
16 the right direction to be a city that
17 fights for our housing for the lowest-
18 income Philadelphians. Thank you.

19 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
20 Thank you so much for your advocacy.

21 Next, Matt.

22 THE CLERK: Gary Williams,
23 followed by Alex Doty. Gary Williams or
24 Alex Doty.

25 MR. DOTY: Hi there. Good

1 afternoon. My name is Alex Doty and I
2 am the Executive Director of the
3 Philadelphia Parks Alliance. I'm here
4 on behalf of a coalition of 95 groups
5 that support funding the essential
6 services that Parks & Rec will provide
7 in response to COVID-19. We recognize
8 the unprecedented budget challenge that
9 COVID-19 has created, but we are also
10 troubled by a basic truth.

11 The African-American and
12 low-income communities that are
13 disproportionately impacted by COVID-19
14 are also most impacted by budget cuts to
15 programming at rec centers and lack of
16 maintenance at neighborhood parks. Now,
17 more than ever we see how important it
18 is that all Philadelphians have access
19 to parks and open space. This
20 stewardship of those spaces is an
21 essential service that is not shut down.
22 Parks & Rec plays a key role in feeding
23 the children of Philadelphia, especially
24 during the summer months, serving almost
25 2 million meals last year, an essential

1 service that is not shut down.

2 Program staffing at Parks &
3 Rec before any budget cuts has been
4 inadequate. Over 100 rec centers,
5 playgrounds have only one staff person
6 on site the vast majority of the time
7 and 14 Parks & Rec staff who were
8 assaulted on the job last year. Our
9 coalition is composed of long-term
10 partners of Parks & Rec. We will do our
11 utmost to extend Parks & Rec programs
12 and stewardship activities in this time
13 of crisis, but cuts to Parks & Rec staff
14 pose often insurmountable challenges to
15 our partnerships and threaten the
16 countless volunteer hours that are
17 essential to make Parks & Rec run.

18 Our coalition includes
19 Fairmount Park Conservancy, afterschool
20 activities partnership, Pennsylvania
21 Horticultural Society, Philadelphia
22 Youth Sports Collaborative, the
23 Philadelphia Parks Alliance and over 95
24 Rec Advisory Councils, Friends of Park
25 and Out-School-Time groups. We must

1 have the essential services that Parks &
2 Rec provides to recover from COVID-19.
3 Thank you for this opportunity to
4 testify on the revised budget.

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
6 Thank you. Thank you for your advocacy
7 and for all the groups.

8 Matt, the next two people.

9 THE CLERK: Stanley Shapiro
10 followed by Kris Soffa or Saffa.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
12 Stan Shapiro.

13 MS. SHAPIRO: Hello. Do you
14 hear me now?

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
16 We hear you, Stan. We hear you, Stan.

17 MR. SHAPIRO: Okay. Great.
18 All right. Thank you. Good afternoon,
19 members of Council and Councilmember
20 Quinones-Sanchez in particular. Nice to
21 hear your voice. My name is Stan
22 Shapiro and I'm Vice-chair of Philly
23 Neighborhood Networks. Prior to
24 cofounding PNN, I was Chief Staff
25 Attorney to this body, City Council and

1 was on its legal staff in one capacity
2 or another for 22 years.

3 Today we've heard many
4 impassioned pleas for maintaining
5 services that are on the chopping block
6 in the Mayor's budget. Philly NN and
7 the Alliance for a Just Philadelphia of
8 which it is a member, I believe that
9 this Council can raise the money it
10 needs to avoid many of these cuts.

11 Today I want to focus on two
12 of these proposals. One is increasing
13 the rate of the gross receipts tax. The
14 other is reimposition of the personal
15 property tax. The gross receipts tax is
16 a very low tax, that was paid almost
17 entirely by the City's largest
18 corporations and by many businesses that
19 are located outside of the City that
20 sell goods and services into the City.
21 We propose doubling its current very low
22 rate to .0028 percent which will still
23 leave it well below a historical high of
24 .0039 in the '90s, and we also propose
25 exempting even more small businesses

1 from the tax.

2 We believe this proposal even
3 in light of the economic downturn would
4 raise \$40 million toward closing the
5 budget gap. We also propose reinstating
6 the .004 percent personal property tax
7 that the City had on its books for most
8 of the last century until 1997. This
9 was a pure wealth tax on both
10 corporations and individuals who could
11 afford to pay. As we all know during
12 the last 30 years, the rich have grown
13 incredibly richer to a great extent due
14 to massive tax cuts. This is the moment
15 for them to give back.

16 The PPT raised approximately
17 \$17 million in the last year it was in
18 effect. Since then stock market values
19 have tripled, so it's likely revenue
20 from that tax would triple as well
21 netting the City at least another \$50
22 million. If actually enforced, which it
23 was, it would last in effect, it would
24 raise considerably more. In response to
25 our idea, some people say we can't take

1 wealth away from the rich. It's going
2 to hurt the economy. But we all know in
3 the end this budget will inevitably be
4 taking wealth. The only question is
5 from whom. Those from whom there's
6 nothing else to take or those who right
7 now have everything. The right choice
8 cannot be clearer. Thank you for your
9 time and attention.

10 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

11 Thank you, Stan.

12 My next two.

13 THE CLERK: Kris Soffa or
14 Saffa and Lydia Ramharack.

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

16 Our next two.

17 THE CLERK: Angelita Ellison
18 and Linda Stern.

19 MS. ELLISON: Hi. This is
20 Angelita Ellison.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

22 Thank you. Proceed.

23 MS. ELLISON: I'm a volunteer
24 with the Women's Community
25 Revitalization Project. I live in

1 Northeast Philly. I was shocked to hear
2 the Mayor's proposal to cut all of the
3 General Fund dollars from the Housing
4 Trust Fund for Fiscal Year 2021. I
5 understand that we are in a crisis right
6 now because of COVID-19 and sacrifices
7 must be made. But why does he expect
8 the most vulnerable of our population to
9 make those sacrifices. Philadelphians
10 served by the Housing Trust Fund include
11 people with disabilities and family of
12 color with the lowest incomes in our
13 City.

14 Before this pandemic, more
15 than half of all City renters and almost
16 one in every three homeowners were cost-
17 burdened. Now, because of the virus,
18 many more Philadelphians are struggling
19 to pay rent and mortgages, buy food and
20 pay for medical care. By taking away
21 another resource, you are adding to the
22 burdens of an already overburdened
23 population. The cut in funding combined
24 with already low resources means there
25 is \$33 million left to support housing

1 programs. This results in a 33 percent
2 reduction in the amount of affordable
3 units the City can build in a year. 300
4 families not having help buying their
5 first home, over 1,000 homeowners not
6 being able to repair their homes and
7 being forced to live in unsafe
8 conditions and more than 150 people with
9 disabilities being trapped in dangerous
10 nursing homes because there is so little
11 affordable accessible housing in our
12 City.

13 If City Council does not stop
14 the Mayor's cuts to the Housing Trust
15 Fund, more people will struggle to stay
16 housed or afford accessible housing and
17 more people will die from COVID-19
18 because they are trapped in unsafe and
19 crowded living conditions like nursing
20 homes and shelters. It is imperative
21 that Mayor Kenney and City Council honor
22 their commitment and return the General
23 Fund dollars permitted to the Housing
24 Trust Fund for Fiscal Year 2021. Thank
25 you for allowing me to testify.

1 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

2 Thank you for your advocacy.

3 Matt, the next two people.

4 THE CLERK: Sure --

5 MS. RAMHARACK: Hello. You
6 called my name previously. It's Lydia
7 Ramharack.

8 THE CLERK: Sure, Lydia.

9 MS. RAMHARACK: Sorry.

10 Anyway, my name is Lydia Ramharack and
11 I'm a second-year Master's student in
12 Mental Health Counseling at the
13 University of Pennsylvania, a clinical
14 researcher at CHOP and a current
15 Philadelphia resident. I want to thank
16 City Council for giving me the
17 opportunity to speak about the
18 importance of the education equity fund.

19 During my junior year at Penn,
20 I participated in a program through the
21 Netter Center that took undergraduates
22 into West Philadelphia Schools to teach
23 neurology. I went into Sayre High
24 School science class once a week for one
25 hour to teach a subject in which I had

1 no formal training. The program I
2 participated in gave us information
3 sheets on the topics we would be
4 teaching about educating us on said
5 topics. In the classroom, we would give
6 our students worksheets to fill out.
7 But if they asked us questions that were
8 not on the information sheet, we often
9 weren't able to answer the questions.

10 After one semester, I chose not to
11 continue with this program because I
12 realized I wasn't helping these students
13 in a long-lasting way.

14 This experience has shown me
15 that mega nonprofits are interacting
16 with Philadelphia City schools
17 insufficiently and are not aligned with
18 what the schools actually need. In the
19 past years at Sayre, there have been two
20 reports of lead paint residue, one
21 report of damaged asbestos, eight
22 reports of lead in the drinking water
23 and six reports of asthma triggers. The
24 repeated exposure to lead and asbestos
25 is a public health concern and lead to

1 long-term consequences such as many
2 learning difficulties, hearing loss and
3 seizures.

4 We need to prioritize the
5 health of students and that involves
6 everyone, including wealthy mega
7 nonprofits to do their fair share and
8 invest in the needs of Philadelphia
9 schools. This is why I'm standing with
10 Philly parents, teachers and students to
11 ask Mayor Kenney to establish the
12 education equity fund so that
13 universities like Penn can contribute
14 meaningfully to Philly by financing the
15 needs of our public schools.

16 Universities using SILOTs, or services
17 in lieu of taxes, to attempt to
18 contribute to the community in which it
19 resides is a disservice because this
20 ignores the immediate health problems
21 that some of the schools are facing.

22 In order to give students the
23 best chance to succeed in school, we
24 need mega nonprofits to invest in
25 helping fix the aforementioned

1 structural and environmental health
2 issues that students are facing. Please
3 act effectively so that Philly students
4 don't have to move from a COVID-19
5 public health crisis to a lead and
6 asbestos one. Thank you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

8 Thank you so much for your advocacy.

9 Matt, can you go through the
10 next three? We're going to ask people
11 to bear in mind and try to listen out
12 for your name so we can continue the
13 order. We still have a couple of people
14 left and we want to be mindful. Thank
15 you.

16 THE CLERK: Absolutely. And
17 forgive me if you hear the ambulance in
18 the background.

19 I'm going to call Kris Soffa
20 or Saffa up, I believe that this person
21 is present, followed by Linda Stern and
22 then Aniyah Comer or Colmer.

23 MS. SOFFA: Matt, can you hear
24 me?

25 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

1 Yes, we can.

2 THE CLERK: We can.

3 MS. SOFFA: Oh, good. Good
4 evening. My name is Kris Soffa. And
5 thank you, Council President Clarke and
6 other members of Council. I'm a proud
7 member of the Parks & Rec Commission and
8 as I'm sure you're all aware Parks & Rec
9 provides more than just access to clean,
10 safe recreational opportunities. We
11 provide essential services, especially
12 now during COVID-19. We serve almost 2
13 million meals a year to children. And
14 two summers ago, a Commission friend and
15 I set out to swim "across the City." So
16 I swam in 28 of our rec center pools.
17 And in every single rec center, I met
18 dedicated staff who impressed me for
19 their commitment and their excellence
20 and they came to work in sometimes very
21 dangerous facilities with broken things
22 and no resources, and they still
23 delivered superb programming and created
24 a safe, nurturing oasis for our kids.
25 In the poorest neighborhoods, these rec

1 centers are often the anchors of the
2 communities. Now, COVID has hit these
3 areas even harder. Parks & Rec needs
4 restored funding now to relieve the
5 disproportionate impact of the pandemic
6 on these low-income neighborhoods.

7 Philadelphia as you probably
8 know is one of the largest and poorest
9 cities in the countries with one of the
10 largest park systems, and Parks & Rec's
11 budget has traditionally been so low
12 that we have to enroll armies taxpayers
13 who volunteer to help us clean and
14 maintain our beautiful park system. Our
15 maintenance needs have just increased
16 due to COVID. Now that the weather is
17 breaking, we're seeing a record number
18 of people pouring into our parks. Our
19 parks can't clean and maintain
20 themselves. Parks & Rec has an
21 increased workload and we need your
22 help. I invite you to fully restore our
23 funding so we can do our job, especially
24 in our at-risk neighborhoods where it
25 now matters the most.

1 Thank you to City Council for
2 your extraordinary work in this really
3 difficult time. And it reminds of what
4 Mr. Roger's mother told him to do when
5 things got scary. She said, just look
6 for the helpers. And this is exactly
7 who you are, City Council. Thank you
8 for your love and your honor and your
9 service to the City and to a purpose
10 greater than yourself.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
12 Thank you, and thank you for your
13 service on the Commission. We
14 appreciate that.

15 The next two people, Matt.

16 THE CLERK: Linda Stern
17 followed by Aniyah Comer.

18 MS. STERN: Can you hear me?

19 THE CLERK: Yes.

20 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
21 Yes.

22 MS. STERN: My name is
23 Dr. Linda Stern. I am a member of Toxic
24 Free Philly and thank you for the
25 opportunity to speak with you today to

1 support Philadelphia Parks & Recreation.
2 We all intuitively know that being
3 outdoors and nature is good for our
4 health. It makes us feel good. Medical
5 studies consistently show that being
6 outside can lower blood pressure and
7 reduce stress. Studies show that being
8 in nature boosts our immune service.

9 In the time of COVID-19
10 pandemic for those with weakened immune
11 systems and high blood pressure are
12 particularly vulnerable to this disease.
13 This is especially important.
14 Philadelphia is blessed with one of the
15 largest public park systems in the
16 world. Toxic Free Philly supports our
17 public parks and we strongly oppose any
18 budget cuts to them.

19 It is important that our parks
20 are adequately funded and absolutely
21 safe. One component of such a safety
22 program is the elimination of synthetic
23 herbicides that have been used to remove
24 unwanted weeds and vegetation. Their
25 many serious side effects include cancer

1 and weakening of the immune system.
2 Therefore, going forward we're asking
3 that such use be stopped and as the City
4 reopens, we transition to effective
5 nontoxic methodology. The protocol is
6 known as integrated pest management and
7 can be used to accomplish the same goal
8 of maintaining our beautiful public
9 spaces.

10 We congratulate our Department
11 of Parks & Recreation for beginning the
12 process by partnering with the national
13 organization Nontoxic Neighborhoods to
14 launch two organic projects thanks to
15 Councilmember Cindy Bass. Given this
16 time when we are living with a COVID-19
17 pandemic, we need to quickly expand for
18 pilot projects to city-wide
19 implementation and increased funding for
20 PPR. The use of integrated management
21 systems will not only protect our
22 health, it likely will not cost more
23 than what we spend out. Our residents
24 deserve no less and our health demands
25 it. Thank you so much for your

1 consideration.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Thank you.

4 The next two.

5 THE CLERK: Aniyah Comer and
6 then Will Gonzalez.

7 Aniha, if you're still on the
8 line, please press start 6 to unmute
9 your phone.

10 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

11 I think they're trying. Go to the next
12 person and we'll get back to them.

13 THE CLERK: Sure. Will
14 Gonzalez, are you on the --

15 MS. COMER: Hello? This is
16 Aniyah Comer.

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

18 You can proceed, Ms. Comer.

19 MS. COMER: Good afternoon,
20 Councilmembers. My name is Aniyah Comer
21 and I'm an 11th grade student from
22 Lankenau Environmental Science Magnet
23 High School. Today I would like to
24 speak about Bill No. 200289 and the
25 importance of public school funding,

1 which includes art education.

2 Why are the arts important to
3 me? Imagine it's the first day back and
4 you're an honor student and you're
5 getting your roster for the new school
6 year. You scan through all the classes
7 that you're sure will keep you up all
8 night. And in a sigh of relief seeing
9 you have an art class. That's how I
10 feel every year -- that's how I felt
11 every year so far with the next being
12 harder than the last.

13 In the coming school year, I
14 will be a 12th grader, the hardest year
15 yet. Throughout high school, art has
16 always been there to calm me down,
17 whether it's been classes stressing me
18 out, it's been a bad day or regular
19 everyday pressures of being a student.
20 I've always had an outlet to let out all
21 my frustrations. That is true for a lot
22 of my peers as well. Art helps us be
23 our best selves at school so we can stay
24 focused on learning. So please when
25 discussing budget cuts, please protect

1 our schools' arts programs. Thank you.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Thank you so much for your testimony.

4 We appreciate young people stepping
5 forward and advocating.

6 The next two folks.

7 MR. GONZALEZ: Buenas tardes.

8 Good afternoon. My name is Will
9 Gonzalez. I'm the Executive Director of
10 Ceiba. Thank you for giving us the
11 opportunity to testify today on Bill
12 200287. It is important that
13 Philadelphia ensures that its budget
14 needs to be of the neighborhoods that
15 face the worst risk of contracting
16 COVID-19.

17 Two recent studies show that
18 Philadelphia's Latino neighborhoods face
19 a disproportionate risk of contracting
20 COVID-19. One is by the Economy League
21 and the other one is by the Federal
22 Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. As the
23 City adjusts its budget, it must not
24 forget the old adage that a change is
25 only as strong as its weakest link.

1 Philadelphia cannot afford to further
2 ignore its most vulnerable communities
3 during this crisis.

4 Latinos were getting
5 shortchanged on many fronts in the City
6 budget prior to the health emergency.
7 Proof of that is the Latino homeless
8 paradox in Philadelphia. Latinos have
9 difficulty accepting homeless services
10 relative to their communities
11 representation among the City's poor.
12 As homelessness increases during this
13 health emergency, are we going to ensure
14 that there's equity in the delivery of
15 homeless services. Please do not let
16 the City hide from meeting this
17 challenge because of this crisis. It is
18 also in all of our answers that we
19 maximize preservation and creation of
20 affordable housing.

21 Ceiba supports investing a
22 minimum of 20 million in General Fund
23 dollars into the Philadelphia Housing
24 Trust Fund, preserving rental
25 productions to help leverage other

1 federal dollars, like low-income housing
2 tax credits to fill in gaps in
3 production of new units, supporting
4 rental preservation, maintaining down
5 payment closing costs assistance like
6 the First-home Buyer Program.

7 Ceiba is also very concerned
8 about the increase in property taxes.
9 You can't get blood out of a stone. It
10 was difficult for low-income families to
11 pay their rising property taxes before
12 the pandemic. Now the City wants to
13 move the goalpost again. We understand
14 the need to seek more revenue in the
15 State's Uniformity Clause. With that
16 said, the City needs to fortify tax
17 relief and tax foreclosure programs.

18 We also want to make sure that
19 all of the above apply to unauthorized
20 immigrant homeowners. On another matter
21 regarding unauthorized immigrants, we
22 respectfully request that the City
23 maintain its commitment to the Vera
24 Agency of Justice, Safety and Fairness
25 for Everyone Network. The City must

1 keep its word in private public
2 partnerships.

3 Finally, please provide
4 maximum support for the Office of
5 Immigrant Affairs. As this crazy crisis
6 continues to turn, we need to make sure
7 that all our neighbors, including people
8 who are limited English-proficient are
9 informed and empowered. Thank you.

10 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
11 Thank you, and thank you for your
12 advocacy.

13 Matt, the next two please.

14 THE CLERK: Michael Bradford
15 Forbes and Erin Hoops.

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
17 You want to repeat one more time and
18 then we'll go to the next two.

19 THE CLERK: Michael Bradford
20 Forbes. Erin Hoopes.

21 MR. FORBES: Hello --

22 MS. HOOPES: This is Erin
23 Hoopes. I'm here.

24 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
25 Proceed. Thank you. Erin, you want to

1 proceed and then Michael?

2 MS. HOOPES: Sure. Good
3 afternoon, members of City Council. My
4 name is Erin HoopES and I'm a
5 Philadelphia resident, a City library
6 worker and a member of AFSCME District
7 Council 47, Local 2186. I'm testifying
8 about Bill No. 200287, the operating
9 budget for FY2021. I'm calling on City
10 Council to work with Mayor Kenney to
11 completely overhaul the proposed City
12 budget so that working people are not
13 paying for the economic impact of the
14 pandemic.

15 The proposed budget clearly
16 values putting more police on the street
17 over opening space and clean public
18 facilities in the City, where residents
19 of all ages are welcomed and encouraged
20 to grow and learn, heal and recover and
21 engage with each other in healthy and
22 productive ways. Our children shouldn't
23 be paying the cost of the pandemic.

24 We need fully funded rec
25 centers, arts programs, libraries in

1 schools. Our young people deserve safe
2 spaces, caring mentors and empowering
3 out-of-school-time programming. I'm
4 especially infuriated that Mayor Kenney
5 touts his lens of racial equity while
6 simultaneously laying off hundreds of
7 Black and Brown workers.

8 As City Councilmembers, you
9 have a duty to stop budget cuts to City
10 services that will disproportionately
11 affect Philadelphia's most
12 disenfranchised residents and further
13 entrench people in poverty. You cannot
14 call yourself dedicated to racial equity
15 by simultaneously ripping public
16 services away from residents of this
17 diverse city. You must fight for
18 progressive revenue reform measures,
19 such as reinstating pilots, ending the
20 property tax abatement program and
21 reforming the City's corporate tax
22 structure.

23 As a resident City worker and
24 union member, I urge you to stand
25 against Mayor Kenney's austerity budget

1 and protect all citizens of
2 Philadelphia, by passing a budget that
3 protects our most vulnerable citizens by
4 allowing City workers to do what they do
5 best, provide robust and transformative
6 services to all residents. Thank you.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
8 Thank you.

9 Next. I believe he was on the
10 line. What's the name, Matt?

11 THE CLERK: Michael
12 Bradford --

13 MR. FORBES: Hello?

14 THE CLERK: -- Michael, are
15 you here?

16 MR. FORBES: Yes.

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
18 Please proceed. Thank you for your
19 patience.

20 MR. FORBES: Thank you. Thank
21 for your time. My name is Brad Forbes.
22 I am the Treasurer of a housing
23 cooperative in Philadelphia called the
24 Life Center Association. We have about
25 50 people in eight properties here.

1 We're part of a larger movement within
2 the City of Philadelphia, including the
3 Philadelphia Coalition of Affordable
4 Communities and the Philadelphia Area
5 Cooperative Alliance of which I am
6 currently a Co-vice President.

7 Specifically, the thing that connects
8 these twon, one of the things that I --
9 the thing that I want to talk about is
10 Bill 200287. And the two issues that I
11 want to talk about are cuts to the
12 Commerce Department and the Housing
13 Trust Fund general dollars.

14 And they're connected because
15 the core of what connects them is that
16 these are things that are building
17 sustainable Philadelphians' self-
18 sufficiency. For example, the City of
19 Philadelphia is spending about \$39
20 million a year on temporary homeless
21 housing. While cutting in this
22 particular budget \$33 million in
23 permanent housing that wouldn't have to
24 be continually shelled out by the City,
25 so we're taking initiatives that were

1 initially intended to end that sort of
2 recurring cycle and begin building
3 structures that mitigate the recurring
4 nature of this \$39 million that we're
5 spending every year on temporary
6 homeless housing. And we're sort of
7 undoing that so that we can keep
8 spending. And that \$39 million isn't
9 going down. It's going up. It's not
10 going anywhere but up in light of the
11 COVID-19 crisis.

12 The Philadelphia Area
13 Cooperative Alliance is on the ground
14 building new businesses. We have an
15 economy that we're going to need to
16 rebuild. People are losing their jobs
17 at astronomical unspeakable rates. The
18 Commerce Department is on the front
19 lines with the Cooperative movement and
20 other movements and other organizations
21 to build this economy back from the
22 ground up. I don't understand, and I
23 think many people are confused as to how
24 the budget as proposed is prioritizing
25 the ability for us to build an actual

1 sustainable economy out of this crisis.

2 Thank you for your time.

3 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

4 Thank you. Thank you for your advocacy.

5 The next two names, Matt,
6 please.

7 THE CLERK: Sure. It's Alisha
8 Dorsey and Kerry Rothman or Rathman.

9 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
10 Kerry Rathman. Are these the last two
11 for this group?

12 THE CLERK: And then we have
13 two additional, I believe, Elizabeth
14 Tarloski and Mark Harold. And that will
15 conclude the group.

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
17 If people can queue up, we would greatly
18 appreciate it. Thank you. Thank you
19 for your patience.

20 Can you repeat those first two
21 names? Kerry Rathman. Come on, Kerry.
22 Star 6 to unmute.

23 Okay. Keep going down the
24 list.

25 THE CLERK: Alisha Dorsey, are

1 you still on the line?

2 Elizabeth Tarloski or
3 Tarlowski.

4 Mark Harold.

5 MS. DORSEY: Hi. This is
6 Alisha Dorsey. Can you hear me?

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
8 Yes, we can. Please proceed. Thank you
9 for your patience.

10 MS. DORSEY: Thank you. I'm
11 Alisha Dorsey, Family Community
12 Advocate, adding my concerns for Bill
13 No. 200287. We are in changing times
14 with this current pandemic. Our
15 families and community stakeholders are
16 vulnerable and in need of support
17 through these changing times, support
18 services and resources that allow us to
19 care for our needs and adjust to the
20 changing times.

21 I volunteer for our City
22 delivering food and census information.
23 I'm hearing the concerns of those
24 vulnerable because of the pandemic and
25 before the pandemic. City workers would

1 like to know why no one in City Council
2 has been laid off. I would like to ask
3 that City Council At Large be laid off,
4 would also like to ask for our City to
5 employ people to make PPE. Vulnerable
6 members of our society also need court
7 support. Please fund the Defender's
8 Association and not feeding the fear of
9 crime to collaborate the need for more
10 policing. Mental health support is
11 needed for all of us. Please budget for
12 support services that help us through
13 these changing times. Thank you for
14 your time.

15 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

16 Thank you.

17 Next names. I cannot hear
18 you, Matt.

19 THE CLERK: Sorry. Apologies.
20 Elizabeth Tarloski.

21 Mark Carroll.

22 Carrie Rathman.

23 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: Matt,
24 those are all in the next group.

25 THE CLERK: They're all in the

1 next group?

2 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: Yes.

3 THE CLERK: So the three
4 numbers that are on the line, are we
5 done this group?

6 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: Yes.

7 THE CLERK: So, Councilmember
8 Sanchez, we are done this group and
9 believe we need another brief break to
10 bring the next group on.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
12 Okay. So we'll take a five-minute break
13 for the calls to be made and we will
14 re-adjourn at about 5:58.

15 (Brief recess.)

16 THE CLERK: There will be
17 two minutes given for each caller due to
18 the limited time and the volume of
19 people who signed up to testify today.
20 The bell will ring at that two-minute
21 mark. And for each of the callers, we
22 expect you to remain on mute until your
23 name is called. When your name is
24 called, make sure to unmute yourself.

25 And just as a reminder, you

1 have to press star 6 to unmute yourself
2 from the phone. And also, I will be
3 calling in groups of two or three names
4 at a time and we just ask if you're the
5 second or third name called, just to be
6 ready and queued up to testify once the
7 person preceding you is finished.

8 Councilmember Sanchez, would
9 you like me to -- are we live, by the
10 way?

11 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT: Yes, we
12 are live now.

13 THE CLERK: Okay. Thank you.
14 Councilmember Sanchez, would you like me
15 to call the first three names?

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
17 Please proceed. Thank you.

18 THE CLERK: We'll have
19 Elizabeth Tarloski, Mark Harold and Amy
20 Hunter.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
22 Star 6 to unmute yourselves.

23 Repeat the names again.

24 THE CLERK: Elizabeth
25 Tarloski, Mark Harold, Amy Hunter.

1 MS. TARLOSKI: Hi. Yes. Can
2 you hear me?

3 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
4 Yes, we can. Proceed.

5 MS. TARLOSKI: Great. Thank
6 you. Hi. My name is Elizabeth Tarloski
7 and I'm a staff attorney at Philadelphia
8 VIP. This testimony is in reference to
9 Bill 200287 and is in support of full
10 funding for the Philadelphia Eviction
11 Prevention Project or PEPP.
12 Philadelphia VIP is one of six legal
13 service agencies that makes up PEPP and
14 we are unique in that we recruit, train
15 and provide support to volunteer
16 attorneys who represent tenants in their
17 eviction cases.

18 As an organization, we work
19 with over 1,000 attorneys and PEPP helps
20 us to train attorneys as well as new
21 attorneys to represent tenants. To put
22 it simply, PEPP helps tenants in
23 Philadelphia. When tenants are
24 represented by lawyers in eviction
25 hearings, everyone benefits. Fifty

1 percent of Philadelphians are renters
2 and we are America's poorest big city.
3 With rising unemployment and the COVID
4 pandemic, tenants are in an extremely
5 vulnerable position. Yet, the Mayor's
6 budget proposes a 75 percent decrease to
7 PEPP funding. People need stable
8 housing now more than ever and over the
9 past two and a half years, 95 percent of
10 tenants held by PEPP have had successful
11 outcomes in their eviction cases. Now
12 is not the time to cut the funding.
13 Compared to tenants who do not have
14 representation, tenants represented by
15 PEPP attorneys are more likely to
16 negotiate an affordable payment
17 arrangement, enter into agreements with
18 their landlords for more time in a
19 property and negotiate repairs to the
20 property they are living in. Beyond
21 legal representation in eviction cases,
22 PEPP runs an incourt help center, a
23 tenant helpline, a website and community
24 outreach. Continued PEPP funding will
25 keep the City safer and investing in

1 PEPP now will save money and resources
2 later.

3 If tenants cannot access legal
4 representation and there are mass
5 evictions, the City will see increased
6 homelessness, health harms and
7 displacement to our City's most
8 vulnerable residents. As a member of a
9 PEPP organization, I am asking that
10 Councilmembers recognize not only the
11 importance of continued PEPP funding to
12 the City, but also the negative effects
13 a funding cut would have on Philadelphia
14 tenants. Thank you for your time and
15 the opportunity to speak today.

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
17 Thank you for your partnership.

18 The next two people.

19 THE CLERK: Mark Harold. Amy
20 Hunter, followed by Eiko Fan. Reminder
21 to press star 6 to unmute yourself.

22 MS. HUNTER: Amy Hunter is
23 here.

24 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
25 Please proceed. Thank you.

1 MS. HUNTER: Hi. My name is
2 Amy Hunter and I'm here with my son Koll
3 Hunter in regards to Bill 200289 and
4 school budget funding.

5 MR. HUNTER: In art class I
6 learned about famous artists, their
7 technique in how to create art like
8 their art. For example, I have learned
9 how to draw illusion, create sculptures
10 and to draw self-portraits. Art is
11 valuable because it gives me a way to
12 express my feelings. Art also teaches
13 me to see the world in a different way.
14 This helps me in the classroom because
15 there are many ways to think about a
16 problem. If art was not an option at
17 Fort -- I mean at Nebinger, I would have
18 never found my passion.

19 MS. HUNTER: It is hard to
20 express how much gratitude I have for
21 Ms. Grace and the art program she has
22 established at Nebinger. The artwork
23 she was doing with students was one of
24 the main factors we chose Nebinger five
25 years ago for our son. It enlivened the

1 building, bringing cheer, imagination
2 and beauty to the forefront when so many
3 negative notions swirl around parents'
4 minds when deciding to enroll their
5 children in Philadelphia School
6 District.

7 Art has helped transform so
8 many students' lives. As for my son, he
9 loves nothing more than the creative
10 thinking process of what he will do,
11 which Ms. Grace taught him, and this
12 helped him with writing and complicated
13 math problems and other subjects. He
14 has struggled and even struggled with
15 his art projects at times but art class
16 has taught him to see things through,
17 not give up and whatever happens can be
18 amazing in the end. He has taken
19 tremendous pride in his work and loves
20 showing the final product. It takes a
21 village to teach and raise our children
22 and I consider Ms. Grace an intricate
23 person in this process. She's been
24 doing live art classes during this
25 difficult time, and my son is able to

1 reset and put aside all the difficult
2 feelings he has right now and be
3 absorbed in the artwork.

4 I understand that some tough
5 decisions need to be made because of
6 budget constraints, but please keep in
7 mind how important art is to helping
8 support the academic subjects and also
9 shape our children into grounded,
10 creative, empathetic human beings which
11 we need now more than ever. Thank you
12 for your time.

13 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
14 Thank you so much. Thank you for your
15 advocacy and for your son.

16 Next two.

17 THE CLERK: Carrie Rathmann.
18 Eiko Fan.

19 MS. RATHMANN: Hi. This is
20 Carrie Rathmann. Can you hear me?

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
22 Yes, we can.

23 MS. RATHMANN: Okay. Hi. I'm
24 Carrie Rathman, Director of Strategic
25 Partnership at Habitat for Humanity

1 Philadelphia. Thank you for your time
2 today. This crisis has exposed so many
3 of our social fragility. It's
4 dramatically illustrated the inequities
5 of all kinds that diminish our
6 resiliency as a city. It's also exposed
7 our collective stability to be more
8 intertwined than we choose to
9 acknowledge. Ensuring that everyone has
10 access to safe, decent and affordable
11 housing is one of the key steps towards
12 greater stability in our ongoing
13 resilience. We hear about health,
14 sheltering at home, education, economic
15 stability, crime reduction, safety and
16 keeping families intact and then we care
17 first and foremost about housing. And
18 investing in housing is an upstream
19 strategy. Ultimately, it saves the City
20 and taxpayers more dollars for a more
21 expensive social increment service
22 interventions down the line.

23 At Habitat we do repairs and
24 we build and sell homes to first-time
25 low-income homeowners. I'm not going to

1 talk about our programs here today. But
2 at this time when staying safe means
3 staying at home, we were disheartened to
4 hear that the Mayor's proposed cuts to
5 the General Fund dollars going to the
6 Housing Trust Fund for Fiscal Year '21.
7 Now is not the time to cut. Now is the
8 time to invest more in the Housing Trust
9 Fund. We need more resources for the
10 Fund, as building and preserving
11 affordable, accessible housing will be
12 critical for the City's recovery from
13 this pandemic. Cuts to the Housing
14 Trust Fund means fewer affordable home
15 preservation and repair activities that
16 address critical health and safety
17 concerns and more residents living in
18 conditions that lead to injury and
19 illness and in this case, possibly
20 death.

21 It means that families can
22 never access affordable homes, rental or
23 owned. It means the City's fragile
24 homeowners will be more vulnerable to
25 live in their only financial assets.

1 And ultimately, it means these cuts will
2 require more investment down the road
3 and housing instability leads to other
4 problems. So thank you. We hope you
5 invest in the Housing Trust Fund.

6 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

7 Thank you and thank you for your
8 partnership and all your advocacy.

9 The next two.

10 THE CLERK: Eiko Fan followed
11 by Katherine Scott. Reminder to press
12 star 6 to unmute your phone.

13 MS. FAN: My name is Eiko Fan.
14 I am calling about Bill No. 200287. We
15 need to continue funding for Arts,
16 Culture and Creative Economy and the
17 Philadelphia Cultural Fund. These are
18 well-designed programs to empower many
19 people. Why not reduce it for 20
20 percent instead of taking it away. I
21 came from Tokyo 50 years ago to study
22 art at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine
23 Arts. Art in Philadelphia raised me.

24 Art in City Hall has been a
25 very important opportunity for many,

1 many artists with disabilities. I have
2 taught sculpture for the Blind Home and
3 Arts Program at the Philadelphia Museum
4 of Art for 30 years. I designed an art
5 program at the HMS School for Children
6 with Cerebral Palsy. My students cannot
7 talk and cannot move in the conventional
8 way, but in spite of that we make
9 paintings using hats attached -- with a
10 paintbrush attached to the baseball hat.
11 My students really love art. Art in
12 City Hall is a very inclusive well-
13 designed program to show everybody's
14 ability.

15 Mayor visits our school at
16 the HMS school. He knows every kid in
17 Philadelphia should get that respect. I
18 serve on City Hall Art Committee. I was
19 trying to create this summer's exhibit
20 to celebrate Americans with Disabilities
21 Act. Then City Hall Art was taken away.
22 Anne d'Harnoncourt, former President of
23 Philadelphia Museum of Art was part of
24 Art in City Hall Committee. She really
25 liked it. Anne would have wanted to

1 keep Art in City Hall alive. Art in
2 City Hall had presented 109 exhibits in
3 City Hall last year. 2,169 individual
4 artists collaborated with 350 community
5 partners. My motto is art is food,
6 everybody needs it. We need access to
7 art for people with disabilities to
8 show. Let's keep Art in City Hall and
9 keep -- in building Philadelphia's
10 tradition alive. Thank you very much.
11 My name is Eiko Fan.

12 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
13 Thank you so very much. Thank you. The
14 next two. We have to keep everyone to
15 two minutes. We're going to ask folks
16 to please honor the clock. Thank you
17 very much.

18 Matt, the next two.

19 THE CLERK: Catherine Scott,
20 followed by Nicole Eggerts.

21 MS. SCOTT: My name is
22 Catherine Scott, President of AFSCME
23 District Council 47. Thank you for the
24 opportunity to present testimony today
25 concerning Bill 200287. I would like to

1 focus on several areas of Class 200
2 contracted services in the proposed
3 budget, specifically PMHCC and prison
4 contracts. While the City is laying off
5 employees and not filling necessary
6 positions, PMHCC is hiring as though
7 there is no budget deficit. PMHCC
8 should not have an umbrella contract to
9 which the City can add services without
10 City Council oversight.

11 The same is true of contracted
12 services at the Philadelphia prisons,
13 where City employees can provide some of
14 the contracted services. Since the
15 medical and psychiatric services are on
16 a capitated rate with significant
17 reductions in the inmate population,
18 there should be a commensurate reduction
19 in these contracts. These are just two
20 contracts in a category of the City
21 budget which has grown exponentially and
22 rivals the Class 100 category of City
23 employees. Without significant scrutiny
24 over the Class 200 category, City
25 Council fails in its due diligence in

1 assessing the revised FY21 budget
2 presented by Mayor Kenney. Thank you
3 very much.

4 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
5 Thank you, Cathy. We had a very
6 spirited debate this morning around that
7 issue. We appreciate your advocacy and
8 we look forward to working with you on
9 that.

10 The next two, Matt.

11 THE CLERK: Nicole Eggerts
12 followed by Robert Zuritsky. Nicole, if
13 you're on the line, remember to press
14 star 6 to unmute yourself.

15 MR. ZURITSKY: Did you say
16 Robert Zuritsky?

17 THE CLERK: I did.

18 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
19 You can proceed. Thank you. Thank you
20 for your patience.

21 MR. ZURITSKY: Sure. I'll
22 just turn this down. Well, thank you,
23 Councilmember Sanchez, nice to hear your
24 voice, and thank you all of Council for
25 letting me testify today. My name is

1 Robert Zuritsky and I serve as President
2 and CEO of Parkway Corporation. Today I
3 speak to you in my capacity as President
4 of the Philadelphia Parking Association.
5 We represent more than 2,000 men and
6 women who are employed by the parking
7 industry and the 311,500 workers who
8 work in Center City who depend upon us.

9 We are asking you to oppose
10 the Mayor's proposed parking tax
11 increase from 22.5 percent to 27
12 percent. It would be a crippling 20
13 percent tax increase. Parking remains
14 the only industry in Philadelphia to
15 have its own tax. It's subject to the
16 use and occupancy tax and paid to the
17 seven other taxes and fees that make it
18 so difficult for us to have businesses
19 be in Philadelphia. The parking
20 industry's cumulative tax burden
21 currently equates to between 40 and 55
22 percent of what the public pays to park.

23 The vast majority of our
24 employees live in the City and have made
25 careers in the parking industry. In

1 fact, parking has been one of the few
2 industries that offer career advancement
3 to those who are unable to afford
4 obtaining a college degree and can be a
5 pathway out of poverty for many, in
6 addition to our industry, provides a
7 vital service. It is the only form of
8 our transportation infrastructure that
9 self-funds and actually helps subsidize
10 the City tax base.

11 Over the last five years,
12 Center City alone has lost 10,000
13 parking spaces due to the onerous tax
14 burden placed on parking lots and
15 garages. The industry is also worried
16 about a second wave of COVID-19 virus
17 and the devastating impact a second
18 stay-at-home order might have on our
19 businesses and employees. Rather than
20 imposing an even more unsustainable
21 burden on the industry and the citizens
22 who count on it, we believe we should be
23 doing everything we can to encourage
24 workers, shoppers, diners, convention
25 attendees and those patronizing our

1 theaters and cultural institutions to
2 come back to Philadelphia and reboot our
3 economy at this trying time. Thank you
4 for letting me testify.

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 Thank you and thank you for your
7 patience. I know it's been a long
8 evening. Thank you so very much.

9 The next two, Matt.

10 THE CLERK: Venta Kita and
11 Michael Powell.

12 MR. EGGERTS: Hello. I was
13 called earlier. I am testifying in
14 place of Nicole Eggerts. Can you hear
15 me?

16 THE CLERK: Yes.

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

18 Yes, we can. State your name for the
19 record and proceed.

20 MR. EGGERTS: Good afternoon.

21 My name is Noah Eggerts and I'm a
22 freshman at Julia R. Masterman High
23 School. I'm speaking today in reference
24 to Bill No. 200289 and the need for
25 school funding which includes arts

1 education. I read Council President's
2 letter to the School Board in regards to
3 blocking the Mayor's proposed school
4 funding and I am brokenhearted.

5 I've been lucky to grow up
6 surrounded by creativity. Music,
7 theater and film have also played a
8 large role in my life. Because of this,
9 I came to Masterman hooked on the arts,
10 but programs at school were key in
11 fueling that fire. From choir to the
12 school musical to cello and bass
13 instrumental lessons, Masterman has
14 provided opportunity after opportunity
15 to immerse myself in music, art and
16 performance. These programs have given
17 me opportunities and achievements in my
18 school and personal life. They continue
19 to nurture my skills, my interest and my
20 purpose.

21 The creative arts aren't just
22 lessons and talents; they're tools. The
23 ways that we see paintings and
24 sculptures, the ways that we make music,
25 these are things that have the power to

1 shape the lives of young students. We
2 go to school for knowledge and we go to
3 school for skill. The arts provides
4 both of those. And that's why arts
5 education is at the core of student
6 achievement and engagement. It allows
7 students to connect to each other and
8 unwind.

9 I've been lucky enough to grow
10 up surrounded by creativity, but not
11 everyone has that opportunity. The arts
12 programming at school introduces
13 students to themselves, their passions
14 and future careers. School is where we
15 grow, where we find friends, well-being
16 and purpose. That isn't possible
17 without the arts funding we need.
18 That's why we ask you to hold arts
19 education funding safe from any
20 potential budget cuts. Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
22 Thank you so much for your advocacy.

23 The next two.

24 MR. POWELL: This is Michael

25 Pow --

1 THE CLERK: Go ahead, Michael.

2 MR. POWELL: This is Michael
3 Powell. Thank you for allowing me to
4 speak. My name is Michael Powell and
5 I've worked at Parkway Corporation for
6 38 years. I started my career 38 years
7 ago. I worked my way up to become a
8 District Manager. I started as a
9 parking lot attendant. This career has
10 enabled me to provide for my family and
11 pay taxes throughout the years. Our
12 customers will be significantly impacted
13 by this increased tax. Those that come
14 to work and those who come to play.
15 Among our employees 95 percent of who
16 live in the City is already struggling
17 with reduced hours and layoffs. This
18 proposed tax increase will cut our
19 customer base and will lead to reduced
20 hours for employees. Thank you very
21 much for your time.

22 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
23 Thank you for your testimony.

24 The next two, Matt.

25 THE CLERK: Sure. Venta Kita,

1 Venta Keta. Tanara Calem. Tanara
2 Caler. Ashley Spear. Remember to press
3 star 6 to unmute yourselves.

4 MS. SPEAR-LEVINE: Hi. Thank
5 you, Councilmembers, for having me
6 today. My name is Ashley Spear-Levine.
7 I serve as Chief Operating Officer for
8 E-Z Park. I worked for E-Z Park for
9 over 13 years and I've lived in the City
10 of Philadelphia for most of my life and
11 currently raising my family here. E-Z
12 Park currently manages over 14 parking
13 lots and garages throughout the City of
14 Philadelphia.

15 I'm calling today to make you
16 aware of the impact the potential
17 parking tax increase can cause and have
18 on our bottom line and our ability to
19 continue to operate and employ people.
20 Since this crisis, revenues have been
21 down 87 percent. We've had to furlough
22 80 percent of our staff because revenue
23 has not been coming in and people are
24 not parking. An increase in the parking
25 tax to 27 percent in the nearly 40 to 50

1 percent tax burden we currently pay,
2 with all the taxes in total, we will be
3 unable to continue operation or provide
4 parking for people who undoubtedly
5 utilize parking as a safe alternative
6 method of transportation. Even if the
7 City decides to raise our taxes, due to
8 the lack of customers it won't be
9 anything left to do. It's important and
10 it's very hard to pack an empty parking
11 lot. We hope the City will identify
12 better, more creative ways to fill the
13 budget deficit that we are facing.
14 Thank you for your time and opportunity
15 to speak today.

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
17 Thank you for your patience and thank
18 you for your time.

19 The next two, Matt.

20 THE CLERK: Todd Gottshall.
21 Charles Newkirk.

22 MS. KITA: Hello. Can you
23 guys hear me?

24 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
25 Yes, we can. Please state your name for

1 the record.

2 MS. KITA: My name is Venta
3 Kita.

4 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
5 Please proceed. Thank you.

6 MS. KITA: I'm a lifelong
7 resident of East Oak Lane, a member of
8 One Pennsylvania and a long-time retail
9 and tattoo worker. I worked at Burger
10 King, Wawa and Target and I'm testifying
11 about the need to restore the 350,000
12 cut from the Office of Labor in the most
13 recent budget proposal. Yesterday I was
14 interviewed in the Inquirer about the
15 need to pass Question 1, to create an
16 independent Department of Labor. But as
17 important as it is to make the Office
18 independent, it's even more (inaudible)
19 is funded properly.

20 I know firsthand the need for
21 strong enforcement of labor laws in
22 Philadelphia. Workers like me see our
23 employers violating our rights
24 constantly, but do not know where to
25 turn. We know that reporting the issue

1 to corporate will yield dismissive
2 responses; at best, cut hours or jobs
3 lost. If this Office is well-funded, it
4 can be more effective, reach out to more
5 workers and resolve more complaints.

6 The additional funding will allow for
7 more staffing and community grants which
8 are crucial to reach the workers most in
9 need of labor protection.

10 Employers and employees will
11 take it more seriously because they will
12 see the City's investment. And the
13 workers will have more trust in the
14 system because their complaints will be
15 actually addressed. Two years ago most
16 of you voted to pass one of the
17 strongest Fair Workweek bills in the
18 country, but my target store was not
19 consistently enforcing that law as a few
20 weeks ago. At this moment, employers
21 are trying more than ever to take
22 advantage of their workers. If you want
23 a worker to feel the effects of the
24 important protection this Council has
25 passed, please restore the \$350,000 to

1 the Mayor's Office of Labor budget.

2 Thank you.

3 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

4 Thank you. Thank you for your advocacy
5 and your partnership.

6 Matt, next two.

7 THE CLERK: Tim --

8 MR. GOTTSBALL: Todd Gottshall
9 here.

10 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

11 Please proceed. Thank you for your
12 patience.

13 MR. GOTTSBALL: Yes. I'm here
14 to speak on Bill 200288. My name is
15 Todd Gottshall and I've worked for E-Z
16 Park for eight years. I was born and
17 raised here. I live in Philadelphia,
18 Pa. With no customers, where are the
19 revenues coming from. You can't tax an
20 empty parking lot. You would think we
21 would be able to provide relief at this
22 time to get more people to come into the
23 City. I started as an attendant and
24 then went to manager and now general
25 manager. These types of life-changing

1 opportunities are being limited with
2 each increase.

3 The large portion of our
4 employees are immigrants. They were not
5 born here but came here to raise a
6 family and better themselves. A large
7 portion of them support their immediate
8 family here and extended family back
9 home. The increase would force
10 ultimately the reduction in payroll.
11 This will hurt immigrant communities
12 near and far. Thank you for your time.

13 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
14 Thank you.

15 Matt, the next two.

16 THE CLERK: Charles Newkirk.
17 Shayna Kessler. And is Tanara Calem
18 still on the line?

19 MS. KESSLER: This is Shayna
20 Kessler.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
22 Please proceed. Thank you for your
23 patience.

24 MS. KESSLER: Thank you very
25 much Councilmember Sanchez, Council

1 President and all the other
2 Councilmembers. Thank you very much for
3 your time. I'm Shayna Kessler with the
4 Vera Institute of Justice. My testimony
5 today is regarding Bill 200287 and
6 200307 to ask you to safeguard the
7 Pennsylvania Immigrant Family Unity
8 Project or PAIFUP by restoring \$200,000
9 to the City's budget.

10 In 2017, the Vera Institute
11 established the SAFE network which
12 provides strategic support and catalyst
13 grant to jurisdictions that invest
14 public funding to build deportation
15 defense programs. We know that these
16 programs promote family unity, due
17 process and stability for immigrants
18 targeted by the Federal Government's
19 anti-immigrants attacks.

20 As my written testimony
21 explains, in light of the disastrous
22 impacts of COVID-19, for people in
23 detention centers this work has never
24 been more urgent. We all understand
25 that when a person is charged with a

1 crime, a lawyer will be provided for
2 them if they're unable to afford one.
3 The principle that the government may
4 not take a person's freedom without
5 access to a lawyer is fundamental to our
6 understanding of justice. Nevertheless,
7 most people facing deportation must
8 navigate immigrant court alone even
9 though they face permanent family
10 separation and possible forced return to
11 deadly conditions in another country.
12 But thanks to this City's leadership,
13 there is hope for immigrants in
14 Philadelphia who are still being
15 targeted by the Federal immigration
16 authorities even today.

17 Last summer we were honored to
18 partner with this City as a national
19 leader in the state's network. Because
20 of Philadelphia's initial investment,
21 the Vera Institute and the Samuel S.
22 Fels Fund joined the City to launch a
23 promising public private partnership
24 that is now promoting freedom and safety
25 for immigrants. However, funding for

1 the coming year was not included in the
2 recently proposed executive budget.

3 Today I am asking you to save
4 PAIFUP to ensure that clients have a
5 fighting chance to return to their
6 families, their jobs and their
7 communities. Philadelphia's investment
8 of \$200,000 in Fiscal Year '21 will
9 unlock an additional \$100,000 from the
10 Fels Fund, promote stability for
11 immigrant Philadelphians and send a
12 strong message that their City stands
13 with immigrants, especially when it
14 matters most. Thank you very much for
15 your time.

16 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
17 Thank you and thank you for your work
18 and your advocacy.

19 Matt, the next two.

20 MS. CALEM: Hi. This is
21 Tanara Calem. I was called to testify.

22 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
23 Please proceed. Thank you very much for
24 your patience.

25 MS. CALEM: Hi. My name is

1 Tanara Calem. I'm an artist living and
2 working in Philadelphia. I'm urging
3 City Council to vote against Ordinance
4 No. 200287 and Resolution 200307, which
5 would cut municipal arts funding for
6 this coming fiscal year. I am the lead
7 facilitator of a small performance
8 cooperative whose work has been made
9 possible by the Philadelphia Cultural
10 Fund, a fund that will not exist if the
11 Mayor's budget is approved. There is
12 not a single artist I've worked with in
13 the City whose practice has not been
14 positively impacted by the Philadelphia
15 Cultural Fund or the Office of Arts,
16 Culture and the Creative Economy.

17 I moved to this City because I
18 knew that Philadelphia cares about its
19 artists and does everything in its power
20 to get them to stay here. I doubt that
21 any of you would choose to pass a
22 municipal budget that effectively closes
23 the Office of Arts, Cultural and
24 Creative Economy and shuts down the
25 Philadelphia Cultural Fund were we not

1 facing this completely unprecedented
2 public health crisis.

3 So instead of spending time
4 impressing upon you the importance of
5 the arts, I will appeal to your economic
6 shrewdness. The Philadelphia Cultural
7 Fund and Office of Arts, Culture and
8 Creative Economy works not only with
9 individual artists like myself, but also
10 with organizations of all sizes. We're
11 talking about a vast percentage of our
12 City's workforce.

13 By bringing Philadelphia's art
14 budget down to \$0, we are effectively
15 shooting our economy in the foot.
16 Without a municipal arts budget, we are
17 taking away critical income that allows
18 artists and arts organizations to make
19 their impact on the economy. Artists
20 will not be able to help you rebuild
21 Philadelphia's economy without essential
22 municipal support. We know that artists
23 are creative and resourceful, but to
24 take away Philadelphia's support of the
25 arts diminishes the vital role that arts

1 play in our souls and in our economies.
2 Because City Councilmembers are creative
3 and resourceful too, I know that they
4 will be able to approve a version of the
5 2021 budget that supports life-
6 sustaining services without sacrificing
7 the arts.

8 One of the reasons why I chose
9 to live and work in Philadelphia is
10 because I knew that I would not have to
11 convince my leaders that the arts are
12 life-sustaining too. Thank you for the
13 time.

14 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
15 Thank you so very much. We have about
16 six or seven people left. Matt's going
17 to read the last two names. We're going
18 to ask people to please pay attention
19 and stay on queue.

20 Matt, the next two.

21 MR. NEWKIRK: Hi. My name is
22 Charles Newkirk. I was trying to hop
23 in, everybody's been jumping over me.
24 But good evening. My name is Charles
25 Newkirk. I've worked for Parkway for

1 almost 42 years. I live in the
2 Brewerytown neighborhood of the City of
3 Philadelphia and rose through the ranks
4 at Parkway from parking lot attendant to
5 my current position as Director of
6 Operations. Thanks to Parkway and the
7 parking industry, I've been able to
8 purchase homes, put children through
9 college and to provide a decent living
10 for my family.

11 Additionally, I have over 100
12 employees that have also been able to
13 earn a living because of this industry.
14 We service customers from all parts of
15 the City and outside of the City. They
16 do it for work. They do it to conduct
17 essential services here in City Hall and
18 elsewhere throughout the City of
19 Philadelphia. Our customers are diverse
20 and they have all types of stories as
21 well. We need to be able to provide
22 affordable parking rates for their
23 parking needs. Because of these
24 reasons, I'm in opposition of the
25 parking tax increase, Bill No. 200288.

1 Thank you for your time.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Thank you so very much. We had called
4 you previously and you did not respond,
5 but thank you for your patience and your
6 time.

7 Matt, can you read the next
8 two names?

9 THE CLERK: Sure. Siobhan
10 Gleason. Jonah Eden.

11 MS. GLEASON: Can you hear me?

12 THE CLERK: Yes.

13 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
14 Siobhan?

15 MS. GLEASON: Yes, this is
16 Siobhan Gleason.

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
18 Please proceed.

19 MS. GLEASON: Okay. I'm here
20 to speak about Bills 200287 and 200307.
21 I'm a part-time seasonal worker for the
22 Free Library of Philadelphia. I work as
23 an afterschool leader in the LEAP
24 afterschool program for two years and
25 I'm among the hundreds of City workers

1 who have already received layoff
2 notices. LEAP is a free drop-in program
3 that offers homework help, it also
4 offers literacy, finance, technology,
5 engineering, art and math programs for
6 every student.

7 Most importantly though, we
8 serve as a safe space for kids and teens
9 to socialize in a city where there are
10 very often few such alternatives. LEAP
11 helps to ensure that libraries are not
12 exclusionary spaces where children have
13 to read quietly. With LEAP, libraries
14 have welcoming spaces for children and
15 teens, places where they can learn,
16 explore and play at their own pace,
17 freeing other staff members to work with
18 other patrons to apply for jobs and
19 access other resources.

20 One LEAP program I led in
21 March was our teen anime club. Teen
22 boys at the library had asked where they
23 could read manga and watch animee. I
24 had no idea how popular the reading
25 would be. 15 teens showed up and they

1 vowed to bring their friends to the next
2 meeting. Right away they were already
3 discussing plans for the club. The
4 COVID-19 shutdown has put the meetings
5 on pause but ASL layoffs will
6 prematurely end it for good.

7 In addition to serving at the
8 community hub, we also serve as job
9 training for many teens. We supervise
10 ensuring them to work as teen leadership
11 assistants and they can start working as
12 early as age 14. Often this is their
13 first job. ASLs Like myself help teens
14 with reading programs, writing resumes,
15 keeping track of reference questions and
16 many other responsibilities. Many TLAs
17 have told me that they want to work as
18 teacher librarians and other City
19 workers after college. For a city
20 struggling with unemployment,
21 eliminating this program eliminates a
22 valuable path to the working world.

23 LEAP is just one program that
24 will be lost if the budget cuts in the
25 new 2021 budget are adopted.

1 Philadelphia cannot afford to end
2 programs like LEAP. Philadelphia
3 children should not be made to bear the
4 burden of budget cuts. Thank you.

5 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

6 Thank you so much for your advocacy.

7 Can you proceed with the next
8 couple of names?

9 THE CLERK: Sure. Jonah
10 Eaton. Murielle McCarthy.

11 MR. EATON: Good evening,
12 Council President and Councilmembers.
13 Thank you very much for your time. My
14 name is Jonah Eaton and I'm the
15 Supervising Attorney of the Nationality
16 Service Center here in Philadelphia and
17 I'm here regarding 200287 and 200307.
18 I'm asking you to restore funding to the
19 Pennsylvania Immigrant Family Unity
20 Project. This project is a response to
21 the Federal Government's extraordinary
22 hostility for immigrant communities.

23 Immigration and Customs
24 Enforcement or ICE has ramped up arrests
25 in unprecedented numbers of people in

1 immigration detention that face
2 deportation proceedings while detained.
3 So in our area, that means the York
4 Immigrant courts housed inside your York
5 County prison. And we know that about
6 70 percent of the immigrants in York do
7 not have an attorney at their final
8 hearing, where they will face a judge,
9 an ICE prosecutor alone.

10 With Mayor Kenney and
11 Council's leadership, we launched PAIFUP
12 last year and we have been busy,
13 screened 125 detained individuals, we've
14 taken on 44 as clients. Our attorneys
15 have attended 52 hearings and
16 critically, we secured release for 15
17 people, either by convincing the
18 immigration judge to release them on
19 bond or by winning the case outright.
20 These successes would have been
21 unthinkable without the assistance of a
22 lawyer.

23 And I want to talk briefly
24 about Jay. He's a Philadelphia
25 resident, originally from Jamaica. He

1 lived in the U.S. in illegal immigration
2 status since childhood with his mother
3 who's a U.S. citizen. And last year, he
4 was arrested by ICE and taken to York to
5 face deportation. He was terrified.
6 Jay's gay and in Jamaica, being an
7 openly gay man can be a death sentence.
8 Despite that, ICE argued that a minor
9 prior conviction gave them the right to
10 deport despite his green card. Once
11 PAIFUP intervened in the case, our
12 attorney found out that the government
13 was just wrong. Jay was not deportable.
14 The government had no right to remove
15 him. The immigration judge agreed and
16 threw the case out. Jay's released to
17 his family and is now at home in
18 Philadelphia on track to becoming a U.S.
19 citizen. So this case turned on
20 specialized knowledge of immigration law
21 that nonexperts can't be expected to
22 know. Jay wouldn't have been able to
23 show that the government was wrong in
24 trying to deport him without counsel,
25 and this just highlights the fundamental

1 unfairness of having to confront
2 deportation without somebody in your
3 corner. So for these reasons, we ask
4 that we continue this work and Council
5 restores funding in FY21. Thank you so
6 much for your time tonight.

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
8 Thank you. Next.

9 THE CLERK: Murielle McCarthy
10 and Rich Garella. Rich Garella.

11 MR. GARELLA: Hi. This is
12 Rich Garella. Good evening,
13 Councilwoman Sanchez. How are you?

14 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
15 Good. Good. Proceed. Thank you for
16 your patience.

17 MR. GARELLA: Sure. My name
18 is Rich Garella and one of the
19 co-founders of Protect Our Vote Philly.
20 We may be the only callers tonight
21 offering a way to bring money in.
22 Commissioner Deeley testified yesterday
23 that the Commissioners need more money
24 because of various increased cost and
25 for the first time, she listed

1 additional costs of the ES&S ExpressVote
2 XL voting system, like paper ballots,
3 testing and high moving costs. There's
4 also a huge new warehouse.

5 These costs are high not just
6 compared to the old machines, but
7 compared to other new voting systems and
8 that's on top of a purchase price of \$29
9 million, three times what Allegheny
10 County spent. But only now a year after
11 the rigged procurement process, we start
12 to hear about these costs. That's
13 because the Commissioner's Office is a
14 budgetary black box. They don't want
15 the people's representatives here in
16 Council to understand just how much
17 these machines will cost year after
18 year.

19 Meanwhile, the machines are
20 failing to perform. They produced
21 incorrect tabulations in North
22 Hampton -- that show our whole ballot on
23 one stream which was their big selling
24 point. Dozens of them failed on
25 Election Day in a variety of ways and

1 now half of them will be gathering dust,
2 not just because of the pandemic, but
3 because Pennsylvania is moving toward
4 vote-by-mail. What terrible investment
5 that was. We could get that \$29 million
6 back, but the Commissioners and the Law
7 Department are fighting tooth and nail
8 to make sure ES&S gets to keep it, even
9 taking the vendor's side in lawsuits.
10 They seem to be working for ES&S rather
11 than for the people. The fact is we got
12 taken. And if we can get our money
13 back, we should. \$29 million would be a
14 big help right now.

15 So before giving the
16 Commissioners more money, I hope the
17 members of Council will ask them exactly
18 what they need it for. And if they need
19 money so badly, why not at least try to
20 get that money back. Thank you.

21 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
22 Thank you. Thank you for your advocacy.

23 The next couple of names,
24 Matt.

25 THE CLERK: Scott McCarthy.

1 Gloria Gilman. Sharon Strauss.

2 MR. McCARTHY: Hi. My name is
3 Scott McCarthy. I'm also associated
4 with and working with Protect Our Vote
5 Philadelphia. I am testifying today to
6 request that no increases are made to
7 the budget for the Office of the
8 Philadelphia City Commissioners until
9 such time that office begins to operate
10 in a more open and transparent manner.
11 My particular concerns are with how the
12 City Commissioners have operated in bad
13 faith with regard to their decision to
14 purchase the ES&S EVXL voting machine
15 and how the Commissioners refuse to
16 address questions posed to them during
17 their periodic Sunshine meetings.

18 The City Commissioners
19 steadfastly refuse to regard the public
20 adequate time and opportunity to
21 evaluate the EVXL voting machine versus
22 alternative methods and machines,
23 particularly in contrast to how other
24 Pennsylvania counties provided their
25 citizens this opportunity. What is most

1 troubling is that the City Commissioners
2 have an option to choose hand-marked
3 paper ballots which meet all of the most
4 up-to-date election safety protocols,
5 and that would have saved the City over
6 \$20 million versus purchasing EVXL. Why
7 should we support additional funding for
8 this Office when it demonstrates such a
9 blatant disregard for the City's
10 finances.

11 Ironically, in order to
12 address public safety concerns related
13 to the current pandemic, the
14 Commissioners are now embracing the use
15 of hand-marked paper ballots as the
16 alternative to inperson voting at
17 polling stations that are using the
18 EVXL. Lastly, I have attended and
19 offered public comment during numerous
20 City Commissioner Sunshine meetings and
21 every instance the Commissioners refuse
22 to answer questions that are posed to
23 them or otherwise engage in any form of
24 dialogue. Such disregard for civic
25 engagement is a slap in the face to

1 taxpayers and demonstrates that these
2 Commissioners have not earned the public
3 trust that is inherently built into any
4 decision to provide that Office with
5 increased funding. Thank you.

6 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
7 Thank you.

8 Next.

9 THE CLERK: Gloria Gilman and
10 Sharon Strauss.

11 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
12 Is that our final two testifiers?

13 THE CLERK: Yes, those are the
14 last two testifiers on the list. I also
15 have Murielle McCarthy, if Murielle is
16 still on the line.

17 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
18 Anyone who is left on the line to
19 testify, please proceed with your
20 testimony. Thank you for your patience.

21 Murielle, Gloria?

22 THE CLERK: And a reminder to
23 press star 6 if you are still on the
24 line.

25 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

1 Going once, going twice. Let me thank
2 our Council colleagues who have hung in
3 there and the staff and the entire team
4 for putting this together --

5 MS. GILMAN: Hello? This is
6 Gloria Gilman. May I speak?

7 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
8 Absolutely, Gloria. We were waiting for
9 you. Proceed. Thank you for your
10 patience.

11 MS. GILMAN: Good afternoon,
12 Councilwoman Sanchez and the rest of
13 Council. My name is Gloria Gilman. I'm
14 testifying about Bills 200287 and
15 200307. I'm the First Chair of the
16 Democratic Party Second Ward, Chair of
17 Philadelphia Neighborhood Networks and a
18 member of Protect Our Vote Philly.

19 Commissioner Deeley testified
20 yesterday that the Mayor's budget
21 proposal might bankrupt her Office by
22 the November 2020 General Election.
23 This cannot be true as the fiscal year
24 begins in July and no reasonable
25 explanation has been offered as to what

1 necessary expenses between July 1 and
2 the beginning of November would deplete
3 the entire year's budget. Please
4 explore in detail the actual necessary
5 expenses for the Commissioner's office
6 to do its job. They have been in an
7 office without adequate oversight and
8 have taken steps this past year to
9 shield themselves from public scrutiny
10 by transferring many decisions formerly
11 made by the Commissioners in a public
12 forum to inhouse staff not subject to
13 the Sunshine Act.

14 You need to look carefully at
15 what the Commissioners' actual required
16 expenses are, as it was only yesterday
17 when Commissioner Deeley admitted that
18 the newly purchased voting machines have
19 added significant ongoing expenses and
20 material shipping and labor costs. This
21 should have been disclosed to you prior
22 to allowing them to purchase such costly
23 machines. Further, the machines have
24 failed a number of ways to perform as
25 promised.

1 There have been and still are
2 opportunities for the Commissioners to
3 void the purchase and maintenance
4 contract. Instead they've used City
5 resources to fight to keep this contract
6 despite the extreme expense and
7 performance failures. The change in
8 Pennsylvania law permitting no-excuse
9 mail-in voting enhanced by the public's
10 awareness of how much safer it will be
11 to vote by mail rather than in person
12 provided a missed opportunity to the
13 Commissioners to reduce their expenses.
14 Voting by mail is much cheaper than
15 purchasing and choosing the machine.
16 Please consider the logical expenses of
17 advertising, print material, postage and
18 staff to scan the ballots versus all
19 those expenses associated with the
20 machines.

21 Commissioner Deeley has
22 refused to provide paper ballots to be
23 counted as regular, not provisional
24 votes to voters who prefer at the polls
25 to use them instead of touching the

1 machines. This would in many ways
2 contribute to saving lives of poll
3 workers and voters and would save the
4 machines from the dangers of
5 disinfectant. Commissioner Deeley's
6 inexplicable explanation is that
7 Philadelphians vote on machines and
8 that's how it will be.

9 We have a very important
10 election coming in November. The
11 Commissioners need to think through a
12 plan for accommodating the likely
13 increased interest in the election and
14 need to be fully prepared by planning in
15 advance all aspects of the mail-in and
16 inperson election. This requires
17 thought, but almost surely reduce
18 expenses with so many fewer inperson
19 voters. Please require them to do a
20 good, efficient and transparent job at a
21 reasonable cost of the electorate.

22 Thank you.

23 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

24 Thank you. Once again --

25 MS. MCCARTHY: This is

1 Murielle McCarthy.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Okay. Murielle, you're going to be our
4 last testifier. Thank you for your
5 patience.

6 MS. STRAUSS: Actually, I'm
7 still on the phone too. This is Sharon
8 Strauss so hopefully, I can go after
9 Murielle.

10 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

11 Okay. Now that we are know you're on
12 board, thank you.

13 Proceed, Murielle.

14 MS. MCCARTHY: I'm Murielle
15 McCarthy. I'm a Philadelphia resident
16 and a member of Protect Our Vote Philly
17 and testifying regarding Bills 200287
18 and 200307.

19 The City can correct a fiscal
20 error made by the City Commissioners and
21 save taxpayer money by recouping and
22 reallocating \$29 million the
23 Commissioners paid for a faulty voting
24 system. The machines cost three times
25 more up front than the paper ballot

1 system offered by the same vendor.
2 Commissioner Deeley justified this
3 premium in exchange for a full face
4 ballot feature which we didn't get. The
5 machines also failed in Northampton, and
6 in Philadelphia we had well-documented
7 problems with our machines. As a
8 minority inspector from my district, I
9 saw some of them and reported them to
10 the Commissioners.

11 Commissioner Deeley testified
12 on May 26th that the machines will cause
13 election chaos in November because the
14 Board "will likely not have the funds to
15 make it through Fiscal Year '21" due in
16 part to "multiple added costs created by
17 the acquisition of the very machines,"
18 that she chose. Missing from her
19 testimony is any mention of COVID
20 directly causing the Commissioner's
21 funding shortfall. Because Commissioner
22 Deeley won't tell us all the operating
23 costs needed to support this overpriced
24 unreliable machine, City Council and
25 taxpayers should not provide additional

1 funding to the Board of Elections
2 without requiring full transparency from
3 the Board.

4 Councilmembers, please get our
5 \$29 million back from the vendor. The
6 vendor failed to deliver the prize as
7 promised and the machines performed
8 poorly. Use a small portion of that
9 money to acquire a safe voting system
10 and apply the remaining money to help
11 our City during this health and budget
12 crisis. Thank you for your time.

13 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
14 Thank you for your advocacy.

15 And now our final testifier.
16 Please proceed and your name for the
17 record.

18 MS. STRAUSS: Hello. This is
19 Sharon Strauss. Can you hear me?

20 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:
21 Yes, we can. Please proceed.

22 MS. STRAUSS: Hi. Thank you
23 for having me. I'm Sharon Strauss, a
24 member of Individual Northwest Philly
25 and Protect Our Vote Philly. I'm

1 commenting on our Commissioner's funding
2 request. As you consider this request,
3 note just some of what our Board of
4 Elections has asked for and done since
5 the budget hearings last year. It shows
6 a history of wasteful spending,
7 misleading statements and a troubling
8 determination to use a controversial
9 voting machine as well as blatant
10 corruption.

11 At the budget hearing last
12 year, the Commissioners quoted a cost of
13 \$29 million which was up significantly
14 from the \$20 million to \$27 million they
15 stated just a few months earlier when
16 selecting the machine. In August,
17 Controller Rhynhart reported that ES&S
18 did not properly disclose lobbying in
19 their bid giving the Board of Elections
20 a chance to cancel our contract and
21 start again. Commission Members
22 Campbell and Furlong ignored many, many
23 public comments asked to Council and
24 read instead from a prewritten decision
25 citing ES&S -- in favor of keeping the

1 contract.

2 One month later, Controller
3 Rhynhart released a 28-page report
4 documenting significant wrongdoing in
5 securing the voting machines. A few
6 highlights: Commissioners Deeley and
7 Schmidt had years of undisclosed
8 campaign contributions that helped them,
9 ES&S, developing their budget request.
10 Meanwhile, Allegheny County similar in
11 size to Philly approves the more secure
12 and handmarked paper ballot voting
13 system at about a third of what we're
14 spending. A lawsuit filed in December
15 seeks to decertify the ExpressVote XL in
16 Pa, arguing that it violates the
17 Election Code and State Constitution.
18 This case is still in the courts. If
19 the suit is successful and the machines
20 are decertified, the City would be able
21 to change voting systems without losing
22 a penny. The Commissioners are not
23 prioritizing safe voting and prudent use
24 of funds. Council should not reward
25 them with more funding. Thank you very

1 much.

2 COUNCILWOMAN QUINONES-SANCHEZ:

3 Thank you so very much. Since we have
4 no one else scheduled to testify or on
5 our list, again I want to thank all of
6 the Council colleagues who have hung in
7 there. We've been here since 3 o'clock
8 this afternoon. This is very important.
9 It is a very difficult budget and seeing
10 no one else left to testify, the
11 Committee will stand in recess until
12 Monday, June 1, 2020 at 9:30, at which
13 time we will reconvene on Microsoft
14 Teams. Thank you everyone very much.
15 Thank you to the staff and the team for
16 hanging in there. Thank you.

17 MS. STRAUSS: Thank you.

18 (Committee of the Whole
19 adjourned at 5:55 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, hereby certify that the
proceedings and evidence noted are contained
fully and accurately in the stenographic
notes taken by me in the foregoing matter,
and this is a correct transcript of the
same.

Court Reporter - Notary Public

(The foregoing certification of
this transcript does not apply to any
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Committee of the Whole
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