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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
PUBLIC HEARING AND PUBLIC MEETING BEFORE COMMITTEE
ON TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, 6/11/01
9:34 a.m.

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11 RES. 000142 - Withdrawn by sponsor.

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13 RES. 000597 - Authorizing the Committee on
14 Transportation and Public Utilities to conduct
comprehensive comparative research into the state of
the City's transportation and public utilities
systems and hold hearings into the same.

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PRESENT: COUNCILMAN W. WILSON GOODE, JR., Chair
COUNCILMAN FRANK DICICCO
COUNCILWOMAN MARIAN B. TASCO
COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNA C. VERNA

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1 6/11/01 TRANSPORTATION/UTILITIES - PUB. MEETING

2 P R O C E E D I N G S

3 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning. This
4 is the continued hearing of the Committee on
5 Transportation and Public Utilities on Resolutions
6 142 and 597. A quorum is present. Committee
7 members Frank DiCicco, Marian Tasco, Council
8 President Anna Verna, and myself are present.

9 The hearing is called to order. We will
10 recess the hearing to move into a public meeting on
11 Resolution 142. As the primary sponsor, I'm going
12 to withdraw that resolution, and I will recognize
13 Councilman DiCicco for a motion on Resolution 597.

14 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: That you,
15 Mr. Chairman. I move that Bill No. 000597 be
16 reported out of this committee with a favorable
17 recommendation, no suspension.

18 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Do I have a second?

19 (Duly seconded.)

20 COUNCILMAN GOODE: It's been moved and
21 properly seconded.

22 All in favor, aye?

23 Those opposed?

24 (None opposed.)

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: This concludes our

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2 public meeting and we will now move back into a
3 hearing on Resolution 597. Will the clerk please
4 read the title of the resolution.

5 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: We just reported it
6 out.

7 (Committee members confer off the
8 record.)

9 THE CLERK: Resolution No. 000597, a
10 resolution authorizing the Committee on
11 Transportation and Public Utilities to conduct
12 comprehensive comparative research into the state of
13 the City's transportation and public utilities
14 systems and hold hearings into the same.

15 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Is Action Alliance
16 here to testify? Will you please approach the
17 witness table, please.

18 (Witness comes forward.)

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Miss Wiggins, please
20 proceed with your testimony. Please state your name
21 for the record.

22 MS. WIGGINS: Okay. Mamie E. Wiggins.

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Please proceed with
24 your testimony.

25 MS. WIGGINS: Good morning, Chairman

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2 Goode, Jr. and other members of the committee. Of
3 course, I said my name. I am the President of the
4 12,000-strong Action Alliance of senior citizens of
5 Greater Philadelphia.

6 Before I start to discuss our opposition
7 to the proposed fare increase by SEPTA, I would like
8 to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for being so gracious
9 and accommodating our request for these hearings in
10 the letter we sent you last May 9, 2001 when myself
11 and several dozen other seniors were here to ask
12 City Council to speak out on this matter of great
13 importance to the citizens of Philadelphia.

14 As you know, many senior citizens and
15 disabled individuals rely on Paratransit and
16 Shared-Ride to get around. They get to work, senior
17 citizens and clubs, doctors' appointments, cultural
18 events, and so on. It allows them certain freedoms
19 and make them feel a part of the larger society. In
20 some cases, they rely on the service just to keep
21 themselves alive, such as the hundreds who go to
22 their dialysis treatment this way. This is an
23 essential service to many of them.

24 Over the years, Action Alliance and
25 others have been working to improve this service.

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2 Over the last few years, there have been some
3 noticeable improvement, particularly since the
4 reservations and dispatch operations were
5 centralized by SEPTA. But there is still a lot of
6 work to be done. Many of our members complain of
7 inability to schedule rides when they want them, of
8 being picked up late for appointments, of being
9 taken on long rides around the City, and in some
10 cases, being stranded with no way to get home. The
11 best we can tell you, Mr. Chairman, is that the
12 Shared-Ride Paratransit is a work in progress to
13 Philadelphia.

14 Action Alliance and many other
15 organizations were shocked to learn of SEPTA's
16 proposed fare increase for Paratransit Shared-Ride.
17 The proposals call for a 23 percent increase for
18 individual riders and a 33 percent increase for the
19 rides going to the senior citizens centers. If
20 these increases are granted, senior citizens will
21 suffer greatly, forcing many of them to remain at
22 home and become less active. The proposal to make a
23 round-trip Shared-Ride costs \$7 is an outrage, and
24 to the senior citizens, in order to accommodate the
25 33 percent increase, centers will be forced to cut

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2 by one-third the rides they order from SEPTA. As a
3 matter of fact, SEPTA's own numbers do not make such
4 sense.

5 For example, according to the 2001-2002
6 budget, they project a 7 percent deficit or
7 shortfall in the operation of the Paratransit
8 Shared-Ride service. Yet they are proposing to
9 raise the fares of seniors by a double-digit figure.
10 As a matter of fact, collectively, senior citizens
11 are getting hit the hardest by SEPTA -- a whopping
12 28 percent fare increase when you include both the
13 Shared-Ride and the senior citizen centers rides.

14 We come before this committee and City
15 Council ask for your help. We want City Council to
16 request that the two members of the SEPTA Board who
17 represent the City of Philadelphia -- DiCicco and
18 Newkirk -- to vote together in opposition to this
19 fare increase. In addition, we are requesting that
20 City Council withhold from the SEPTA budget the
21 \$52 million earmarked in subsidies for the next
22 fiscal year. We want you to tell SEPTA that they
23 will not get one red City cent until they take off
24 the table this unfair fare increase.

25 Let's make one thing clear: The

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2 citizens of Philadelphia only have you to speak for
3 them with some sort of carrot and stick when it
4 comes to SEPTA. Over the years, Action Alliance and
5 others have been trying to get the SEPTA Board to
6 take services to senior citizens seriously, and they
7 have failed to do it repeatedly.

8 Join us in sending SEPTA a strong
9 message that budget shortfalls should not be made up
10 on the backs of senior citizens. Please urge the
11 two City-of-Philadelphia SEPTA Board members to veto
12 this fare increase.

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you for your
16 testimony, Miss Wiggins.

17 The Chair recognizes Councilwoman Tasco.

18 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Good morning, Miss
19 Wiggins.

20 MS. WIGGINS: Good morning.

21 COUNCILWOMAN TASCO: Thank you so much
22 for your thoughtful testimony.

23 I just would like to ask a couple of
24 questions. How much does it cost for the
25 Shared-Ride? And does that -- just tell me how it

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2 functions. The Shared-Ride, SEPTA Shared-Ride.

3 (Witness comes forward.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Would you identify
5 yourself for the record.

6 MS. WIGGINS: May I? This is Pedro
7 Rodriguez, who is the assistant there at Action
8 Alliance.

9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

10 The current system is that individuals
11 can schedule rides through Paratransit Shared-Ride
12 by calling the reservation number. When they get to
13 the ride, they pay 2.85 for each segment of the
14 trip.

15 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: So it's 2.85 a
16 round trip?

17 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No, each way.

18 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: \$2.85 to go and
19 \$2.85 to come back?

20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Right.

21 Now, the proposal is to raise that to
22 3.50 each way, making it \$7 a round-trip.

23 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: So that's 2.85
24 each way?

25 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Right now, yeah.

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2 COUNCILMAN DICICCO: And it costs \$5.70
3 a round trip?

4 MS. WIGGINS: Mm-hmm.

5 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Right.

6 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Now, what about the
7 senior citizen centers? She mentioned something
8 about a 38 percent increase to 33 percent.

9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: A 33 percent increase
10 from -- it's 2.40 to 3.20.

11 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: So if you're going
12 to go to a senior citizens center, it's \$2 and --

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: It's 2.40. The center
14 schedules rides. And they get a subsidy from the
15 Philadelphia Corporation for Aging, which has a set
16 budget to pay for that.

17 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: So the senior
18 citizens center pays for the rides for the seniors
19 to come to the centers.

20 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Right.

21 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: And they pay
22 presently 2.40.

23 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Right.

24 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Okay. Now, what's
25 it going to go to?

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2 MR. RODRIGUEZ: It will be 3.20 each
3 way.

4 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Each way. Are most
5 of the senior citizen centers run by the City?

6 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No, no.

7 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: They're private?

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: There are nonprofits and
9 religiously-based own them and just community-based.

10 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Community-based
11 senior citizens --

12 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Centers, right.

13 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: They receive their
14 funding from where?

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: From a number of
16 sources. Some of them get City funding, State
17 funding, through Philadelphia Corporation for Aging,
18 and the centers raise money privately through
19 foundations and so on.

20 COUNCILWOMAN TASC0: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm,
21 okay. Thank you very much.

22 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Miss Wiggins, let me
24 thank you for your testimony and let you know that I
25 think everyone from the City, from the Mayor and

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2 City Council have said that they oppose this fare
3 increase across the board, particularly for our most
4 vulnerable citizens -- our younger and older people.
5 And we're really looking for a strategy, what we can
6 do. I'm not sure what we can do at this point but
7 we will take whatever action and work along with
8 Pedro and Action Alliance on a strategy. We do have
9 a representative from SEPTA here that can respond to
10 the issues raised in your testimony.

11 But thank you again for testifying.

12 MS. WIGGINS: Thank you very much.

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: If I just may add, the
14 way that the SEPTA Board is structured, the two
15 Philadelphia City representatives have veto power
16 over any resolution, any (indiscernible) that comes
17 before the SEPTA Board. So the two City
18 representatives vote together in rejecting this fare
19 increase and they can break it up as they want if
20 they choose to. Then it will just be sent back to
21 SEPTA and it will be approved.

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: So your request is
23 that City Council ask the City members to vote
24 against this fare increase.

25 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Absolutely. Mr. DiCicco

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2 and Newkirk to vote -- both of them to vote against
3 this particular fare increase.

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: That is something
5 that we can do through a resolution as early as this
6 Thursday, but let's give SEPTA a chance to respond
7 to two things: One, your testimony; and two,
8 whether the City members actually do have veto
9 power.

10 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

12 Miss Jones, would you please approach
13 the witness table.

14 (Witness comes forward.)

15 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Please state your
16 name for the record.

17 MS. JONES: Good morning. My name is
18 Frances M. Jones. I am the Assistant General
19 Manager of Government Affairs at SEPTA.

20 Good morning, Councilman and members of
21 the committee. And good morning to the
22 representatives from Action Alliance and all of the
23 other seniors from across the City of Philadelphia.

24 I am here this morning basically just in
25 an observing position because we did know about the

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2 hearings this morning.

3 The specific numbers as relates to
4 Shared-Ride and the Paratransit I'm not prepared to
5 comment on at this point. However, I'm sure the
6 members here are aware that we held public hearings
7 about two or three weeks ago to get testimony from
8 people around the region about the fare increase and
9 we took that testimony very seriously. We do share
10 the concerns and are really sympathetic to the
11 concerns of the seniors and the school children in
12 the region. However, a fare increase is something
13 that, you know, we labored over, something that we
14 gave great thought about and tried to figure out
15 ways that we would not have to do it.

16 With the recent increase in cost in
17 utilities and other things that we need in order to
18 operate, it was, you know, it was something that we
19 had to do. And please be assured that we didn't
20 take it the lightly. We heard the testimony. We
21 knew about concerns of school children, and we're
22 concerned about seniors, school children, and
23 everybody because essentially they're our riders.

24 We are awaiting the report from the
25 hearing examiners from all of the testimonies that

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2 were taken throughout the region, and within the
3 next 24 to 48 hours, we should have a comprehensive
4 document that documents the recommendations from the
5 hearing examiner to SEPTA management and then to the
6 SEPTA Board.

7 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you. Could you
8 respond to the issue of veto power of the City
9 members on the SEPTA Board.

10 MS. JONES: It is my understanding that
11 the SEPTA Board, the two representatives from the
12 SEPTA Boards representing Philadelphia County do
13 have veto power. I don't recall it -- I've been at
14 SEPTA about six years, and I don't recall it ever
15 being exercised, but it is my understanding that
16 there is veto power, understanding that there are
17 only two representatives from the Philadelphia
18 County and representatives from the other five
19 counties as well as representatives from the House
20 of Representatives, the Governor's Office and from
21 the Senate.

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay, thank you.

23 MS. JONES: You're very welcome.

24 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Is there anyone else
25 to testify? Please approach the witness table.

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2 (Witnesses come forward.)

3 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning. Please
4 state your name for the record.

5 MS. DALTON: Hello. My name is Agnes
6 Dalton. I am here today to tell that you that I am
7 very upset about the proposed SEPTA Paratransit fare
8 increase. I take Paratransit every day to St. Ann's
9 Center. I feel that the proposed increase would be
10 a real hardship on me and others who use Paratransit
11 to get to the center.

12 Because we are retired, we're all on a
13 fixed income, and many of us have as little as \$550
14 a month to live on. As it is, most of us live very
15 carefully to make ends meet. Paying more for rides
16 is out of the question. The other alternative,
17 cutting back the number of days we attend the
18 center, would be a really a real loss to us.

19 I go to St. Ann's to get out of the
20 house and to be around people. I live alone since
21 my husband died, and it is very important for me to
22 have company. I also depend on a hot meal that I
23 receive each day at the center. In addition, it is
24 important for me to go to the center because it can
25 help with any problems that may come up in my life.

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2 Paratransit is a lifeline for me and others like me.

3 I have been going to St. Ann's Center
4 for about 20 years. I used to take the bus until I
5 developed bad arthritis and it became too difficult
6 for me to take public transportation. Since that
7 time, I have been taking the van to get to the
8 center. I would not be able to get out without
9 Paratransit. It's a necessity.

10 For these reasons, I hope you'll stop
11 the proposed fare increase. Please --

12 (Sound system difficulties.)

13 MS. DALTON: Please try to understand
14 that people in my generation don't ask for very
15 much. We only ask for what we really need. What's
16 at stake here is our independence and our survival.

17 Thank you very much.

18 (Applause.)

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you for your
20 testimony.

21 You're going to testify also?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No. I'm staff
23 from St. Ann's. I'm just escorting Agnes.

24 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay, thank you.

25 Is there anyone else to testify? Please

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2 approach the witness table.

3 (Witnesses come forward.)

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Please state your
5 name for the record.

6 MS. STERNE: Deborah Sterne.

7 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Please proceed with
8 your testimony.

9 MS. STERNE: Good morning. Thank you
10 for the opportunity to present testimony today.

11 My name is Deborah Sterne. I am a
12 member of the Philadelphia Shared-Ride Program
13 Advisory Council. The Shared-Ride Council works to
14 maximize the provision of cost-effective, efficient
15 safe and satisfactory service to the Shared-Ride
16 Program users in Philadelphia County. Each
17 Shared-Ride Council member serves as the voice of
18 older adults to represent the diversity, needs, and
19 interests of the Shared-Ride-eligible population
20 throughout Philadelphia.

21 I am here on behalf of the Shared-Ride
22 Council to ask you to vote in support of the
23 resolution to authorize the review of the
24 Southeastern Transit Authority's operations. Also,
25 I would like to take this opportunity to ask City

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2 Councilmembers to educate the City's representatives
3 on the SEPTA Board-- Jettie D. Newkirk, Esquire, and
4 Christian DiCicco, Esquire -- about the negative
5 SEPTA's proposed Shared-Ride fare increase would
6 have on older Philadelphians.

7 As you may know, the Philadelphia
8 Shared-Ride Program is designed to serve
9 Philadelphians over the age of 65. These
10 individuals rely on Shared-Ride for a variety of
11 reasons to maintain their health and independence.
12 These patrons may have functional and cognitive
13 limitations such as dementia. The Shared-Ride
14 Program helps to enable those older adults who are
15 frail to remain at home and out of nursing homes for
16 as long as possible.

17 Patrons use Shared-Ride to attend
18 doctors' visits, dialysis appointments, and adult
19 day health centers. They also rely on the
20 Shared-Ride Program to maintain social contacts by
21 riding to senior centers and to attend church. Each
22 of these rides is important to keep seniors from
23 becoming isolated and ill.

24 (Sound system difficulties.)

25 MS. STERNE: Each of these rides is

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2 important to keep seniors from becoming isolated and
3 ill. Despite frequent delays in pickup and drop-off
4 times when using Shared-Ride CCT Connect, older
5 adults still utilize the system. For many older
6 adults, the Shared-Ride service is their only option
7 for transportation.

8 As you know Philadelphia, has a very
9 high proportion of low-income senior citizens.
10 These seniors do not have other transportation
11 available or the financial resources to pay the
12 proposed fare of 3.50 per trip.

13 Under Pennsylvania Code Title 67,
14 Section 425.7(i), any profit generated by the local
15 Shared-Ride Program is subject to refund to the
16 Department of Transportation. Therefore, SEPTA
17 should not be funding other SEPTA transit programs
18 with Shared-Ride revenues. The Shared-Ride Council
19 asks this committee to take keep this regulation in
20 mind when conducting its review of SEPTA's
21 operations.

22 In the Shared-Ride Council's past
23 experience, SEPTA has not managed the Shared-Ride
24 Program in the most efficient manner. For example,
25 capital improvement dollars were spent on the MDT

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2 system to track when passengers are picked up and
3 dropped off and provide information to increase
4 efficiency. Even though the system was installed
5 long ago, the data is not available. Also,
6 Shared-Ride Council members often here from
7 Shared-Ride patrons about problems they have
8 experienced with late arrivals, delayed trips home,
9 abandoned rides, and poor customer service. The
10 proposed rate hike will only further reduce customer
11 satisfaction with an already-problematic system.

12 The Shared-Ride Council also questions
13 whether SEPTA has considered that the Shared-Ride
14 fare increase will reduce ridership, thus reducing
15 its overall revenue from the fare hike. The Council
16 is convinced that many seniors who cannot afford the
17 increased fare will simply stay at home instead of
18 attending to their vital physical, mental, and
19 social needs. The Shared-Ride wonders if SEPTA's
20 proposed fare hike is aimed to reduce the ridership
21 to make it easier for SEPTA's CCT Connect to comply
22 with ADA and other court-related mandates.

23 One reason SEPTA has given for the fare
24 increase is rising fuel costs. The Shared-Ride
25 Council understands that fuel costs have risen

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2 lately; however, the Shared-Ride Council questions
3 whether SEPTA has considered other options to deal
4 with this cost rather than passing it on to the
5 riders. As we've seen over the past few years, fuel
6 costs fluctuate. Perhaps SEPTA can request
7 emergency funding from Harrisburg for the temporary
8 increase in fuel costs. Although fuel costs
9 fluctuate, it seems unlikely that SEPTA will reduce
10 its fares when fuel costs subside.

11 The Shared-Ride urges City Council to
12 remind its representatives on the SEPTA Board --
13 Ms. Newkirk and Mr. DiCicco -- that SEPTA is not the
14 only one on a limited budget. Many older
15 Philadelphians have fixed incomes and they cannot
16 their incomes to meet the rising costs of oil,
17 electricity, prescription medications, or fares. If
18 the fare increase is imposed, these older adults may
19 be choosing between paying for prescription
20 medication or a round trip to the doctor's office.

21 Older residents of personal care homes
22 who rely on SSI will also be affected by the fare
23 increase. While their meals and housing costs are
24 paid for by their SSI income, they receive a monthly
25 allowance of \$60 for all other personal expenses.

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2 These residents cannot increase their monthly
3 allowance to account for increased transportation
4 costs.

5 The Philadelphia Corporation for Aging
6 (PCA) subsidizes some rides for older adults. With
7 a limited transportation budget, PCA has no
8 additional funding to cover the higher cost for each
9 ride. Therefore, PCA will be forced to reduce the
10 number of rides and older adults who benefit from
11 the assistance.

12 It is our understanding that the City of
13 Philadelphia provides a significant subsidy to SEPTA
14 for the provision of City transportation. The
15 Shared-Ride Council asks City Council to use the
16 power of its pocketbook to make sure that SEPTA does
17 not financially burden our most vulnerable and frail
18 older adults with its proposed 33 percent fare hike
19 for Shared-Ride patrons.

20 In conclusion, the Shared-Ride Council
21 urges you to vote in favor of the committee's
22 resolution to authorize a comprehensive review of
23 SEPTA's operations. The devastating impact of the
24 proposed fare increase demands that an impartial
25 entity examine SEPTA's operations. The Shared-Ride

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2 Council also hopes that it can depend on City
3 Council to prevent the approval of the proposed fare
4 increase to the Shared-Ride Program.

5 On behalf of the Shared-Ride Program
6 Advisory Council, I thank you for the opportunity to
7 comment today. I'll be happy to answer any
8 questions you may have.

9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

10 Any questions from members of the
11 committee?

12 (No questions.)

13 MS. STERNE: Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Is there anyone else
15 to testify?

16 Please approach the witness table.

17 (Applause.)

18 (Witness comes forward.)

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Do you have copies of
20 your testimony with you?

21 Please state your name for the record
22 and proceed with your testimony.

23 MS. FINEMAN: My name is Francine
24 Fineman, and I am President of the Southeastern
25 Alliance of Adult Day Services. I'd like to thank

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2 you for the opportunity to speak today.

3 I represent 22 adult day centers that
4 serve hundreds of seniors and their caregivers. I
5 am here to express the Alliance's opposition to the
6 proposed increase in the Shared-Ride Program
7 administered by SEPTA's customized community
8 transportation program.

9 There are good reasons that I am
10 speaking today instead of an adult day care consumer
11 who relies on the SEPTA Shared-Ride system. The
12 seniors who use the Shared-Ride system to get to an
13 adult day center either have Alzheimer's disease,
14 some other type of dementia, Parkinson's disease, or
15 have had a stroke affecting their mobility or their
16 ability to speak. The average age of a day center
17 client is 85, and they frequently have multiple
18 chronic health problems. These seniors spend their
19 day at an adult day center either because they
20 cannot be left home alone or because they are unable
21 to get out for any other type of socialization.

22 The reason that more caregivers aren't
23 here to testify is that the majority of them have to
24 work, which having their family members receive
25 services at an adult day center allows them to do.

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2 Other family caregivers are also seniors generally
3 doing everything they can to keep their spouse at
4 home. If any of you have had to make the difficult
5 decision of placing a family member in a nursing
6 home, I believe you will understand what these
7 caregivers are going through.

8 This is the segment of the senior
9 population that a 33 percent SEPTA Shared-Ride fare
10 increase will hurt. If these seniors cannot get to
11 their adult day care center because they cannot
12 afford the fare increase, many things will happen:
13 Their quality of life will suffer because they will
14 be isolated in their homes; their health will suffer
15 since they receive medical monitoring, medication
16 management, and other types of health services at
17 their adult day center; they may also used
18 Shared-Ride system to get to their doctors'
19 appointments and the fare increase will affect their
20 ability to pay for these trips as well. In many
21 cases, caregivers have to quit their jobs or
22 struggle to find alternative care for their family
23 members.

24 In terms of a system-wide impact,
25 generally when a senior can no longer be cared for

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2 in their home, the usual alternative is nursing home
3 placement. In a large percentage of cases, the
4 State will be facing funding expensive nursing home
5 care as opposed to the extremely cost-effective fee
6 at an adult day care center.

7 Consumers have also clearly stated to
8 their elected officials that they want to age in
9 place. We want to do all that is possible to help
10 seniors and their families in the battle to stay
11 where they most want to be: in their homes.

12 On behalf of all of the adult day care
13 clients and caregivers who are unable to be here
14 today, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Alliance of
15 Adult Day Services urges the City's representatives
16 on the SEPTA Board -- Jettie Newkirk and Christian
17 DiCicco -- to vote no on the Shared-Ride fare
18 increase.

19 Thank you for your attention. I can
20 answer any questions that you might have.

21 (Applause.)

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you for your
23 testimony, Miss Fineman.

24 MS. FINEMAN: You're welcome.

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Any questions from

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2 the committee?

3 (No questions.)

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

5 MS. FINEMAN: Mm-hmm.

6 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Is there anyone else
7 here to testify? Please approach the witness table.

8 (Witness comes forward.)

9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Do you have copies of
10 your testimony?

11 MS. FANARO: Actually, I don't with me,
12 but you'll be receiving them.

13 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay.

14 MS. FANARO: My name is Patricia Fanaro
15 (ph.), and I'm with the Philadelphia Corporation for
16 Aging. I was not prepared to provide formal
17 testimony today but we do have a letter and a copy
18 of our testimony that's being forwarded to your
19 office.

20 I wanted to say a few words here today
21 because PCA has been mentioned in other people's
22 testimony and let you know that we are the area
23 agency on aging for Philadelphia Code. Part of our
24 role is to fund various programs for older people in
25 the county. One of those is transportation, and we

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2 want to be on record to indicate what a devastating
3 impact this fare increase will have on the older
4 population.

5 I just wanted to quote a couple of
6 numbers from our testimony, and that is that
7 currently PCA sponsors approximately 375,000 rides a
8 year for older people to get to senior centers, to
9 get to adult day care, to get to doctors'
10 appointments, therapies. If this fare increase goes
11 into effect, that means we'll be able to sponsor
12 almost 200,000 less rides per year. And as has been
13 indicated by previous testimony -- and I hope others
14 will testify who are here -- this has a very
15 negative impact on older people's health and
16 welfare.

17 I don't want to spend time giving
18 testimony here because I think it's more important
19 that you hear from the people who are here today who
20 are directly impacted by the service, but I wanted
21 to let you know that someone is here from
22 Philadelphia Corporation for Aging. If you have
23 questions about the service, the funding, I'd be
24 happy to try to answer any of them for you.

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay, thank you for

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2 your testimony.

3 MS. FANARO: Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Is there anyone else
6 to testify? Please approach the witness table.

7 (Witness comes forward.)

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Do you have copies of
9 your testimony?

10 MS. SPOSARO: No, I'm sorry, I don't.

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay. Please state
12 your name for the record.

13 MS. SPOSARO: My name is Frannie
14 Sposaro. Good morning. I'd like to thank Council
15 Wilson Goode, Jr. For this opportunity to explain to
16 City Council and to the citizens of Philadelphia why
17 we need to raise our voices in opposition to the
18 proposed fare hike by SEPTA particularly for the 33
19 percent increase for Paratransit and Shared-Ride.

20 I'm here today on behalf of my son who
21 is blind. My son is 23 years old. He's a young man
22 who works in a sheltered workshop. His earnings are
23 limited. He is fulfilled by what he does but his
24 main source of income is Supplemental Security
25 Income. Christopher relies on Paratransit to get to

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2 work and to the doctors and he pays out of his
3 pocket \$2.85 for each ride, a total of 5.70 a round
4 trip. Now SEPTA wants to raise his fare charge.
5 They want to charge my blind son \$7 a day round trip
6 for him to get to work.

7 Now, Mr. Chairman, you and I know that
8 Christopher's SSI income is not going to go up the
9 same 33 percent that SEPTA is raising the fare.
10 This proposed fare hike by SEPTA is only going to
11 hurt people like Christopher and make their lives a
12 lot more complicated than they already are. Such a
13 drastic price increase will break Christopher's
14 spirit by though yet another obstacle on his road to
15 independence.

16 I believe strongly that City Council has
17 a moral responsibility to look after the welfare of
18 people like Christopher. I am asking you,
19 Mr. Chairman, and the rest of the members of the
20 committee and the entire City Council to instruct
21 the two City of Philadelphia members of the SEPTA
22 Board to reject this unfair and unneeded rate hike
23 on Paratransit and Shared-Ride. Do it for
24 Christopher, the senior citizens, and all others in
25 need of reliable and affordable public transit in

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2 Philadelphia.
3 Thank you.
4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.
5 (Applause.)
6 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Is there anyone else
7 to testify? Please approach the witness table.
8 (Witness comes forward.)
9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning. Please
10 state your name for the record and proceed with your
11 testimony.
12 MS. MORRISON: Yes. My name is Adrienne
13 B. Morrison, and I'm President of the Advisory
14 Council which represents the members of Center in
15 the Park.
16 I am here to let all of you know what
17 the impact will be on senior citizens and the
18 disabled if SEPTA decides to close their budget
19 deficit on our backs. Such a move can at best be
20 called amoral and sometimes just plain mean.
21 We are the people who raised you, who
22 taught you, who fought in your wars, who marched for
23 rights, who raised grandchildren, who mentor, and
24 yet, we are to be treated like last week's trash and
25 kicked to the curb. While everything else goes up,

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2 our income does not. We have made sacrifices, and
3 at this point in our aging, we should not have to
4 continue to make sacrifice. Money can be found for
5 entertainment centers, for a sports stadium, for
6 festivals; why can't money be found for the aged and
7 the disabled.

8 Now, it's very easy when you hear the
9 word "aged" to think of non-productivity. I
10 represent a center where everything there is really
11 vibrant. As a matter of fact, if you want to see
12 what happens when older people have a chance to come
13 to a center like ours, I invite you to come to Moore
14 College of Art Friday night from 5 to 8 and attend a
15 reception which be our kickoff of our arts program
16 -- that is art pottery, special projects. We have
17 shown all over Philadelphia. We are the those old
18 people you want to hold back by not scheduling
19 enough rides and by making it impossible for us to
20 meet our budget and pay for transportation.

21 We're not asking for a favor; we do not
22 feel that being fair to us and being respectful of
23 us and honoring us is a favor. Many societies honor
24 their aged. They recognize us as the keeper of
25 wisdom. Why can't this society and this city do the

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2 home to the center, where I receive a nutritional
3 meal and other services on a daily basis. I am also
4 eligible for rides to the doctor's office and other
5 places for benefits that allow me to maintain my
6 independence. I do not own a vehicle because of my
7 limited income. I can barely make ends meet for my
8 daily living needs.

9 If you continue with these increases for
10 transit rides, it will put a strain on the center's
11 allocations for transportation, and no doubt, it
12 won't be long before me and many other members at
13 the center will feel the strain as well.

14 We cannot afford to pay for these
15 rides. I will not be able to keep doctors'
16 appointments and attend the center, where I get my
17 lunch and other much-needed services, not to mention
18 the socialization and compensation I get at the
19 center. I have volunteer opportunities and get to
20 interact with my peers.

21 In addition, I also speak for the
22 handicapped and physically disabled people who live
23 alone and depend solely on the center for all of
24 their services. Without transportation, they have
25 no access to these services. What are they to do?

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2 We urge you to reconsider and make no
3 increase in fares but increase in the services.
4 Thank you. We from Haddington Multiple Service
5 Senior Citizens look forward to your favorable
6 consideration on this issue.

7 Thank you very much.

8 (Applause.)

9 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

10 (Witness comes forward.)

11 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

12 REV. WALLINGTON: Good morning.

13 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Please state your
14 name.

15 REV. WALLINGTON: My name is Reverend
16 Evelyn Wallington from the Greater Germantown
17 Settlement Mature Adult Centers.

18 I live in a senior center complex. I'm
19 the President of the Advisory Council at my center
20 that I go to and I see the concerns of the people
21 there. We have people that are brought to our
22 center and taken home by Paratransit. If they come
23 -- if the fare is risen, they will not be able to
24 come out every day. And a lot of them -- the only
25 hot meal they get is when they come out to the

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2 center. They're not -- some of them are really and
3 truly not capable of or don't want to fix anything
4 to eat when they get home but they get a good solid
5 meal and it's warm and it's hot.

6 And they have the fellowship. When
7 you're living in a seniors complex, you're by
8 yourself in your apartment. But you go to the
9 center for companionship, you go there for
10 fellowship. And when the fare is risen to the point
11 they can't afford to use it to come to the center,
12 they have to make a choice whether to stay home.
13 Some of 'em go hungry and some of 'em just be by
14 themselves and be lonely and become depressed. And
15 one of the things with older people is they get
16 depressed very easily when they're schedule is
17 changed abruptly.

18 We need Paratransit. It's a life flow
19 for us. With the center, they takes us on trips
20 using Paratransit. And sometimes those are only
21 trips that some of the people go on because it
22 doesn't cost that much by going with the center. We
23 go to the doctor's, we go and we visit people. We
24 need the Paratransit. Do not make us make a choice
25 that we sit in the house and do nothing, when we can

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2 go out every day.

3 Council, as the former speaker spoke,
4 people in this society throw us away. They don't
5 talk to us; they talk at us. They don't talk to us;
6 they talk down at us. If we go to the doctor's,
7 it's our bodies and our conditions, but they will
8 talk to anybody else but talk to us about what is
9 wrong with us. We need the respect. We have worked
10 hard to get where we're at today.

11 We don't get that much in our Social
12 Security. When we were growing up raising families,
13 the salaries were not what they had today, they had
14 no pension plans. And the only thing we have to
15 depend on is our Social Security checks that come
16 once a month. We budget so that we can do some of
17 the things that is very important, and one of the
18 things is using Paratransit to get us back and forth
19 to our centers, to our doctors and to other
20 important places that we have to go.

21 I thank you for your time and I pray
22 that you will take into consideration the people
23 that are here and give us some justice.

24 Thank you.

25 (Applause.)

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2 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you for your
3 testimony.

4 Let me make a brief statement. I said
5 that when SEPTA was considering this fare increase
6 across the board, it came before this Council. They
7 did not mention what they were going to do in asking
8 for the public subsidy. We actually did not find
9 out what they were going to do until after we
10 approved our funding to them. It is my
11 understanding that the Mayor and most members, if
12 not all members, of City Council oppose this fare
13 increase.

14 The resolution that you're testifying on
15 behalf of today is related to a comparative analysis
16 of SEPTA and its operating performance measures
17 among the top ten cities in the nation. Our
18 research has shown us that SEPTA to be fairly
19 efficient in terms of service and fairly effective
20 in terms of service but not cost-effective. Our
21 analysis led us to question SEPTA in the April 3rd
22 hearing in terms of why they were not more cost-
23 effective. Mr. Leary, in testimony here, did not
24 have much to say about why they were not
25 cost-effective, and then a few days later, decided

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2 to, along with the SEPTA Board, raise the fares. It
3 is also our understanding that the original SEPTA
4 fare increase that went to the board was rejected by
5 the board because they said it was not enough.

6 As you know, we do not have as much
7 leverage as we would like to have over the SEPTA
8 Board; it is a regional board where we only have two
9 seats. If we can pursue our veto power on that
10 board for our City representatives, we will do so.
11 We will introduce a resolution on Thursday calling
12 upon our City representatives to do so.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILMAN GOODE: This Council will
15 stand behind you in your interests. I am somewhat
16 upset that more of my committee members aren't here
17 today, but I will be here to listen to you and your
18 comments will be on the record.

19 When members of Action Alliance came to
20 Council more than a month ago, they asked for
21 separate hearings on this matter. There was not
22 enough time but we did have this hearings on
23 Resolution 597, so I decided to invite Action
24 Alliance to testify under that resolution, but we
25 will sponsor a separate resolution related

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2 (ph.) and I represent Philadelphia Senior Center,
3 509 South Broad Street.

4 Now, I have sat up here and I have
5 listened to the stories that are put out, and they
6 are 100 percent true. Everybody 'fore me that has
7 given statements have given facts, but these facts
8 seem to go out the window when we leave the place.
9 All this talk don't mean anything if it don't bring
10 forth some result.

11 And I've been at a lot of SEPTA
12 meetings, but I don't see no results where the
13 seniors are concerned. We are social criminals and
14 we have to pay the cost for that. We have just as
15 much right to enjoy life and the little bit of
16 income that we do have coming in and we try to
17 stretch it, but after all, the rubber runs out so
18 there's no more stretching. And I wish you would
19 let SEPTA know that they too will get old someday.

20 (Applause.)

21 MS. GRIER: And the same thing that
22 we're fighting to establish now will benefit them
23 when they get old.

24 Now, we're not cry babies and,
25 95 percent of us survive on our one own, without any

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2 help other than what we have worked for. They're
3 not giving us anything; we worked for this, and I
4 think we should reap the benefit without having to
5 go through a whole lot of catastrophe about how
6 they're going to take 33 percent from me and they
7 going to take 25 percent from me. We've lived our
8 life, we shouldn't have this.

9 And to tell you the truth, we should
10 have access to get on that bus or whatever
11 transportation SEPTA provides all 24 hours, not just
12 a few hours this morning and a few hours this --
13 that don't get us because we're not up at 6 o'clock
14 in the morning to go anywhere, but maybe we going to
15 go somewhere at 7 o'clock or we might want to stay
16 out later than 6:30, and we have to pay the cost to
17 be the boss. And that isn't fair, 'cause, as I
18 'fore say, we pay for this. And we are the reason
19 why the City is where it is.

20 Now, there's only one way to get rid of
21 this and it is to break the monopoly with SEPTA and
22 get other companies in here.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. GRIER: Now, it's up to City Council
25 to see that this puts across, but every time this

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2 subject comes across to City Council, they sweep it
3 under the rug. Why? Because, hey, the money's --
4 big money going out on the top and to keep us weak
5 people from surviving within it. It's not fair.

6 And I tell whoever leads SEPTA -- I tell
7 'em the same thing I'm telling you guys. When I
8 speak something I mean every word I say. And if we
9 all -- if the City itself, they use transportation,
10 would get together and fight for it -- no, this
11 group gets theirs and that groups get theirs, it's
12 (indiscernible). There's power in numbers and we
13 need the power.

14 And that's all I got to say.

15 (Applause.)

16 (Witness comes forward.)

17 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

18 MS. WILLIAMS: Good morning.

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Please state your
20 name for the record.

21 MS. WILLIAMS: My name is Frances
22 Williams. I'm a member of the Center in the Park,
23 Germantown Avenue. I'm also a member of Union 1199
24 and No. 33. I also volunteer at Fulton School. I'm
25 a member of (indiscernible) Advisory Board. Also

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2 Senior Environmental Corps. We test the streams to
3 keep them safe for Philadelphia.

4 I am saying all of this to say to a
5 great extent, SEPTA makes my being involved in these
6 volunteer positions possible. Please do not
7 increase the fares. Please do not decrease the free
8 time seniors have on SEPTA.

9 Today's senior citizens grew up in an
10 age when doing your share meant survival. And even
11 though we are retired, we are still doing our share
12 and sometimes more. Most of us are on a limited
13 income. Many of the things we do for the City of
14 Philadelphia as volunteers we could not do if we
15 didn't have SEPTA's help.

16 So we are asking you to please do not
17 decrease our free time nor increase the fare. The
18 added hours enable me to be at my classes or
19 meetings on time. I no longer have to fear missing
20 my last bus.

21 Thank you. Frances Williams.

22 (Applause.)

23 (Witness comes forward.)

24 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

25 MR. THOMAS: Hi, buddy, how you doing.

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2 My name is James A. Thomas. I'm a
3 member of the Clara Baldwin Center at 27
4 (indiscernible), okay?

5 I fought in the war; I was there when
6 they bombed Japan. I was there and a lot of my
7 friends died. And I want to know why is it that CCT
8 wants to go up on the senior citizen rates from 2.85
9 to 3.25 one way. I believe that all seniors should
10 stick together in this matter to what they have
11 worked hard in past years to earn. They pay \$50 a
12 month to Medicare to hear a doctor tell them they
13 need a referral to see a surgeon for a damn X-ray --
14 excuse me. That takes three days; a person can die
15 in three days. Do you understand what I'm saying?

16 I have five doctors. My doctors are
17 Navy doctors they tell me this: When you're sick,
18 we'll take care of you right away because you earned
19 it by being a member of the United States Navy.
20 These other people, they didn't have that chance,
21 some of 'em didn't go in the service, but they still
22 deserve the same damn rights as everybody else. You
23 understand me? They deserve it.

24 (Applause.)

25 MR. THOMAS: I'm 79 years old. I don't

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2 regret a day, I don't regret a day I spent in the
3 service for the United States government, but I do
4 regret this: When you take advantage of these old
5 people that have earned the right to be old, they
6 have lived, God spared them, why don't you spare
7 'em? Let 'em ride free. They don't owe you
8 nothing; you owe them.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. THOMAS: Now, you talk about this
11 Pennsylvania lottery, makes all of this money,
12 okay? Where is all of this money when the senior
13 citizens need it and you say it's for the senior
14 citizens? Where is the money at?

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. THOMAS: The man down the street
17 from me won \$50 million. He got his money. Where
18 is ours? You paid him, didn't you, but where's
19 ours? Did it go back into your kitty?

20 All seniors cannot pay the CCT raise
21 because some of them only get Social Security of 348
22 a month. Now, let me tell you something, have you
23 ever had heard of a notch baby? I'm one of 'em, I'm
24 one of 'em. I went in the service in 1940, came out
25 in 1957, and Social Security gives me \$348 a month.

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2 Can I live on it? Hell, no. But I tell you
3 something, we saved Social Security in 1939 and
4 1940; when they needed the money, they took it from
5 us to pay you, then they won't give it back to us.
6 They tell us in Washington --

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. THOMAS: They tell us in Washington
9 they're going to give a us lump sum of \$5,000 to
10 make us feel good, but how you going to get it? So
11 much a month. It's still not getting the money back
12 they owe you and they never pay you off, just like
13 they're dipping into Social Security in Washington
14 to pay all of the debts. Now Bush is going to take
15 all of the money for tax returns and all of the rich
16 -- well, anyway, all the rich people going to get
17 it.

18 We on the bottom of the pile, don't get
19 nothing. We pay taxes too. By the time it gets
20 down to us, if you get \$3, you're lucky. That money
21 that I get from Social Security is just enough to
22 live on and buy food. There are people that have
23 saved Social Security back in the 1930s and '40s who
24 need help to stay together. Now when they are too
25 old to work, everything goes up, up, up out of

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2 reach.

3 This government owes the seniors. When
4 the hell you going to pay 'em off?

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 (Witness comes forward.)

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

9 MS. BUTLER: Good morning. My name is
10 Peggy Butler, and I'm with the Mercy Douglas Senior
11 Center. I have been retired two years this month.
12 When I came out, I looked for a center to go to, and
13 that's where I went. And when I looked around --
14 I'm not old enough to ride on Paratransit yet, but
15 when I look around our center and see the ones that
16 are old enough to ride and they come in there every
17 day, sometimes some of them be in there at 8:30 in
18 the morning till after lunch or whatever time they
19 choose to go home, and Paratransit brings 'em,
20 sometime they're late bringing 'em, sometime they
21 don't have the proper lift to lift the people up
22 on. And I think they need to improve the service
23 greatly, and why they want to go up on the fare --

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. BUTLER: Because sometime they don't

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2 give you the service. I have a mother that's 82
3 years old and I know what she go through because
4 since I've stopped working, I go up there and help
5 her. And the time don't mean nothing to 'em.
6 Sometime they'll come get you, they're a hour late,
7 or sometime they come earlier and we haven't
8 finished doing what we doing.

9 And the center means a lot to some of
10 them people there. Me, I'm fortunate I have a
11 family; some of them don't even have a family. Some
12 come in their in the morning and it's just good for
13 'em to be there. And I hope that Paratransit don't
14 go up on the fare 'cause one day I'm going to need
15 'em, and it won't be long.

16 Thank you.

17 (Witness comes forward.)

18 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

19 MS. REDMAN: Good morning. My name is
20 Geraldine Redman, a member of the Germantown
21 Settlement Mature Adult Center, also a member of
22 (indiscernible) Adult Center and also an employee of
23 the Mayor's Commission on Services to the Aging.

24 I looked forward to the day when I
25 didn't have to pay a fare because then I would have

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2 more of my income for myself. But after I arrived
3 at this point where I didn't have to pay a fare, I
4 feel like they're doing me a favor. When you get on
5 the bus, they won't look at you; it's like, oh,
6 here's another freebie.

7 So I'm thinking that perhaps we, the
8 senior riders of Paratransit, cannot afford an
9 increase in fare at this time. However, I can't
10 speak for all of us, but I believe we would more
11 readily accept paying on a regular transit such as
12 it was before, when we paid a reduced fare. It
13 would offset the need to increase the Paratransit
14 riders.

15 We thoroughly appreciate free rides all
16 day on Saturdays and Sundays. I'm sure that's an
17 added expense for SEPTA. Perhaps age factor may
18 come into play where 65 to 70 pay a reduced and 70
19 and above ride free.

20 Respectfully submitted, Geraldine
21 Redman.

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

23 (Witness comes forward.)

24 MR. WASHINGTON: Good morning
25 Councilmembers.

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2 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

3 MR. WASHINGTON: My name is Earl
4 Washington, and I'm from the Senior Citizens at
5 Broad, No. 509.

6 And I sympathize with these people
7 because I'm an ex-serviceman too. Number one, I
8 sympathize with 'em for standing for the rights as
9 being a senior citizen. If it wasn't for the senior
10 citizen, a lot of these programs wouldn't be
11 existing, number one. Monopolizing, which is SEPTA
12 and this City should have more than one
13 transportation, see, because they're monopolize on
14 the system, which you all know. If I'm number one,
15 I call the shots, if you agree with me or you
16 disagree with me. And that's what happened with
17 SEPTA.

18 Number two, as far as being courtesy
19 [sic], there is not too much courtesy with SEPTA.
20 On some of the buses, I can tell you, if that driver
21 close that door and you can be waving your hands,
22 you can be standing there, they're not going to stop
23 and open that door for you, as being a senior.

24 Number two, they have the, kneeling
25 buses. Now, I heard this, that you have to ask them

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2 to lower that --

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. WASHINGTON: Now, how can a person
5 with two crutches or even one crutch or a limp leg
6 have to beg and ask you, Will you please lower your
7 bus down? That shouldn't be. It should be
8 automatically. And they don't do it.

9 Now, there are some that's courtesy
10 [sic]. There's some drivers that are very
11 courtesy. You don't have to ask them for things
12 like that and they automatically does that.

13 So I'm saying, why would they want to
14 hike the fare up, why would they want to hike the
15 fare up when all we, as being a senior citizen, have
16 paid our dues from Day One, whenever it was
17 appropriated for us to put the funds into the
18 system.

19 Now, speaking about the lottery, okay,
20 if the lottery is that much popular today in this
21 city here and they're paying for the senior citizen,
22 why are we being treated the way we are when it
23 comes down to the different transportation?

24 (Applause.)

25 MR. WASHINGTON: Why are we being

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2 treated that way if they're paying into the system?

3 Shared-Ride, like you say, you name the
4 difference ones on the bus, different organizations,
5 why are we being treated that way when we paid our
6 dues?

7 And I have some people to say that we're
8 riding free -- we're not riding free. If it wasn't
9 for us to be a senior citizen and to pay into the
10 system from the age -- from the count of number of
11 age, there wouldn't be that system. So why can't
12 they incorporate us?

13 (Applause.)

14 MR. WASHINGTON: I sympathize not only
15 with the ones here, I sympathize with the ones that
16 can't get here, and maybe the reason why they can't
17 get here is because they don't have the
18 transportation to get here and they have to pay out
19 of their pocket. And I sympathize with 'em not, and
20 only I sympathize with the senior citizens here, I
21 sympathize with the children too when they want to
22 up the fare for the simple reason you got some
23 children in a family, in one family that has two and
24 three children going to school and to up the fare
25 and there ain't but one parent in that family.

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2 (Applause.)

3 MR. WASHINGTON: So why the hike? Why
4 would the hike be?

5 And I stand firm on what I'm saying, and
6 I'm not having no paper that I printed out. It's in
7 my calculation mind, what God gave to me, and I
8 stand firm on what they're saying. Why the hike?

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. WASHINGTON: And in this country, it
11 is told that we are paying the highest fare right
12 now. Right now, you don't have to go no further.
13 So why is it? When it comes down for us to get a
14 raise, we on the bottom rung. (Indiscernible.) And
15 that's in this country, they on the top rung, they
16 can they getting plenty, if you want to use it that
17 way. So I sympathize with 'em and I take my hat off
18 to them, and I don't wear no hat, so that's what I'm
19 concerned about, I'm concerned about it.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. WASHINGTON: And SEPTA has got to
22 stop. There's always a beginning and a ending. And
23 I think this is going a little too far.

24 (Applause.)

25 (Witness comes forward.)

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2 MS. TRADER: Good morning. My name is
3 Grace Trader. I'm a senior, I'm a part-time working
4 senior. I work for Seniors that Work.

5 I formerly worked at Germantown
6 Settlement and I saw a lot of problems with the
7 CCT. They had quite a few members they had to drop
8 from the center because of the drivers that didn't
9 have directions of where to go and pick them up at.
10 And some of the seniors had to miss various days
11 because they weren't picked up. There was some
12 seniors that didn't have time to have their
13 breakfast at home because the driver was too early,
14 and many of the seniors had to stay there past the
15 time because the drivers were late. And some of the
16 drivers on CCT were a little rude 'cause I
17 experienced it by helping some of the seniors get on
18 and off the bus.

19 I now work part-time at St. Rita's and
20 they started using service but some of them sometime
21 probably can't get in because of the fact that the
22 drivers are late or whatever. And these centers do
23 great jobs for these senior citizens and these
24 centers are needed 'cause, like I said, I worked at
25 Germantown Settlement but now at St. Rita's.

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2 Also in the line of SEPTA itself, the
3 services are the poorest I've ever seen.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. TRADER: I've been in California
6 more than one time and you can get on the phone and
7 find out what time the bus is going to be at that
8 particular stop and when you get to that stop, trust
9 me, the bus is there. And they can just about
10 detect whether you're a visitor or not. Very
11 courteous, they ask you where you going, where want
12 to go, they tell you what bus to take, what time the
13 bus coming back, they give you a pass.

14 The first year I went to California, I
15 rode around for 85 cents, which will never happen
16 here, but by the same token, like I said, I'm a
17 senior citizen and I remember back to the days when
18 you get on the bus it was 25 cents, 30 cents and go
19 where you wanted to go. Now it cost you almost
20 \$5 to come to Center City and go home.

21 (Applause.)

22 MS. TRADER: So a lot of times I'll
23 walk. I mean, I have a free pass, it's true, but a
24 lot of times I'll walk because I have stood up and
25 waited for a bus from 15 minutes to a half an hour.

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2 And in the wintertime, you stand in the cold and you
3 freeze. In the summertime, you stand in the heat
4 and you burn up.

5 And there's buses that -- I usually
6 travel from Broad and Olney, 55, 22, 6, or whatever.
7 Now, the 6 bus will pull in, load the people, and go
8 out. The el bus will sit there 15 minutes, 20
9 minutes, and the driver's eating, drinking their
10 drink, talking to a customer, and it's about 100
11 people there. And you got Girls High School,
12 Central High School, LaSalle College, kids coming
13 from all kinds of schools, and you get there about 3
14 o'clock, there's no bus or there might be two or
15 three over on the side and there's no drivers. And
16 (indiscernible) and these young people today do not
17 respect senior citizens or the elders. And when try
18 to get on the bus, they practically knock you down.
19 And it's the poorest service I've seen in I don't
20 know how many years.

21 And I'm so glad to see the amount of
22 people that turned out here because SEPTA needs
23 somebody to fight 'em and it needs somebody to fight
24 'em hard like because like I said, you freeze in
25 the wintertime and you burn up in the summertime.

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2 (Applause.)

3 MS. TRADER: Saturday and Sunday,
4 somebody says, Why don't you go so-and-so and
5 so-and-so? No, I'm not going to wait a half an hour
6 for each bus to have to take. The K bus runs one
7 bus every half an hour. The 18, (indiscernible) bus
8 every half an hour. Saturday and Sunday, people
9 move around on Saturday and Sunday as well as they
10 do during the week, but from the way SEPTA look at
11 it, they're out there for the working people and the
12 school kids; they're not out there for people that
13 travel on Saturday and Sunday.

14 Many senior citizens take SEPTA going to
15 and from their churches. Just thank God I'm lucky
16 enough that I get a ride to my church but I usually
17 have to take SEPTA home.

18 But in all fairness, SEPTA is about the
19 most undependable transportation system I've ever
20 seen in my life.

21 (Applause.)

22 MS. TRADER: New York has four or five
23 subway lines and any amount of buses take you
24 anywhere you want to go. SEPTA have one bus to
25 bring you to Center City. Wait for the C Bus, how

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2 long you have to wait? A bus come quarter after 1
3 and you don't get it in there until (indiscernible),
4 okay? Sometimes a 18 bus goes around
5 (indiscernible) Avenue and you right there a couple
6 blocks from Rising Sun. You miss one 18, in 15, 20
7 minutes, I don't think there's a SEPTA bus out there
8 that runs anywhere from every five to ten minutes,
9 because if it is one, I would like to see it, 'cause
10 up to now, I haven't seen one yet.

11 Like I said, I live up in West Oak
12 Lane. For me to get to St. Rita's at Broad and
13 (indiscernible), it takes me every bit of 45
14 minutes, which should be no more than at least a
15 half an hour. So if I have to be at work at St.
16 Rita's at 8 o'clock, I have to leave my house at
17 quarter after 7, which means I got to up at about
18 6 o'clock in the morning to get ready to go to work
19 in South Philly.

20 So in all fairness, there is no fairness
21 with SEPTA. SEPTA is full of crap.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. TRADER: They need to take a good
24 laxative to get it all out their system 'cause the
25 system they run stinks.

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2 Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

5 MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: I'm small so I have
6 to stand. I have to make myself heard.

7 Anyway, when --

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Excuse me. Please
9 state your name for the record.

10 MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: Oh, I'm sorry.
11 Alice S. Wojciechowski.

12 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Would you spell your
13 last name, please.

14 MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: Wojciechowski,
15 W-O-J-C-I-E-C-H-O-W-S-K-I.

16 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

17 MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: Anyway, when they
18 ring up each person that they're going to get paid
19 for, they don't stay with one lane, they cheat, they
20 ring it two, three times with nobody else getting on
21 that bus. So they're getting topped off without a
22 passenger.

23 Another thing, when you get off that bus
24 -- I have short legs and I shrunk three inches, so I
25 -- and he doesn't lower that thing. You have to

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2 keep asking and asking and asking. I have to
3 actually jump off that bus to reach the ground. So
4 they just -- they just love to hear you tell 'em --
5 ask them. We ask nicely to please lower.

6 Anyway, I'm 83 years old. I rode -- at
7 my last job, I worked 26 years, three buses to work,
8 three buses back home. So I think I earned a free
9 ride.

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: I retired in 1981
12 from Keebler's Baking Company. I was making it on
13 my own income with careful shopping. Now our money
14 is like a rubber band. You can't stretch it too
15 far; pretty soon it will break.

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: And we will be out
18 on the street with no income of our -- any of our
19 money left. Anyway, our money is not keeping up
20 with the years. We all are wearing outmoded clothes
21 to save money. Prices are going up, but our income
22 is the same.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: We go to the dollar
25 stores. Thank God they're pretty decent. I made a

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2 garden with all kinds of vegetables so to help me
3 with my problems. My windows need caulking and they
4 said they could not help me 'cause I'm just a little
5 bit over my limit. That's the story of my life.
6 I'm always over my limit.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: The gas bill put me
9 in the hole. The lottery is almost paying 100
10 percent for us, 97 percent they're paying, so why
11 are they asking for 33? They're only short 3
12 percent.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. WOJCIECHOWSKI: What do they want
15 the 33 percent for, to pocket it? We worked for our
16 benefits but we have to share it with the whole
17 world. The world is laughing at us Americans for
18 letting these things happen to us.

19 Thank you very much.

20 (Applause.)

21 (Witness comes forward.)

22 MS. DAVIDSON: Good morning. My name is
23 Helen Davidson, and I'm here representing the
24 seniors from Germantown Settlement Mature Adult
25 Center, not only them seniors but all seniors all

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2 over Pennsylvania.

3 We as senior citizens have worked all of
4 our lives -- 30, 40, 50 years. A lot of us have
5 been injured, a lot of us have become handicapped,
6 working, standing on corners, waiting for SEPTA. It
7 is a hard thing to think that you have to ride
8 Paratransit and they're going to go up 33 percent.
9 We hardly get 33 percent in our income that we get
10 when we retired. A lot of us here don't even get a
11 pension; I am one that don't get a pension. I'm 74
12 years old and I worked at a place where I was unable
13 to get a pension 'cause I went out on disability.
14 When the contract ran out, I was ineligible for a
15 pension.

16 So, therefore, I'm saying, Paratransit
17 is going up higher and higher and higher. We have
18 handicaps there at the Settlement. Some get more
19 than just the Paratransit ride. They get-- some of
20 them don't even get their first -- that's their
21 first meal that they get, the very first meal that
22 they get. The Paratransit is late. The
23 Paratransit, some of the buses are not fit to ride
24 in.

25 Paratransit -- I have a aunt 91 years

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2 old who was taken to Pennsylvania Hospital at 8:30
3 and she waited at the hospital called till 20
4 minutes to 8 that night and had just had a heart
5 transplant.

6 Now, it's ridiculous for all of these
7 seniors sitting here for a cause for the fare to go
8 up. And some of the bus drivers are nasty and some
9 of 'em refuse to lower the steps.

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. DAVIDSON: I think they want to
12 terminate us, but we're going to stand and stand and
13 stand together to fight for our rights.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. DAVIDSON: First of all, SEPTA would
16 not have been here if it wasn't for your parents,
17 your grandparents, and your great- great- great-
18 grandparents.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. DAVIDSON: I remember when you only
21 paid 3 cents to ride SEPTA, when you got two tickets
22 for 5 cents, and every time you turn around, it's
23 going up, going up, going up, and we're unable to
24 pay, but we're not going up, we're going down.

25 (Applause.)

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2 MS. DAVIDSON: We're being treated
3 unfair. With all things that are here for the
4 seniors, we don't get, we're being decreased by --
5 they're killing us because we don't have the money.
6 You'd be surprised at some of the people that don't
7 get their blood tests taken unless they can come
8 there on Paratransit to get it taken. Some of them
9 don't even have their first meal until they get
10 there.

11 So we're asking you, we are begging you
12 to please, please, please do not raise this
13 Paratransit.

14 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

17 MS. PIAZZA: Good morning. I am a
18 member of JCC Stifle Center. My name is Harriet
19 Piazza and I am prepared to speak. I am here today
20 to speak on behalf of myself and many of my friends
21 at the Stifle Center in South Philly who use
22 Paratransit.

23 I broke my hip and I can't walk well.
24 If I don't have Paratransit available, I wouldn't be
25 able to come to Stifle Senior Center. I have no one

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2 to bring me. My sister and I both come to the
3 center every day. Life would be awfully boring if I
4 had to stay home. All I can do is watch TV. When I
5 come to the center, I have to serve lunch, I call
6 bingo, I am on the advisory council, and I go to
7 arts and crafts and our club meetings. Most
8 importantly, I am with my friends.

9 The Stifle Center gets money from PCA to
10 pay for the Paratransit rides that bring my friends
11 and myself to the center. I wouldn't pay the full
12 cost because I am on a fixed income. If the fares
13 were raised by 33 percent, not all of us could be
14 able to come to the center every day. That would be
15 very sad.

16 For my friends and myself, I urge you to
17 vote against the increase in the cost of
18 Paratransit.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. PIAZZA: Thank you for listening.

21 (Applause.)

22 (Witness comes forward.)

23 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

24 MS. MORELAND: Good morning. My name is
25 Tamara Moreland, and I'm the Executive Director of

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2 the Philadelphia Senior Center, and I'll keep my
3 comments very brief 'cause I think it's much more
4 important that you hear from these men and women
5 than from me.

6 But you have heard about the fact that
7 we serve meals and it may be the only nutritious
8 meal that these folks might get in a day. You've
9 heard about how senior centers combat isolation and
10 provide socialization. But there's another
11 important aspect here. I think this is an issue of
12 access to health care.

13 The Shared-Ride not only provides rides
14 to physicians' appointments, etc., but many of the
15 senior centers provide many health-care components.
16 We provide podiatry, we provide nutritional
17 counseling, we provide exercise programs, support
18 groups, we help coordinate physicians' visits, some
19 of us even have physicians and nurses onsite.

20 So I think it's just a really important
21 factor in this that you need to remember that this
22 is also a health-care issue for senior citizens.

23 Thank you very much for your support.

24 (Applause.)

25 (Witness comes forward.)

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2 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

3 MR. HOPEWELL: My name is Sylvester
4 Hopewell, Sr. I'm a member of the Germantown
5 Settlement.

6 And I'm here this morning to let you
7 know that we seniors, we're just about making it and
8 we can't afford no 33 percent increase that SEPTA
9 wants to make unless -- there's also between us, we
10 are all having a time with transportation coming
11 (indiscernible). Now, we would like for the members
12 of City Council to let them know that -- where we're
13 coming from that this 33 percent increase we
14 definitely can't have it and we will not stand for
15 it.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. HOPEWELL: Please, I also want to
18 say that we also vote for City Council, and we want
19 them to let them know that this SEPTA wants to
20 borrow \$50 million from the City and we want the
21 City Council to vote no because it's not fair no way
22 you look at it.

23 Plus there's a whole lot of us senior
24 citizens, through the center, it's the only meal we
25 get during the day, plus there is no way in the

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2 world that we could stand it, the increase, I don't
3 care how you look at it.

4 Please, I want you to take into
5 consideration that we definitely need more
6 consideration for our senior citizens coming and
7 going. I want to thank you.

8 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

9 (Witness comes forward.)

10 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

11 MR. BROWN: Good morning. My name is
12 Gregory Brown. I am a social worker at the Earl
13 Gray Roberts Junior Adult Day Care Center.

14 Our day care center provides therapeutic
15 recreational services to senior citizens suffering
16 from a variety of mental and physical disabilities.
17 Without the services available at the day care
18 center, our seniors would have to be placed in a
19 nursing home, or their caregivers would be forced to
20 quit their jobs to take care of their family members
21 at home. Caregivers need the services of the day
22 care center to provide respite from the stress that
23 occurs when you're responsible for a disabled loved
24 one.

25 I am here today in response to the

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2 proposed 33 percent increase in SEPTA fares. I
3 believe that this proposed fare increase will have a
4 detrimental effect on the ability of our day care
5 center to provide services to clients.

6 At present, there are 27 persons
7 enrolled in the day care center. Of those 27
8 persons, 26 utilize Paratransit to travel to and
9 from the day care center. Only 2 of the 26 seniors
10 who ride Paratransit do not receive funding from the
11 Philadelphia Corporation for Aging. The two clients
12 who do not receive funding from the Philadelphia
13 Corporation for Aging pay for rides out of their own
14 pocket.

15 The Philadelphia Corporation for Aging
16 is the area agency on aging in Philadelphia County.
17 The Philadelphia Corporation for Aging provides
18 funding to eligible seniors for transportation
19 services. Should SEPTA be permitted to increase
20 fares, more money will have to be allocated for
21 transportation, leaving less money available for
22 other needed services such as day care. As a result
23 of this increase in fares, clients who presently
24 attend the day care center five days per week, for
25 example, may only be eligible to attend the center

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2 three days per week. Clients who pay on a private
3 pay basis will have to pay more for transportation
4 in addition to the \$45.48 per day for the cost of
5 day care services.

6 What this means is that seniors will no
7 longer have access to the day care center,
8 caregivers will be forced to quit their jobs to stay
9 home with their father, mother, sister or friend to
10 adequately provide for the needs. Caregivers will
11 have to seek alternative support systems to care for
12 their family members. Senior citizens will
13 experience a disruption in their activity of daily
14 living. Without Paratransit services, an adult day
15 care center see a decrease in the number of persons
16 utilizing the services of our facility.

17 When senior citizens attend the day care
18 center, they are provided a continental breakfast of
19 coffee, milk and Danish, they engage in activities
20 that include current events, exercise, arts and
21 crafts, lunch, group discussions, and games.
22 Clients have opportunities for socialization
23 experiences and peer interaction activities. We
24 encourage our clients to work to improve their
25 ability to express themselves and grow in the area

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2 of mental, physical, and spiritual development.

3 Without the socialization opportunities
4 available at the day care center, if not placed in a
5 nursing home, senior citizens will stay at home and
6 be denied access to the structured environment of
7 the day care center. Their daily routine will
8 consist of staring out the window and a watching
9 television throughout day. No one will be there to
10 listen to their stories of what it was like to grow
11 up in the South. They cannot paint interesting
12 pictures and listen to music that reminds them of
13 the spontaneity of their youth.

14 On behalf of the staff of the Earl Gray
15 Roberts Junior Adult Day Care Center, I appeal to
16 you, members of City Council, to say no to this
17 proposed fare increase. I know SEPTA will talk
18 about the increase in the cost of providing
19 transportation services as a basis for why this
20 increase is needed, but I suggest that the needs of
21 seniors in this community must also be a
22 consideration.

23 Do not allow this fare increase to
24 become a reality, because as a result, the most
25 vulnerable members of our society will suffer the

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2 effects. Follow your conscious, do what is right.

3 Give our elders the freedom to continue to become

4 the creative individuals that they want to be.

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. BROWN: If I may, I have a statement

8 by a caregiver written by a caregiver of our day

9 care center. His name is Bernard Levine.

10 "I am a caregiver. I am responsible for

11 the care of my disabled mother. My mother is 96

12 years of age. She suffers from dementia,

13 hypertension, depression, and hearing impairment.

14 "My mother attends the Earl Gray Roberts

15 Junior Adult Day Care Center five days per week.

16 She has been enrolled in the day care program since

17 December 1997. My mother uses Paratransit to

18 transport herself to and from the day care center

19 every day. The Philadelphia Corporation for Aging

20 provides funding for my mother to attend the day

21 care center, including transportation. My mother

22 needs the day care center because it keeps her

23 connected to the outside world.

24 "If SEPTA increases the cost of

25 transportation, there may not be enough money in the

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2 budget to permit my mother to attend the center at
3 the same rate she does now. I believe that if my
4 mother is unable to get out of the house during the
5 day, she will be confined to just four walls and her
6 physical and mental health will deteriorate. She
7 needs access to other people so that she can
8 continue to feel good about herself. My mother
9 likes attending the day care center. If the cost of
10 transportation increases, her access to the day care
11 center will decrease.

12 "I am asking the members of City Council
13 to reject this proposed fare increase. A fare
14 increase will not only be detrimental to my mother
15 but also to the many other thousands of seniors who
16 use Paratransit."

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 (Witness comes forward.)

20 MS. JIHAD: Good morning, sir.

21 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

22 MS. JIHAD: My name is Barbara Abdullah
23 Jihad (ph.), and I live in Elmer Arms, on 6733 Elmer
24 Street.

25 And I travel every day with SEPTA and I

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2 see when I'm going that's traveling, I see how SEPTA
3 treats the elderlies [sic] because some of elderlies
4 get on the buses and some elderlies don't have the
5 money. There's a certain time that they got to pay
6 a certain fare on the bus, and they don't have it in
7 the morning when they want to get on the bus to go
8 to they destination and they cannot go to they
9 destination. So I have to give them the money
10 because the bus driver won't let 'em on, and it's
11 not right.

12 I mean, we have to have some kind of
13 human heart, compassion for ourself and humanity and
14 we don't. All we worry about is money. And 33
15 percent, it's wrong. SEPTA -- the elderly shouldn't
16 pay nothing else because they done paid the way for
17 us, then they struggled hard in this life for us, so
18 why they got to keep paying and paying and paying
19 and paying. It's not right.

20 And I'm going to take a stand with them
21 because it's not right 'cause they our mothers and
22 fathers. They need all the respect and reference
23 from the womb bore you, for God always watches over
24 us. So, I mean, we have to (indiscernible) them.
25 They our grandmothers, they our grandfathers.

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2 So I'm saying I traveled all my life to
3 Atlantic City back and forth on SEPTA, which one
4 night, I came home and I fell down the el steps
5 because I travel, I had a nighttime job, and that
6 was 12 to 8. And every time I came home, it was
7 dangerous at them times, the nights coming in.

8 And I'm just saying SEPTA is not fair.
9 Because even in the cold, I see the elderly standing
10 out there cold and they won't even open the door for
11 'em just to get on the bus and sit down just to be
12 warm. And it ain't right that SEPTA do all us like
13 that because I don't know, I might not even make it
14 to be the age they are, but I am still a young
15 senior and still we need the respect for everybody
16 in this city because it's not right.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. JIHAD: And the 33 percent, they
19 don't even pay nothing. I mean ya'll need to just
20 -- the price, no more. They pay enough already. I
21 got a Medicare card, and I can't even get on the
22 bus. They say I'm too young to get on the bus,
23 which I have a ailment, but still, they don't even
24 want me on the bus. I have to get off that bus and
25 get on another bus. And that's not right, sir,

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2 because, I mean, we got to treat each other right.

3 I mean, we want to uphold this community and this

4 society and this society, the elderlies. Without

5 us, without the elderlies, we're not going to make

6 it.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. JIHAD: So what I'm saying is, 33

9 percent -- please, we don't need no 33 percent no

10 more. They can't pay it, I can't even pay it, and

11 I'm struggling every day trying to make it with the

12 little money that I have to try to get on the bus

13 every day, sir. So I'm just saying that we got to

14 respect everybody, all our elderlies, because they

15 done paid their way already. I mean, God, they

16 don't need to pay no more.

17 (Applause.)

18 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Let me say for the

19 record again briefly that this was up to a vote in

20 Council and Council would not approve this fare

21 increase. I think that Council will get a chance to

22 take its first on Thursday opposing this fare

23 increase. That resolution will be introduced, but

24 this is the first chance we will get to take action

25 after SEPTA announced its fare increase.

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2 So while I understand the spirit of your
3 comments, this is really not a Council decision
4 other than what action we will take on Thursday to
5 oppose this fare increase and to ask the City
6 representatives on the SEPTA Board to do so also.
7 And beyond that, we will continue to work with Miss
8 Wiggins and Mr. Rodriguez to whatever action you
9 want to take along with us.

10 And thank you and good morning.

11 MR. POWELL: My name Mildred Powell and
12 I want to speak about things that are happening as
13 far as SEPTA's concerned.

14 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Could you please have
15 a seat so you can speak into the mike. Please pull
16 the mike closer to you.

17 MS. POWELL: I think that when we think
18 about SEPTA raising the fares for school children,
19 we don't realize that there are so many school
20 children who have parents that are not working. How
21 are they going to get money to go to school if SEPTA
22 raised the fare? They're paying more now than they
23 can afford to pay, and I think it would be a very
24 bad thing to happen if they did raise the fare more.
25 That's one of the things I wanted to speak about.

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2 And another thing I wanted to speak
3 about was in the case of my husband, he's disabled,
4 handicapped, and he can't walk. He was paralyzed,
5 he doesn't have no legs, and he can't get around.
6 And now SEPTA has stopped taking them out to doctors
7 or wherever they need to go, they don't take them
8 out anymore. If the person has more than two steps
9 to walk down to get out of their house, SEPTA will
10 not take them. They have to get to the doctor the
11 best way that they can, and in many cases, they
12 don't get there at all.

13 And I think SEPTA should do better than
14 they're doing with all of the people. And the
15 children who go to school really need SEPTA bad and
16 their parents need SEPTA in order to send them to
17 school.

18 And I think those were the two main
19 things I wanted to speak about. So that's all.

20 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you for your
21 testimony.

22 (Applause.)

23 (Witness comes forward.)

24 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

25 MR. BECKER: Good morning. My name is

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2 Robert Becker.

3 Now, they want to shut our place down
4 and I ain't got no place to go. (Indiscernible)
5 waiting an waiting. What are we supposed to do
6 about this. There's no way getting there. And I
7 live at Mt. Airy, 6926 (indiscernible) Street. What
8 we supposed to do then? Where am I going to go if
9 they shut our place down. What are we supposed to
10 do about this? If they shut my place down, where am
11 I supposed to go if they shut our place down,
12 Germantown Settlement? Where am I going to go, live
13 in the street? Oh, no. It doesn't work in my
14 books. In my books, they keep everything wide
15 open. And why are they putting people back to work
16 (indiscernible) done in the right way? You don't
17 get any respect like it should be.

18 Thank you, sir.

19 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

20 (Witness comes forward.)

21 MS. MINK: My name is Rosie Mink, and I
22 am 93 years old.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. MINK: I came this morning to give
25 the committee of SEPTA hell.

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2 (Applause.)

3 MS. MINK: How dare they come up with
4 this inhuman figure of 33 percent increase. I -- we
5 cannot afford it. We do not ride SEPTA to party, we
6 do not just ride SEPTA to enjoy ourselves. It is
7 our way of life, we need it for transportation, we
8 need it for the sick.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. MINK: We are assembled here and
11 look around, you will see by our faces that we
12 contributed many, many years of living in
13 Philadelphia and supporting Philadelphia, and now
14 it's payback time. It's time for them to do
15 something for us.

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. MINK: We're not asking for charity;
18 we want what belongs to us.

19 And what really makes me a little --
20 I'll say something maybe a little unladylike, but
21 anyway, what really makes me pissed off is this:
22 They worry about the horses, they make sure that the
23 horses are covered. They worry about the dogs, but
24 they don't worry about us. We have to --

25 (Applause.)

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2 MS. MINK: In the bad weather, we have
3 to trample in the snow and it's cold and it's wet.
4 We cannot afford it. My husband was taken in an
5 emergency to the hospital. It will cost me \$50 up
6 and back. Who in the hell could afford that? We
7 can't.

8 So we're not asking for charity; we want
9 what rightfully belongs to us. Let us live, let us
10 enjoy our life. And that's all we ask. And don't
11 push us to the limit and don't take away our pursuit
12 of happiness.

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 (Witness comes forward.)

16 MR. JONES: Good morning. My name is
17 Carlos Jones and I'm from West Philadelphia
18 Community Center. I'm the senior program
19 coordinator for the seniors program at West
20 Philadelphia Community, Center the Crime Prevention
21 Association. First I'd like to read our statement.
22 Our senior center would lose 33 percent
23 of our current consumer rides, which means a drastic
24 decrease in our daily membership participation. The
25 senior center here is here to serve members.

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2 However, if they cannot get to us, how are we to
3 provide them with a service that they so desperately
4 need? What good is it for a senior center to exist
5 if it's unattainable to the population that it
6 serves?

7 Members here at West Philadelphia
8 Community Senior Center attend because of their need
9 of social activities, fitness, educational classes,
10 and meals. The plan increase would limit their
11 ability to receive these needed services. It would
12 force our seniors to stay at home in locked
13 residences and many without nutritious meals.

14 What about riding the SEPTA bus? you
15 might ask. Well, unfortunately, the steps that you
16 board on the bus are too high. The handicapped-
17 accessible buses are unoperable. The buses are too
18 crowded and the waiting time between buses is
19 entirely too long for the elderly to wait. Bus
20 stops are not senior-friendly because there are no
21 benches or coverings to accommodate them.

22 Now, let's just break it down here. You
23 all want to bring up a 33 hike on the seniors. I
24 don't even see where you deserve it.

25 (Applause.)

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2 MR. JONES: Nasty drivers, late all the
3 time, pickup and drop-off always late. You have to
4 understand -- they should understand also we all
5 have mothers, grandmothers, grandfathers. And what
6 about you? I'm 34 years old, but guess what, I have
7 a mother who's going to soon be a senior. If I
8 worked for SEPTA, I wouldn't even have that thought
9 in my mind.

10 Let's try to get this thing together for
11 the seniors. They do not deserve it.

12 Thank you very much.

13 (Applause.)

14 (Witness comes forward.)

15 MS. WILSON: Good morning. My name is
16 Genevieve Wilson and I'm a caretaker for my father.
17 He attends the adult day care center at Earl Gray
18 Adult Day Care at Belmont Avenue and Girard.

19 I don't feel like the SEPTA fare need to
20 be increased because if it's increased, that means
21 that he would not be able to go to the center as
22 many days as he does now, which means I would have
23 the liberty to do what I have to. When he's at the
24 center, he gets taken care of, they have activities
25 for him to do, and it helps him to live a little

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2 longer. My father's 84 years old, and when he stays
3 at home, he has nothing to do. He can't get around,
4 he's disabled.

5 And I agree with the other speakers that
6 I don't really see where they need a increase
7 because they're never on time. And if they do get
8 there on time, they don't bring him home on time and
9 I have to keep calling, trying to see where he's at,
10 taking him to the wrong address.

11 And I just feel like the rate of
12 increase is unfair at this present time.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

15 Is there anyone else to testify? Please
16 approach the witness table.

17 (Witness comes forward.)

18 MS. DOWNEY: Good morning. My name is
19 Yvonne Downey. I'm representing Haddington Multi
20 Services for Older Adults Incorporated. We're in
21 West Philadelphia. Geneva A. Black is our executive
22 director and I am her assistant.

23 We are very outspoken, we are very
24 militant at our center. We are not going to sit
25 around with our hands folded and just let SEPTA

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2 tired. We're not quitting, and those of us that
3 speak up for the seniors are going to do just that.
4 And we're going to do it very loudly, I might add.
5 (Applause.)
6 MS. DOWNEY: Thank you and have a nice
7 day.
8 (Applause.)
9 (Witness comes forward.)
10 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.
11 MS. EDWARDS: Good morning. My name is
12 Norma Edwards. I'm from the Haddington Center.
13 (Applause.)
14 MS. EDWARDS: I'm a volunteer at the
15 Haddington Center and I am the president of the
16 advisory council.
17 Now, I was born here in Philadelphia, in
18 the best part of Philadelphia -- North Philly -- and
19 we don't play.
20 (Applause.)
21 MS. EDWARDS: And there was a time when
22 I was here, when I was born and you only had to pay
23 7 cents to get on PTC. It wasn't SEPTA. Then it
24 was raised to 15 cents and you got a pass and you
25 went out the front door, not the back door.

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2 But now I'm tired. You want to retire,
3 you want to go someplace, you want to enjoy
4 yourself. I was working 35 years on one job. I'm
5 retired now. I don't want to go out and work no
6 more and to have to go out and pay a high fare.
7 It's disgusting, it really is.

8 And everybody -- we have a problem, not
9 everybody, some people get around real good, and I'm
10 one of them that can try to get around good. But
11 other people, you have to look out for other
12 people. It's hard. Why don't you come to our
13 center and take a ride with me one day to some of
14 these people's houses and see how they be treated.
15 Be for real with 'em, be for real. We only human
16 beings, we not cattle. We human beings, just like
17 everybody else. And we intend to be treated like
18 human beings.

19 (Applause.)

20 MS. EDWARDS: And the fare shouldn't go
21 up no more. We're not cattle.

22 So please take it into consideration.
23 You might get 75, 85. God bless you. But you want
24 to be treated right.

25 Thank you.

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2 (Applause.)

3 (Witness comes forward.)

4 MR. ROSS: Good morning, Council,
5 seniors, and colleagues.

6 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

7 MR. ROSS: My name is Ron Ross, and I'm
8 the Program Coordinator of the Southwest Center.
9 I'm here to let you know the gravity of the
10 situation.

11 On our way down here, courtesy of
12 Paratransit, our senior numbers were mixed up.
13 Therefore, some of the seniors were not able to
14 board. That's one of the existing problems and main
15 problems as program coordinator that I've found
16 since taking the position. Many of my programs are
17 not able to run because of the ineptness of the
18 people who handle the programming on the other end.
19 Therefore, our programs, such as coming down here --
20 we would have been down here an hour before the
21 time. We got down here late.

22 As usual, I've been given excuses
23 numerous times as to why our programs are not being
24 attended. SEPTA, in fact, has not provided us with
25 the transportation that we need in a timely manner.

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2 Therefore, the seniors are inconvenienced. Many
3 times they are not picked up, as you've already
4 heard. Their voices are not heard. I hear many
5 times of the discourtesy that the drivers extend to
6 them. We've had problems with some of our drivers,
7 in fact, coming here and delivering people.

8 And where does the 33 percent go? As a
9 rider SEPTA myself, I've seen since I've been on
10 public transportation as a native Philadelphian
11 cuts. To ask for increases, what we really need to
12 know and what we want to know is, where do they go,
13 where does the money go, how do they justify it, and
14 why are these people being inconvenienced? It's not
15 fair to them. They have no way to go and no other
16 way of getting there. If the drivers are not on
17 time, they never meet their destinations and we
18 constantly have to cancel and we have no programs.
19 We can't get them there. Therefore, we're not
20 funded. That's our main problem. We can't lose
21 them.

22 At this point in time, we really ask you
23 to take under consideration what it is they're
24 suggesting and put a stop to it.

25 Thank you.

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2 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

3 (Witness comes forward.)

4 MR. JORDAN: My name is James Jordan,
5 Sr. I am a member, a vice president, for Action
6 Alliance for Senior Citizens organization, which you
7 are all well familiar with, for 28 years. I'm also
8 the committee person for the 4th Ward and the 8th
9 Division.

10 Being a member of the 4th Ward, 8th
11 Division, I am down in the trenches where I know
12 everybody on my street lives. It's close to 900
13 people that I see daily. Those people come to me
14 for advice when the time comes for election, and
15 election time is not far away, but I also when I
16 became out on disability some years ago, I attended
17 Haddington Multi Services --

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. JORDAN: -- where I found a home
20 away from home. I was there daily and enjoyed
21 myself. I would have been lost without them. I
22 would have been lost, but in going there, I'm
23 keeping myself active. Many people say, "I don't
24 believe you're a senior citizen" when I first did
25 get my card to ride for free. They didn't want to

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2 say that I was, and I had been on disability then
3 over a year before I was able to use my red and
4 white card.

5 Now, I went through the war and came out
6 a disabled veteran and drew my pension check on the
7 last day of July, 1945. And let me tell you one
8 thing, it was a small pension, but every little bit
9 helps. Then when I became of age and came out on
10 disability and got the little increases in my money
11 from Social Security, I want you to know everybody
12 needs two checks or more to make ends meet. There
13 are many sacrifices I have to make in order to make
14 ends meet, but I don't regret a single day for the
15 good things that I have done.

16 But as I pass along this way, I notice,
17 at 77 years of age, I look at the people in my club
18 and organization, 85, 90, and they're still moving
19 along. And I feel blessed as I go about through the
20 nursing homes and see people much younger than I.
21 And I say thank God, he's a good God.

22 Every day now is a good day, every day
23 is a good day. You may have two loaves of bread
24 under each arm and you cry, but the thing about it
25 is this: You have reasons to cry when you have been

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2 misused, your intelligence has been insulted by
3 people that you have put in the positions they are
4 in.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. JORDAN: In the State of
7 Pennsylvania and Florida, there are more senior
8 citizens than in any other states in the union. On
9 those bad days in November, cold, many of 'em, I had
10 workers out trying to get votes, people to come to
11 the polls. Who comes? The first people there when
12 I opened the door in the morning standing in line
13 were the senior citizens.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. JORDAN: And let me tell you one
16 thing, one day what goes around will come around.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. JORDAN: I want you to believe
19 that. And it's written in stone, it is written in
20 stone. So don't forget. It's me today, and it may
21 be you tomorrow.

22 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 (Witness comes forward.)

25 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Good morning.

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2 MS. SADLER: Good morning, Mr. Goode,
3 Councilman and the representative from SEPTA. Good
4 morning to everyone.

5 My name is Arlene Sadler. I live in the
6 2500 block of North Myrtlewood Street. I'm a
7 committee person and I've been around there since
8 1955. And I am speaking for myself and for other
9 senior citizens that live in my neighborhood that
10 are unable to get out.

11 And the Paratransit come and pick the
12 people up, take 'em to the doctor, they don't go
13 back and get 'em. And I experienced that myself
14 with the Paratransit in 1996.

15 I am a former employee of SEPTA. I
16 drove a bus out of the 29 Allegheny depot for nine
17 and a half years. I met an unfortunate accident.
18 In '96, I had to have a hip replacement, and due to
19 that hip replacement, I had to go to the clinic.
20 Paratransit came to pick me up, they were late.
21 When they got me to the doctor, the doctor was
22 gone. They left me, they never came back for me. I
23 had to get a cab to get home. Then they came back
24 another day to take me to the doctor. They came
25 early and I wasn't ready and they never came back.

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2 So I never bothered Paratransit anymore.

3 I forced myself because I live alone. My car was
4 parked in front of my door and I asked the good
5 master, "Dear Lord, give me strength to get in my
6 car and drive myself to a doctor." I got in my car,
7 I started it up, I waited. And I said, "Lord, you
8 got to be my guide," and I drove from the 2500 block
9 of North Myrtlewood Street to Domino Lane to the
10 doctor. The doctor wanted to know how I got there.
11 It was snow on the ground, I said, "I drove
12 myself." He said, "You drove yourself?" I said, "I
13 didn't have a choice." Because Paratransit was
14 supposed to pick me up and they came early and they
15 never came back.

16 And I would just like to ask -- maybe
17 it's a request, that Metro Paper that SEPTA is
18 putting out on all of the these corners and all over
19 Philadelphia County, maybe in some of the suburban,
20 I can't speak for the suburban. That paper is
21 free. People used to buy the Daily News but you
22 don't see as many people buying the Daily News as
23 they used. And I would like to ask a request. Some
24 of that money, what they putting out there for that
25 Metro Paper to be for everybody to pick up and the

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2 paper is all over the street, please, please
3 consider us poor senior citizens that done worked
4 hard in trying to get somewhere. If you all would
5 find a few pennies of that to give to us, the senior
6 citizens, to help us out, and we would appreciate
7 it.

8 Thank you very much.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILMAN GOODE: I want to thank you
11 all for coming out to testify. I --

12 (Witness comes forward.)

13 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Okay.

14 MS. NEWTON: Good morning. My name is
15 Dot Newton, and I'm the Director for Aging Services
16 for Germantown Settlement.

17 I really wasn't going to say anything
18 and just let the seniors testify, but you see, this
19 whole thing is impacting more than just the
20 seniors. Unfortunately, it's impacting them, but I
21 didn't realize the impact that it was going to have
22 on other groups.

23 You see, I was going to tell you about
24 the fact that some seniors, the only meal that they
25 will get per day is the one meal that they get at

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2 lunch at my center. And I was going to tell you
3 that some members never knew they had glaucoma until
4 they had screenings at my center. And I thought
5 about telling you that there was some diabetes
6 screenings and we found seniors had diabetes who
7 never knew they had diabetes and had to leave right
8 away to go to the hospital.

9 I thought about telling you that seniors
10 will sit in their homes all day and never speak to
11 another person unless they come to a center.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. NEWTON: I wanted to tell you about
14 how they need stimulation and how important that
15 was. That's what I was going to tell you.

16 But you see, last night I got a phone
17 call and I got a phone call from Florida, and my
18 mother lives in Florida. My mother lived in
19 Philadelphia and moved to Florida about 15 years
20 ago. And earlier this year, there was an
21 error-induced stroke, my mother had a stroke. My
22 mother was a missionary for 40 years. My mother was
23 a member on her choir. My mother would give
24 clothing and go up and down the streets in her
25 neighborhood to make sure seniors had food. And now

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2 my mother is a senior and my brother -- boys are
3 very different in caregiving than females, and he
4 calls me every single day.

5 But last night, I got a phone call that
6 disturbed me, Mr. Goode, because my brother said,
7 "We have to do something about Mom because all she
8 does is sit home and stare in the corner." And I
9 said what? And my mother was a strong, strong black
10 woman. My mother had six kids, and if you
11 disrespected a senior, you would be slapped across
12 your mouth. And things are real different today.
13 My mother gets disrespected in hospitals, my mother
14 gets disrespected at doctors' appointments. And I
15 don't want to hear that stuff 'cause I can't handle,
16 and I don't want my brother to tell me that kind of
17 stuff.

18 But it gets worst. You see, I
19 investigated nursing homes and personal care homes.
20 And, as a matter of fact, I was there looking over
21 your grandmother, Mr. Goode, at Germantown Home.
22 And for ten years, I investigated those homes and
23 saw the abuse and the neglect, and I saw people
24 sitting in their rooms by themselves, just
25 deteriorating.

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2 People sit in their homes -- will sit in
3 their homes by themselves, Mr. Goode, and
4 deteriorate if they don't get to get out. We've
5 taken cars from them because they can't drive
6 anymore. And this is what that phone call was
7 about. My mother didn't want to give up the car,
8 but she has to give up the car.

9 So all of a sudden, I thought I had a
10 bright idea, Mr. Goode, and I said, "Send her to a
11 senior center. We have that here. Oh, we just love
12 it. We do this, we do that." My brother said,
13 "Dot, Mom has lost 40 pounds." And I said, oh,
14 only goodness. He said she won't eat, she won't
15 cook. And I said, "Well, you can't yell at her to
16 try to make her cook 'cause I don't even feel like
17 cooking." And he said, "Well, what am I going to
18 do?" I said, "Don't they have Meals on Wheels?
19 Don't they have a senior center down there
20 somewhere?"

21 He said, "How is she going to get
22 there?" And I said, "Well, don't they have like we
23 have, the Paratransit? They're getting ready to try
24 to hike that up, but don't you have that?" And my
25 brother said, "Well, yeah, but we can't afford it.

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2 And I said what? He said, "We can't afford it."

3 And I said, "Well, how much is it going to cost?

4 I'll pay it. And so he said, "I don't know. Maybe

5 a hundred dollars a week." I said, "A hundred

6 dollars a week? What kind of transportation is

7 that?"

8 And he talked about the overall cost. I

9 said "Al, we have to do something about Mom because

10 if she sits there, she's going to get ulcers on her

11 skin and she's going to lose her cognitive ability."

12 Senior citizens are not just about

13 recreation and coming in and laughing and talking.

14 It is about the increase and the maintenance of

15 quality of life for these people. That's what

16 senior citizens is about.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. NEWTON: I'm fighting in

19 Philadelphia for senior centers and fighting against

20 this transportation hike that SEPTA proposes because

21 I know some seniors aren't going to come in there

22 because they won't be able to afford to come in.

23 And every day, I think about my mother, Mr. Goode.

24 And so the other group that this

25 impacts, it impacts people our age. Are you going

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2 to let your mother go downhill? Are you going to
3 let your father go downhill, your aunts and your
4 uncles, the people that were there for you? That's
5 going to affect your paycheck because now I pay my
6 mother's health insurance and now I'm getting ready
7 to pay for Paratransit for my mother go to -- not
8 Paratransit, but the transportation there for her to
9 go to a senior center. Then I have to pay for the
10 activities for the senior center. A lot of these
11 seniors have a lot of children, but there will be
12 one or two that will do something for them.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. NEWTON: And I want you to know that
15 I might be here in Philadelphia fighting for these
16 seniors, but I have to fight for my mother in
17 Florida, and that's coming out of my pocket, and
18 it's going to come out of the pockets of not just
19 these seniors; it's going to come out of the pockets
20 of their children.

21 And guess what, another thing with those
22 school tokens? You have grandparents taking care of
23 school-aged children.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. NEWTON: So now they got to pay for

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2 the increase and pay for those school tokens. We
3 need to think about that.

4 And I said too much, but that's all I
5 wanted to say, Mr. Goode.

6 (Applause.)

7 COUNCILMAN GOODE: Let me thank all of
8 you for your testimony and thank you for coming out
9 this morning. I was glad to give you the
10 opportunity to make that testimony on Resolution
11 597. We will work along with Miss Wiggins and
12 Mr. Rods on taking some action by this Thursday. If
13 we're going to take any action before we recess --
14 City Council actually recesses for the summer on
15 Thursday. I invite you back on that day. Beyond
16 that, we look forward to working together.

17 Thank you again for coming. This
18 concludes our public hearing.

19 (Applause.)

20 (Adjourned 11:50 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing
proceedings of the Council of the City of
Philadelphia of Monday, June 11, 2001, were reported
fully and accurately by me, and that this is a
correct transcript of same.

RE: COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC UTILITIES
RES. NO. 000142, 000597

_____,
JOSEPHINE CARDILLO,
Registered Professional Reporter