

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Remote location using Microsoft® Teams
Tuesday, November 28, 2023
10:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR., CHAIR
COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON
COUNCILWOMAN QUETCY M. LOZADA
COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

BILLS: 230765, 230766, 230767, 230768

1 - - -

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
3 morning, everyone. This is the
4 public hearing of the Committee on
5 Appropriations for November 28,
6 2023 at 10:00 a.m., and dealing
7 with Bill Nos. 230765 and 230766,
8 230767 and 230768.

9 And before we get started,
10 Mr. Glass, will you please read the
11 appropriate announcement.

12 THE CLERK: Thank you,
13 Mr. Chairman.

14 I understand that state law
15 currently requires that the
16 following announcement be made at
17 the beginning of every remote
18 public hearing as follows: Due to
19 the current public health
20 emergency, City Council Committees
21 are currently meeting remotely. We
22 are using Microsoft Teams to make
23 these remote hearings possible.

24 Instructions for how the
25 public may view and offer public

1 testimony at public hearings of
2 Council Committees are included in
3 the public hearing notices that are
4 published in the Daily News,
5 Inquirer and Legal Intelligencer
6 prior to the hearings and can also
7 be found on PHLCouncil.com.

8 Everyone who has been
9 invited to the meeting to testify
10 should be aware that this public
11 hearing is being recorded. Because
12 the hearing is public, participants
13 and viewers have no reasonable
14 expectation of privacy. By
15 continuing to be in the meeting,
16 you are consenting to being
17 recorded.

18 Additionally, prior to
19 Councilmember Jones recognizing
20 Members for the questions or
21 comments they have for the
22 witnesses, I will note for the
23 record at this time that you will
24 use the chat feature available in
25 Microsoft Teams to allow Members to

1 signify that they wish to be
2 recognized. In order to comply
3 with the Sunshine Act, the chat
4 feature must only be used for this
5 purpose. Thank you.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
7 you, Mr. Glass. And at this point,
8 can you call the roll to make sure
9 we have established quorum.

10 THE CLERK: Yes,
11 Mr. Chairman.

12 Councilmember Thomas.

13 (No response.)

14 THE CLERK: Councilmember
15 O'Neill.

16 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
17 Present.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
19 morning.

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
21 morning. This is --

22 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Good
23 morning.

24 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Sorry.
25 This is Councilmember Thomas. I'm

1 present. I just couldn't come off
2 mute. Good morning.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
4 morning. Hate when that happens.

5 THE CLERK: Councilmember
6 Lozada.

7 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Good
8 morning. I'm present.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
10 morning.

11 THE CLERK: Councilmember
12 Gilmore Richardson.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
14 RICHARDSON: Good morning,

15 Mr. Chair. Good morning,
16 colleagues. I am present.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
18 morning.

19 THE CLERK: Vice-Chairman
20 Johnson.

21 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:
22 Present. Good morning, everyone.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
24 morning.

25 THE CLERK: And, Chairman

1 Jones.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: I am
3 present. We established a quorum.

4 Mr. Glass, would you please
5 read the numbers and titles of the
6 bills.

7 THE CLERK: Yes,
8 Mr. Chairman.

9 Bill No. 230765, an
10 ordinance amending Bill No. 230144,
11 entitled "An Ordinance To Adopt a
12 Capital Program for the Six Fiscal
13 Years 2024 and 2029 Inclusive," by
14 revising various appropriation
15 amounts and totals to conform to
16 amendments to the Fiscal Year 2024
17 Capital Budget Ordinance, all under
18 certain terms and conditions.

19 And Bill No. 230766, an
20 ordinance amending Bill No. 230145,
21 entitled "An Ordinance To Adopt a
22 Fiscal 2024 Capital Budget," by
23 revising various appropriation
24 amounts and totals, all under
25 certain terms and conditions.

1 And Bill No. 230767, an
2 ordinance authorizing transfers in
3 appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024
4 from the General Fund, certain or
5 all City offices, departments,
6 boards and commissions; and the
7 Grants Revenue Fund, certain or all
8 City offices, departments, boards
9 and commission, to the General
10 Fund, certain or all City offices,
11 departments, boards and
12 commissions; the County Liquid
13 Fuels Tax Fund, certain or all City
14 offices, departments, boards and
15 commissions; the Municipal Pension
16 Fund, certain or all City offices,
17 departments, boards and
18 commissions; and the Transportation
19 Fund, certain or all City offices,
20 departments, boards and
21 commissions.

22 And finally Bill No.
23 230768, an ordinance authorizing
24 transfers in appropriations from
25 Fiscal Year 2023 from the General

1 Fund from certain or all City
2 offices, departments, boards and
3 commissions; the Water Fund, from
4 certain or all City offices,
5 departments, boards and
6 commissions; the Grants Revenue
7 Fund, from all City offices,
8 departments, boards and
9 commissions; and the Aviation Fund,
10 from certain or all City offices,
11 departments, boards and
12 commissions, to the General Fund,
13 certain or all City offices,
14 departments, boards and
15 commissions; to the Water Fund for
16 certain or all City offices,
17 departments, boards and
18 commissions; and the Aviation Fund,
19 for certain or all City offices,
20 departments, boards and
21 commissions.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
23 you, Mr. Glass.

24 Before we get started, I
25 just want to say that we have an

1 aggressive agenda today and an
2 expansive list of people to
3 testify. What we will do is after
4 each witness panel, after each
5 table is metaphorically heard from,
6 we will entertain questions from
7 Members, and please use the chat to
8 make sure that you are recognized.

9 Do any of the Committee
10 members have an opening statement?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Hearing
13 none, seeing none --

14 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: I'm
15 sorry. Mr. Chairman?

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes.

17 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: This is
18 Councilmember Thomas. I'm sorry.
19 I was just struggling a little bit
20 to come off mute. I --

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: That's
22 all right. I hate when that
23 happens. Would you like me to --
24 please make your statement, sir.

25 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Real

1 briefly I just want to communicate
2 some concerns that I have and other
3 Councilmembers have based on
4 negotiations that's been taking
5 place around some other things that
6 we recommended that's been to take
7 place on. We understand that we're
8 in a space and a place right now
9 where we don't want to pick up a
10 lot of recurring costs, but I think
11 that there's some significant
12 difference as to where we are right
13 now on what we should be spending
14 while agreeing with the philosophy
15 of not picking recurring costs.

16 So I'm looking forward to
17 today's conversation and hope that
18 there will be some level of
19 compromise and put us in a position
20 where we can all believe in the
21 investment that we're looking to
22 make this fall.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
24 And thank you to my colleagues for
25 your advocacy and the work that you

1 do as far as keeping your ear to
2 the ground, especially the District
3 Councilmembers in recognizing what
4 your community needs and being
5 willing to fight for those specific
6 things.

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Well
9 said, Member Thomas. Well said.

10 I can't believe my
11 Councilwoman Gilmore Richardson
12 doesn't want to weigh in and set
13 the tone here.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
15 RICHARDSON: I couldn't get into
16 the chat. I'm having a lot of
17 issues with the City computer.
18 However, thank you for the
19 recognition, Mr. Chair.

20 And I too wanted to rise
21 regarding my concern with this
22 appropriations bill that we have
23 been working on over the last
24 several weeks. And I know that
25 I've been working very closely with

1 the Administration and relative to
2 a number of concerns that I've
3 noted even back to our original
4 briefing, particularly around OHS
5 and some of the other departments.

6 But I wanted to highlight
7 and underscore some of the
8 overarching concerns that I have
9 for this bill in its totality and
10 what we'll have to do over the next
11 couple of hours. I read with great
12 interest the Econsult analysis
13 relative to why we have such a
14 robust General Fund balance, and I
15 remain very concerned regarding our
16 financial outlook going into the
17 upcoming fiscal years.

18 I think it's exceedingly
19 clear that we have a fund balance
20 for all the wrong reasons. We have
21 a fund balance because we have at
22 least an 18 percent vacancy rate.
23 We have a fund balance because we
24 really can't hire folks for a
25 number of these positions. We have

1 a fund balance because we have the
2 benefit of federal support coming
3 from the White House after the
4 onset of COVID-19.

5 And when all of that is
6 gone, particularly after FY25 and
7 that money has to be spent, we will
8 be in a vicarious financial state.
9 So I am looking at this
10 Appropriations hearing and requests
11 and all the requests that have been
12 made with keen interest to say that
13 I think it's important that we make
14 strategic investments in our budget
15 and in our future fiscal health.

16 I think it's important that
17 we look at this and realize that in
18 the outyears of our five year plan
19 it is anticipated that,
20 particularly over the last two
21 years, that our General Fund
22 balance will be less than \$100
23 million. And so, anything that we
24 do the way I'm looking at this
25 appropriations bill, anything that

1 we do today and with this bill will
2 have a detrimental impact to that
3 fund balance.

4 And I just want all of our
5 colleagues and everyone who is on
6 this call to understand that.

7 Okay. And that is the perspective
8 from which I'm coming for this
9 particular appropriations matter.
10 To be clear, we are stewards and we
11 are fiscally responsible for the
12 City of Philadelphia's budget, and
13 I intend to be fiscally responsible
14 today and I'm asking all of our
15 colleagues to do the same.

16 Thank you, Mr. Chair, for
17 the leeway you've granted.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
19 you so much, Member Richardson.
20 And I've listened attentively to some
21 of your observations and insights
22 to various departments and
23 expenditures and look forward to
24 the discussion and debate about
25 priority because that's what

1 budgeting is about, establishing
2 priorities that are both fiscally
3 sound and both beneficial to the
4 populous that we are sworn to
5 serve.

6 So with that, are there any
7 other Committee members that wish
8 to put a comment on the record?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Hearing
11 none, Mr. Glass, can you give us
12 the first panel of witnesses to
13 testify.

14 THE CLERK: Yes,
15 Mr. Chairman.

16 Our first panel will be
17 Sabrina Maynard and Rob Dubow.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES:
19 Mr. Dubow and Ms. Maynard, this is
20 not your first time, so welcome
21 back.

22 MS. MAYNARD: It's mine
23 though. It's mine.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: Oh,
25 that's right, yes. Well, welcome.

1 MS. MAYNARD: Thank you.
2 Good morning, everybody. Good
3 morning, Chair Jones and members of
4 the Appropriations Committee. I'm
5 Sabrina Maynard, Budget Director,
6 and I'm joined by colleagues from
7 departments that have requests in
8 one or more of the transfer
9 ordinance bills.

10 I'm here to testify in
11 support of all four bills, so I
12 will read them out again: The FY23
13 year-end transfer ordinance, FY24
14 mid-year transfer ordinance, the
15 two capital ord -- and the two
16 capital ordinances, amendments to
17 Bill No. 230144, entitled "An
18 Ordinance To Adopt a Capital
19 Program for the Six Fiscal Years
20 2024 to 2029 Inclusive, and
21 amendments to Bill No. 230145,
22 entitled "An Ordinance To Adopt
23 Fiscal '24 Capital Budget.

24 You also received my full
25 written testimony as well as

1 testimony from every department
2 that has a request in one of the
3 above-referenced bills. I thank
4 you for this opportunity to testify
5 today. And I would like to request
6 a suspension of the rules so that
7 these ordinances can be considered
8 at the next session of Council. If
9 anyone has any questions, we would
10 be happy to answer them. Thank
11 you.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
13 you so much for your testimony.

14 Mr. Dubow, are you going to
15 testify?

16 MR. DUBOW: I am not, but
17 I'm available to answer questions.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
19 My question would be, and I had the
20 benefit of hearing some of the
21 analysis that has -- it's good news
22 and bad news. Why don't you give
23 us a roundabout picture of where we
24 are with the budget surplus.
25 Member Gilmore Richardson has put

1 on the record her concerns about
2 the tentative nature of that
3 surplus.

4 Can you give us and the
5 listening audience an overview as
6 to where we are fiscally?

7 MS. MAYNARD: Absolutely.
8 As you know, the City received \$1.4
9 billion in ARPA funding, the
10 Federal Rescue Plan money, which
11 sounds like a really big number but
12 our loss was 1.5 billion which is
13 bigger than the 1.4 billion. And
14 so, we used this money to stave off
15 some pretty catastrophic cuts that
16 we otherwise would have had to
17 take.

18 The money is in place until
19 its end date, which is the end of
20 Calendar Year 2024 which is in
21 FY25. It's our next year, and the
22 money is one time and then it goes
23 away. So our fund balance and our
24 finances at the moment are sort of
25 buoyed by this one-time money. But

1 when we look past December of 2024,
2 things get a little bit shakier.

3 So a couple of things drove
4 our sort of high fund balance at
5 the end of 2023, things that we
6 think largely nonrecurring in
7 addition to the ARPA money. We had
8 some nonrecurring underspends in
9 Class 100 and 200, and these were
10 sort of driven by challenges in
11 hiring.

12 As Councilmember Gilmore
13 Richardson mentioned, we have a
14 roughly 18 percent vacancy rate
15 across the City, which is not --
16 we're not unique in that way.
17 We've been struggling to hire as
18 other cities have as well. And
19 then there were a couple of areas
20 of revenue that came in a little
21 bit higher than projected, we had
22 some higher than expected interest
23 earnings. We had slightly higher
24 wage tax and revenue from other
25 governments.

1 But we're really keeping an
2 eye on one tax in particular, which
3 is our realty transfer tax. And as
4 you may have noticed, there's less
5 real estate transactionizing
6 happening out there at the moment.
7 And so, we've had to adjust our
8 FY24 numbers, roughly 125 million
9 just ahead in 2024 alone from what
10 we had projected at the beginning
11 of the year. Some of that carries
12 out through the plan, so that's
13 definitely something we're keeping
14 an eye on.

15 We're also always keeping
16 an eye on our other volatile tax
17 sources, including our business
18 tax. And then there's just general
19 uncertainty about a bunch of
20 things. As you know, the ARPA
21 funding is programmed. We have a
22 pension obligation balloon payment
23 that'll pop up in our next five
24 year plan. So that'll pop up in
25 2029, so it'll be higher --

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: If I
2 recall, that's 400 million. I
3 think you mentioned a number, 400
4 million?

5 MS. MAYNARD: I can pull
6 the exact number but --

7 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. That
8 400-and-something is our total debt
9 service that year. The pension
10 obligation bond portion is in the
11 200s because of 80 million in that
12 single year.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Got it.
14 Thank you.

15 MS. MAYNARD: So, yep. And
16 then continued inflation is a
17 challenge. Kind of keeping an eye
18 on the federal government as they
19 continue to pass these sort of
20 continuing resolutions to fund the
21 government in short clips and
22 keeping an eye on a potential
23 recession. So there's certainly a
24 lot going on that we're keeping an
25 eye on even though the numbers at

1 the end of 2023 were stronger than
2 we had expected.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: And
4 we're looking forward to labor
5 negotiations of all of our
6 municipal unions next year,
7 correct?

8 MS. MAYNARD: Yes, we are.
9 Those are up in 2025.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
11 Are there questions from members of
12 the Committee?

13 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
14 Councilwoman Gilmore Richardson
15 would like to be recognized.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
17 Gilmore Richardson, please proceed.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: (Muted).

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: I think
21 you're on mute.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Yes, I'm on mute.

24 Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

25 For the record, I just

1 wanted to get a few things on the
2 record for this hearing. Can you
3 just notate the anticipated fund
4 balance for FY25, '26, '27, '28,
5 and '29?

6 MS. MAYNARD: So our '24
7 fund balance we are projecting 682
8 million, and the rest of the
9 numbers we have not published
10 because things are still influx and
11 when we do a new five year plan,
12 we'll have new numbers --

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Pardon me. Pardon me
15 for the interruption.

16 MS. MAYNARD: Sure.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: You said 682 million?

19 MS. MAYNARD: For FY24,
20 yes, 682 million.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: Okay. Can you help me
23 out there because I thought that
24 number was different. I thought it
25 was 96?

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
2 Richardson, that's the number I
3 recall as well.

4 MS. MAYNARD: So the FY23
5 ending fund balance was 982. And
6 the number for '24 is 682.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
8 RICHARDSON: Okay. Let me just get
9 this for clarification. FY23 is
10 986. FY24 is 682?

11 MS. MAYNARD: Sorry. FY23
12 is 982. FY23 we are projecting to
13 682.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
15 RICHARDSON: All right. Let me
16 stop you, okay, because I want to
17 get this straight. FY23, how much?

18 MS. MAYNARD: 982 million.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: Okay. FY24?

21 MS. MAYNARD: 682 million.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: FY25?

24 MS. MAYNARD: These are
25 preliminary, 507 million.

1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: When does the federal
3 money come offline?

4 MS. MAYNARD: The middle of
5 FY25, so December of 2023. Almost
6 a year from now.

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Right, a year from
9 today. Okay. FY26?

10 MS. MAYNARD: Our
11 preliminary working estimate is 185
12 million.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: FY27?

15 MS. MAYNARD: 24 million.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: FY28?

18 MS. MAYNARD: 20 million.

19 MR. DUBOW: And just to be
20 clear, what those are, those are
21 adjusted for changes we've seen in
22 tax revenue and adding our proposed
23 transfer ordinance, but not other
24 adjustments. So those numbers will
25 be different by the time when we

1 actually do a five year plan. But
2 they give kind of a sense of the
3 scale of what it will be.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Right, and thank you
6 for that clarification.

7 Do you have FY29?

8 MS. MAYNARD: We do not
9 yet. We will have that when we do
10 our next five-year plan.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Okay. Just asking.
13 So for the record, you're saying
14 FY24, 982 million anticipated fund
15 balance. FY24, 682 million. FY25,
16 507 million. Middle of FY25,
17 December of 2025 the federal money
18 comes offline. FY26, 185 million.
19 FY27, 24 million. FY28, 20
20 million. Is that correct?

21 MS. MAYNARD: That's
22 correct using the preliminary
23 numbers with all the caveats Rob
24 just talked through.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

1 RICHARDSON: To be clear based on
2 Rob's comment, you have adjusted
3 this because I thought one of the
4 years was close to around 80 or 90
5 million in '27 or '28. But this
6 has been adjusted for changes in
7 tax revenue which would include the
8 realty transfer tax but also the
9 proposed ordinance. And if that's
10 the case, at what amount?

11 MS. MAYNARD: So the realty
12 transfer numbers we can -- how we
13 applied them by year, I don't have
14 them off the top of my head, but I
15 think we assumed that it would be a
16 larger hit in the earlier part of
17 the plan and then it would recover
18 to some extent towards the tail end
19 of the plan, but that's predictive
20 based on guesses about the real
21 estate market, so there's some open
22 questions there.

23 And then in terms of the
24 recurring costs from the transfer
25 ordinance, I think that was roughly

1 20 million, but we can get you that
2 exact number as well.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Okay. So you're
5 putting in from an assumption
6 standpoint, is it 20 million for
7 each fiscal year or 20 million for
8 this year? I'm just trying to get
9 clarification on how you did the --

10 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. It's 24
11 million, roughly 24, 23, 22 from
12 '25 to '28. And in the first year
13 it's 78 because it has a lot of
14 one-timers.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: Okay. So first year
17 is 78 because of the one-time
18 expenditures?

19 MR. DUBOW: Yes. And then
20 after that it's in the 20s.

21 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

22 RICHARDSON: Okay. And for the
23 record if you can just notate I
24 think FY23 possibly will be the
25 only year that we have the GFAO's

1 recommended amount for actual fund
2 balance?

3 MR. DUBOW: So we're so, so
4 close to it but not actually there.
5 We're just a little below it.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Got you. Just like
8 right there. But the percentage is
9 what, is it 16 point what? Is it
10 16.7? What is it now?

11 MS. MAYNARD: Two months,
12 so it's 16.666. So we usually say
13 17, but it's an average.

14 MR. DUBOW: That's the
15 recommendation, and we were at
16 16.2.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: Got you. But it's
19 16.7?

20 MS. MAYNARD: It's 16.666.
21 It's two months of --

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Understood, so it's
24 two months. So with the numbers
25 you have for FY24, what's the

1 percentage and then graduated on
2 down what's the percentage for each
3 year?

4 And the reason why I'm
5 asking this is because my concern
6 is that based on where you think we
7 may be, that will make our
8 borrowing ability in how much we
9 have to pay in interest, which is
10 something else we have to be
11 cognizant about moving ahead. So
12 if you can just notate what the
13 percentage will be each of the
14 Fiscal Years '23 through '28.

15 MS. MAYNARD: (Muted).

16 MR. DUBOW: You're on mute,
17 Sabrina.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: You're on mute.

20 MS. MAYNARD: I'm on mute
21 so you can't hear me. Okay. FY24
22 is roughly 11 percent. The other
23 years I would need to calculate. I
24 don't trust my ability to do math
25 on the fly, but we can get you

1 those percentages.

2 MR. DUBOW: And obviously
3 by '28, it's basically around 0
4 percent because it's 19 million
5 over 6 billion.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Understood,
8 understood. I just wanted to get a
9 couple of these figures on the
10 record there. Okay. I will hold
11 the balance of my questions for the
12 next panel.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
15 you, Member Gilmore Richardson.

16 Chair recognizes Member
17 Thomas.

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
20 Thomas?

21 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Good
22 morning. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
23 appreciate you. Thank you to my
24 colleague Councilmember Gilmore
25 Richardson for that first round of

1 questioning.

2 I want to try to take it
3 into a different direction a little
4 bit. I definitely agree with
5 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson's
6 concern around the spending that we
7 have, the fiscal stability in the
8 future of our City, looking at a
9 possible recession and anticipated
10 debt, so that is a concern on my
11 end.

12 One of the things that
13 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson
14 talked about was staffing and
15 issues with staff as it relates to
16 not being able to hire. When we
17 began these negotiations, one of
18 the things that I was concerned
19 with was some of the issues around
20 Parks & Rec, hiring for Parks &
21 Rec. I also have questions around
22 some of the dollars that were
23 requested by the Administration and
24 how they would be disbursed, so I
25 never got answers to those

1 questions.

2 So I'm wondering if
3 somebody can help provide some
4 level of clarity as it relates to
5 some of the concerns that I
6 communicated around Parks & Rec.

7 MS. MAYNARD: Good morning,
8 Councilmember. We just shared
9 responses with the Chair yesterday,
10 so we can walk through those
11 responses if helpful. One moment.
12 Okay. So you wanted to know a
13 little bit about Class 100
14 underspend and where sort of the
15 positions were, and Parks & Rec can
16 jump in as well if they want to
17 add.

18 So Parks & Rec had some
19 Class 100 underspending in '23 due
20 to some hiring challenges, but they
21 are citywide national trends. They
22 made a push to fill civil service
23 positions and were able to fill 82
24 priority hires by the end of 2023.
25 Despite that progress, they did

1 have 124 vacancies across their
2 divisions resulting in a \$1.8
3 million underspend at the end of
4 2023.

5 Parks & Rec is continuing
6 its recruiting efforts in
7 partnership with Human Resources,
8 and those efforts include attending
9 hiring events, posting job
10 opportunities on LinkedIn,
11 Handshake and the City's website.
12 Job announcements are also shared
13 with seasonal staff, part-time
14 staff and various universities and
15 colleges with matching degree
16 requirements. And to assist in the
17 recruiting process, Parks & Rec
18 will coordinate with Council and
19 send available civil service job
20 opportunities to share with their
21 networks.

22 And, Parks & Rec, if
23 there's anything you guys want to
24 add. Someone's probably on from
25 Parks.

1 COMMISSIONER RENDON: Thank
2 you, Sabrina. Yes, your response
3 was perfect and spot-on. Again, we
4 will continue to aggressively get
5 recruitment efforts away, talking
6 to universities as you mentioned,
7 continuing to --

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Excuse
9 me. Can you --

10 COMMISSIONER RENDON: --
11 social media --

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: -- stop
13 a second.

14 COMMISSIONER RENDON: Oh,
15 so sorry.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: You got
17 to state your name for the record
18 please.

19 COMMISSIONER RENDON:
20 Sorry, Councilperson. Orlando
21 Rendon, Commissioner of Parks &
22 Rec.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
24 you so much. Please proceed.

25 COMMISSIONER RENDON: Yes.

1 So, yes, Sabrina, thank you. So we
2 are trying to aggressively get
3 folks in and making sure that we
4 can get folks who are eligible by
5 contacting our part-time staff and
6 other folks to make sure that they
7 match eligible degree requirements
8 to get them on a full-time basis.

9 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: That's
10 good. So I mean, one thing I will
11 say is that we've been a part of
12 the process to help push for people
13 to accept positions at Parks & Rec.
14 And a lot of people that I know
15 have been denied, so I would
16 definitely like to do a deeper dive
17 into the process as it relates to
18 some of the civil service positions
19 and what we're doing wrong that
20 we're denying people who I feel
21 like are qualified, but at the same
22 time giving money back because we
23 can't hire when all of us want our
24 rec centers open on nights and
25 weekends.

1 There were two other
2 appropriations for Parks & Rec I
3 wanted to be addressed. It said
4 \$560,000 as far as supplies,
5 maintenance and things of that
6 capacity and then another \$92,000
7 to replace bleachers. And one of
8 the things I communicated a while
9 back from my office is the number
10 of complaints we received
11 specifically around housing and rec
12 centers.

13 So I asked for a list of
14 rec centers that would be on the
15 list to receive some type of
16 services based on --

17 (Background
18 interruption.)

19 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: -- that
20 you requested.

21 (Background
22 interruption.)

23 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
24 Somebody got to go on mute.
25 Somebody got to go on mute. I'm

1 not sure who it is.

2 I'm sorry, Commissioner or
3 Mr. Dubow. If somebody can answer
4 that, that will be helpful.

5 MS. MAYNARD: Sure. I --

6 COMMISSIONER RENDON:
7 I'm -- I'm sorry, Sabrina. Go
8 ahead.

9 MS. MAYNARD: I was going
10 to read the response, but it was
11 yours. Go ahead.

12 COMMISSIONER RENDON: No,
13 I'm sorry. You can read the
14 response. I apologize.

15 MS. MAYNARD: Got it.
16 Okay. So breakdown by locations,
17 so the Parks & Rec items in the
18 transfer ordinances include the
19 following: The '23 year-end
20 ordinance included \$900,000 to fund
21 additional unanticipated
22 inflationary costs offset by an
23 internal transfer. This is
24 citywide but not tied to a specific
25 location.

1 In the '24 transfer
2 ordinance, the items include 1.1
3 million for turf maintenance;
4 690,000 for vehicle purchases;
5 \$200,000 for increased chlorine
6 costs; 200,000 for short-dumping
7 prevention; 130,000 for emergency
8 in tree services and a few other
9 items, small items related to
10 various supply and equipment price
11 increases.

12 The interdepartmental
13 transfer of \$1.8 million includes
14 funds for the Kensington clean-up
15 project. And so, that includes
16 McPherson, Hissey, Hope, McVeigh,
17 Scanlon and Harrowgate. Funds will
18 also be used to replace a 25-year-
19 old dump truck that's located at
20 the Recycling Center in Fairmount
21 Park. The other requests are for
22 citywide investments that are not
23 connected to a specific location.

24 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So
25 again when I started my statements

1 at the beginning of the hearing, I
2 don't want to make it seem like
3 Houseman is my district. I'm not a
4 District Councilperson. I haven't
5 been in the rec center in years.
6 This is just simply us responding
7 to concerns around constituents.

8 So this is just another
9 example of how the Administration
10 is one place, Councilmembers are
11 another place. We specifically
12 communicated concerns around the
13 rec center multiple times as it
14 relates to the young people not
15 being able to participate in
16 positive activities there. And
17 based on my memory where Houseman
18 is, if I live in that neighborhood
19 I would either have to, A, go all
20 the way over to Lawncrest to
21 participate in activity or, B,
22 cross over a 12-lane Roosevelt
23 Boulevard at a very funny
24 intersection to be able to go to
25 Simpson Rec Center to be able to

1 participate in positive activity.

2 So again, haven't been
3 there in a very long. It's not my
4 district. It's not my
5 neighborhood. But this is just
6 another example of us trying to
7 respond to constituents and talk
8 about one-time investments that
9 need to happen to improve the
10 conditions that Philadelphians are
11 facing and the request has been
12 pretty much ignored.

13 So I'm hoping that
14 throughout the course of
15 negotiating today we can begin to
16 look at some of things that
17 Councilmembers are advocating for,
18 because again our ear is to the
19 ground and all we're doing is
20 responding to the things that
21 constituents are telling us that
22 are concerns in the neighborhood,
23 and it doesn't seem like those
24 things are being taken serious.

25 I have a list of other

1 things, Councilmember -- Mr. Chair.
2 But I'm going to follow the lead of
3 my colleague Councilmember Gilmore
4 Richardson and just defer my time
5 for now because I'm sure other
6 Councilmembers have questions. And
7 if there is a second round, I'll
8 come back with other questions for
9 this particular panel.

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
11 thank you to the Administration for
12 answering the questions. We
13 appreciate it.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
15 you so much, Member Thomas, mostly
16 for your advocacy. Although you
17 are an At-large, you are welcome in
18 all of our Districts. And we have
19 equally as District Councilpeople
20 been somewhat frustrated with the
21 slowing of some of the promised
22 capital improvements and some of --
23 more importantly or as importantly
24 some of the repairs that are
25 ongoing.

1 And I know we had COVID. I
2 understand we had some interruption
3 within that labor force. But when
4 you start to put a meter on the
5 time you give a request for repairs
6 at a particular center, it is
7 overbearing to the public, and in
8 particular Frank Favier, who is a
9 one-man band for most rec centers,
10 we were told that we could get a
11 crew of skilled workers as a result
12 of the sugary drinks beverage tax.

13 And I wanted to get what is
14 the status of that and whether or
15 not that particular segment of the
16 workforce has actually been hired?
17 And that would be the Rec
18 Department.

19 COMMISSIONER RENDON: Thank
20 you, Chairman. I have our Deputy
21 Commissioner from Administration
22 Marissa Washington on the line.
23 I'm going to ask to see if she can
24 give an update in terms of those
25 hirings for skill trades for those

1 special projects and for capital
2 work on our rec centers.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
4 you so much.

5 COMMISSIONER RENDON:
6 Ms. Washington.

7 MS. WASHINGTON: Good
8 morning, Council, Councilman.
9 Marissa Washington, Deputy
10 Commissioner of Parks & Recreation.
11 So like everyone else we are still
12 struggling to fill our skilled
13 trades positions. When we do get
14 lists available, there might be two
15 or three names on the list for the
16 entire city. So we still have
17 close to a 12 to 15 percent vacancy
18 rate for our skilled trades
19 positions.

20 We are working right now to
21 try to fill some of those, so our
22 carpenters and electricians. We
23 are working with OHR, but right now
24 it still is a struggle for those
25 skilled trades positions.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: And
2 what's the raw number of vacancies
3 in that category?

4 MS. WASHINGTON: I don't
5 have it off the top of my head. I
6 can give that to you. I know the
7 last time I looked it was around 15
8 positions that were vacant, but we
9 have had some resignations and some
10 retirements since then. And that's
11 one of the things that our
12 department is facing. We do have a
13 fair amount of retirements or folks
14 resigning from the positions and
15 probably because they can get more
16 money some place else.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Can you
18 send that list to --

19 MS. WASHINGTON:
20 Absolutely.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: --
22 myself and also the Chair of Parks
23 & Rec, Cindy Bass?

24 MS. WASHINGTON:
25 Absolutely. Thank you.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
2 you so much.

3 Are there any other
4 Councilmembers ready to question
5 these witnesses?

6 THE CLERK: Yes,
7 Mr. Chairman. Councilmember Lozada
8 would like to be recognized.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
10 Lozada, please begin your
11 questions.

12 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
13 you, Mr. Chairman.

14 I just want clarification.
15 I heard Ms. Maynard mention the
16 Kensington cleaning project pilot
17 and we have a request for 5.5 on
18 there. But I have been also asking
19 for some clarification on the \$70
20 million that is allocated currently
21 to cleaning Kensington that Eva
22 Gladstein mentioned during our
23 Marshall Plan Committee hearing.

24 And I still have not gotten
25 a breakdown around that \$70

1 million. Can't seem to get a
2 direct response from anybody after
3 multiple requests. So if I can
4 also get a breakdown of where that
5 70 million is, who's getting it,
6 what are they using it for very
7 specifically. And then this 5.5
8 that request was put in for, it
9 would be helpful, right.

10 I want to be supportive. I
11 know that or everybody knows that
12 cleaning up Kensington is my
13 priority and I want to be
14 supportive as possible. But I
15 can't do that if I don't have the
16 information.

17 MS. MAYNARD: Yes,
18 Councilmember. We'll work on
19 getting you that information, and I
20 will say that we are committed to
21 continuing the Kensington clean-up
22 work through the end of the year.

23 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
24 you.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank

1 you, Member Lozada.

2 Mr. Glass, are there any
3 others to be recognized?

4 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
5 there are no other Members wishing
6 to be recognized in the chat at
7 this time.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Well,
9 thank you for your testimony.

10 Would you please --

11 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
12 Mr. Chairman?

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes.

14 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: If
15 there's no other -- can I go for a
16 second round real quick?

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, you
18 can. Member Thomas, feel free.

19 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank
20 you. So just one more question
21 about Parks & Rec and a couple
22 other things. So what's the
23 current -- since you're saying it
24 is progress, what's the current
25 number of unfilled positions,

1 either total number of unfilled
2 positions or by percentage?

3 COMMISSIONER RENDON:

4 Commissioner Orlando Rendon. I'm
5 going to ask our Deputy
6 Commissioner of Administration
7 Marissa Washington to see if she
8 has the figures available for you.

9 MS. WASHINGTON: Yes. Good
10 morning. Again, this is Marissa
11 Washington. Our current vacancy is
12 we have 269 positions vacant. Most
13 of our vacancies are attributed to
14 the influx of new money that we
15 received this year and last year.
16 We probably have about 8 million
17 that we received in FY23 and FY24
18 for just new positions, and that
19 was coming out of COVID and a
20 hiring freeze, so it makes it
21 difficult along with everyone else
22 in the nation trying to fill these
23 positions.

24 So although we did in FY23
25 with around 170 vacancies, we got

1 new money in FY24, close to
2 \$3 million just for positions
3 alone, so that takes us up to about
4 269. And you incorporate that with
5 resignations, retirements and those
6 sorts of things, it continues to
7 increase our vacancy rate.

8 But I will say that we are
9 working to fill over the next three
10 months about 80 positions. So
11 those are our rec leader trainees,
12 recreation outreach workers, our
13 grounds maintenance facility
14 workers positions and a handful of
15 other positions.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
17 Thomas.

18 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank
19 you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate it.

20 And thank you for the
21 answer. It's definitely very much
22 appreciated. We -- you know what,
23 I'll forfeit the rest of my time.

24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: All

1 right. Thank you, Member Thomas.

2 Member Gilmore Richardson.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you

5 so much, Mr. Chair. I don't know

6 what's happening with this

7 computer. Okay, there it is.

8 So I just wanted to ask

9 just a few additional questions

10 that I wanted to get on the record

11 while we have everyone here. I

12 just wanted to notate for the

13 record and thank the Administration

14 for their willingness to meet with

15 me ad nauseam and exchange emails

16 even on Thanksgiving Day regarding

17 the issues and the challenges that

18 we are seeking to work through.

19 I just wanted to briefly

20 get a few things on the record so

21 that we have it on the record and

22 then proceed from there. I do have

23 additional questions that I am

24 going to email over to you all that

25 I've been working on for the past

1 couple of days, my office and I.

2 And so, can we just hone in
3 quickly on the \$16.1 million
4 request for the Office of Homeless
5 Services. And for the record, the
6 request is for \$16.1 million. That
7 would address some of the needs at
8 the Philadelphia Nursing Home and
9 then also address the needs for
10 OHS. So the OHS's specific portion
11 is 14.7 million. The total would
12 be -- including the Philadelphia
13 Nursing Home issue will be 16.1.

14 For the record, if you all
15 can break down how much it would be
16 if we addressed FY -- all the
17 previous fiscal years up until the
18 end of Calendar Year June of 2023,
19 so right before you go into FY24.
20 If we address those periods only,
21 how much would that be and then
22 give you all the leeway and
23 latitude to address anything that
24 would come up starting in July of
25 '21 -- July 1st of 2023, which will

1 be FY24 in the next budget cycle?

2 MS. MAYNARD: The OHS
3 folks.

4 MR. HOLLOMAN: Yes. Good
5 morning, Chairperson Jones and
6 members of the Appropriations
7 Committee. My name is David
8 Holloman. I am the Interim
9 Executive Director for the Office
10 of Homeless Services, and I'm here
11 today to testify in support of that
12 16.1 that you indicated.

13 Just to speak to that 16.1
14 and what does that cover, so 14.7
15 million is requested to resolve a
16 current and prior year shortfall.
17 Those years include Fiscal Years
18 '21, '22 and '23. This also
19 includes that 1.4 million for
20 maintenance and facility operations
21 at the Philadelphia Nursing Home.
22 But just to go back to that one
23 part of the question that you
24 indicated on what will it take to
25 resolve those issues, it will be

1 that \$14.7 million to resolve those
2 contracts.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Sure --

5 MR. CURRAN: I'm sorry.

6 May I speak? Hi. Good morning,
7 Chairman Jones and the rest of the
8 Councilmembers. I'm Peter Curran.
9 I'm the Deputy for Finance at the
10 Office of Homeless Services. To
11 answer your specific question,
12 Councilmember, the number is
13 9,607,346.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

15 RICHARDSON: Okay. So that would
16 cover FY21, '22 and '23 which is
17 June 30th of 2023. And so, from
18 the 9.6, give or take a few
19 thousand, the remainder of the
20 14 -- the remainder of the 14.7
21 million would be to address the
22 shortfall just from July 1 of 2023
23 to October 30th of 2023, which is
24 the first few months of FY24, is
25 that correct, or would that address

1 the entire FY24 issue?

2 MR. CURRAN: It would
3 address the entirety of FY24.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Okay. So it would be
6 the entirety of FY24. Okay.

7 MR. HOLLOMAN: Yes. I --

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: And -- I'm sorry.

10 MR. HOLLOMAN: And I just
11 want to state too that the reason
12 why the numbers for FY23 and '24 is
13 because we as an office in
14 partnership decided to do a pilot
15 program that put out contracts on a
16 calendar year. And so, that FY23
17 and '24 will cross over into two
18 current fiscal years, so that's why
19 that number is represented there.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Right. But to address
22 specifically any shortfalls from
23 previous encumbrances it will be
24 the 9.6. And then just for this
25 year for July 1 through October

1 30th, so July, August, September,
2 October, so four months it's an
3 additional about 5 million just for
4 the four months or is it 5 million
5 for the whole year? It will be
6 from July 1 to June 30?

7 MR. HOLLOMAN: It will be
8 for the whole year.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Okay. I just wanted
11 to make sure I was clear.

12 MR. HOLLOMAN: Yeah.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Okay. I have a slew
15 of additional questions, and I just
16 want to be real clear that I am
17 greatly appreciative of the
18 opportunity to meet the ongoing
19 dialogue that we've all been able
20 to have over the last several
21 weeks. I will remit the remainder
22 of my questions in writing, for a
23 response in writing to the
24 Committee and for dissemination to
25 our Committee Chair and for

1 dissemination to the Committee.
2 But I wanted to notate for my
3 colleagues who are on
4 Appropriations what the breakdown
5 and the numbers would be based on
6 what we may need to do today.

7 Also, I just wanted to,
8 Mr. Chair, for the PPD, can we
9 switch gears here for PPD. We
10 received the information this
11 morning relative to I believe there
12 is a \$6.8 million request. It will
13 be offset by less than 2 million, I
14 believe we received in the email.

15 I think the original
16 numbers we had were in error, but I
17 think this email has updated the
18 information. I just want to make
19 sure for the PPD portion because we
20 did bring this up in the meeting
21 that there is something there
22 outside of just Class 100 and to
23 address any Class 100 costs or
24 overtime or whatever it may go to,
25 that we are addressing the issue

1 around the PPD recruitment issue
2 that came up in the budget that I
3 don't know was properly spent or
4 allocated.

5 And I think Councilmember
6 O'Neill will be able to speak to
7 this more than I can, but I just
8 want to make sure with the numbers
9 we received today, I think it was
10 around 6.8 million, I believe if
11 that will address the issue that
12 Councilmember O'Neill stated.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Would
14 you like to hear from Commissioner
15 Stanford; is that your request,
16 Member Gilmore Richardson?

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
18 RICHARDSON: Sure. Just a
19 breakdown of what the 6.8 million
20 will be. I know it's a small
21 offset, but what's the --

22 MS. MAYNARD: Yeah. So
23 here's a couple things, maybe
24 you're referring to that FY23
25 year-end ordinance which had -- we

1 had put an error in a document that
2 it was a net increase of 2 million.
3 It was 6 million. That number was
4 incorrect, so I apologize. You
5 caught it. We missed it.

6 I think the second piece is
7 around recruitment, so if someone
8 from OHR or Police is able to speak
9 to that piece and the status.

10 MR. ZACCAGNI: Good
11 morning, Council. My name's Mike
12 Zaccagni and I see Commissioner
13 Stanford is on also so if he wants
14 to add to this. But Mike Zaccagni,
15 Director of OHR for City of
16 Philadelphia. So is the question
17 specifically around the 3 million
18 for the recruitment activity?

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
20 RICHARDSON: Yes, the 3 million for
21 recruitment activity, and if
22 anything in this specific ordinance
23 that we are undertaking today
24 addresses anything around
25 recruitment. I just want to get

1 that on the record because I know
2 that was a source of contention.

3 MR. ZACCAGNI: For the
4 police recruitment (inaudible), I
5 would defer to the Managing
6 Director's Office after discussions
7 with them. And I believe that they
8 had discussions with I believe
9 Council President's office on
10 diverting some of that 3 million
11 that was identified for police
12 recruitment to other public safety
13 recruitment, including Prisons.
14 And we're trying to work on
15 piggybacking on a contract there to
16 expand their efforts in advertising
17 for correctional officers. So a
18 chunk of that is going to go to
19 that. And we're holding a few
20 hundred thousand dollars in reserve
21 as we move into the next year in
22 case we can do something around 911
23 operators or other critical
24 positions like that.

25 In this ordinance, OHR has

1 money for basically an effort to
2 promote the City as an employer of
3 choice to really get the message
4 out there that this is a great
5 place to work. We offer a lot from
6 the standpoint of what you can give
7 back to the community but also for
8 you personally. So that's the
9 money that's really identified
10 within this ordinance that we're
11 going to do a campaign. We have
12 the RFP already out. I think we're
13 already getting solicitations back
14 from vendors.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
16 RICHARDSON: Okay. And then
17 anything relative from PPD that we
18 need to be aware of based on the
19 numbers that we have?

20 COMMISSIONER STANFORD: So
21 good morning. John Stanford,
22 Interim Commissioner for
23 Philadelphia Police Department.
24 Good morning. So some of the money
25 that we utilized was going into the

1 campaign that we just essentially
2 announced over the last month or
3 so, Our City Needs You campaign.
4 And that's going to be really
5 pushing forward to try to drive in
6 additional, you know, citizens that
7 may be interested in joining the
8 police department.

9 I know some of the
10 conversations around digital
11 advertisement is moving forward and
12 additional marketing efforts to get
13 more people into the doors, so
14 we're going to continue to push
15 forward on that. We can get you
16 additional breakdown as to some of
17 the things we are looking to do and
18 what has been done in terms of a
19 dollar amount and get that
20 breakdown for you. We can get that
21 over.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
23 RICHARDSON: Okay. That'll be
24 great. Thank you so much,
25 Commissioner. And thank you, Mike

1 Zaccagni. I just wanted to make
2 sure we got that on the record.

3 And last thing, Mr. Chair,
4 relative to the public safety
5 portfolio I wanted to ask a
6 question regarding the 911 staff.
7 And I understand there are
8 vacancies in that particular
9 department or unit. For the
10 record, if you can just notate how
11 many vacancies and based on those
12 vacancies, how much underspending
13 they have in Class 100.

14 MS. MAYNARD: We may need
15 to double check on -- okay. Sorry.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DAHL-
17 CAMPBELL: Good morning, everyone.
18 This is Deputy Commissioner Krista
19 Dahl-Campbell. I'm just jumping on
20 here. Our vacancies in Radio
21 fluctuate. I'm getting the exact
22 number now. But we have done very
23 well with hiring in the past few
24 years. Our problem is retention.
25 So we tend to lose a number of

1 dispatchers after their training
2 period and after a couple of years
3 where they look to seek for higher
4 wages, but we've done well with
5 recruitment. But to that point, we
6 are also looking to focus some of
7 our recruitment efforts towards
8 radio dispatch.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you for
11 that. I just need to know how much
12 underspending you may have in Class
13 100 and how many vacancies you
14 have.

15 And for context, for the
16 Finance folks for the Committee
17 Chair and for the members of the
18 Committee, if you can get us today
19 on average how many vacancies you
20 had and how much underspending you
21 had as a result of that over the
22 last three or four fiscal years.
23 That will also be helpful for us in
24 the deliberation today.

25 MS. MAYNARD: Understood.

1 Thank you.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Are we
3 waiting for a response?

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Yeah, I thought we
6 were going to be able to --

7 MS. MAYNARD: Okay. So I
8 can speak at a high level. We have
9 a roughly 18 percent vacancy rate
10 across the City. We would need to
11 pull the numbers if you want to go
12 back a couple of years. We can
13 pull that.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

15 RICHARDSON: And even just for the
16 benefit of today for this hearing,
17 if you know what the vacancy rate
18 is as far as the number of
19 positions and then how much in
20 underspending that gives you for
21 even this upcoming fiscal year, for
22 FY24 basically.

23 MR. DUBOW: You're talking
24 about specifically the dispatcher;
25 is that what you're asking about?

1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Right, the 911
3 dispatchers. The ones that answer
4 the phone for 911.

5 MR. DUBOW: Yep. Got it.
6 Thank you.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DAHL-
8 CAMPBELL: Councilwoman, we're
9 getting that for you now. I just
10 want to give you the exact number.
11 I'll be sure to raise my hand and
12 have it for you shortly.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much.
15 All right. Thank you,
16 Mr. Chair.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
18 you, Member Gilmore Richardson, for
19 focusing on those departments.
20 Your pencil is sharp. You found a
21 discrepancy in one of those
22 numbers. But also particularly
23 when it comes to 911 operators, we
24 spent a considerable amount of
25 visits, a considerable amount of

1 hearing time looking into their
2 operations and everything from
3 their physical location in their
4 offices and they moved, thank
5 goodness, but also to some of the
6 retention problems that were
7 mentioned at that pay level that
8 they have, and there is a process,
9 I will say that before you do,
10 there is a process that we have to
11 adhere to. It is a collective
12 bargaining unit.

13 But the reality is that,
14 that is the front line for public
15 safety. When they get mandatory
16 overtime and are overworked, it
17 results in human error. And human
18 error in that department can mean
19 critical minutes that get missed,
20 critical days that have gotten
21 missed in getting citizens the help
22 they need.

23 I always remember that
24 commercial that was used a couple
25 of election cycles ago where they

1 said press 1 if it's a home
2 invasion, press 2 if it's a
3 carjacking, and I never want for
4 Philadelphia to be in that
5 category. So, therefore, whatever
6 relief and support we can give to
7 the dispatchers of 911 I as an
8 individual elected official and
9 support above, but we do have to be
10 frugal as you had pointed out, to
11 know exactly how many spots are
12 vacant and when that help would be
13 able to be implemented. So I thank
14 you for that.

15 Member Thomas.

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank
17 you, Mr. Chair.

18 Just one quick thing, and I
19 apologize for this. One thing I
20 want to get on the record, one of
21 the things we asked for money for,
22 and it was a plethora of things
23 that we thought were smart one-time
24 investments, but one of them is our
25 partners who deal with animal

1 control and other things.

2 As Councilmembers, we often
3 get complaints about animals and
4 different (inaudible), and our
5 partner at ACCT are the ones who
6 deal with the majority of this
7 stuff, dealing with animal control
8 stuff and things of that capacity.

9 So I'm wondering because they sent
10 us a letter, and I don't know if
11 that letter only came to City
12 Council but I'm assuming it went to
13 the Administration as well too.

14 And what they said is that
15 if they did not get a significant
16 investment from the City right now,
17 they might be forced to close their
18 doors next year or possibly cut off
19 some of the services that they do.

20 And so, when I go back to what
21 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson
22 talked about earlier as it relates
23 to fiscal responsibility, it only
24 makes sense that we make this
25 one-time investment to help deal

1 with some financial shortfalls that
2 they're having because if we don't,
3 then we're going to have to absorb
4 the cost as a City as it relates to
5 the services that they won't
6 provide or we'll just have animals
7 running wild across the City of
8 Philadelphia and I'm pretty sure
9 none of us want that.

10 So I'm wondering what was
11 the thought process behind not
12 investing in ACCT as it relates to
13 what we're looking to do this fall,
14 and how can we do that as something
15 as fiscally responsible if it will
16 cost us more money in the long run
17 to be able to absorb what it is
18 that they would not be able to do
19 if their doors are closed or if
20 they're forced to be able to cut
21 back on some of the services that
22 they provide?

23 MR. DUBOW: So there were a
24 couple of things going on there,
25 and I appreciate the question.

1 One, they sent some information
2 related to FY23 where they said
3 they wanted 5.9 million and without
4 that, they would have to scale back
5 services or close down. And in
6 response to that, we increased FY23
7 to about 5.8.

8 And in the FY24 budget we
9 increased that to 6.2 million. I
10 think what they're asking for now
11 is money for their employees to
12 increase their pay. Their
13 employees are in D.C. 33 so that
14 would be a collective bargaining
15 process activity. And what we do
16 with that is we go through a
17 process when that's finished, see
18 what the costs are and then add
19 money to the budget to cover it.

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank
21 you for the response. So basically
22 what you're saying is you don't
23 feel like there's a sense of
24 urgency around investing in ACCT
25 right now. You feel like that this

1 is something that could be done in
2 next year's budget negotiations and
3 you're not concerned around them
4 having to cut off staff or cut back
5 services, things of that capacity.
6 You don't feel like that's going to
7 be an issue?

8 MR. DUBOW: I think the '24
9 request from what I saw this
10 morning is about increasing pay,
11 and that should be addressed
12 through collective bargaining and
13 then we would provide funding and
14 enter increases through that
15 collective bargaining.

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: The
17 communication from us told us that
18 it wasn't just about salary pay, so
19 I'm looking forward to going into
20 negotiation around that issue as
21 well so we can make sure we find
22 some type of happy compromise in
23 order to put us in a position where
24 we're not increasing costs for the
25 City by having one of our trusted

1 partners be in a position where
2 they have to cut back services or
3 lay off staff or anything of that
4 capacity.

5 And I think it's important
6 that we go back and define exactly
7 what it is that money was spent on
8 in the past so we can have clarity
9 as it relates to what the record
10 should be moving forward.

11 So, Mr. Chair, thank you.
12 I just wanted to get that
13 information on the record. And of
14 course, Mr. Dubow, thank you for
15 communicating your perspective on
16 that particular issue.

17 MR. DUBOW: Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: For
19 someone who has had bats in their
20 home and has cried for help, I
21 appreciate the services provided.

22 Chair recognizes
23 Councilmember Johnson.

24 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
25 you, Mr. Chair.

1 I just want to circle back
2 regarding I saw in the chat a
3 response from Commissioner Stanford
4 particularly around the issue of
5 the 911 dispatchers. I know there
6 was a request to go through seeking
7 support of the 911 dispatchers just
8 to address the lack of staff
9 (inaudible) regarding collective
10 bargaining and salaries. And I
11 just want Rob, if you could just
12 clarify that for the record as well
13 as Commissioner Stanford to also do
14 a follow-up because I know it was a
15 very, very robust hearing. This is
16 something I believe that we should
17 be addressing with a sense of
18 urgency.

19 And so, how are we going to
20 work through those collective
21 bargaining issues as well as
22 addressing the staff shortages as
23 it relates to making sure it's a
24 very, very robust and efficient 911
25 department?

1 MR. DUBOW: Sure, thanks
2 for the question. So in addition
3 to the collective bargaining
4 element, there's also the civil
5 service element, and the Office of
6 Human Resources has been doing an
7 analysis of compensation for the
8 dispatchers and how they compare to
9 compensation in other jurisdictions
10 with the goal of at the end of that
11 process in seeing how we compare
12 and in seeing whether there are
13 adjustments that we can make that
14 would make us more competitive if
15 that's what the results show. But
16 I'll also ask Mike Zaccagni to come
17 back on and to talk about that
18 process.

19 MR. ZACCAGNI: Yes, Rob.
20 Thank you. I'm Mike Zaccagni,
21 Office of Human Resources. We have
22 done some analysis. We're going
23 back to look at that analysis to
24 see whether or not there is some
25 additional adjustments. One of the

1 other things that we found is when
2 the police is talking about
3 retention issues, we also I think
4 about a year ago, maybe a little
5 bit longer, created an additional
6 position in sort of a series for
7 the operators so that they had some
8 place to go and there's limited
9 shall we say promotional
10 activities. So we did look at
11 that. We'll look at that position
12 again and see whether or not we can
13 make some adjustments around
14 salary. We'll certainly share that
15 with Council and we'll also look at
16 the operator position itself.

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:

18 Commissioner Stanford --

19 MR. ZACCAGNI: Councilman
20 Johnson, is there anything else
21 that you -- any other specifics?

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: No,
23 not at the moment. Just want to
24 get additional follow-up from
25 Commissioner Stanford.

1 COMMISSIONER STANFORD:

2 Good morning. Again, we're at 68.

3 I put it in the chat. We're 68

4 short as it relates to 911

5 dispatchers and we put in an

6 additional request as far as a

7 justification request to raise the

8 salaries of dispatchers,

9 understanding that we know it is

10 collective bargaining issues, but I

11 think we are in support of that as

12 well as what has already been

13 discussed regarding supervisory

14 positions for a tier type of system

15 to increase pays. But that's again

16 something that would have to be

17 agreed upon through collective

18 bargaining. But it is a priority

19 for us.

20 We will also be looking to

21 do a little more around recruitment

22 efforts for those positions in

23 addition to the recruitment efforts

24 that are being done for sworn

25 positions. But that conversation

1 came up before that we need to do a
2 little bit more as it relates to
3 marketing and advertising just to
4 get the message out regarding some
5 of those civilian positions that we
6 have available to make sure that we
7 get them filled as quickly as
8 possible. So we are definitely in
9 support of that and looking to do
10 more moving forward as a department
11 to get that done.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
13 you very much.

14 And, Mr. Dubow, can you and
15 your team also do additional
16 follow-up with Councilwoman Jamie
17 Gauthier regarding the collective
18 bargaining component and how it
19 plays a role into this actual
20 transfer request that she's seeking
21 right now? Just want for clarity
22 to take a look at those two issues
23 because obviously we can't do
24 collective bargaining overnight so
25 that's going to take some time.

1 But nevertheless, she has taken the
2 lead with a sense of urgency to
3 address this issue.

4 And so, it's my hope and I
5 said it the last time on the record
6 that rather now or either come when
7 the Philadelphia Police Department
8 comes in front of us for their
9 official budget, right, that there
10 should be a robust strategy and
11 plan to build up and replace those
12 vacancies that are in the 911 unit
13 but also strategy and plan
14 regarding the recruitment, looking
15 at the morale of the actual workers
16 who work in the 911 unit and
17 basically help us restore
18 confidence and public confidence
19 that 911 is the official system
20 that should be utilized and is
21 utilized here in the City of
22 Philadelphia.

23 And so, those are some of
24 the things we have gone back and
25 forth with stakeholders on how to

1 address this issue but also be
2 supportive of the work that
3 Councilwoman Jamie Gauthier is
4 definitely taking the lead on
5 something that's very, very
6 important based upon the tragedy
7 and mass shooting that took place
8 in her District.

9 And so, I think the whole
10 public is paying attention to us
11 around this particular issue
12 because it is a quality-of-life
13 issue here in the City of
14 Philadelphia and goes to how people
15 feel safe when they're calling 911
16 and feel confident that someone is
17 going to be on the other line on
18 the phone and actually pick up and
19 actually respond. And so,
20 hopefully that part of the
21 conversation can take place for her
22 and her team today as we go through
23 the process hoping to determine how
24 we move forward.

25 Thank you very much,

1 Mr. Chairman, for your time.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
3 you, Member Johnson.

4 Real quick point of
5 clarification. You said there were
6 how many vacancies out of how many
7 in the unit? Can you put that on
8 the record again, Commissioner?

9 COMMISSIONER STANFORD:
10 Yes, sir. So we are authorized to
11 have 353. We are currently at 285.
12 We're a shortage of 68.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
14 you very much.

15 Chair recognizes Member
16 Gilmore Richardson.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: Thank you,
19 Mr. Chairman.

20 I just had an additional
21 point of clarification that's
22 relative to the amount of vacancies
23 and that could translate into the
24 actual amounts relative to Class
25 100. Meaning, I think I heard a

1 number of -- was it 68 dispatcher
2 vacancies? And so, how much does
3 that translate to in Class 100?

4 I'm only asking because we
5 need to understand the difference
6 in how much that amount is based on
7 the Class 100 underspending based
8 on what we are seeing here relative
9 to this request around the
10 additional 911 hires. I'm just
11 trying to understand what the
12 difference is.

13 MS. MAYNARD: So we do
14 apply a vacancy percentage. We
15 don't assume that the difference
16 will be filled 100 percent of the
17 time. So we'll just have to double
18 check on some of this math. I
19 don't know it off the top of my
20 head, but we'll have to circle back
21 and get you that information.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Right, which is why I
24 was asking because, you know, if it
25 is 68 positions but you know you

1 have the vacancy allowance that you
2 always account for at the beginning
3 of the budget process. Just how
4 much is it so we can understand
5 what that is. Okay?

6 MS. MAYNARD: Understood.

7 We will get that to you. Yep.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you,
10 Mr. Chair.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
12 you, Member Richardson.

13 I believe -- Member Lozada,
14 did you have your hand up wishing
15 to be recognized?

16 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: I
17 did. I wanted to shift the
18 conversation a little bit and just
19 put on the record my appreciation
20 for Rob Dubow in the conversation
21 and in his direction as it relates
22 to St. Christopher's Hospital in my
23 District. There are only two
24 children's hospitals in the City of
25 Philadelphia. St. Christopher is

1 one of them. And they have put in
2 a request for \$2.5 million.

3 I recognize that there's a
4 challenge in the infor -- there is
5 a challenge to continue to support
6 institutions like this one.

7 However, this request is vital to
8 the quality of life in the 7th
9 Council District. This hospital is
10 the hospital that residents just
11 don't go to for an emergency. They
12 go there just for general medical
13 needs.

14 The hospital has become a
15 teaching hospital in the City of
16 Philadelphia. It hires locally.
17 They generate about \$13 million in
18 revenue for the Commonwealth. They
19 have about 36,000 jobs throughout
20 the state. And so, I just want to
21 make sure that we understand the
22 urgency of this request and that we
23 do everything possible to be able
24 to get them what they need now, and
25 we can figure out how we work with

1 them on their future requests.

2 But I wanted to make sure
3 that I put how important this
4 request is on the record as well as
5 express my appreciation for Rob and
6 everything that he's done to be
7 able to get me clarification and
8 ask all of the necessary questions.

9 This being one of my first budget
10 processes, I'm not really sure how
11 it all works, but he has really
12 been instrumental in guiding me
13 through the process and through the
14 conversation.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Are you
16 done, Member?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
19 Lozada?

20 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yes,
21 sir. I'm sorry.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: You're
23 done?

24 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yes,
25 I am. Thank you.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Well, I
2 ditto everything you said about Rob
3 Dubow and then some. His grimace
4 over the decades I've known him
5 when I anticipate every budget
6 cycle, he does a wonderful job of
7 being a good fiscal steward.

8 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yes,
9 he has. And I think that he is
10 pushing to find us what we need to
11 be able to support St. Chris. I
12 don't know where we will end up,
13 but I just wanted to make sure that
14 I expressed my gratitude in his
15 work and just making sure that I'm
16 straight and I have all of the
17 necessary information so that we
18 are responsible, right.

19 I understand the challenges
20 and I understand that we can't --
21 the City of Philadelphia can't be
22 in the business of continuing to
23 support medical or hospital
24 institutions, but this is a -- this
25 is only one of two. And so, I want

1 to make sure we do whatever we
2 possibly can to be able to support
3 the request.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
5 you, Member.

6 Chair recognizes Member
7 Thomas.

8 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank
9 you. Mr. Chair, I feel so bad. I
10 know I'm killing you with the back
11 and forth because I do apologize
12 and I --

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: You're
14 fine.

15 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: --
16 appreciate you, Mr. Chair.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: You're
18 all right.

19 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank
20 you, sir. Thank you.

21 First and foremost, I just
22 wanted to echo the sentiments of
23 two of my colleagues, Councilmember
24 Lozada and Councilmember Johnson,
25 as they raised important issues

1 that I'm supportive of, whether
2 it's 911 operators and the
3 conditions that they're dealing
4 with.

5 We had an indepth hearing
6 about that, a number of
7 Councilmembers including the Chair
8 of our Appropriations and Public
9 Safety Committee has been
10 advocating for this for some time,
11 Councilmember Gauthier. Future
12 Mayor Parker, I remember her being
13 involved in the hearing advocating
14 for this. So this is something
15 that we've been very vocal about.
16 And similar to what was said
17 before, these are quality-of-life
18 issues that we're talking about,
19 supporting hospitals, supporting
20 workers. They're extremely
21 important.

22 Mr. Dubow, just to close
23 out our conversation around ACCT,
24 you talked about the fact that they
25 are whachamachallit, that the

1 majority of the money that they're
2 asking for is wages and that the
3 contract negotiations is when this
4 should happen; is that correct?

5 That's what we agreed upon, right?

6 MR. DUBOW: Sorry, I didn't
7 hear the last part. I heard the
8 first part about salaries --

9 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: I'm
10 talking about --

11 MR. DUBOW: -- yes.

12 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Okay.

13 But I mean, are you aware that
14 they're going through contract
15 negotiations right now? Part of
16 the reason why they're asking for
17 the funds right now is so that they
18 can finalize contract negotiations.
19 If they're paying people \$12 an
20 hour and if you want to compare
21 somebody trying to catch wild dogs
22 and Councilmember Jones talked
23 about bats and things of that
24 capacity, they can go to Target and
25 make more money at Target than they

1 can getting the bats out of
2 Councilmember Jones' house right
3 now.

4 So at the end of the day if
5 we're talking about some level of
6 support throughout the course of
7 contract negotiations, they're
8 literally going through those
9 negotiations right now. So I'm
10 trying to figure out why is there
11 so much pushback around helping
12 give them the support that they
13 need so that the City doesn't have
14 to absorb this cost of these
15 services?

16 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. Our
17 process for negotiations and what
18 we do with our own departments is
19 when the negotiations are over, we
20 know the exact amount that we have
21 to put in and that's the point at
22 which we make the adjustment.

23 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: So you
24 want them to negotiate a contract
25 for money that they don't have and

1 assume that the City is going to
2 supplement them for whatever costs
3 they absorb and if it's contract
4 negotiations, that they won't be
5 be able to fiscally take care of.
6 Is that what we're recommending
7 that they do?

8 MR. DUBOW: That's how we
9 do it with all our departments
10 because if we put in an amount and
11 set the amount for negotiations,
12 then we set a target for where the
13 negotiations go, so we always do it
14 after negotiations are over. We
15 don't put the money in before.

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
17 Mr. Dubow, you're way more
18 experienced than me. You're great
19 at the work that you do, and the
20 City is in good fiscal health right
21 now so you have to be commended for
22 the job. But I got to push back on
23 the idea that an organization
24 that's a separate entity from the
25 City of Philadelphia that has a

1 separate board, if we were talking
2 about L&I or Fire or Police, that
3 theory would make sense to me. But
4 if I'm the Executive Director of a
5 nonprofit organization and you're
6 basically asking me to negotiate a
7 contract for funds that I
8 essentially do not have, I don't
9 know who in good faith would do
10 that.

11 I don't know what was done
12 in the past. I'm not that
13 experienced. I haven't been in
14 City Council that long, but I think
15 it's very difficult for us while
16 sitting on \$900-plus million to ask
17 one of our important partners who
18 do things like getting bats out of
19 Councilmembers' houses to negotiate
20 a contract to actual money -- I
21 mean, to negotiate a contract and
22 be able to come to an agreement for
23 money that they don't have.

24 MR. DUBOW: Yeah. And I
25 think --

1 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: I don't
2 know.

3 MR. DUBOW: And part of
4 what we should do and honestly I
5 didn't -- this came to us today,
6 right, that it was a salary issue.
7 The first I saw of this was today.
8 And I think we need to have a
9 discussion with them to give them
10 assurance that they can proceed.

11 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Okay.
12 And I think that would be good.
13 But, you know, again this is
14 another example of us as
15 Councilmembers having our ear to
16 the ground knowing what's going on,
17 fighting for the things that we
18 feel like would improve the quality
19 of life for the City of
20 Philadelphia and the Administration
21 offering pushback.

22 So I'm going to be more
23 than willing to talk to the
24 Executive Director and other folks
25 involved in the organization,

1 because again I can't have
2 constituents calling us about wild
3 animals and us as City government
4 saying, sorry, it's nothing we can
5 do about it.

6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7 Thank you, Mr. Dubow. I appreciate
8 it.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Point of
11 clarification, Mr. Chair.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: (Muted).

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Mr. Chair, you're on
15 mute.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes,
17 Member Richardson. Please proceed.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: I just wanted to do a
20 follow-up to what Councilmember
21 Thomas just asked.

22 Mr. Dubow, you said this is
23 the first time you all heard about
24 this today?

25 MR. DUBOW: The pay raise

1 element of it. This is the first
2 time I'm hearing about it, yes.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you for
5 the clarification.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
7 you, Member Richardson.

8 Member Johnson, is your
9 hand up?

10 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes,
11 sir, Mr. Chair.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Chair
13 recognizes Member Johnson.

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
15 you very much.

16 Just wanted to circle back
17 to Mr. Dubow regarding
18 St. Christopher's Hospital, and I
19 know since I've been around here
20 this issue has come up of support
21 from time and time again. So can
22 you just give me the background
23 history regarding briefly the
24 issues regarding supporting
25 St. Christopher's. And then

1 obviously, it has to be a long-term
2 strategy to help them maintain
3 their overall operations. And part
4 of my thought process regarding
5 this line of questioning is just
6 based upon us coming out of the
7 pandemic and really saw health
8 disparities, inequities across the
9 City of Philadelphia regarding how
10 different communities have access
11 to quality health care services.

12 And obviously, where
13 St. Christopher's Hospital is
14 located, right, and not too far
15 from Kensington, not too far from
16 the opioid crisis and the epidemic
17 that's taking place in that area,
18 right, how this support or lack of
19 support play into how we're
20 addressing the health inequities
21 that are taking place in the City
22 of Philadelphia. So I want to get
23 an idea from you, Rob, because
24 you've been dealing with this for a
25 while separate from this funding

1 request, but obviously looking at a
2 long-term strategy as well and
3 partnership with the Administration
4 and St. Christopher's to see how we
5 can get them on solid footing
6 financially for their operations?

7 MR. DUBOW: Yeah, and I
8 might be a tiny off on this a
9 little. But I think maybe in FY22
10 or FY23 when the first request came
11 for -- we had put in that we
12 matched by the (inaudible), and it
13 was part of a plan to bring
14 St. Chris back to financial
15 stability. We got financial
16 projections. We provided the
17 funding. I think we leveraged
18 about another 7.5 million. I think
19 we did a second contribution that
20 also leveraged additional money.

21 We received a request for
22 this contribution right at the very
23 end of the budget process. And
24 what we've been trying to
25 understand over the last couple of

1 weeks is what the long-term
2 strategy is and how the hospital
3 will eventually be able to survive
4 without recurring City
5 appropriations. And so, that was
6 kind of what we were trying to
7 figure out, understanding how
8 important the hospital is, my
9 understanding that it's important
10 for us that the hospital survive.
11 That's kind of where we've been,
12 and Councilmember Lozada --

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yeah,
14 I'll follow up with Councilmember
15 Lozada as well as Councilman
16 Chairman Curtis Jones regarding
17 their Marshall Plan as it relates
18 to Kensington. St. Chris not being
19 so far from there as well as
20 looking at the issue around the
21 work that St. Chris has done
22 supporting particularly children
23 who are survivors of gunshots,
24 right, which is a very, very
25 critical area that needs to be

1 addressed, but really it's also in
2 an area again that's not so far --
3 I'm sorry, not so close to the
4 level of health care institutions
5 that probably need to be in an area
6 where people need access to.

7 So I just wanted to touch
8 base with you on that particular
9 issue and I'll follow up with
10 Councilwoman Lozada as well as
11 because I think it probably will be
12 a long-term conversation as well,
13 but I definitely will be supportive
14 of all efforts as it relates to at
15 least trying to keep them afloat as
16 long as we can particularly because
17 of the vital work that they are
18 doing that is so severely needed in
19 the City right now.

20 Thank you very much,
21 Mr. Chairman.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
23 you, Member Johnson.

24 Chair recognizes Member
25 Lozada and then Member Richardson.

1 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yeah.
2 I just want to follow up on the
3 fact that they are an amazing
4 partner. They are a much-needed
5 partner as it relates to providing,
6 like I said earlier, not just
7 emergency services but their
8 location is where families in that
9 community go when they don't have
10 health insurance.

11 And so, we need to
12 understand that they have been
13 trying to have conversations
14 apparently with the Administration
15 since June. And so, information,
16 important information that I think
17 should have been asked for earlier
18 in this process was just requested
19 right before Thanksgiving. And so,
20 if we were at a point where we
21 thought we were going to question
22 this request, those documents
23 requested during that time should
24 have been requested earlier in this
25 process.

1 And I'm not really -- I
2 don't want to point fingers. I
3 don't know why those documents were
4 requested so late in this process,
5 but I'm frustrated with that. I'm
6 frustrated with the late request
7 for documentation necessary to be
8 able to come to a decision
9 regarding such an important
10 institution and such an important
11 service that we know is only one of
12 two in the City.

13 And so, again I think that
14 we need to really think about how
15 do we make that whole. How do we
16 ensure that they are fiscally
17 stable because we need them. We
18 need them in the community. The
19 community, that's the only place
20 that some of these folks have to go
21 for medical attention. And so, I
22 want to make sure that it is on the
23 record that they have been having
24 conversation not just with the
25 Administration but with Council

1 since some time early in June.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
3 you, Member.

4 I think, Member Richardson,
5 you're next.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 I just have another
9 clarifying question based on the
10 briefing you had in Line 76. My
11 question is regarding the matching
12 funds from the state for St. Chris.
13 So I thought if they were able to
14 secure matching funds, that we
15 would be able to do our part from a
16 City perspective? Did I miss
17 something there? I thought we had
18 that discussion previously.

19 MR. DUBOW: If we raised
20 the issue in that briefing about
21 being concerned that it was a
22 recurring cost and at the briefing
23 a member suggested that I talk to
24 Councilmember Lozada to try to
25 straighten that issue out. And

1 that's what we've been working on
2 since the briefing.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Okay. But I wanted to
5 clarify that they did receive the
6 state support?

7 MR. DUBOW: Yes.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: And so, then for the
10 record have they received any City
11 support?

12 MR. DUBOW: They have
13 received payments from us in the
14 past over the last couple of years,
15 yes, but not in FY24.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Not in FY24. And does
18 that match up to how much they
19 received in total from the state?

20 MR. DUBOW: So the amount
21 they would be able to leverage from
22 our payments was more than the
23 amount that we put in. So, no,
24 they've gotten more from other
25 levels of government to leverage

1 what we've given them to more than
2 what we gave them.

3 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

4 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you for
5 the clarification. I'm also
6 supportive of Councilmember
7 Lozada's request.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
9 you, Member Gilmore Richardson.

10 Member Johnson, are you
11 queued up again? Member --

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: No,
13 sir, Mr. Chair. Let me put my hand
14 down. Thank you very much.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: All
16 right. I see no other questions
17 for this panel. If you will be so
18 kind as to stick around. We will
19 now proceed with the next panel to
20 testify.

21 Mr. Glass.

22 THE CLERK: Yes,
23 Mr. Chairman. Our next witness
24 will be District Attorney Larry
25 Krasner.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES:

2 DA Krasner, are you connected?

3 MR. STEWART: Mr. Chairman,
4 how are you. I'm standing in today
5 for the DA because of the meeting
6 he's having with two family members
7 connected to a homicide in
8 Philadelphia.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Sorry to
10 hear that, but we will accept your
11 testimony, sir. State your name
12 for the record and begin your
13 testimony.

14 MR. STEWART: G. Lamar
15 Stewart, Chief of Community
16 Engagement, City Government
17 Affairs. I'm joined today with ADA
18 or by ADA Bill Fritze, who's the
19 Chief of our Gun Violence Task
20 Force; ADA Kim Esack, who's the
21 Chief of Economic Crimes Division
22 and ADA Jennifer Lin, who's the
23 Senior Advisor on Finance and
24 Administration.

25 So good morning, Chairman

1 Curtis Jones and members of the
2 Appropriations Committee. I'm once
3 again G. Lamar Stewart in today for
4 DA Krasner. I'm testifying in
5 support of the District Attorney's
6 Office General Fund request of
7 \$3,480,000 of Class 100
8 supplemental budget funding to
9 increase resources prosecuting
10 crimes against retailers, crimes
11 again seniors, crimes against
12 workers and illegal gun possession
13 by prolific offenders.

14 The DAO is requesting
15 funding to increase resources to
16 strengthen the DAO's external
17 engagement with community groups,
18 response to constituent and
19 increased communication
20 collaboration with City Council and
21 state legislators and their staff.

22 Additionally, the District
23 Attorney's Office is requesting
24 \$500,000 for the Victim and Witness
25 Relocation Fund, a total fund

1 request of \$3,980,000. The
2 District Attorney's Office is
3 committed to increasing resources
4 to strengthen the prosecution of
5 illegal gun violence possession
6 cases from arraignment through
7 appeal.

8 We are equally committed to
9 the professional development and
10 well-being of DAO personnel,
11 especially those who prosecute the
12 traumatic aftermath of gun
13 violence. Emphasizing caseload
14 reduction is a critical component
15 to our long-term retention
16 strategies. Lower caseloads for
17 our ADAs to have more time to
18 prepare for litigation, develop and
19 support victims and witnesses in
20 those cases. Equally important, it
21 will allow for ADAs to have a
22 better balance between trauma of
23 prosecuting gun violence and the
24 joy of living in Philadelphia.

25 The Philadelphia DAO will

1 hire and assign ADAs to the DAO's
2 Gun Crime Strategies & Prevention
3 Collaborative as well as our
4 Municipal Court Unit, Major Trials
5 Division, Gun Violence Task Force,
6 Family Violence & Sexual Assaults
7 Unit, Law Division and our Juvenile
8 Division to vigorously prosecute
9 the following gun-related offenses:
10 6105, Felons In Possession of
11 Firearm; Prolific Gun Possession
12 Offenders; 6111, Straw Purchasing
13 Ghost Guns; and 6110.1, Juveniles
14 In Possession of Firearms.

15 The DAO will also assign a
16 group of attorneys to a Bail
17 Revocation & Bail Appeal Program.
18 The group will file motions to
19 appeal and handle bail revocation
20 hearings for defendants charged
21 with firearm-related offenses who
22 have pending criminal matters in
23 the City of Philadelphia for those
24 who are repeat gun possession
25 offenders.

1 The Philadelphia DAO will
2 also create an Organized Retail &
3 House Theft Tax Force under the
4 supervision of the DAO's Economic
5 Crimes Division led by Kim Esack.
6 The Organized Retail & House Theft
7 Task Force will collaboratively
8 work with local, state and federal
9 justice partners to investigate,
10 prosecute and hold accountable
11 individuals involved in house
12 theft, deed fraud and crimes
13 against retailers and businesses.
14 Our prosecutors will vigorously
15 prosecute those involved in fencing
16 operations, organized house theft
17 offenders and prolific retail theft
18 offenders.

19 Our team of course will
20 work with PPD's Major Crimes Unit
21 and the six detective divisions to
22 identify, investigate and prosecute
23 those who are involved in such
24 crimes. The Philadelphia DAO will
25 also create a Labor Crimes

1 Enforcement Unit under the
2 supervision of once again our
3 economic crimes division. This
4 unit will be responsible of
5 bringing criminal charges against
6 employers who engage in wage theft,
7 labor trafficking and
8 misclassification of workers in
9 Philadelphia.

10 The DAO is also seeking an
11 appropriate increase in City
12 funding to support DAO's Victim
13 Witness Relocation. During prior
14 years, the DAO received \$260,000
15 annually from Philadelphia City
16 Council via the Managing Director's
17 Office. The PA Attorney General's
18 Office has a budget of 1.5 million
19 for the entire Commonwealth.
20 However, the state has very strict
21 guidelines for relocation and the
22 DAO also often relies on our City
23 relocation resources to prioritize
24 the safety of witnesses, victims
25 and families and survivors who

1 don't qualify for that state
2 funding. We are requesting all
3 increased allocated funds for
4 relocation that will come directly
5 to the DAO to ensure timely and
6 safe transition of survivors and
7 witnesses into the DAO's witness
8 program.

9 Finally, the DAO is
10 requesting or desires to create an
11 External Strategies & Government
12 Affairs Division. This Division
13 will consist of DAO's Community
14 Engagement Unit, Government Affairs
15 Unit, Public Relations Operations,
16 law enforcement partnership
17 strategies and other outward facing
18 operations. Staff assigned to this
19 Division will support the DAO's
20 mission by building and improving
21 relationships with our community,
22 city and state government, law
23 enforcement and other external
24 partners through balanced
25 programming, intentional

1 collaboration and increased
2 communication.

3 The aforementioned DAO
4 priorities and requests combine
5 additional hires of Assistant DAs,
6 DATA Lab Analysts, Community
7 Engagement & Government Affairs
8 staff as well as Philadelphia
9 County Detectives. Philadelphia
10 City Council's approval of this
11 budget request will position the
12 Philadelphia District Attorney's
13 Office in the 2024 calendar year to
14 work collaboratively with Mayor-
15 elect Cherelle Parker's
16 Administration, our next
17 Philadelphia Police Commissioner
18 and our partners throughout the
19 justice system and most importantly
20 victim service agencies and
21 community groups as well as
22 faith-based partners throughout the
23 City of Philadelphia in
24 prioritizing a balanced approach to
25 public safety and reform.

1 The Philadelphia District
2 Attorney's Office will remain a
3 committed collaborative partner as
4 we join other City departments and
5 agencies with this shared goal in
6 mind, one Philly, a united city.
7 Thank you for the opportunity to
8 testify today. And if you have any
9 further questions or concerns,
10 we're happy to answer them.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
12 you, G. Lamar Stewart. A couple of
13 questions: There has been a 19
14 percent reduction in homicides as I
15 recall. Give me not scientific but
16 knee-jerk how did that happen?

17 MR. STEWART: I'm going to
18 tap Bill Fritze who leads our Gun
19 Violence Task Force and his staff,
20 they work to really address the
21 issue of group violence here in
22 Philadelphia.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
24 you.

25 MR. FRITZE: Councilman, I

1 don't want to take credit for
2 anything. I think --

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Can you
4 take and state your name for the
5 record before you start. Our
6 stenographer has to know.

7 MR. FRITZE: William
8 Fritze, Chief of the Gun Violence
9 Task Force.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
11 you.

12 MR. FRITZE: The 19 percent
13 reduction, I would like to take
14 credit for it. PPD would also like
15 to take credit for it. I think
16 it's a combination of what we've
17 been doing throughout the City and
18 our partnership with the police
19 department. So every week we have
20 a representative from Gun Violence
21 Task Force and the Intelligence
22 Division, which is now a part of
23 the Gun Violence Task Force, that
24 sits on the call. We have analysts
25 assigned within our unit who work

1 one-on-one with any cases that we
2 can solve in realtime with those
3 detectives to try and solve those
4 cases.

5 We've also done our long-
6 term investigations in South
7 Philadelphia, Southwest
8 Philadelphia and North
9 Philadelphia. We've tried to
10 expand to do those. And based on
11 that PCCD funding, we have been
12 able to expand to bring more staff
13 on to do those long-term
14 investigations, which I think also
15 creates kind of a chilling effect
16 for that group violence.

17 There has been an increase
18 in the (inaudible) rate over the
19 last few years in the preliminary
20 hearings on gun cases and that's
21 because you have Gun Violence Task
22 Force DAs, senior DAs sitting in
23 that room every single day making
24 sure that those cases get held for
25 court. We train the young DAs in

1 that room to handle those cases,
2 but we oversee them. And then they
3 have that experience to go forward
4 into the CP trial level to try
5 those cases with a little bit of
6 experience under their belt in
7 order to move forward.

8 So I think overall it's
9 been a combination of us partnering
10 with the police department on these
11 long-term investigations, working
12 with them on the shooting calls but
13 also our advanced technology that
14 we've been able to purchase that
15 helps us get into those cell
16 phones, helps us look at social
17 media and helps us try to solve the
18 large issue of what's going on with
19 violence.

20 We also have the victim
21 assistance staff that helps, serves
22 and goes out to the community and
23 also our Community Engagement Team
24 working with GVI to try and send
25 that message out that you will be

1 prosecuted to the fullest extent.
2 And we again, the Gun Violence Task
3 Force, try to take that lead along
4 with Homicide to take those cases
5 and prosecute them to the fullest
6 extent.

7 So I think overall it's
8 been that overarching theme, the
9 additional funding that we've been
10 able to receive, although one-time
11 funding from the state, has helped
12 us to expand to do more.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I
14 asked that question because
15 tomorrow I will be speaking to the
16 private sector and they are going
17 to ask me about those kinds of
18 public safety concerns while I have
19 the experts available. Some of the
20 stuff I picked up from you and your
21 department at the Crime Summit,
22 which some of the findings will be
23 public next week. We will present
24 it to the 100th Mayor as well as
25 the newly minted soon-to-be Police

1 Commissioner to talk about -- and
2 Commissioner Stanford was a part of
3 it. Some of these kind of
4 recommendations come from that
5 discussion and dialogue.

6 How many shootings? We
7 know about murders, 19 percent
8 reduction. How many shootings? Is
9 that up or down?

10 MR. FRITZE: I can't give
11 you -- I don't want to give you a
12 number that's incorrect, but I know
13 shootings are also down. But I
14 will defer to the Police
15 Commissioner on that.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Police
17 Commissioner Stanford, how are you?
18 State your name again please.

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILMAN JONES:
21 Commissioner Stanford?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: He seems
24 to be frozen, so I'll wait for that
25 answer. One of the police was

1 quoted in the Crime Summit, every
2 shooting is just a failed murder.
3 So we want to be aware of what
4 those shootings are, whether
5 they're up or down as well. Let
6 me --

7 MR. STEWART:
8 Councilmember, I think we have
9 DC Vanore and a couple of other DCs
10 who have also joined and they could
11 help with that response. As they
12 respond, if I can just point to
13 this, Councilmember, and that is
14 the work of our victim service
15 agencies to address the issue of
16 trauma, whether that's EMIR or
17 South Victim Services or Northwest
18 Victim Services, BPP which I
19 believe I saw on a moment ago
20 really treating that trauma,
21 particularly for those nonfatal
22 shooting incidents. Helping those
23 who are impacted not want to --
24 address that trauma so they don't
25 go out and retaliate.

1 I think when we talk about
2 reduction and violence we have to
3 salute those who are doing the
4 work, victim services but also
5 those who are doing prevention work
6 and intervention work. GVI was
7 mentioned. Of course, Deion is
8 doing a phenomenal job.

9 Organizations like GROW, Donite
10 Jones and Donnell Drinks. Anton
11 Moore down in South Philly, Peter
12 Michael Boone. There's a boxing
13 program out there in Councilmember
14 Kenyatta's area at the Rock
15 Ministry that's doing phenomenal
16 work mentoring young people.

17 And so, as we talk about
18 that reduction, of course there's
19 that enforcement arm. But we have
20 to support the work of those who
21 are on the ground addressing this
22 work from a grassroots perspective.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I
24 appreciate that insight as we try
25 to find out whether shootings are

1 up and down. Can we move to case
2 closures. Could you for the record
3 define what a case that is closed,
4 what is that definition?

5 MR. FRITZE: So case
6 closure can mean a few different
7 things as far as guilty verdicts,
8 which is verdict at trial, a guilty
9 plea, when a defendant pled open
10 generally for a negotiated plea,
11 those are three types of the
12 positive case closures. And then
13 you have the withdrawal, that's if
14 the Commonwealth can't move forward
15 with the case, whether the victim
16 didn't appear, whether there's
17 something wrong with that, whether
18 we lost a motion to suppress and we
19 can't introduce a gun or we can't
20 introduce testimony, so withdrawal.
21 And then you have obviously not
22 guilty if we take it to trial and
23 the matter is found to be not
24 guilty by the judge.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: So if I

1 understand what it means, there are
2 two types. There is case closure
3 as in we have a suspect that we are
4 prosecuting or apprehending; is
5 that one definition?

6 MR. FRITZE: Yes.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: And the
8 second definition for just those
9 people in the barbershops would be
10 we found someone, we've identified
11 them. We've prosecuted them
12 successfully to a verdict. Is that
13 a second tier definition?

14 MR. STEWART: Absolutely,
15 Councilmember. One you're talking
16 about an arrest rate and the other
17 you're talking about a prosecution
18 rate. And so, of course PPD -- and
19 they're doing outstanding work as
20 far as trying to apprehend
21 individuals who have been involved
22 in gun violence, that's kind of --
23 that's the arrest rate for a
24 particular category of crime.

25 But with ADA Fritze, he is

1 mentioning once an individual is
2 charged with a particular crime and
3 through the prosecutory process at
4 some point that case has to be
5 resolved some way, whether that's
6 through traditional prosecution in
7 most cases for gun violence or in
8 other types of cases it may be
9 diversion or some alternative. At
10 the end of that resolution, that
11 will be the prosecution rate.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: So can
13 you give me those closure rates for
14 each category?

15 MR. STEWART: Certainly.
16 We can work with our data lab and
17 get that to you and other members
18 of the Appropriations Committee at
19 some point, Councilmember.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
21 Because I would think that we would
22 know those right away, but all
23 right. I'm going to go with that.
24 And I'm going to move to a question
25 about witness protection and

1 relocation. I mentioned to you
2 whether the actual recommendations
3 coming out of the Summit is to work
4 on a -- I hate the word task force,
5 but I'll use it in this
6 discussion -- to work with the
7 federal government, state
8 government to find creative ways
9 through PHA Public Housing or HUD
10 to create a labyrinth of safe
11 houses that we can move witnesses
12 to in various houses but also
13 various cities. For the record, is
14 that something we can start to work
15 on in the next fiscal year?

16 MR. STEWART: Certainly. I
17 think that there are a number of
18 people -- as we mentioned in our
19 previous conversation,
20 Councilmember, there are a number
21 of people who of course have
22 interest in making sure that those
23 who are victims and witnesses are
24 protected, and I think this is the
25 perfect time for us to think about

1 expanding our approaches around
2 where we are placing those who are
3 victims and those who are
4 witnesses.

5 I think certainly we will
6 be a partner at the table, and we
7 talk about HUD but also PHA and
8 their Portability Unit specifically
9 that works with other jurisdictions
10 across the tri-state area but also
11 across the country and instances
12 where we need to relocate a family
13 outside of the Philadelphia area,
14 so that's something that we're
15 willing to work on and work with
16 you on, Councilmember, as well as
17 other members of Council to make
18 that a priority in the new year.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
20 Final question: When it relates to
21 our crime lab that many members
22 have supported expanding and
23 providing the funding for, how are
24 we doing with ballistics,
25 processing of other critical data

1 for prosecution? How are we
2 working with that?

3 MR. FRITZE: So
4 unfortunately, the forensics lab is
5 behind. And so, we are dealing
6 with DNA reports that we're waiting
7 months on, we're dealing with the
8 FIU reports that we are waiting on
9 and that does affect the
10 prosecution of these cases. We've
11 been working with the lab and
12 started a working group here with
13 the DA's Office and the lab to try
14 to streamline these things and see
15 if we can move forward with some of
16 the more immediate needs, but there
17 is a problem and that centers
18 around staffing and requirements of
19 the lab.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. I
21 know my Members are anxiously
22 anticipating questioning you, so
23 I'm going to yield the mic. And
24 we're going to go with Katherine
25 Gilmore Richardson, who seems to be

1 the first one in the queue.

2 MR. STEWART:

3 Councilmember, if you don't mind,
4 you asked a question around numbers
5 as far as prosecution rate --

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes,
7 I --

8 MR. STEWART: I promised to
9 overdeliver. And so, I was able to
10 get this information from the Chief
11 of our Homicide and Nonfatal
12 Shootings Unit. So right now our
13 prosecution rate or conviction rate
14 rather for homicide shootings is 88
15 percent and that's as of November
16 22, 2023. And our conviction rate
17 for nonfatal shootings is 81
18 percent as of November 22, 2023.
19 So I just wanted to make sure I got
20 that on the record. Again, that's
21 coming from ADA Joanne Pescatore,
22 Chief of our Homicide and Nonfatal
23 Shooting Unit.
24 COUNCILMAN JONES: Is that
25 up or down from last year?

1 MR. STEWART: Give me a
2 couple of minutes. I'll have that
3 for you.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
5 We'll yield the mic. Councilwoman
6 Gilmore Richardson.

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member,
9 are you there?

10 MS. ALFORD: Hi, Chair
11 Jones. This is Eliza from her
12 staff. She just had to step away
13 for one second. She'll be right
14 back. If you can circle back to
15 her to ask those questions. Thank
16 you.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: That's
18 fine. Thank you.

19 Member Thomas.

20 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
21 Mr. Chair, I'm supportive of the
22 work of the DA's Office and the
23 requests that they have and I do
24 not have any questions for this
25 witness. Thank you.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
2 you, sir.

3 Member Lozada.

4 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: I'm
5 also supportive of this request,
6 Mr. Chairman. I think that those
7 that lie in order that you're
8 looking in the chat there is from
9 the previous panel, so I do not
10 have a question. Thank you very
11 much.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay. I
13 got you on the record anyway
14 supporting it.

15 Member Johnson.

16 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.
17 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18 Just a couple of questions:
19 One, Bill Fritze, I want to thank
20 you for the work that you're doing
21 around the issue of gun violence
22 which is an issue I'm very, very --
23 which is very near and dear to my
24 heart, so thank you for staying on
25 top of it. Thank you for your work

1 with the Gun Violence Task Force as
2 well as most importantly supporting
3 victims and survivors of gun
4 violence.

5 But I had a couple of
6 questions I just want to ask as we
7 move forward. And I know the last
8 time either the transfer ordinance
9 or the budget process I was very
10 supportive of the Carjacking Unit,
11 right, advocating for funding to
12 expand the Carjacking Unit. So we
13 know that homicides are down. We
14 know that shootings are down.
15 However, car thefts and carjackings
16 are up.

17 And so, can you give us an
18 idea of what you and your team are
19 doing to address this issue just
20 based upon the funding that we
21 started and supported the DA's
22 Office on. So I want to give an
23 idea of how effective are those
24 operations coming along because we
25 did support it and I'll say that

1 y'all can continue to grow in a
2 variety of different areas. And
3 so, as you grow, which I think is a
4 great thing, I think is also
5 prudent to make sure that we're
6 also being effective in key areas
7 that we do request funding for,
8 right.

9 And so, I want to get an
10 idea about where we're at
11 carjacking-wise and car theft? And
12 then also in terms of the Labor
13 Unit, are y'all working in
14 partnership with the Department of
15 Labor with this current
16 Administration? Is the building
17 trades/other service units like
18 SEIU, 32 BJ, what other
19 stakeholders are at the table that
20 actually I would say push the DA's
21 Office or came up with this whole
22 new concept that's generally in the
23 business of going after wage theft?

24 And so, those are the two
25 key questions of mine. And

1 obviously, the last one is the
2 million dollar question: Are we
3 prosecuting retail theft in the
4 manner of \$499 or are we addressing
5 anyone that comes in the store that
6 actually takes something off the
7 shelf and are holding them
8 accountable? Inquiring minds want
9 to know.

10 MR. STEWART: Certainly.
11 Councilmember Johnson, thank you
12 for that question. I want to
13 yield --

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And
15 one last thing, G. Lamar. I see
16 y'all trying to create a whole new
17 Government External Affairs Unit,
18 right. And I'll talk to Larry
19 myself. At least my perspective is
20 maybe they continue to support you,
21 right. Maybe give you additional
22 staff, right. But I think I'll
23 give you your flowers now publicly
24 that you've been very, very
25 effective in supporting the agenda

1 of the District Attorney.

2 And to be quite frank, at
3 one point in time Members weren't
4 responsive to be quite frank with
5 you for whatever reason. And I
6 think you have done a great job of
7 really getting the DA to a point
8 where he has good relationships
9 with members of Council as well as
10 your briefings with members of
11 Council where y'all not working in
12 silos.

13 You're saying you can come
14 and meet with us once a month and
15 we'll tell you what it is we are
16 doing when the cameras aren't
17 watching and ask us questions about
18 the process because we're open to
19 addressing those issues, and that
20 hasn't been the case when the DA
21 first arrived. And I've seen that
22 you have played a major role in
23 helping in the office and actually
24 him personally get to a whole
25 different level in terms of working

1 in partnership with members of City
2 Council.

3 And so, I know y'all talked
4 about expanding. Hopefully, you're
5 a part of that process or at least
6 lead the person as a part of that
7 process. I don't know if bringing
8 a whole bunch of other people and
9 you're not there is going to get
10 the same type of response. When
11 you're calling me on a Sunday night
12 or in the evening saying, this is
13 what we're working on, this is what
14 we're trying to get support on, and
15 I'm only picking up the phone
16 because it's G. Lamar Stewart and I
17 know that your heart and your
18 commitment is based upon helping
19 people.

20 And so, I just wanted to
21 state that for the record. And
22 when I do see Larry, I'll also
23 express that to him. But can you
24 answer those three questions
25 please?

1 MR. STEWART: I'll address
2 the last one myself. So that
3 External Strategies and Government
4 Affairs Division will be a new
5 division at the DA's Office that I
6 will be leading. And so, community
7 engagement, government affairs,
8 some of our public relations
9 operations and continue to build on
10 our partnerships with law
11 enforcement, all that work will
12 take place under that division and
13 that's something that will be under
14 my leadership.

15 To your question,
16 Councilmember, I appreciate those
17 questions around what we've been
18 doing around retail theft thus far,
19 the Carjacking Enforcement Unit as
20 well as your question around \$500
21 or less, what are we doing around
22 retail theft in that category, I
23 want to yield to ADA Kim Esack who
24 is the Chief of our Economic Crimes
25 Division.

1 Kim has more than 20 years
2 experience as a prosecutor in this
3 office and she certainly has been
4 doing a phenomenal job piloting a
5 program that we wanted to take on a
6 larger scale citywide. She's been
7 working with some of PPD's finest
8 commanders as well as the business
9 community and retail associations
10 in Center City and in parts of
11 Southwest to get this off the
12 ground.

13 I'm going to yield to her
14 to answer those questions. And
15 whatever she doesn't ask or answer,
16 I'll come back, and the DA has also
17 returned back to the office. I'm
18 sure he may want to give some
19 response as well.

20 MS. ESACK: Hello.
21 Kimberly Esack. I'm the Supervisor
22 of the Economic Crimes Division,
23 but I'm also the recently appointed
24 Supervisor of the Carjacking Unit,
25 so I can address all the issues you

1 just raised regarding retail theft,
2 what we're doing there, what we're
3 doing with the new Labor Crimes
4 Enforcement Unit as well as what's
5 going on with carjacking and auto
6 thefts in the City of Philadelphia.

7 So with regard to retail
8 theft or -- I think we're coming
9 off of (inaudible) -- retail theft,
10 we're coming up on years in the
11 making with a collaboration between
12 this office and the police
13 department as well as the community
14 in general and the business
15 community with regard to retailers.

16 We started meetings two
17 years ago to address a significant
18 rise in the mass lootings
19 throughout the City, a rise in
20 retail theft and whatever issues
21 were going on out there in the
22 business communities. An idea was
23 struck to try to venture on a pilot
24 program, but we wanted to work in
25 one small area and then take what

1 we know from that and try to expand
2 that citywide. We had many
3 meetings with various stakeholders
4 in this over the past two years.

5 This past December of 2022
6 is when it really got up and
7 running officially. I am the head
8 of the Economic Crimes Division,
9 which under me right now I have
10 seven units. So the Financial
11 Crimes Unit, which I usually handle
12 cases such as deed theft and the
13 various large scale economic crimes
14 for Philadelphia. That's one of
15 the units that's under me.

16 We need a place for this
17 retail theft initiative to go. And
18 so, I brought it in with us. But
19 mind you, I only had a staffing of
20 about one-and-a-half ADAs. One ADA
21 was assigned to another one of my
22 units on a more halftime to full-
23 time basis. So we started it just
24 in December of 2022. Since that
25 time I don't have exact numbers

1 yet. We're going to be compiling
2 this data ourselves and we really
3 need to get it built up in a much
4 more significant way, in a clear
5 way to expound to you.

6 But I just know from
7 offhand at the beginning of October
8 we had already adopted into my unit
9 or into the Financial Crimes Unit
10 is where I placed it -- and mind
11 you, we have other work going on
12 there with the deed theft and all
13 the other economic crimes, but
14 pulling this in where we started
15 adopting the most prolific
16 offenders that we could find. One
17 with the Center City pilot program
18 working with the PPD of cases they
19 would be referring directly to us,
20 but also we created our own list of
21 the most prolific offenders that we
22 could find throughout the City just
23 by running our own numbers to see
24 who had accumulated numerous retail
25 theft D.C. numbers since about

1 2018.

2 We created our own list and
3 started basically from the top and
4 worked our way down. And what we
5 found is that we had a significant
6 overlap of what some members of the
7 business community had already
8 forwarded to us about who they
9 believed to be their most prolific
10 offenders in the various stores,
11 and we basically adopted those
12 cases.

13 So from December of 2022,
14 we have adopted -- at the beginning
15 of October, the number was
16 approximately 300 cases overall. I
17 believe it was over 40 defendants
18 that I had adopted into the unit.
19 And what we did for retail theft
20 cases, we're not just taking that
21 case, we're looking to see if they
22 have anything else out there and we
23 adopt all of their cases so that we
24 could really focus in on these
25 particular defendants who are

1 committing the most crime, but it
2 was the smallest percentage of
3 those committing those prolific
4 retail theft offenses, so we can
5 figure out what was going on with
6 them, work our way down to
7 mid-level people who maybe only had
8 a few retail thefts out there and
9 those who might just be starting
10 out to see if we can get to them
11 before they commit to a life of
12 crime and take this a step further,
13 do they need drug treatment, do
14 they need something more and try to
15 work that. Now, again limited
16 resources and we've only just begun
17 the work here.

18 But the police department
19 has been phenomenal in their
20 collaborations with us and their
21 willingness to adopt a program and
22 a protocol that we have done in
23 Center City and has been working
24 very well. We're getting great
25 feedback from the retailers here.

1 The goal is to have this spread
2 citywide to the various divisions.
3 We were trying to come up with a
4 plan of action and work out all the
5 kinks locally and then put it out
6 citywide. But in order to do that,
7 the PPD as well as this office is
8 going to need resources for that.

9 To answer the question
10 about whether or not we prosecute
11 people who steal less than \$500, we
12 absolutely do. I can attest to
13 that. I have multiple defendants
14 who have less than that. What we
15 are doing though is for those who
16 may have been out there and had
17 cases that were less than \$500, we
18 have gone back into the system and
19 pulled all those cases together and
20 consolidated them so that a
21 defendant no longer had a case --
22 had maybe 10 cases across the
23 criminal justice system where one
24 hand may not have been speaking
25 with the other. We rectified any

1 issues like that or on our way to
2 doing so. So we adopted all those
3 cases and pulled them in together.

4 We've been working with the
5 PPD even though it's not something
6 that they usually do in practice,
7 but they have been very willing to
8 think outside the box in order to
9 now consolidate cases and not just
10 put them in on a cite arrest,
11 complaint arrest, put that one
12 through in one division, in another
13 division where the divisions don't
14 connect and they don't speak with
15 one another so the defendants are
16 targeting all over the City and
17 their cases aren't being pulled
18 together. We're working with the
19 PPD in order to make that happen.

20 We've been working with
21 Major Crimes with fencing
22 operations. We've been working
23 both locally and outside the County
24 for fencing operations. I have at
25 least two cases where I have been

1 working with both Philadelphia and
2 Montgomery County on fences and
3 we've been working our way towards
4 search warrants and arrests to take
5 down the fences.

6 As for the Labor Crimes
7 Enforcement Unit, we have been
8 working collaboratively with all of
9 the stakeholders and the people of
10 interest there. I don't know all
11 their names. I'm learning it all
12 anew, but we have a labor liaison
13 here who has been walking me
14 through it and we've been out in
15 the community and in with the
16 unions and finding out all the
17 organizations that want to tell us
18 about all the wage
19 misclassification that's been going
20 on.

21 We're learning as much as
22 we can about it and we're trying to
23 get the Assistant District Attorney
24 to take that position as well as
25 the Carjacking Unit now. That has

1 been expanded so it's no longer
2 just the Carjacking Unit. The auto
3 theft grant was under me for the
4 Auto Theft Unit. It's now being
5 put -- which only supplied one ADA
6 for some auto theft cases, but
7 we're putting that all together and
8 we're trying to get more support
9 for the cases being put in one
10 place.

11 So the Carjacking Unit is
12 now not just going to prosecute
13 carjackings. We're also going to
14 be prosecuting car theft-related
15 cases with various crimes in that
16 nature. Let's say a person is
17 found with a car a month after a
18 carjacking, two months after a
19 carjacking, that case is just not
20 going to go into Trial Division.
21 We're going to adopt that case.

22 Any other types of -- we're
23 new to this process. It's only
24 just started. We're going to go
25 through and see how many cases we

1 have out there and see how many
2 cases that are auto theft-related
3 that we can bring into the unit and
4 then try to expand from there.

5 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
6 I just had another question. And I
7 see the District Attorney. It's
8 good to see you, Larry. So I guess
9 y'all expanding, right, more and
10 more units, right. And I guess I'm
11 trying to still get an
12 understanding that y'all still
13 growing, but we also didn't totally
14 just mask and settle those key
15 areas that you just talked about.
16 So I'm still trying to get an
17 understanding, like you need more
18 and more staff because obviously
19 you just mentioned that, right.

20 But at the same time we're
21 not totally 100 percent. I don't
22 think we'll ever be 100 percent,
23 but the goal is 100 percent to be
24 effective in again driving down
25 carjackings, the thefts, right,

1 totally having aggressive overall
2 addressing of the gun violence, but
3 now we're in a whole new different
4 area and a whole new unit when it
5 comes to wage theft, which is
6 something I support. I have a bill
7 and I have a hearing around this
8 whole concept of wage theft and
9 being supportive of the unit, so we
10 definitely want you to go after
11 those companies.

12 But I'm thinking of the
13 level of expansion as it relates to
14 us also just perfecting those key
15 areas that you already came and
16 requested budget requests for such
17 as carjacking which again is up,
18 car thefts which again is up,
19 right. Bill Fritze is doing a
20 great job around the issue of gun
21 violence which is the number one
22 issue here in the City of
23 Philadelphia. So I just was trying
24 to get an understanding of why
25 we're continuing to grow when we

1 totally still have a lot of work to
2 do in two other areas in terms of
3 budgetary requests.

4 And, District Attorney
5 Krasner, good to you see as always.
6 Before you arrived, I was just
7 saying I was letting your staff
8 know and also G. Lamar know
9 personally giving his flowers that
10 he's done a great job in terms of
11 helping move the District
12 Attorney's Office forward in terms
13 of the relationships with members
14 of Council, the monthly briefings
15 where you allow Members to come in
16 and see your operations. And I'll
17 just always be transparent that
18 early on that probably always
19 wasn't the case in terms of a
20 relationship with Councilmembers,
21 but I think and I know for a fact
22 that G. Lamar has done an excellent
23 job in being your conduit and
24 working with you to create this
25 type of partnership, not even

1 (inaudible), but a partnership with
2 members of Council as we move the
3 City of Philadelphia forward around
4 the issue of public safety.

5 So I wanted to say that
6 publicly while you were here
7 regarding him because obviously one
8 of your requests is to expand also
9 another area which is the External
10 Gun Relations Community
11 Partnerships area. And him as a
12 solo act is doing a great job, but
13 obviously he just mentioned prior
14 to you getting here that when y'all
15 do expand he will be the head of
16 that particular unit, which I
17 believe is an excellent choice
18 because his passion, his
19 commitment, his personality has
20 done a great job in building that
21 bridge with the District Attorney's
22 Office and members of Council. Go
23 ahead, District Attorney Krasner.

24 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
25 Well, thank you very much,

1 Councilmember. My apologies to
2 everyone that I had to step away.

3 But as I mentioned in a text to
4 many of you, I was addressing --

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: District
6 Attorney?

7 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
8 Yes, sir.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Can you
10 please state your name for the
11 record?

12 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
13 Oh, yes, sir. My name is Larry
14 Krasner. You'll find it in the
15 media. Sometimes favorably,
16 sometimes not. But my name is
17 Larry Krasner. I'm the District
18 Attorney for the City of
19 Philadelphia. I do want to express
20 once again how grateful I am that
21 Council has been willing to look at
22 the situation we face in relation
23 to public safety the way we look at
24 it, which is that things change.

25 You may have a year when

1 carjackings are way up and then you
2 may have a year where they're
3 coming down. Well, the fact is
4 carjackings, thank goodness, are
5 coming down. On the other hand,
6 car thefts have gone way up. At
7 times they were 100 percent over
8 this year for reasons that we could
9 discuss at one of our briefings.
10 We need to make sure that the
11 District Attorney's Office and
12 every law enforcement partner is
13 agile that we move with the times,
14 that we adjust to the needs. We
15 need to improve every day.

16 And I appreciate,
17 Councilmember Johnson, your being
18 transparent that we weren't doing
19 everything perfect at first. I
20 know that. I agree with that, and
21 I appreciate everything that a lot
22 of our staff, including the great
23 G. Lamar Stewart have done because
24 we really do try to do better every
25 day. We know that we make mistakes

1 every day.

2 But one of the things that
3 I think we have learned, and I am
4 so grateful that Council has been
5 willing to listen, is that there
6 are improvements in areas of focus.
7 There are ways to shift resources
8 and people. Sometimes you got to
9 reduce your nonlawyer staffing and
10 increase your lawyer staff because
11 that's what the backlog of cases
12 requires because that's how we get
13 the best work.

14 Sometimes you got to make
15 sure people who might leave because
16 they're not being compensated well
17 enough to stay, stay longer because
18 they bring all that experience and
19 expertise that is so hard to
20 cultivate. So what we are trying
21 to do is not have an ever-expanding
22 District Attorney's Office. We're
23 trying to have an ever-improved
24 District Attorney's Office that on
25 a day-to-day basis address the

1 public safety needs as they shift
2 but also just is excellent and does
3 excellent work in all the areas of
4 focus.

5 We do not want to drop the
6 ball anywhere. But obviously if
7 you have an area where the level of
8 criminal activity or the number of
9 arrests has dropped, that may be an
10 area where you can potentially
11 shift.

12 There are a lot of really
13 interesting, important and creative
14 things that I believe we're going
15 to be able to do moving into this
16 next Administration. The
17 Mayor-elect, I am excited and
18 encouraged to see that the
19 announcement that Kevin Bethel,
20 someone I have known for 20 years
21 and have known reasonably well for
22 6 years, is going to be the new
23 Commissioner.

24 I am excited to be working
25 with a Mayor-elect who I think will

1 be open to some of the frankly new
2 ideas that I've been trying to kick
3 around for three or four years. I
4 think that with the help of
5 Council, with the help of other
6 electives, with the help of our law
7 enforcement partners and in close
8 communication with the community,
9 we can really make a difference.
10 But the essence of the reason that
11 we are lifting up certain units is
12 that we can see the needs, we see
13 what is important and we're trying
14 to do everything we can to come at
15 it at levels that frankly are more
16 effective than ever before.

17 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay.
18 Thank you very much. And just one
19 last part of my question:
20 Councilman Curtis Jones -- Chairman
21 Curtis Jones and Quetcy Lozada,
22 Councilwoman as well as Jim Harrity
23 are working on a Marshall Plan for
24 Kensington, and your team just
25 clarified the issue regarding

1 retail theft on it and I just want
2 to say thank you.

3 But also, how do we look at
4 the issue around diversion, right?
5 And I would like to say mandatory
6 treatment, meaning I know Judge
7 Presenza used to run Treatment
8 Court, right, where a person gets
9 locked up for selling drugs,
10 hustling drugs, a certain amount,
11 right. They had the option to go
12 to Treatment Court, get the
13 treatment that they need, right.
14 And if they complete their program,
15 their record is exonerated, right.

16 So give us an idea of your
17 position and the things that your
18 team are doing because obviously
19 your position is not to incarcerate
20 people for having drug addiction.
21 I am definitely in the position on
22 that aspect. But however, because
23 there's going to be a new day in
24 how we address the issue of the
25 opioid crisis in Kensington, how do

1 we look at diversion, right, as a
2 part of the strategy and plan from
3 a prosecutorial standpoint, and
4 obviously we have Commissioner John
5 Stanford here on the call as well
6 regarding holding people
7 accountable and trying to also
8 support them in the addiction, and
9 to have this true diversionary
10 court such as Treatment Court, and
11 I just want to get your perspective
12 on that.

13 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

14 So thank you for that,
15 Councilmember. With reference to
16 this approach to Kensington, it's
17 something that I'm deeply committed
18 to. I mean, we have a four-hour
19 meeting which starts at 8 o'clock
20 in the morning tomorrow which will
21 be including Councilmember Lozada
22 and also Councilmember Harrity are
23 invited. This is not the first
24 meeting we've had. We are very
25 dedicated to this issue.

1 There's a big picture here
2 that involves things like the fact
3 that the DA's Office is out there
4 almost solo litigating against big
5 opioid companies in a way that
6 could potentially generate the kind
7 of resources that are not just
8 skimming profits off of opioid
9 manufacturers but that could make a
10 tremendous difference, so we are
11 very, very interested in that.

12 In terms of diversion,
13 diversion is accountability, has
14 always been accountability.
15 Certain forms of diversion actually
16 require a whole lot more in terms
17 of treatment or therapy or
18 education, them being convicted,
19 you know, not really that hard to
20 be on probation with no particular
21 requirements attached to it.

22 So diversion for the right
23 population, and it has to be the
24 right population, in many ways can
25 be more effective than convictions.

1 It makes a ton of sense when it
2 comes to activity that is related
3 to addiction. I am more than
4 happy, A, to continue with our
5 informational sessions to address
6 the concerns of Council, more than
7 happy to do so monthly, more than
8 happy to focus on the topics that
9 are of interest.

10 I can tell you there are
11 some international models that have
12 been more effective than forced
13 treatment, but I can also tell you
14 that one size does not fit all and
15 some people's experience for how
16 they escape addiction or they get
17 away from it is different than the
18 experience of others. So I think
19 as long as we approach this in a
20 serious meaningful way, which I'm
21 more than happy to do with
22 four-hour meetings with meetings of
23 Council, diversion can be very
24 positive.

25 We have some data

1 reflecting that in certain kinds of
2 diversion, the recidivism is much
3 lower than when people are actually
4 convicted of the same crimes. But
5 again, let's be transparent, let's
6 be honest about it. We're picking
7 who they are. We are not going to
8 pick people who pose a danger to
9 public safety or the worst of the
10 worst for diversion because that's
11 not appropriate. We're going to
12 pick that much lower number of
13 people who are fundamentally decent
14 people but have a public health
15 issue or have made mistakes and
16 we're going try to work it out from
17 there.

18 But ultimately, sir, let me
19 just -- we need to use diversion to
20 increase public safety. And we
21 believe in the track that we're on,
22 but we are always open to the ideas
23 of others and any data, any
24 evidence that would show a
25 different path.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And
2 thank you. And that was a quick
3 segue into my last part of the
4 question. And how are we dealing
5 with -- I had a recent
6 intergovernmental meeting with some
7 law enforcement folks, state level,
8 federal level, obviously Jacqueline
9 Romero spoke very highly of you,
10 was a part of talking about the
11 role that (inaudible) in terms of
12 coming into our City different
13 cartels operating all in the City
14 of Philadelphia. So how are you
15 and your team working with
16 obviously the new U.S. Attorney and
17 their administration, right, as
18 well as our Attorney General,
19 right?

20 And I know Bill Fritze is a
21 part of that Gun Violence Task
22 Force, but particularly right now
23 we're talking about the drugs, the
24 ridding of blocks in Kensington,
25 right, and really going off the

1 guys who are really doing what you
2 just said, the worst of the worst,
3 in that Kensington area that's just
4 outright running blocks and selling
5 drugs, open air drug operations.
6 And so, what are your team's
7 efforts around approaching it from
8 that aspect?

9 So I want to do the
10 prevention and diversion standpoint
11 because I know that's something
12 that you lead with, right. You
13 can't just incarcerate our way out
14 of this situation. And so, I got
15 your perspective from that aspect.
16 But from a prosecutorial
17 enforcement standpoint, how are we
18 dealing with the big drug dealers
19 who are selling drugs in Kensington
20 making life like hell for the kids
21 and the families living and going
22 to and from school, to and from the
23 store, to and from the market and
24 is wreaking havoc by open air drug
25 dealing and running of blocks and

1 the running of drug cartels in
2 Kensington?

3 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

4 So the answer to that,
5 Councilmember, is that I can point
6 to some remarkable successes that
7 we've had. One of them was the
8 bust of Kip and Cambria a few years
9 ago which was about getting the
10 professional drug dealers, not just
11 getting the 16-year-old kid with
12 six bags in his pocket on the
13 corner which is frankly how this
14 was handled historically in
15 Kensington, it was grab and go, get
16 the kids on the corner but you're
17 never getting the guy who's making
18 all the money. You're never
19 getting the guy who's actually
20 receiving the supply or very
21 seldom.

22 That approach will never
23 succeed. The most important thing
24 in our view when it comes to drug
25 dealers, drug dealers are in a

1 totally different category than
2 users. It's a different
3 population. Drug dealers should be
4 prosecuted and to the extent they
5 are professional drug dealers,
6 diversion is not appropriate.

7 Kip and Cambria was about
8 65 professional drug dealers who
9 all met a pretty serious measure of
10 justice. A shut down of a
11 two-generation drug corner that was
12 so good at what they did that they
13 used to rent blocks out to other
14 drug dealing organizations. Two
15 generations they were there. They
16 were taken down with an excellent
17 law enforcement collaboration.

18 Another example, our
19 dangerous drug offender unit, which
20 has been running extremely
21 favorably by a guy named Paul
22 Reddel for years. Spent years, my
23 signature is all over wiretap
24 warrants for a drug dealer who was
25 personally going into and out of

1 Mexico. He was personally dealing
2 with members of one of the leading
3 cartels there. He was involved in
4 drug dealing at such a high level
5 that we are talking about scores of
6 kilos and we are also talking about
7 millions of dollars in cash that
8 were confiscated from tractor
9 trailers, from vehicles during
10 house raids, things of that sort.

11 Now, that went on quietly
12 for two-and-a-half years. It was a
13 case that the Feds didn't want
14 initially. But by the time we had
15 done everything we could to develop
16 it, they did want it. They are
17 prosecuting it and we've had
18 excellent cooperation from
19 Jacqueline Romero, the United
20 States Attorney appointed by our
21 President. I think we have a very
22 solid cooperation with them. Her
23 upper staff are serious about
24 criminal justice, not just about
25 politics like a prior U.S.

1 Attorney. I'm just being honest.

2 That's the truth.

3 So I think we have an
4 excellent cooperation there, but
5 there are certain things that are
6 concrete that can be done that I
7 believe would revolutionize our
8 ability to really make a dent in
9 drug dealing that's occurring in
10 Kensington. I've mentioned that at
11 times and I'd love to do a session
12 on it if you are interested.

13 One of them is to do a lot
14 more wiretaps. Wiretaps are very,
15 very effective with big-time drug
16 dealing and very, very effective
17 with people who are shooting up
18 neighborhoods. I would love to do
19 a lot more wiretaps. That's
20 something that the Philadelphia
21 Police Department and the DA's
22 Office could do together. We just
23 need some resources that is not
24 crazy resources.

25 I think that there's a lot

1 that we can do. We just need to
2 get away from a kind of law
3 enforcement that is measured by did
4 you make a lot of arrests as
5 opposed to did you get the people
6 who are driving this criminal
7 activity. I think that principle
8 applies to drug dealing in
9 Kensington where it has been a
10 blight for over 60 years, but I
11 think that principle also applies
12 to retail theft.

13 If you're not going to get
14 the people who organized it all,
15 you're not going to get the people
16 who make all the money. Then all
17 that you're doing is nipping away
18 at the tentacles. You're not
19 getting the head of the octopus,
20 and we need to get the head of the
21 octopus.

22 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Well,
23 thank you. Thank you, District
24 Attorney Larry Krasner. I just
25 want to say thank you for your hard

1 work. I do want to follow up with
2 you regarding that. Not now, I'm
3 going to pass on my time. But I
4 probably want to have a deeper side
5 conversation with you regarding the
6 fencing of retail stores to these
7 big shadowy operations that are
8 going on versus the little guys who
9 are going in the store, but we do
10 know little guys need to feed their
11 habit.

12 We do know that the data
13 shows that a lot of folks that got
14 to get particularly the heroin,
15 when you got this, a good way to
16 get it is by going into these
17 stores, taking items from the
18 stores and selling them back on the
19 streets. But obviously, there's a
20 bigger conversation that we had
21 about who they're actually giving
22 these items to and receiving money
23 from and how they're going to get
24 their habit. So I'll find another
25 time off the record to have a

1 conversation with yourself and
2 G. Lamar regarding those efforts.
3 Thank you very much for your time.

4 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

6 Thank you. I know for a fact that
7 there are some people suffering
8 from addiction who are given a list
9 of things to steal and paid in
10 drugs. I know that. And that's
11 part of the reason why we've asked
12 for support for organized retail
13 and house theft because we want to
14 get the fences. That's really
15 never been done in Philly, but we
16 want to get the fences because we
17 think it is so crucial and I'm
18 happy to talk to you about that
19 more.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: So thank
21 you, Member Johnson. And the only
22 thing I'll say before I turn it
23 over to Katherine Gilmore
24 Richardson is that it's not an or,
25 it's an and, that we need to go

1 after the bigger whales that are
2 putting an infrastructure together
3 to sell these goods, but you have
4 door-to-door salesmen.

5 I talked to a resident of
6 Kensington the day before yesterday
7 I think it was, and they said that
8 they will knock on the door almost
9 like a salesman, you put your order
10 in. By the end of the evening,
11 they will have brought you back
12 that soap powder or whatever. So
13 it has to be and as opposed to or.

14 So I saw on 60 Minutes I
15 think it might have been, a whole
16 infrastructure that is in the dark
17 web that you can place orders for
18 all kinds of things. So, yes, they
19 are important but to the shop owner
20 in Kensington, they need to get to
21 the person that walks in with a bag
22 and shops with impunity as well.

23 So with that, I recognize
24 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson.

25 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

1 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
2 so much, Mr. Chair. Apologies for
3 the slight delay as I was tending
4 to the very important Council
5 business in the building. But I
6 wanted to thank DA Krasner and his
7 team for their testimony. And of
8 course, you know my running
9 (inaudible), Mr. DA. And I really
10 thank G. Lamar Stewart for his work
11 and how he continues to work with
12 the members of Philadelphia City
13 Council as we interface with your
14 office on some of these more
15 important issues.

16 I wanted to talk to you
17 specifically about organized retail
18 theft and just organized theft in
19 general, which I think is a huge
20 issue here in the City. One being
21 because now I have experienced this
22 and have a different lens and view
23 regarding theft here in our City.

24 And so, I've never really
25 talked about it but several -- I'd

1 said two months ago now, it was
2 actually two months ago tomorrow,
3 that my car was smash-and-grab
4 robbed. All of my belongings were
5 stolen. And immediately they
6 proceeded to use one of my cards,
7 one of my credit cards at the
8 supermarket, and then I sort of
9 followed them throughout the City
10 as they were utilizing my different
11 credit cards at different stores.

12 So they went from
13 Wynnefield to the Northeast. And
14 then once they I guess noticed that
15 all the cards were shut down, they
16 tried to use the cards online at
17 parxcasino.com, nbastore.com and
18 everywhere else. But because of my
19 disdain for this situation
20 happening to me, I followed their
21 footsteps physically and everywhere
22 they went. And from there and with
23 the help of God was able to find
24 some of my belongings and some of
25 my papers 2.2 miles from the scene.

1 In addition to that, I also
2 found other items from a number of
3 individuals, like 20 different
4 credit cards, IDs. So it was very
5 apparent to me that these
6 individuals just go around and do
7 this and then they sort of pick a
8 store that they'll go to that maybe
9 have easy access of gift cards at
10 the front or they are able to use
11 self-checkout.

12 How are you all looking at
13 both individuals and sort of
14 organized individuals around this
15 retail theft issue? My concern is
16 that, yes, we should get the folks
17 that are in charge of these
18 operations, but in addition to that
19 we need to deal with the folks who
20 are actually committing the crime
21 as well.

22 So I just ask what is your
23 thought process there? How would
24 the support for organized retail
25 and how the Theft Task Force deals

1 with the issue similar to the one
2 that I described?

3 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

4 Well, thank you for that question.
5 What you are describing is
6 unfortunately something that has
7 also affected my family in
8 Philadelphia many years ago,
9 outside of Philadelphia actually
10 just about a week ago. And in my
11 mind what you are describing is
12 organized theft. This is a crew
13 who had a plan.

14 When you start to find
15 multiple cards and you're seeing
16 this kind of quick ability to
17 follow the playbook, a lot of
18 people who steal identities and
19 steal credit and steal bank
20 accounts follow which is to run to
21 different jurisdictions and try to
22 move the money as quickly as
23 possible, you're talking about
24 people who know what they're doing.

25 In my mind, that is

1 incredibly important stuff. It
2 needs to be prosecuted vigorously,
3 and I don't really know anybody
4 better at it than Kim Esack and who
5 has been working really vigorously
6 on this. But once again, we've got
7 some homerun hitters in this office
8 who need to deal with pressing
9 issues. This is a pressing issue.

10 I understand that there is
11 this myth out there that the DA's
12 Office does not prosecute theft
13 that are less than \$500. That has
14 never ever, ever, ever been true.
15 That is a completely false
16 narrative that has only gotten
17 waves because it's been apparently
18 repeated so many times. This is
19 not how we view this. I understand
20 how incredibly damaging,
21 inconvenient, terrible it is to
22 have your identity stolen, to have
23 your credit card stolen, to have
24 people accessing your bank account.
25 It may take many, many months to

1 have to iron out with all these
2 different financial entities the
3 problems caused and that's on top
4 of the incredibly inconvenience of
5 having your car window smashed,
6 having to deal with the reality of
7 getting it fixed and having it safe
8 during a period of repair.

9 So everything you are
10 saying to me is very important and
11 should be addressed vigorously.
12 And I also want to reiterate that I
13 completely agree with Councilmember
14 Jones when I am talking about
15 fences, it's not either or. It's
16 yes and. We have to go after
17 things in a way that is individual
18 justice.

19 There are many different
20 levels of types of organized
21 activity that we need to go after.
22 To the extent there is any good
23 news here, the good news is that
24 from the retail cases we see, it's
25 actually a very small number of

1 organized prolific offenders, but
2 they deserve very serious
3 consequences. And people who are
4 doing what they are doing driven
5 out of addiction, they deserve
6 consequences as well.

7 It may be just different
8 kinds of consequences that will
9 actually get them to the point
10 where they are no longer motivated
11 to some addiction to do it again
12 and again and again. We are trying
13 to solve these problems and to
14 prevent these things in the future.
15 But our north star on this stuff is
16 always public safety and taking the
17 individual and turning that
18 individual whether it's by means of
19 a long jail sentence or it's by
20 means of treatment in the direction
21 that will make the public safer.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Okay. Well, thank
24 you, Mr. DA, for the clarification
25 and for the needed and necessary

1 clarification relative to the
2 prosecuting of retail theft in the
3 City of Philadelphia. I just
4 wanted to mention that specifically
5 because now I have a personal
6 experience with that type of
7 situation and just wanted to really
8 underscore the type of work that's
9 happening.

10 And then finally, I just
11 again want to underscore a special
12 thanks to G. Lamar Stewart for his
13 work in interfacing with us from a
14 government relations perspective,
15 and I look forward to receiving
16 additional information in that
17 regard prior to the reconvening of
18 this hearing.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

21 Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
23 you, Member Richardson.

24 It's amazing people in the
25 queue, people that are members of

1 the Committee all agree on one
2 thing and that's you, G. Lamar
3 Stewart.

4 So Chair recognizes
5 Councilmember Lozada.

6 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
7 you, Mr. Chair.

8 Thank you, DA Krasner, for
9 being with us this morning and my
10 condolences to the families of the
11 people that you were with earlier
12 this morning. I have mixed
13 feelings about a lot of what I'm
14 hearing, right. While I understand
15 that there are different levels of
16 prosecution that are necessary
17 based on the individual's
18 situation, I represent a community
19 that has been occupied for many,
20 many, many years both by those who
21 are suffering from addiction, those
22 who are dealers, those who are sex
23 workers. There's a lot of levels
24 of occupation that are happening in
25 the 7th Council District.

1 And I think that based on
2 what I've seen over the last year
3 as an elected, I question the
4 amount of diversion programs that
5 exist, not just out of the DAO but
6 in the police department, through
7 the court system. Because at what
8 point does diverting an individual
9 help to improve the quality of life
10 in Districts like mine?

11 Are we looking at or has
12 your office looked at -- I
13 mentioned to you before, right, I
14 got a report from your office where
15 there were 18 different diversion
16 programs, and I've expressed
17 concern about them before. Have
18 you all had the opportunity to look
19 at those diversion programs to
20 figure out which ones overlap? How
21 often is a person diverted? And if
22 the person's coming in who is a
23 known retail theft person, how
24 often does that person get
25 diverted?

1 Because somehow or either
2 this message of the DA doesn't
3 prosecute \$499 and below, it came
4 from somewhere, right. So why does
5 everyone believe that? How did
6 that come to be? And how do we
7 change that? What do we do?
8 Because all of my anchor stores in
9 the community have shut down as a
10 result of retail theft.

11 My last retail business is
12 a Rite Aid who said, Councilwoman,
13 I can't remain open because I lost
14 \$1.5 million in inventory and these
15 guys are the same guys who
16 consistently come in and empty our
17 out my shelves. And so, I'm just
18 trying to figure out are we looking
19 at diversion programs? How do we
20 change the perception that you will
21 not be prosecuted? And how do we
22 address the open air drug sales and
23 drug use if the message is that
24 they're not going to be prosecuted?

25 I want to be a partner,

1 right. I want to stop fighting.
2 I'm excited about participating in
3 your information sessions on a
4 regular basis. And I mentioned to
5 you before, I want short-term
6 answers and I'm willing to work on
7 long-term, but we have to do both.
8 Like Councilmember Jones mentioned,
9 we have to do the small operations
10 where we're sending a message to
11 people that they will be held
12 accountable for their illegal
13 activity in the District. And then
14 we can also at the same time work
15 on the large operations.

16 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
17 Well, thank you for those comments.
18 I am going to let Kim Esack address
19 some of the specifics. But let me
20 just say this: The way that we're
21 going to address all of these
22 things is by doing things in ways
23 that work and in ways that are new.
24 The reality, the truth, is
25 that Kensington for over 60 years

1 has been beset by certain problems
2 that have not been addressed by
3 doing things the way that some of
4 my predecessors did, that's just a
5 fact. And things have of course
6 gotten worse not only with the
7 pandemic but with the meteoric rise
8 of addiction to opioids that have
9 paved the way for the fentanyl
10 addiction.

11 There are certain things
12 that have been done traditionally
13 that should be done, but when I
14 come in and say, give me more so I
15 can do wiretaps so we can get
16 big-time drug dealers, that is an
17 improvement over let's just grab
18 the 16-year-old who's on the corner
19 and keep it moving. When I talk
20 about let's not only go after the
21 prolific offenders who do retail
22 theft but let's go after the
23 fences, that's doing more. That is
24 an effort to do more, and it is an
25 effort that does specifically

1 affect Kensington.

2 So I truly, and I mean this
3 very sincerely, I truly look
4 forward to working with you. These
5 four-hour sessions are four hours
6 that you and I could both be doing
7 other things, but I am willing to
8 just keep grinding away on these
9 things with the cooperation,
10 participation, collaboration of the
11 incoming Mayor, of the Philadelphia
12 Police Department, of our new
13 Commissioner. I'm all in on let's
14 see what we can do so that
15 Kensington can go in a much more
16 positive direction despite the
17 terrible challenges that we are
18 facing.

19 Kim, did you want to add
20 some comments?

21 MS. ESACK: Yes. Kim Esack
22 for the record. So I completely
23 appreciate exactly what you've said
24 and I want to attest here and there
25 are others that if you reach out

1 into even the Commerce Department
2 for Philadelphia and the Center
3 City District, they can tell you
4 what we've been doing. Everything
5 you said is exactly the plan that
6 we're going for, both short-term
7 fixes right now for long-term
8 goals. And that is -- it did take
9 us a while to get here, but it is
10 happening.

11 I'll give you one example
12 to tell you how the message is
13 getting out there. There's a lot
14 of misperception. The DA admitted
15 earlier when he came in here that
16 no one is perfect, no one is
17 perfect. The Police Department,
18 City Council, the DA's Office, we
19 all make mistakes at times.

20 There's a lot of
21 misperceptions in the community,
22 the business community, in the DA's
23 Office, in the police department
24 about what we were doing, about
25 what the policy was, and there were

1 mistakes made. And that boils down
2 to people maybe not really
3 understanding what the DA had in
4 mind and needing to be retrained
5 and refocused on what we were
6 supposed to be doing.

7 And when we learned about
8 it, fixing that which is what we
9 have actively been doing. With the
10 police department, retailers
11 believe that the police department
12 weren't showing up anymore. That
13 wasn't really happening. We got
14 together. We all didn't point our
15 fingers. We all came to the table
16 and we said what the mistakes were,
17 what the misperceptions were and we
18 worked it out fixing that, because
19 we could sit here all day and do a
20 blame game, but we needed to get to
21 results. And that's when the plan
22 came to be about starting the pilot
23 program.

24 The hope was actually to be
25 in your community now already. But

1 outside forces have prevented that
2 from happening. That's a matter of
3 resources, changes in the police
4 department, things outside of our
5 control. But the goal is still
6 there, and that is where we are
7 moving to.

8 In terms of how we're going
9 to be treating the people who are
10 committing the crimes, we look at
11 every case on an individual basis.
12 And right now what my protocol is
13 with these retail theft offenders
14 is to finding who they are. In 20
15 years experience as a prosecutor, I
16 can look at a case and say whether
17 or not someone has a drug problem
18 or whether or not they're being
19 utilized to fund somebody else's
20 business or whether or not they are
21 the person who is running the
22 business, and that is what we're
23 working on right now.

24 And when we get people in
25 who maybe don't have as many retail

1 thefts but they clearly have a drug
2 problem, we're getting information.
3 We've already started establishing
4 that. The police department has in
5 this protocol established an app
6 that they're putting out to the
7 retailers out into the community.
8 And with more resources, the plan
9 is to have people to be able to go
10 out to your mom-and-pop shops in
11 your local districts. They walk
12 in, the officer introduces who they
13 are, gives the phone number, gives
14 app information, makes the
15 connection, the retailers can work
16 together, share information, we're
17 already doing that. Unfortunately,
18 it's been localized in just Center
19 City, but the plan is to push it
20 out.

21 And one final example I'll
22 give you, in all these meetings I
23 said it seems like things changed
24 overnight and the City exploded and
25 everybody just decided that crime

1 was okay and we were going to start
2 stealing from all these stores and
3 no one was going to do anything,
4 but it's going to take some time to
5 change that message. And it
6 already has.

7 Macy's is one of the
8 businesses right next door to us,
9 so we deal with a lot of their
10 cases. One of their loss
11 prevention supervisors there told
12 me very recently how happy they
13 were, because a defendant had come
14 in and it was someone that they
15 knew. They got him onsite arrested
16 and he said, they told me not to
17 steal from Macy's anymore because
18 they're arresting for retail theft,
19 so it is getting out there. That
20 message is starting to change.
21 It's just going to take a little
22 bit of time.

23 I know myself of the top --
24 we have already put 15 people who
25 deserve to be off the street and

1 into prison in prison as the most
2 prolific retail theft offenders.

3 They have gotten a minimum of --

4 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
5 For Center City.

6 MS. ESACK: Yeah, for
7 Center City. And some of them were
8 ones that I had pulled from maybe
9 the Northeast Division. I have no
10 idea. We are looking at the
11 D.C.'s. It's just whoever was at
12 the top of the list. We went to
13 the top for the numbers and we just
14 went down, so we already prosecuted
15 those and they've gotten sentences
16 of 9 or 11-and-a-half minimum and
17 state as well. And some of them
18 actually thanked us for it because
19 they needed treatment and they
20 needed time out and they weren't
21 going to stop otherwise.

22 So we're trying to find out
23 who's the drug addicts who needs
24 help and try to divert and who
25 actually needs to get prosecuted,

1 who needs to go to jail and who
2 needs something kind of in the
3 middle and who can help us with
4 these investigations as fences.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Can I --

6 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: I
7 look forward to making sure that
8 the same attention that you guys
9 are giving to retail theft in
10 Center City, that you give to small
11 commercial corridors because
12 commercial corridors as all of us
13 know are the economic engines of
14 communities. And much of my
15 economic engines have been severely
16 impacted as a result of what you're
17 calling misperception, right.

18 And so, I am looking
19 forward to ensuring that the same
20 attention and the same
21 aggressiveness that you are giving
22 to establishments like Macy's, that
23 you give to the local grocery store
24 or the local Family Dollar or the
25 local pharmacy in communities like

1 mine who now have to walk miles in
2 order to be able to get their needs
3 addressed.

4 MR. STEWART:

5 Councilmember, if I can just
6 respond to that one piece there.
7 This is G. Lamar. You and I had
8 this conversation on this topic and
9 I want to put on record, just know
10 that this is a conversation that I
11 have with ADA Esack often. Of
12 course we piloted this program in
13 Center City. It was actually
14 supposed to be Center City as well
15 as in East. However, from a
16 resource perspective we just didn't
17 get out there yet. It's one of the
18 reasons we're asking to expand this
19 through this Task Force citywide.
20 And we believe that East and
21 Southwest will be the next
22 divisions that it will roll out in.

23 But one thing that has come
24 up consistent in my conversation
25 with ADA Esack is we don't want a

1 perception out there that the DA's
2 Office only cares about what's
3 happening in Center City. One of
4 the things that we've done through
5 our Community Engagement Unit as
6 well as the staff in our office is
7 begun to do walkthroughs of
8 business corridors.

9 You gave me several
10 addresses around Aramingo Avenue
11 and of course we've been on the
12 Kensington and Allegheny corridor
13 and also other business corridors
14 throughout the City, whether it's
15 52nd Street, the areas that have
16 been hit by retail theft but other
17 crimes along the business corridor
18 routes. And most recently the
19 looting, we've worked very close
20 with Deputy Commissioner --
21 Commissioner Stanford and
22 Commissioner Vanore and their team
23 to make sure we were appropriate
24 but also very focused in our
25 prosecution in that regard.

1 I'm going to ask -- Bill
2 Fritze has one other example of
3 someone not in Center City, a
4 recent retail case that was under
5 \$500 that I think is just worth
6 hearing, and it will be a short
7 example.

8 MR. FRITZE: So one of the
9 things I was asked -- Councilwoman,
10 I guess my voice doesn't project as
11 well. One of the examples I wanted
12 to give you, an explanation behind
13 it is Gun Violence Task Force, we
14 brought the Intelligence Division
15 within the District Attorney's
16 Office, but their job and their
17 role really is to provide
18 intelligence to the entire office.

19 One of the things that we
20 asked them to implement when they
21 came over to us was to actually sit
22 in front of that computer system
23 for the arraignment system for the
24 police department. So as each
25 offender comes in and we see their

1 name, the Intelligence Division has
2 been doing a background on that
3 person and they do it on every
4 case.

5 One of the most recent
6 examples for retail theft was from
7 the 15th District. It was an
8 arrest for about \$100 worth of
9 items from one of the Walgreens in
10 the 15th. They put a packet
11 together to show not that this
12 person had violent crime, but that
13 this person had a lengthy history,
14 bench warrant history from prior
15 retail thefts, some out of Bucks
16 County.

17 And based on that, they
18 sent this packet. They created a
19 packet just on this retail theft
20 offender and sent it over to the
21 Charging Unit and the DAs and the
22 DA reps were able to argue bail. On
23 a retail theft case over \$100, the
24 defendant received \$20,000 bail,
25 which they would have had to post

1 to get out. So that is an example
2 of our Intelligence Division that's
3 working.

4 But based on having a staff
5 member sitting there for that
6 limited time to check the system as
7 each offender comes through, so
8 that's one of the things that we
9 developed over there to kind of
10 work with Kim and others to provide
11 that information across the office.

12 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: G.

13 Lamar, can I say one more thing?

14 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA:

15 (Muted).

16 MR. STEWART: You're muted,
17 Councilmember.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Hello?

19 Are you done, Member?

20 MR. STEWART: I think she
21 was talking, but she was muted.

22 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Oh,
23 I'm sorry. I didn't know I was on
24 mute. I apologize. Thank you,
25 Chairman.

1 My question was in the work
2 that you all are doing is there a
3 mechanism in place that allows you
4 to see that this particular
5 individual is a prolific shoplifter
6 who's also in the world of pushing
7 guns, who's also a drug dealer, and
8 how often are we able to see is
9 this person actually being
10 prosecuted, is this person pushed
11 into different diversion programs?
12 And I don't want percentages. I
13 want you to give more real raw
14 numbers.

15 MS. ESACK: So I can't give
16 numbers right now. But what I can
17 tell you is that part of this
18 collaboration we've been doing with
19 the police department is to get
20 exactly this type of information
21 from them as well as those in the
22 stores. And I mentioned only one
23 store here, but there were multiple
24 retailers who have been coming to
25 these meetings over the past two

1 years including supermarkets, and
2 the goal has always been to get to
3 the mom-and-pop shops in each of
4 the Divisions throughout the City.
5 There's --

6 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Are
7 you telling me that you currently
8 don't have the numbers where you're
9 able to cross-reference if this
10 individual is involved in multiple
11 wrongdoings?

12 MS. ESACK: No, I don't
13 have that right now. But when I
14 tell you what we did with knowing
15 that I had no resources besides
16 just using the one-and-a-half
17 people that I had in my unit that
18 was actually for a whole other unit
19 because this is considered being a
20 task force, I just ran a D.C. No.
21 for anyone who had a retail theft
22 arrest from 2018 to I think it was
23 in 2022 so I could get whoever had
24 the most of those charges and get
25 them first, because anybody who has

1 20 retail thefts, they're going to
2 be considered a retail theft
3 prolific offender --

4 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yeah,
5 but I don't understand with the
6 quality of data collection that you
7 guys have there -- I mean,
8 remember, I worked for the DA for a
9 little bit so I know the quality
10 data collection department that you
11 guys have. I'm very surprised that
12 you all can't do that cross-data
13 collection in order to be able to
14 give us those numbers. I'm not
15 going to buy that.

16 MS. ESACK: We're not
17 saying that we can't. That's the
18 whole reason that we're here asking
19 for resources. Because what I'm
20 trying to explain to you is I had
21 one-and-a-half DAs literally
22 working on this, one-and-a-half.
23 It's not an amount of what you know
24 to be just in your division alone,
25 just the people you represent

1 that's not enough to combat this in
2 the way we want to.

3 We opened up a protocol so
4 that basically I'm getting emails
5 from the various divisions of the
6 police department at midnight
7 telling me about prolific offenders
8 that are out there committing these
9 crimes that I would not know about,
10 that charging wouldn't know the
11 back story on, that information
12 could only come from the stores.
13 That is why the goal of this is to
14 have the same protocol we have in
15 Center City in every division
16 throughout the City that requires
17 the police department and
18 collaboration with them.

19 They have to have officers
20 who are going to be those people --
21 in Center City we have an officer
22 who is assigned to this task force,
23 so he has made his presence known
24 to all of the retailers so that
25 he's gone in, given his card,

1 gotten information, they can
2 contact him about the offenders.

3 The same plan is that is what we
4 want to happen in your community,
5 to have somebody who is going --

6 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Why
7 doesn't it start in smaller
8 communities? Why do all of these
9 have -- and I'm going to yield my
10 questions because I know I'm eating
11 up the clock here. But again, my
12 frustration goes back to everything
13 that -- all of the investments
14 regardless of whether you all know
15 that Kensington is ground zero for
16 everything, task force and pilots
17 start in Center City. That's
18 nonsense. That's nonsense.

19 52nd Street is blowing up
20 with crime. Kensington is blowing
21 up with crime. Southwest Philly is
22 blowing up with crime. And you
23 start in Center City where they
24 already have resources, where you
25 know this is really not where you

1 need to be. Can we start thinking
2 about if you're getting this
3 allocation, can we use it in
4 communities that are desperate for
5 the resources?

6 MS. ESACK: That is
7 exact --

8 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Can
9 we, you know, the District Attorney
10 just said we need to do things
11 differently. Well, let's start
12 doing things differently but where
13 they will be the most impactful.

14 And I apologize, Chairman
15 and my colleagues, for taking up
16 all of your time. My --

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: No need
18 to apologize.

19 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: My
20 frustration --

21 MS. STEWART:
22 Councilmember, noted. Let me just
23 say this: When we rolled out the
24 Gun Crime Strategies and Prevention
25 Collaborative during the pandemic

1 before we were funded, this is when
2 we were putting ADAs in the police
3 divisions. We didn't start in
4 Center City.

5 The very first division we
6 started in was Southwest. It was
7 two ADAs there, and then we put two
8 ADAs in East Division. Those were
9 the first divisions that we started
10 with. Then we went to Northwest.
11 Then we went to South. The final
12 division we ended with was Center
13 City. But I do hear your point for
14 this retail theft piece.

15 One of the reasons -- and
16 again, we thank ADA Kim Esack. She
17 utilized an ADA who was working in
18 a whole other area of her division
19 to focus in on this pilot because
20 we did not have the resources at
21 that time to bring anyone in for
22 this. It's one of the reasons
23 we're asking for those resources
24 for this particular purpose.

25 And to your question as to

1 when, Council hopefully provides
2 the resources for this particular
3 purpose. East Division and
4 Southwest will be the next division
5 that we roll out. It's something
6 that Kim wanted to do before
7 January --

8 MS. ESACK: And G. Lamar
9 and I already had this -- because
10 we do recognize that the police
11 department also has potential
12 staffing issues. This requires to
13 have people dedicated to doing this
14 across the City. So G. Lamar and I
15 anticipating that maybe the police
16 wouldn't be in the position to have
17 an officer designated, I've already
18 spoken with G. Lamar about his
19 group going out to do the
20 walkthroughs, to do the door-to-
21 doors, to let the community know in
22 the East and in Southwest what it
23 was, right, the East and Southwest
24 that we're doing this.

25 We need the shop owners to

1 know that we're here. We'll have
2 their information. They'll have a
3 way to connect to us to feed us
4 information. And once they see
5 that we're serious about it they
6 may open up about this even more so
7 and give us more intel that they
8 may not have wanted to do so
9 before, so that has been the goal
10 and we have already been speaking
11 about that because we do realize we
12 cannot just -- we do need to work
13 with the police on this, but we
14 can't necessarily wait for
15 everybody to get on the same page.
16 But the police, the PPD, they are
17 on board with this. They have been
18 so far very supportive, but we know
19 that we need to do things here on
20 our own.

21 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA:
22 Mr. Chair, again I apologize for
23 taking up all the time but I will
24 end with this: We can't start
25 initiatives or pilots in

1 neighborhoods like Center City
2 where there's not a whole lot going
3 on. We need to start them in
4 neighborhoods where we're really
5 going to collect data and it's
6 going to make a lot more sense.
7 And so, I am looking forward to
8 continuing the conversation in the
9 future. I'm looking forward to
10 attending the information sessions
11 with the District Attorney.

12 And while I am really
13 trying to be supportive of their
14 request, I want to make sure that
15 when I support these ordinance
16 transfer requests, that they are
17 going to be as impactful to
18 communities like mine as possible.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
21 Councilmember, you have my
22 commitment on that, that we are
23 going to deal with it in any way,
24 and that means you got to go where
25 there's a need. And I am well

1 aware of the tremendous needs of
2 Kensington and I totally support
3 anyone who is trying to do things
4 that will be impactful and approve
5 that.

6 You have my personal
7 commitment that we will not just be
8 rolling out stuff in Chestnut Hill,
9 no offense to Chestnut Hill, Center
10 City, no offense to Center City,
11 but we're going to roll it out
12 across the board.

13 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
14 you.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
16 Lozada, you never have to apologize
17 for the passion you have for your
18 District. And I've said since the
19 Kensington Marshall Plan hearing
20 that until Kensington is safe, no
21 part of Philadelphia is safe. And
22 we're starting there, but we're not
23 ending there. So thank you for
24 your passion on this subject.

25 I also wanted to thank you

1 and your team, DA Krasner. G.
2 Lamar gets a lot of shout-outs.
3 But I wanted to emphasize and thank
4 you for your participation in the
5 Crime Summit and some of the
6 suggestions that have come out of
7 that, those difficult discussions
8 often are going to be solid policy
9 recommendations.

10 One question that came up
11 was under your private Criminal
12 Complaint Unit the question was why
13 isn't it 24 hours. Too often when
14 it comes to protection against
15 abuse issues, there is a need for
16 your office to be open when there
17 is not a familiar status, meaning
18 someone that is related to someone
19 who might be being victimized by
20 someone else, maybe next door or in
21 the neighborhood or stuff like
22 that.

23 Is there any possibility
24 with this new allocation that some
25 of that need can be addressed?

1 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:

2 Yes. Well, thank you for the
3 question. Let me if I may take
4 about 30 seconds. So we do have a
5 PFA, which is a Protection From
6 Abuse, hotline. This is for the
7 purpose of protecting people who
8 are in some kind of a domestic
9 relationship. We have a hotline
10 that is open 24 hours and we do
11 respond 24 hours. That number is
12 215-686-9848.

13 Private criminal complaints
14 are actually somewhat a separate
15 thing. Pennsylvania law says if
16 police show up and they're not
17 willing to arrest and an individual
18 feels that criminal charges should
19 be brought anyway, under most
20 circumstances the individual can
21 then go to the DA's Office and
22 initiate charges. Okay. So a lot
23 of what we see happening with
24 private criminal complaint is a
25 situation where a civilian does not

1 feel that the police or potentially
2 the DA, but it's usually the
3 police, are responding in an
4 important way.

5 I am a believer that the
6 private criminal complaint process
7 is important because there are a
8 lot of disputes that don't
9 necessarily rise to the level of an
10 arrest yet often between neighbors
11 or people who know each other. But
12 if they're not addressed, you're
13 going to have that shooting over a
14 parking space like we saw on
15 Christmas Eve I think it was a
16 couple of years ago. So I think it
17 is a good process, but it is not
18 specifically attune to PFAs.
19 That's something that we take very
20 seriously and we do have resources
21 for that 24 hours a day.

22 What happens with most
23 private criminal complaints is a
24 complaint is brought, there's a
25 process for it. And then when it's

1 brought, they are usually
2 handled -- they're resolved by what
3 the court system refers to as
4 judge's pro tem, meaning lawyers
5 who pose as judges and then they
6 will work out a stay away order or
7 something like that.

8 A small number of private
9 criminal complaints actually go to
10 a trial. And when that happens, we
11 prosecute those cases. That is
12 part of what we do. But once
13 again, I am inviting, I'm asking, I
14 am respectfully requesting of all
15 of you, if you give us a list of
16 topics that you'd like us to really
17 break down and give you all the
18 information on in an off-the-
19 record, face-to-face, transparent
20 kind of way, including on this
21 topic, I can get all the right
22 people in the room and we're happy
23 to dig in.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES: We are
25 as we speak working on an agenda

1 for you, and we appreciate the
2 offer. We do, Mr. District
3 Attorney.

4 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
5 Thank you.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: All
7 right.

8 Are there any other
9 questions for this witness,
10 Mr. Glass?

11 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
12 it does not appear there are any
13 more Members in the chat or asking
14 to be recognized with their hand.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Can you
16 call the next witness to testify.

17 Thank you, DA Krasner.

18 DISTRICT ATTORNEY KRASNER:
19 Thank you. Thank you to all of
20 you. Thank you so much for your
21 time.

22 THE CLERK: Yes,
23 Mr. Chairman.

24 Our next witness will be
25 Chief Keisha Hudson from the

1 Defender Association of
2 Philadelphia.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
4 you for your patience, Chief
5 Defender. Are you connected?

6 PUBLIC DEFENDER HUDSON: I
7 am. Good afternoon. On behalf of
8 the Defender Association of
9 Philadelphia, I would like to thank
10 you, Chairman Jones, Vice-Chair
11 Johnson, Councilmembers Thomas,
12 O'Neill, Gilmore Richardson and
13 Lozada for inviting us to testify
14 today in regards to our transfer
15 proposed by Ordinance No. 230767.

16 As the members of this
17 Committee know, the Defender
18 Association of Philadelphia is a
19 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
20 that holds the City's contract to
21 provide indigent defense services
22 to children and adults arrested in
23 Philadelphia and to children who
24 are subject to child abuse and
25 neglect cases in dependency court.

1 This dual role as the
2 City's provider of constitutionally
3 mandated indigent defense services
4 and independent nonprofit
5 organization status puts in a
6 unique position. On one hand, we
7 provide essential City services.
8 Last year we represented 37,310
9 clients at 211,501 scheduled
10 hearings and typically filed more
11 than 250 petitions for early
12 termination of probation.

13 On the other hand, we are
14 not a City agency. Our office is
15 responsible for covering all costs
16 related to our daily operations,
17 including rent, building
18 maintenance costs and taxes passed
19 onto us by a landlord, critical
20 technology needs as we are not
21 supported by the Office of
22 Information Technology and the cost
23 of benefits as we are not a City
24 agency and, for example, are not a
25 part of the City's pension plan.

1 This all comes directly out of our
2 operating budget.

3 The Defender Association of
4 Philadelphia has incurred 2 million
5 in unexpected or increased expenses
6 and we anticipate an additional
7 500,000 and are requesting a total
8 of 2.5 million in appropriations
9 for Fiscal Year '24 to cover these
10 costs. Specifically, these funds
11 are needed to address our lease-
12 mandated increases in our rent,
13 increases in our building
14 maintenance and Philadelphia and
15 Center City property taxes which
16 are billed annually to the Defender
17 by our landlord, the costs of
18 mandatory building renovations, the
19 licensing fees for software we need
20 to receive electronic discovery
21 from the District Attorney's
22 Office, increases in our health
23 premiums and the costs of benefits
24 we are required to pay because our
25 attorneys are unionized and they

1 are mandated by the collective
2 bargaining agreement.

3 Unlike City agencies that
4 are often housed in City-owned and
5 maintained buildings and are
6 eligible for ongoing improvements
7 through the capital budget, we fund
8 our office space. We have a lease
9 and a landlord, and our lease
10 includes rent escalations and
11 mandates that we must absorb
12 unexpected costs related to
13 building maintenance and property
14 taxes paid to the City of
15 Philadelphia through our operating
16 budget.

17 This year we have
18 experienced unexpected increases in
19 building operating costs and both
20 Philadelphia and Center City
21 property taxes. These costs are
22 billed to the Defender in total of
23 \$350,000. The building operating
24 costs include elevator maintenance,
25 repairs, plumbing, electrical and

1 HVAC maintenance and repairs,
2 building staff salaries,
3 extermination, et cetera. We have
4 no control over these costs and our
5 lease mandates that we pay them.
6 These costs are an additional
7 125,000 increase in rent we have
8 incurred. We are also outgrowing
9 our current office space.

10 Thank you to City Council
11 for recent investments, which have
12 allowed us to increase staffing
13 levels in our Child Advocacy Unit,
14 our Juvenile Special Defense Unit
15 and Social Services to bring our
16 workload more in line. We're not
17 quite there, but more in line with
18 what is recommended national
19 practice.

20 Our already limited office
21 space cannot accommodate any more
22 staff and we are projecting about a
23 \$500,000 per year for the next
24 three years to renovate the space
25 we currently have for anticipated

1 staff. An additional 185,000 of
2 requested funds will cover costs
3 associated with licensing acquired
4 for attorneys and our support staff
5 to participate in the digitized
6 transfer of discovery. Electronic
7 discovery exchange, while costly,
8 is essential to a more efficient
9 court process, encourages a
10 timelier exchange and eliminates
11 unnecessary delays in court
12 processing associated with
13 questions as to whether pieces of
14 discovery were exchanged.

15 And the remaining 1.3
16 million requested will serve to
17 reimburse us for our efforts to
18 maintain benefits for staff. As
19 members of this Committee are
20 aware, our staff, though they
21 provide essential City services,
22 are not eligible for City benefits.
23 However, our attorneys are recently
24 unionized and entitled to the full
25 benefits of their collective

1 bargaining agreement. This
2 investment will enable us to
3 maintain our staff benefits at
4 current levels without passing on
5 any rising costs to staff and will
6 help us meet our obligations to
7 fund other benefits already
8 guaranteed by our CBA.

9 Our ability to continue to
10 offer consistent benefits to our
11 staff remains essential to our
12 staff retention. This concludes my
13 testimony today, and I thank
14 members of this Committee for your
15 time and the support you have shown
16 the Defender Association of
17 Philadelphia and your recognition
18 of the value-added service and
19 constitutionally-mandated service
20 we bring to the City. Thank you.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
22 you, Chief Defender. And I want to
23 emphasize and underscore the value
24 added to the process of justice the
25 Defender's Association does. I

1 know my Members all agree that you
2 are an essential component for
3 justice in the City of
4 Philadelphia. And thank you in
5 addition for your work in the 100
6 Shooter Review. Thank you for your
7 work in the most recent Crime
8 Summit, which gives insight to
9 things that we might not recognize
10 from the fact that you advocate for
11 young people in custody issues in
12 Family Court and many of them wind
13 up in foster care and other state
14 kind of institutions and following
15 them almost in a case management
16 style to their adulthood, and
17 often, often some of those outcomes
18 aren't the best.

19 But sometimes you have to
20 look in the mirror and examine the
21 system in order to improve it or
22 correct it. So I appreciate what
23 you and your staff do throughout
24 that, that is often unheralded
25 within the justice process.

1 Case in point of support,
2 we recently announced this
3 wonderful SEPTA no fare system for
4 City employees and you and your
5 Defenders at this point aren't
6 eligible for it?

7 PUBLIC DEFENDER HUDSON:
8 That is correct, Councilmember. We
9 are not eligible for that benefit.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: But yet
11 you are asked to travel to State
12 Road and other institutions to
13 defend your clients; is that
14 correct?

15 PUBLIC DEFENDER HUDSON:
16 That's correct, Councilmember.
17 Every day not only our attorneys,
18 but investigators and social
19 workers are traveling to virtually
20 every corner of the City, including
21 all the facilities, the jails on
22 State Road, that we're there every
23 day and often Saturdays and
24 Sundays. But again, we do not get
25 the benefit of SEPTA that our

1 counterparts in the Law Department
2 and the DAO currently receive.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: I know
4 that that perk, that service does
5 not equate to good benefits and
6 salaries. But it's the kind of
7 thing that can be the difference in
8 keeping somebody from leaving and
9 going to the private sector; is
10 that correct?

11 PUBLIC DEFENDER HUDSON:
12 That is correct. I had a staff
13 member in the elevator just
14 yesterday asking me what could be
15 done to get a stipend benefit, and
16 that would be \$204 that she spends
17 per month commuting to work and
18 commuting around the City for her
19 work, would be tremendously helpful
20 for her in terms of supporting her
21 family.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Is that
23 amount per staffer included in your
24 request?

25 PUBLIC DEFENDER HUDSON: We

1 did not include that in our
2 request. I would like to continue
3 that conversation and I could do
4 that, put that math together. We
5 have around 500 people who work
6 here at the Defender Association.
7 Of course we don't envision all of
8 them would utilize the benefit, but
9 a significant majority would.

10 Thank you for your support
11 Councilmember Jones, Councilmember
12 Johnson. When I brought this issue
13 to both of you, you were in support
14 of us being a part of that benefit
15 so we can certainly follow up with
16 you and get you a number to add to
17 our request.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Would
19 you give it to me and I will
20 circulate it to members of the
21 Appropriations Commission -- I mean
22 Committee. And we do support you,
23 not just in words but also with our
24 treasuries here. So please get
25 that to us.

1 Are there any questions --

2 PUBLIC DEFENDER HUDSON:

3 Thank you, Councilmember.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: -- from
5 members of the Committee for the
6 Chief Defender here?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: I don't
9 see any. And that being the case,
10 thank you for your testimony.

11 PUBLIC DEFENDER HUDSON:

12 Thank you. Thank you,
13 Councilmember. Thank you,
14 everyone.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES:
16 Mr. Glass, who do we have next?

17 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
18 that was our final witness to
19 testify for any of our panels. The
20 only thing we have left is our
21 public comment section.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Well,
23 let's proceed. I want to try to
24 power through this. It looks like
25 we will probably recess for a while

1 to go over the fine details of this
2 budget and requests, and we will
3 probably -- how many people to
4 testify under public comment?

5 THE CLERK: We have about
6 10. We are ready to start when
7 Council Support -- Council Support,
8 are you and your team ready to
9 start linking in our first callers?

10 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT:
11 We're ready to go.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
13 you. You can proceed.

14 Who's first to testify,
15 Mr. Glass?

16 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
17 our first witness for public
18 comment today will be Ricky Duncan
19 from NOMO.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES:
21 Mr. Duncan, are you connected?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILMAN JONES:
24 Mr. Duncan?

25 (No response.)

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Who is
2 next --

3 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT:
4 We'll reconnect him now.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
6 Who's the next witness?

7 THE CLERK: Anton Moore.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Leader
9 Moore, are you connected?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN JONES:
12 Mr. Moore?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
15 Let's move to the next witness.

16 And when these other two witnesses
17 reconnect, we will put --

18 MR. MOORE: Mr. Moore here.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES:
20 Mr. Moore, how are you today?

21 MR. MOORE: I'm doing fine.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: State
23 your name for the record and please
24 submit your testimony.

25 MR. MOORE: My name is

1 Anton Moore. I'm the Executive
2 Director of Unity in the Community
3 here in South Philadelphia.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
5 you. Please proceed.

6 MR. MOORE: So I've been a
7 part of Promise, which is an
8 initiative under United Way. And
9 one of the key things about The
10 Promise and the initiative is being
11 able to connect with neighbors
12 door-to-door. We do a lot of
13 community outreach with The
14 Promise. Sorry I'm out of breath
15 because I was getting dressed and
16 ran downstairs when I heard my
17 name.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Sorry,
19 sorry.

20 MR. MOORE: No problem.
21 Working with The Promise, one of
22 the key things here in Philadelphia
23 that people have a problem with is
24 having that connection at City Hall
25 and having that connection to

1 resources. But through The
2 Promise, we was able to go door-to-
3 door and talk to neighbors about
4 different things that's affecting
5 the neighborhood for those to offer
6 resources.

7 And one of the stories that
8 stand out to me is a young lady who
9 was going through some tough
10 economic times. She was behind on
11 her rent. She had food insecurity.
12 She didn't have food and different
13 things like that. I would not have
14 known that or our organization
15 would not have known that if we
16 didn't get those funds from The
17 Promise grant that went through
18 GPCA.

19 And when I was talking to
20 the young lady, she broke down
21 crying to me saying, look, all the
22 different things that she was going
23 through once we reconnected with
24 her and did our follow-up calls,
25 she talked about being behind on

1 her rent, not having food, child
2 care is killing her and all these
3 different things.

4 And we were able to take
5 those things into consideration, we
6 was able to connect her with
7 resources and was able to help her
8 with some of those things. That
9 would not have been possible
10 without that Promise grant through
11 GPCA. And looking through The
12 Promise, you can't make a promise
13 without a commitment. So I stand
14 firm in being supportive of The
15 Promise getting funded and add
16 additional funding to help connect
17 us with neighbors and residents
18 throughout the community. That's
19 my testimony.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
21 you, Mr. Moore. And I appreciate
22 what you are able to do. When you
23 knock on those doors and identify
24 what those resources are, you are a
25 referral source in other words?

1 MR. MOORE: So some of
2 our -- not like a referral source,
3 but we have resources, GPCA has
4 resources and we combine those
5 resources to help those neighbors
6 out. So they'll -- our canvassers
7 who are actually from the
8 neighborhood we have knocking on
9 the doors, they are neighbors of
10 the people that we're actually
11 visiting so they'll give them
12 information that they bring back to
13 us and we'll assess the situation,
14 then do a follow-up call and help
15 with those resources.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: That's
17 at a granular level of providing
18 resources to people door-to-door.
19 That's amazing. I would love to
20 talk to you offline at a different
21 time about something that came out
22 of the Crime Summit, and it's kind
23 of called The Promise. Obviously
24 we're going to have to change the
25 name of that contact. But I think

1 to give you some insight, it is to
2 go to -- it's similar. That is,
3 The Promise and GVI had a baby, it
4 would be this. And what it would
5 be is a case management style
6 commitment to youth that said, if
7 you do the following things over
8 the course of the year, here's our
9 promise to you.

10 MR. MOORE: Mm-hmm.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES: That you
12 work all year, that you will be
13 prudent if you need it, if you want
14 to go to school, you'll have means
15 to get there and something to eat.
16 I mean, certain basic inalienable
17 rights that should come and it
18 should be promised to every
19 individual that is high risk that
20 wants to do right. So I'm going to
21 talk to you about that offline,
22 sir, because --

23 MR. MOORE: Well, real
24 quick, you know what I noticed too,
25 sometimes we assume that everyone

1 is on the Internet, but it's
2 something about that face-to-face
3 interaction that you get with
4 residents that make you say, you
5 know what, you care. Sometimes
6 people don't feel that through the
7 Internet. When we pull up to their
8 doors and you knock on their doors
9 and you're addressing their
10 concern, there's a different type
11 of feeling that you get. And
12 sometimes it opens you up to other
13 problems that's going on in the
14 community that they might be
15 dealing with when it comes to gun
16 violence.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
18 observation, sir. Boots on the
19 ground do matter and make a
20 difference, so I thank you for your
21 testimony. And I will reach out to
22 you to have this conversation.
23 Okay?

24 MR. MOORE: Okay.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank

1 you.

2 Mr. Glass.

3 THE CLERK: Mr. Chair, I
4 apologize. Sheriff Rochelle Bilal
5 is here and would like to provide
6 testimony for her mid-year transfer
7 request as well.

8 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:
9 Mr. Chairman? Are you taking
10 questions yet, Mr. Chairman? My
11 hand was raised --

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: All
13 right. I'm sorry --

14 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- or
15 you want to wait until the panel is
16 over?

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Why
18 don't you jump in.

19 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yeah.
20 I just wanted to thank Anton Moore
21 for his work in terms of boots on
22 the ground around the issue of not
23 only gun violence but also
24 addressing the root causes of
25 poverty. And I think in terms of

1 this particular initiative, and I'm
2 still in agreeance with the data,
3 right, because I know this started
4 off as a City Council Poverty
5 Initiative and obviously partnering
6 with United Way, it became The
7 Promise which is a good concept in
8 terms of really addressing poverty.

9 But one thing that Anton
10 mentioned I think that is crucial
11 that we have to look at as we move
12 forward as a City and be strategic
13 about how we're addressing poverty
14 and really taking an out-of-the-box
15 type of approach, particularly
16 looking at strategically those
17 neighborhoods and those areas
18 that's high in poverty and then
19 strategically looking at how we are
20 looking at canvassing and going to
21 door-to-door which was mentioned by
22 Anton, particularly targeting
23 people with the actual resources
24 that they need. And I know this
25 concept begins around addressing

1 initial poverty.

2 However, according to the
3 Philadelphia Economy League,
4 household incomes amongst every
5 other race except African American
6 has risen here in the City of
7 Philadelphia. Also, when we look
8 at the issue of poverty as a whole
9 in terms of the City, we're the
10 number one big city when it comes
11 to poverty in the country. It has
12 decreased. However, among Black
13 and Brown people that number has
14 increased, right.

15 And then when you also look
16 at this last election, right, we
17 increased our voter turnout, right,
18 but particularly in Black and Brown
19 neighborhoods the turnout actually
20 decreased, which shows me if we
21 look at the actual data there's a
22 disconnect in terms of policy and
23 resources and getting in the hands
24 of those who truly need it.

25 And so, when we talk about

1 door-to-door canvassing, when we
2 talk about concepts such as Philly
3 Counts where we had individuals in
4 the middle of COVID going to
5 people's doors, going to houses,
6 going block-by-block, neighborhood-
7 by-neighborhood making sure that
8 people had information regarding
9 how they address COVID. Hopefully,
10 that same type of model we can use
11 with resources as it relates to
12 addressing the issue of poverty.
13 And hopefully, that will be the
14 next plateau in terms of how we
15 address the poverty in the City of
16 Philadelphia.

17 And I know that this
18 particular initiative is key, but I
19 am doing a deep dive on the actual
20 data around how this particular
21 program is measuring, is measuring
22 the results. I know poverty didn't
23 happen overnight so we're not going
24 to get out of it overnight, but we
25 also want to make sure we're being

1 strategic and targeting these key
2 areas in terms of blocks and
3 neighborhoods, but also individuals
4 who have the most need in
5 addressing those needs whatever
6 that may be, rather it's food
7 insecurity, rather it's housing
8 inequalities, rather it's
9 supporting young men who may be
10 dealing with child support issues,
11 supporting individuals who may be
12 trying to further their education
13 and also supporting individuals who
14 are trying to become gainfully
15 employed, those key areas that kind
16 of keeps the City moving forward.

17 And so, I just want to
18 thank you again, Anton Moore. I
19 see also Mr. Ricky Duncan from
20 NOMO. I think South Philadelphia
21 is very heavily strong in the
22 building today. But as the City
23 goes, we leave and I thank y'all
24 young fellows for being here and
25 stepping up to the plate for being

1 boots-on-the-ground advocates.

2 Thank you very much,

3 Mr. Chair, for my time.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: You're
5 welcome, Member Johnson.

6 I would only say that the
7 one of the most interesting things
8 about serving in government is that
9 people will call the exact same
10 thing something different. So as
11 we look at the proposal for the 57
12 Block Coalition and some of the
13 things that they're talking about
14 is very similar to what Mr. Moore
15 in South Philly is already doing
16 and making those assessments to
17 underserved communities, to making
18 those assessments and these
19 assessments to folk under the
20 poverty guidelines and that is a
21 function of why sometimes crime is
22 higher in those underserved areas.

23 So what we need to do is
24 kind of get a common dialogue, a
25 common understanding of language

1 and the types of boots-on-the-
2 ground service that can be employed
3 to provide those services at a
4 granular level, at a door-to-door
5 level. So thank you for those
6 comments, Member Johnson. And
7 thank you, Mr. Moore.

8 We have the Sheriff who
9 probably should have been under the
10 Administration. We have moved into
11 the public comment, but we will
12 make the exception for the Sheriff
13 and allow her to present her
14 testimony.

15 Sheriff Bilal, are you
16 there?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Sheriff
19 Bilal?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILMAN JONES:
22 Mr. Glass.

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
24 Sheriff Bilal should be here. I'm
25 looking through the chat now.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: All
2 right. Can we move to the next
3 witness.

4 THE CLERK: Yes,
5 Mr. Chairman. Ricky Duncan.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES:
7 Mr. Duncan, are you connected?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN JONES:
10 Mr. Duncan?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA:
13 Mr. Chair, can I make a comment
14 while we wait for the next witness
15 to testify?

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
17 Lozada.

18 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: I
19 just want to thank Mr. Moore for
20 his work on the ground in his
21 community. I also want to thank
22 the Poverty Action Plan for their
23 work in uplifting Philadelphians
24 out of poverty. But I want to
25 specifically recognize the Latino

1 Equity Development Collective who's
2 a group of culturally, competent
3 Latino agencies who work in the 7th
4 Council District on a daily basis
5 identifying the needs of the
6 community and addressing them
7 directly.

8 They have created a system
9 as a result of their work with the
10 Poverty Action Plan, The Promise,
11 that allows them to collect data
12 for the people that are coming in
13 for services and the data that they
14 share, right. Often times we talk
15 about who is the constituency that
16 we're serving. Are they coming to
17 one agency to get one type of
18 service and then travel to another
19 one and another one, and sometimes
20 we overcount, right, because we're
21 not sure, we don't share data.

22 As a result of the work
23 with The Promise and the Action
24 Plan, they've been able to create a
25 system that allows them to collect

1 the data from the residents, know
2 what their specific needs are and
3 provide the wraparound services at
4 that one point, right. So it's
5 almost like a one-stop shop. And I
6 think it's made a huge impact in
7 the Latino community and has helped
8 to connect people with the real
9 services.

10 Anton mentioned earlier
11 that not everyone is online, not
12 everyone has access to the
13 Internet. And I can attest to
14 that, right. During the COVID when
15 the vaccine was so necessary, we
16 kept telling people, go online and
17 register, sign up for a vaccine
18 appointment. And we went out and
19 during my work at Esperanza, we
20 went out to doors to talk to people
21 about why. We were at that point 5
22 percent of the population that was
23 vaccinated. We couldn't understand
24 why, why Latinos were not getting
25 vaccinated. And it was because

1 there was a true discrepancy with
2 Internet.

3 And so, I want to thank him
4 for his work. Thank you for
5 recognizing that not every -- we
6 assume that everyone is connected
7 and is online and has access, and
8 that's not the reality. And I
9 appreciate him for his on-the-
10 ground work and the work that the
11 Latino Collective is doing on a
12 daily basis to help Latinos and
13 others get connected to the
14 necessary resources.

15 And so, this request is
16 extremely important. It is going
17 to make a -- I believe that if
18 Latino agencies can collect data
19 and share it with one another, City
20 entities can do that as well.

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
22 you, Member Lozada, for that
23 specific group because like I
24 mentioned in each section of the
25 City it's needed. But in each

1 section of the City, it's
2 different. And so, thank you for
3 that.

4 MR. DUNCAN: Thank you for
5 allowing me to testify, Chairman
6 Curtis Jones. My name is Ricky
7 Duncan. I'm the CEO and Executive
8 Director of the NOMO Foundation.
9 I'm here to testify in reference to
10 The Promise grant and how it has
11 helped us be more of a community
12 development organization than we
13 already was.

14 We were able to be robust
15 and address several issues that we
16 encounter in our day-to-day
17 operations at NOMO. One, being
18 workforce development. Another one
19 being parenting. Another being, of
20 course our main goal is youth to
21 cultivate and taking them to the
22 next level.

23 What we did with our
24 Promise grant, we were able to do
25 an expungement clinic serving over

1 200 people. And why it was
2 important for the workforce is
3 because a lot of times you may have
4 these cases that's lying on your
5 record that's maybe 15 to 20 years
6 old and it doesn't show exactly
7 what it is but it's still being
8 used against you. So being able to
9 get those cleaned out will help us
10 and put more people back into the
11 workforce.

12 How does it affect
13 parenting? I don't know how many
14 people still have school-aged kids
15 that's on this call, but in order
16 to go on a trip with your kids or
17 now be a part of or be in the
18 classroom with your child, you have
19 to do a criminal background check
20 and you have to have a clean record
21 to be an active parent in your
22 children's lives and just to be
23 able to go on these trips. So a
24 lot of families were reunited and
25 able to bond over going on trips

1 and just being a volunteer at their
2 local kids' school, so this was
3 able to help them.

4 And we also have a lot of
5 young people that's coming up with
6 felony offenses that's getting it
7 at an early age and it's carried
8 out to the adulthood. These are
9 things that the diversion program
10 was not able to address, but the
11 expungement clinic was able to get
12 them that fresh start and getting
13 them to be productive in society.

14 So I think it's a need
15 taking a robust approach to really
16 being a community developer. These
17 are one of the problems that plays
18 a part in housing. You know, a lot
19 of landlords are looking at what
20 your record looks like in housing
21 and they're not looking at the
22 dates that's saying this was 10, 15
23 years old. They're looking at the
24 fact that you have a criminal
25 record.

1 You know, landlords,
2 employers. Like I said, the School
3 District they're looking at it now.
4 So without being able to do that
5 and being provided the resources to
6 be able to do that, this was
7 something that was continuing to
8 hinder and be part of the
9 generational curse that we face
10 every day in our urban communities.

11 COUNCILMAN JONES:

12 Mr. Duncan, are you done?

13 MR. DUNCAN: Yes, sir.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: No,
15 you're not. You got a lot of work
16 to do, and thank you for the work
17 that you do. To you and your
18 family who I know have been more
19 than just that you guys have gotten
20 into the midst of young people and
21 relate to the issues that they're
22 going through. So thank you, thank
23 you for that.

24 Question, would you say
25 there is a need to help parents be

1 parents? Is that an issue that you
2 find true for some of the young
3 people that you deal with?

4 MR. DUNCAN: Yes, because
5 what I find is you're only
6 responsible for what you know. A
7 lot of stuff that's encountered was
8 never taught or was never learned,
9 so parents need the support of not
10 just their immediate surroundings
11 but support of the community to
12 help develop these young people.
13 These young people are living in a
14 time that has never been seen
15 before. So this is going to be a
16 challenge for everyone. And when
17 we say it takes a village, it got a
18 little bigger than that. It may
19 take a city.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I'd
21 like to reach out to you as well
22 about a concept that came out of
23 our Crime Summit that talks about
24 the old parent university concept
25 that the School District used to

1 use but they want to 2.0 it,
2 meaning that there's two sets of
3 bookbags. The one filled with
4 books for the lessons at school and
5 the other bookbag is filled with
6 the troubles at home. And I want
7 to help unpack those bookbags
8 through services that can be
9 provided for parents to help them
10 be better parents. So I'm going to
11 have to buy you a cup of coffee and
12 talk about that concept.

13 MR. DUNCAN: I'll be
14 honored to --

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
16 you, sir. Thank you so much.

17 Are there any questions for
18 this witness?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing
21 none, thank you again for your
22 testimony. I'll reach out to you.

23 MR. DUNCAN: All right.

24 COUNCILMAN JONES:
25 Mr. Glass, who do we have next?

1 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
2 our next speaker for public comment
3 is Annie Altman.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES:
5 Ms. Altman, are you connected?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILMAN JONES:
8 Ms. Altman, are you connected?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Why
11 don't we go to our next witness and
12 hopefully she will be able to
13 reconnect.

14 MS. ALTMAN: Can you hear
15 me?

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Oh, now
17 I do, yes.

18 MS. ALTMAN: Sorry. That
19 magic mute function.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
21 afternoon.

22 MS. ALTMAN: Good
23 afternoon. Thank you for allowing
24 me the opportunity to speak on
25 behalf of the Reading Terminal

1 Market Corporation. The Reading
2 Terminal Market Corporation is the
3 nonprofit steward of this treasure
4 for Philadelphia. I'm sure many of
5 the folks on this call and the
6 Councilmembers have a particular
7 favorite merchant or stand or item
8 or a memory of great times at the
9 Reading Terminal.

10 But what you might not know
11 is how we function as a public
12 space in Philadelphia. I came into
13 the market as a CEO in the midst of
14 the pandemic where I quickly
15 learned that we are often times the
16 only public restroom that's open,
17 clean and available. We host
18 school groups to learn about food
19 systems and entrepreneurship. Our
20 merchants have become increasingly
21 diverse and look more and more like
22 our City.

23 Currently we have 76
24 merchants. 28 percent are BIPOC.
25 AAPI are Hispanic-owned. 53

1 percent of our merchants are
2 female-led or co-led. 17 percent
3 are heritage Pennsylvania Dutch.
4 Every purveyor or merchant in the
5 Market that would be eligible to
6 accept SNAP and EBT in fact are
7 registered and do participate. We
8 are believed to be the largest
9 redemption site of EBT and SNAP
10 benefits in the entire
11 Commonwealth. We're diverse, we're
12 welcoming and we're here for all of
13 Philadelphia.

14 We do have a request in
15 working hand-in-hand with
16 Councilmember Squilla's office and
17 the Commerce Director and her
18 staff. We are requesting some
19 unrestricted funds to help bridge
20 gaps that we are currently facing.
21 In particular and kind of tagging
22 on to many of the conversations I
23 heard today, one of the uses of the
24 funds would be to upgrade our
25 security camera system. That's not

1 about retail theft. That really is
2 about public safety.

3 We welcome over 5 million
4 shopping visits a year. Thank you
5 very much. That concludes my
6 testimony and I'm available to
7 answer any questions.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I
9 will admit from time to time I am
10 one of those secret shoppers. I
11 remember my grandfather taking me
12 to the Reading Terminal and
13 watching those butcher shops,
14 watching those seafood purveyors in
15 an up, close and personal way was a
16 different experience than going to
17 a grocery store, so thank you for
18 that.

19 And could you -- again, the
20 number one budget request is for
21 cameras and what other --

22 MS. ALTMAN: The two again,
23 we ask for unrestricted -- just
24 candidly on any given day we're
25 never sure what might break here.

1 What we're hoping to use it for is
2 to upgrade our camera system for
3 our security both inside the market
4 and around our block. And then
5 secondly, we have in the past had
6 sort of a pathway to merchantship,
7 a day stall program, which is a low
8 barrier to entry for a short-term
9 vendor program. That was sunsetted
10 at the pandemic and we would be
11 using some of those funds to create
12 space that we could reinstitute or
13 bring back that short-term day
14 stall program.

15 That program in the past
16 has been very successful in
17 bringing in very small micro-
18 merchants and helping them grow
19 into full-time merchants. For
20 example, Luhv Vegan Deli, Really
21 Real Ginger, A Taste of Spain,
22 Sweet Nina's, Sweat T's Bakery,
23 Little Marrakesh and Russ Brown
24 Photography all started as a day
25 stall merchant in the market.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Shout

2 out to --

3 MS. ALTMAN: (Inaudible).

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: I'm not
5 only a Councilman, I'm a client so.

6 MS. ALTMAN: There you go.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: All
8 right. So thank you.

9 Are there any questions for
10 this witness?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Hearing
13 none, Mr. Glass -- thank you for
14 your testimony.

15 MS. ALTMAN: Thank you.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES:
17 Mr. Glass, who's next to test --
18 oh, we have the Sheriff, I
19 understand.

20 THE CLERK: Yes,
21 Mr. Chairman. The Sheriff's Office
22 was having some technical
23 difficulties. They are connected
24 now.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES: Sheriff

1 Bilal.

2 (No response.)

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: Sheriff

4 Bilal?

5 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes, sir.

6 Can you hear me?

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, we
8 can. Can you state your name for
9 the record and please --

10 SHERIFF BILAL: Give us one
11 second. We're working on our audio
12 now. One second.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: You
14 sound good to us.

15 SHERIFF BILAL: We can
16 barely hear you.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
18 Testing, testing. Is that coming
19 across any better?

20 SHERIFF BILAL: Excellent,
21 better. Now, we hear you.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: All
23 right. Sheriff Bilal, please state
24 your name for the record and begin
25 your testimony.

1 SHERIFF BILAL: Good
2 afternoon. Good afternoon,
3 Chairperson Curtis Jones and
4 members of the Appropriations
5 Committee. I'm Rochelle Bilal.
6 And as the Sheriff for both the
7 City and County of Philadelphia, I
8 am here today to testify in support
9 of the Philadelphia Sheriff's
10 Office General Fund request of
11 \$1.555 million funds required for
12 IT service. This is offset by an
13 interdepartmental transfer of
14 250,000 and 1,300,000 in revenue.
15 The proposed funding halts
16 any corrective action I am
17 executing, which my staff has
18 uncovered as an incomplete from the
19 past two Administrations. The
20 deficiencies that exist prior to my
21 arrival cannot be overcome without
22 the functional and skilled civilian
23 staff along with the technology
24 support for continuous operations
25 and improvements.

1 The amount reflected in the
2 transfer ordinance represents only
3 22 percent of the 6 million-plus
4 requested by my staff for Fiscal
5 Year 2024. An assurance that you
6 have all the information in front
7 of you dealing with vehicle
8 acquisitions, civil enforcement, IT
9 staff augmentation, software of
10 service and service recommendation,
11 Taser 7 seven acquisition, staff
12 and space expansion, all of those
13 entities are in our proposal for
14 Fiscal '24 and those that are
15 needed for the transfer ordinance.

16 I will end this shortly by
17 saying this: First of all, we've
18 been here since 10:30 a.m. this
19 morning as for slotted time to
20 testify on our transfer ordinance.
21 I just want to put that on the
22 record. And I want to make sure
23 that if you have any questions of
24 us, please feel free to ask. My
25 staff is here. Let me introduce

1 who's here. My CFO Patrick Lee, my
2 Chief of Staff Erica Davenport and
3 my Chief Budgeting Officer is here.

4 MR. MARTIN: Good
5 afternoon. Craig Martin.

6 SHERIFF BILAL: Craig
7 Martin, and we are ready to answer
8 any questions that you have.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: I want
10 to first thank you, Sheriff Bilal,
11 for your patience and being on
12 standby as we perform our due
13 diligence in order to make sure
14 that all of the questions are
15 asked, that our t's are crossed and
16 our i's are dotted in order to
17 appropriate any taxpayer dollars,
18 so sometimes every now and then it
19 takes a while. But I'll remember
20 that when thinking of what order
21 you should go in because you are a
22 vital part of the City
23 Administration.

24 Let me ask a couple of
25 quick questions. The IT portion of

1 your request, tell me exactly,
2 drill down on what that will update
3 or replace.

4 MR. LEE: Yes, sir. This
5 is Patrick Lee, the Sheriff CFO.
6 So just to clarify that, Chairman,
7 it revolves around upgrades to
8 software that's needed, one. Part
9 of that is the accounting software
10 system that's required to continue
11 to run the office and to manage the
12 I will say thousands of financial
13 transactions that this office is
14 responsible for, in addition to the
15 upgrades to systems for our civil
16 system that is ongoing at this
17 moment.

18 We as an independent office
19 do not have dedicated IT staff so
20 we also require IT staff
21 augmentation. Those three elements
22 alone are about half of the
23 operating budget just to keep this
24 office functioning with the
25 upgrades that the Sheriff is able

1 to manage prior to my arrival. So
2 she immediately started this in
3 2020, but the budget for it grew as
4 we started to add the appropriate
5 software packages to every
6 installation and every location and
7 footprint that this office is
8 responsible for.

9 SHERIFF BILAL: And the
10 fact that we are not supported by
11 the OIT staff for the City.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
13 All right. We got that. Can you
14 tell me about Class 500 of -- there
15 was an issue with your vehicles.
16 Can you tell me what's going on
17 with that?

18 SHERIFF BILAL: It's a
19 twofold portion -- and I will also
20 have the Chief of Staff chime in.
21 As we did a (inaudible) to various
22 installation, one was to a warranty
23 (inaudible). But every time a
24 vehicle is turned in we don't get
25 it replaced and/or if it's turned

1 in for maintenance, we don't have
2 any replacements that we can put in
3 service as well.

4 The interior of some of the
5 vehicles that our Warrant Unit is
6 using right now are severely
7 deteriorated. A couple of vehicles
8 they're using have donuts. They're
9 not standard tires to function and
10 move around. And we've gotten the
11 support and information from Fleet,
12 but Fleet can't order the vehicles
13 until we get the money.

14 Just note that our Warrant
15 Unit people are out there in the
16 streets 24 hours a day, especially
17 dealing with warrants as far as
18 dealing with gun violence because
19 we're a part of the collaborative
20 to deal with the crime in this
21 City. All our vehicles are flagged
22 at this point. They do need to be
23 replaced and they need to be
24 upgraded.

25 We're also looking at the

1 expansion of the Protection From
2 Abuse orders, those dealing with
3 coming from the FJD people that
4 say -- what are they called?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:
6 (Inaudible).

7 SHERIFF BILAL: The FJD
8 people who are out there doing
9 evictions, so I call them the
10 eviction people because ours are
11 sworn personnel. So we're looking
12 at all of that --

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: So can I
14 stop you, Sheriff. How did that
15 whole issue that was brought up by
16 Member Brooks, Member Gauthier and
17 members of the State House where
18 are we at with that? Is that a
19 function that is being transferred
20 to your department?

21 SHERIFF BILAL: State
22 Representative Krajewski, we have
23 had conversations back and forth
24 with him as to what it will be as
25 to what will be the needs of the

1 office in order to assume that, and
2 back and forth with the landlords
3 as to what it is that they wanted
4 to see out of that consumption.

5 And so, those conversations are
6 going back and is legislated on the
7 state that's being produced.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.

9 Thank you very much. What about
10 with the bulletproof vest
11 situation? Are you rotating them
12 out, getting new ones? How is that
13 working?

14 MR. LEE: Yes, sir. At
15 this particular point we have about
16 60 percent, 70 percent filled
17 because unfortunately we do have
18 officers that are out on IOD and we
19 can't require them to come in to
20 get fitted for the equipment
21 immediately. Within the last year
22 we outfitted the bulk of the
23 officers on duty with the office.
24 However, it is ongoing because as
25 we hire new officers we still have

1 to get ballistic armor, so we have
2 to have that funding readily
3 available so we can acquire that
4 particular resource.

5 There's a reference made
6 and I will (inaudible) with the
7 Sheriff with regard to vacancies
8 for agencies. Ours is about a 25
9 percent vacancy rate. We're
10 dealing with similar information.
11 You've heard retirement,
12 terminations and so forth --

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: How
14 many -- what are the exact numbers
15 of the vacancies, not percentages?

16 MR. LEE: Yes, sir. Our
17 target is 428. We are short 107,
18 and that's with the combination of
19 both sworn and civilian personnel
20 that we projected out over the last
21 three fiscal year periods. We've
22 identified it clearly. We know
23 where the shortages are. We know
24 that's roughly about a 70, maybe 75
25 percent fill rate. Our top number

1 is 660. But if we can get to 428,
2 that will stabilize operations
3 while the Sheriff is continuing to
4 add hiring classes to the offices.

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: So I'm
6 going to ask you this question: So
7 a lot of the police academy cadets
8 wind up washing out over the time
9 it takes at the point it takes to
10 do the physical run and other
11 challenges. Would you be in
12 support of moving that test and
13 requirement to a latter part in the
14 training? Would that be something
15 you would support, Madam Sheriff?

16 SHERIFF BILAL: We are --
17 training is done at Penn State.
18 And our biggest issue is the fact
19 here we can probably hire more but
20 because they have to spend 19 weeks
21 up at Penn State and not come home
22 five days a week, that has been a
23 problem for us. If our training
24 was here at the police academy,
25 which they do have room, I've had

1 this conversation with them and now
2 we're dealing with our State
3 Representatives in order to get
4 this done. We can hire more here
5 if they was able to go to class and
6 go home at night for families, so
7 it's a harder press.

8 COUNCILMAN JONES: Got it.
9 Understood. Thank you.

10 Are there any members of
11 the Committee that wish to ask the
12 Sheriff questions?

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN JONES:
15 Mr. Glass.

16 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
17 there are no Members wishing to be
18 recognized at this time.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: So thank
20 you, Sheriff Bilal and your team,
21 for your testimony.

22 SHERIFF BILAL: And I --
23 can I say one thing, my Budget
24 Officer?

25 MR. MARTIN: Yes. One of

1 the things in Class --

2 SHERIFF BILAL: State your
3 name.

4 MR. MARTIN: My name's
5 Craig Martin. I'm the Budget
6 Officer. One of the things that we
7 just have to address is Class 100
8 in terms of hiring personnel. We
9 don't have extra money in Class 100
10 even if we don't hire our personnel
11 because Class 100 for hires is
12 Subject-object Code 101, but they
13 charge us with other sub-object
14 codes such as IOD, injured on duty,
15 overtime and terminal leave.

16 When those classes are
17 utilized, they go up. It takes
18 away from the money that we have to
19 hire people. So it's a sequence
20 even if we do get a candidate or
21 some candidates that are released,
22 at a slow pace we have to go back
23 and get consent to hire. And what
24 they do is do a computation based
25 on where we are until the end of

1 the year and they tell us we've
2 overdrawn.

3 But here we are just
4 halfway through the year we
5 shouldn't be overdrawn, but some of
6 those categories that carry a big
7 balance are not budgeted
8 categories. So they suck out Class
9 100. And when we're ready to hire,
10 we have to do this big fight for
11 money even though those bodies were
12 approved at the beginning of the
13 year.

14 SHERIFF BILAL: And what's
15 the resolution to that?

16 MR. MARTIN: The resolution
17 to that is Class 101 is the class
18 that hires. And what happens is
19 when there is an overdraft in any
20 of the sub-object codes, they hit
21 or they suck that money out. If
22 we're going to be able to hire --
23 especially with injured on duty, we
24 can't predict what that's going to
25 be. That could be anywhere from

1 \$350,000 to \$1 million, so that
2 knocks out a bunch of bodies we
3 cannot hire.

4 We have to be able to
5 utilize the money that has been
6 budgeted in Class 101 to hire the
7 amount of staff that we need to
8 hire that's being computed in that
9 category. If not, any overdraft in
10 any part of 100 will (inaudible).
11 When we need to hire or maybe even
12 at the end of the first or second
13 quarter, we're just out of the
14 ballpark. And right now we've been
15 told that there is a freeze on the
16 hiring for the Sheriff's Office.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Madam
18 Sheriff, can you send that detail
19 to Josh Cohen in my office right
20 away?

21 SHERIFF BILAL: Yes, sir.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: And we
23 will distribute that to other
24 members of the Appropriations
25 Committee.

1 SHERIFF BILAL: You will
2 have that within the hour. Yes,
3 sir.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
5 you very much. Thank you for your
6 testimony.

7 SHERIFF BILAL: Thank you
8 so much. I appreciate it. Thank
9 you.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES:
11 Mr. Glass.

12 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
13 our next witness will be LaTrista
14 Webb.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES:
16 Ms. Webb, are you connected?

17 MS. WEBB: (Muted).

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
19 afternoon. Ms. Webb, are you
20 connected?

21 MS. WEBB: Good afternoon.
22 I'm sorry. I was unmuted when I
23 wasn't supposed to be and then
24 muted when I was supposed to be.
25 Sorry about that.

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: I hate
2 when that happens, don't you.

3 MS. WEBB: I'm LaTrista
4 Webb. I am the Founder and
5 Executive Director of The Elevation
6 Project. We are in the 4th
7 District at 63rd and Haverford.
8 And I'm here just to speak about my
9 experience with The Promise for the
10 last year-and-a-half. The
11 Elevation Project has been working
12 with The Promise on record clearing
13 clinics that we've been able to
14 host as community events. We have
15 hosted three so far, two in the 4th
16 District and one in the 3rd, but
17 all of them in West Philadelphia.

18 We've been able to service
19 over 290 people just to meet with a
20 lawyer just to find out what was on
21 their record and to get their
22 record cleared. Why I think this
23 is important, record clearing
24 happens in a lot of places, in a
25 lot of offices. You can go online

1 and sign up to get your record
2 expunged through the Defender's
3 Association, through Community
4 Legal Services, through PAWS,
5 through all of those great
6 programs.

7 But what makes this special
8 is you don't have to leave the
9 neighborhood. You can get your
10 record cleared right in your
11 neighborhood. You don't have to go
12 far. West Philadelphia residents
13 are able to come to West
14 Philadelphia and get their record
15 cleared. And we have parties when
16 we do it. So it's not --

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: Oh, I
18 know.

19 MS. WEBB: It's not a
20 boring event. It is a party. This
21 last one that we had was a block
22 party and it had a concert. It had
23 slides for the kids. We had food
24 out there, everything you needed,
25 and it was a safe event. Record

1 clearing is important for a lot of
2 reasons. There was a person who
3 was at our clinic. His name is
4 Jay. I believe Jay was supposed to
5 testify today so I won't share
6 Jay's story.

7 But I will say that record
8 clearing is an opportunity to
9 people that they wouldn't have
10 otherwise known that they had,
11 right. So if I don't know what's
12 on my record -- first, the clinic
13 is important to find out what's on
14 my record, right. Then I'm able to
15 find out what can be expunged, what
16 can be sealed, whether I need a
17 pardon for, all of those things at
18 the clinic.

19 And then you have the
20 neighborhood program that you can
21 always come and knock on our door.
22 I'm in our office now. So this
23 bright beautiful (inaudible), you
24 can come knock on the door and find
25 out what's going on with the

1 process. The process takes a year.
2 That's probably a conversation for
3 another day. But when you're in a
4 yearlong process, it's great to
5 know that you can always come to
6 The Elevation Project, walk to 63rd
7 and Haverford and know what is
8 going on with your record.

9 And I think The Promise is
10 important because lots of people on
11 here are asking for money. I was
12 impressed. I've been on here since
13 10:30 this morning. I didn't know
14 all of this went down, right. So
15 lots of people are asking for lots
16 of money. But The Promise gives
17 chances to small organizations.

18 I think I've developed a
19 great relationship with you,
20 Councilman Jones. But I credit a
21 lot of that to the work that I've
22 been able to do with The Promise.
23 And so, The Promise has helped The
24 Elevation Project become a
25 household name in West

1 Philadelphia, but we wouldn't have
2 been able to do that without their
3 support and they've opened doors
4 for us that I believe are important
5 for smaller organizations, because
6 we're like family-led.

7 My daughter is sitting here
8 with me and she's watching
9 cartoons. If someone wants to know
10 what's happening with their
11 records, they can walk in with
12 their kids, with their stroller,
13 whatever and find out what's going
14 on. So that's why I believe that
15 The Promise should receive the
16 funding that they're requesting.
17 Thank you.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: First of
19 all, at that event which when on
20 the surface seemed like a solemn
21 event where people were trying to
22 straighten out past actions, but it
23 was a block party for sure. There
24 were lines all the way down the
25 street of people waiting to get

1 services and they were your
2 everyday neighbor. They weren't
3 stereotypical folk. They were
4 people who might have gotten into
5 something 20 years ago, moved on
6 with their life, changed their
7 life, raised families, got jobs and
8 still could not get rid of that
9 blemish.

10 I know an individual who
11 was a turnkey store manager for a
12 corner store. And it was a Friday
13 night, he wanted to go out on a
14 date. He snuck back into his store
15 where he had a key. The alarm went
16 off. He got caught. He was
17 convicted. He is a senior citizen
18 who cannot do certain things, can't
19 get public housing. There's like
20 200 different things he cannot do.

21 So I say that long story
22 short, short story shorter, is that
23 what you do changes lives. So
24 thank you for what you do, and
25 thank you for your testimony. And

1 I look forward to the next block
2 party. It was a real event. I had
3 a good time and doing the right
4 thing, so thank you.

5 MS. WEBB: Thank you again.
6 Thanks.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: Any
8 questions for this witness?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing
11 none who's our next person to
12 testify, Mr. Glass?

13 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
14 our next witness will be Otis
15 Bullock.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Otis
17 Bullock. Mr. Bullock, are you
18 connected? Hello, sir. How are
19 you?

20 MR. BULLOCK: I am. I am.
21 Good afternoon, Chairman. I
22 appreciate your time. I want to
23 say hello to the other members of
24 the Appropriations Committee. I've
25 known you all. Otis Bullock, CEO

1 of Greater Philadelphia Community
2 Alliance formerly Diversified
3 Community Services. And I'm here
4 for the same reasons that Ricky
5 Duncan and Anton Moore and LaTrista
6 are here, which is to support the
7 Poverty Action Fund aka The
8 Promise.

9 Just to give everybody a
10 little background on my
11 organization, GPCA is the result of
12 a merger between Diversified
13 Community Services and United
14 Communities Southeast Philadelphia.
15 Our mission is to break the cycle
16 of generational poverty by ensuring
17 equitable distribution of resources
18 for vulnerable children, families
19 and communities. And as a result
20 of the merger, we now serve all of
21 South Philly from river to river,
22 from Schuylkill to the Delaware, as
23 well as Southwest Philly.

24 I've been doing this work
25 around poverty for a long time.

1 Many of you have --

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, you
3 have.

4 MR. BULLOCK: -- worked
5 with me directly. If not at GPCA,
6 you may remember that I started my
7 career in this Chamber 20 years ago
8 as a legislative aide in Council to
9 Councilmember Jannie Blackwell. I
10 was a staffer there during the time
11 when two of your former colleagues
12 and the current Mayor-elect were
13 staffers as well, the Honorable
14 Cherelle Parker and Derek Green.
15 That's a long time ago.

16 Chairman, you may remember
17 that as the Executive Director of
18 the Mayor's Office of Community
19 Services, MOCS, I put together a
20 strategic plan for coordinating
21 poverty-related services under
22 Mayor Nutter's Administration.
23 That plan eventually became what we
24 know as Charitable Prosperity.
25 And, Chairman Jones, your eyes were

1 two of the first eyes to see it, if
2 you remember.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES: I do
4 remember, Mr. Bullock. I do
5 remember.

6 MR. BULLOCK: But what you
7 guys did three years ago was
8 different. It has the potential to
9 be transformational. To create a
10 public-private partnership that is
11 committed to lifting 100,000
12 Philadelphians out of poverty by
13 2025 is what Council President
14 Clarke called your moonshot. This
15 type of partnership is also the
16 first of its kind. I don't know if
17 you guys knew that.

18 The Poverty Action Fund
19 supports organizations like mine
20 and other grassroots community-led
21 programs in being more
22 collaborative while doing our work.
23 We understand that no one
24 organization can solve our most
25 pressing problems alone. So for

1 example, my organization is the
2 lead for South Broad partnership.

3 Partners who are part of my
4 group include Anton Moore and Unity
5 in the Community, SEAMAAC, Campaign
6 for Working Families, Community
7 Legal Services, Benefits Data
8 Trust, Cambodian Association of
9 Greater Philadelphia, Juntos and
10 even Puentes de Salud. Together we
11 support and connect South Philly
12 residents to an array of benefits
13 to build economic stability.

14 We also are expanding
15 housing, counseling and economic
16 empowerment programs. None of this
17 would be possible without the
18 funding from City Council and your
19 partnership with the United Way.
20 And I think LaTrista pointed that
21 out earlier too. This funding
22 allows me to expand partnerships
23 with organizations like Unity in
24 Community. GPCA brings
25 organizational capacity and

1 programmatic expertise while Anton
2 Moore and Unity in the Community is
3 the best grassroots community-
4 organizing organization in the City
5 hands down.

6 For a number of years,
7 Thoia Nguyen from SEAMAAC and I
8 we've been trying to figure out how
9 we could work together to better
10 serve all of South Philly. Thoia
11 wanted to offer his services in
12 Point Breeze where the constituents
13 are predominantly Black and SEAMAAC
14 did not have the cultural bandwidth
15 to get into the community. I
16 wanted to ensure that GPCA was
17 adequately serving the Latino and
18 Southeast Asian population in South
19 Philly. But like Thoia, my
20 organization did not have the
21 cultural bandwidth to do so.

22 Then along came the Poverty
23 Action Fund. This funding serves
24 as a catalyst for organizations
25 like SEAMAAC, GPCA, Unity in

1 Community and many others to do
2 exactly what my mission says,
3 ensure that equitable distribution
4 of resources to vulnerable children
5 and families and communities and we
6 couldn't do it without this
7 funding.

8 Three years ago City
9 Council made a promise, a promise
10 to lift 100,000 Philadelphians out
11 of poverty by 2025. It was a bold
12 promise. It has potential to be
13 transformational. However, our
14 work is not done yet as you said
15 earlier, Chairman and Ricky Duncan,
16 we're not done yet.

17 And, Chairman, I
18 respectfully request that Council
19 keep its promise to continue
20 funding the Poverty Action Fund,
21 and I appreciate all your time.
22 Thank you.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES:
24 Mr. Bullock, thank you for your
25 continued work in this space. I

1 would also be remiss if I didn't
2 mention former Councilwoman Marie
3 Quinones-Sanchez who worked with
4 President Clarke on this
5 moonshot --

6 MR. BULLOCK: She did.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: -- and
8 it's an incredible thing that you
9 see the fruits of that labor in
10 what you guys are doing citywide.
11 So I want you to know that we are
12 working behind the scenes as we try
13 to keep our promise. All right.

14 MR. BULLOCK: I appreciate
15 that, Chairman.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
17 you for your testimony.

18 MR. BULLOCK: It was good
19 seeing you.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: You know
21 how it goes. You know how it goes.

22 MR. BULLOCK: Yes, sir.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES:
24 Mr. Glass, is there anyone else
25 here?

1 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
2 Councilmember Thomas would like to
3 be recognized.

4 THE CHAIR: Member Thomas,
5 please proceed.

6 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Thank
7 you, Mr. Chair.

8 I just wanted to take a
9 moment to thank the organizations
10 that have come before Council today
11 to testify as it relates to the
12 importance of the work that they're
13 doing around violence prevention
14 and (inaudible). I know it's very
15 difficult to take time out of your
16 day to come to testify.

17 This is just a sentiment to
18 what I said earlier. Another
19 example of Councilmembers having
20 their ears on the things that we
21 could invest that's important to
22 the City of Philadelphia that has a
23 direct impact on quality-of-life
24 issues. Listening to Mr. Moore,
25 Mr. Bullock and Mr. Duncan and

1 other organizations that were
2 represented here today, it's
3 imperative that we put ourselves in
4 a position talking about making
5 investments that's not recurring
6 costs, that we're investing in
7 things that we know will make
8 Philadelphia a better place and
9 this is just again another example
10 of Councilmembers saying this is
11 something that is important that we
12 need and the Administration
13 offering some type of pushback.

14 So I'm not questioning
15 anybody's intentions because we all
16 are trying our best to make
17 Philadelphia the greatest city that
18 it could possibly be, but I really
19 have to just take a moment to just
20 communicate my support for these
21 organizations, communicate my
22 support to continue to invest in
23 addressing this issue of poverty,
24 my support in advocating and
25 fighting for the Poverty Action

1 Fund.

2 So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 I appreciate it. And thank you to
4 all the other organizations that
5 were represented here today as it
6 relates to the work that you do to
7 improve our City. Thank you,
8 everybody.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
10 you, Member Thomas.

11 Chair recognizes Member
12 Johnson.

13 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yeah.
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 I just wanted to
16 acknowledge the hard work of
17 Mr. Otis Bullock. That
18 organization that he represents,
19 former Diversified Community
20 Services, is in Point Breeze, South
21 Philadelphia and I've seen
22 firsthand him and his team's
23 dedication to addressing the issue
24 of poverty, but most importantly
25 improving the quality of life of

1 our young people in South
2 Philadelphia. So I just wanted to
3 take a moment to thank him.

4 I see that again South
5 Philadelphia organizations are
6 running a table on being advocates
7 on the front line day in and day
8 out, addressing the quality of life
9 of the neighborhoods here in the
10 City of Philadelphia and most
11 importantly having a unified front
12 on how we move this great city
13 forward. So I just wanted to
14 acknowledge their hard work and
15 dedication, acknowledge the work
16 that the Philadelphia Promise is
17 doing as we move forward.

18 Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Chair.

20 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
21 you, and thank you for the work
22 that they do. It's felt citywide.
23 It's felt citywide.

24 Mr. Glass, who do we have
25 next?

1 THE CLERK: Chairman, our
2 next witness is Gretjen Clausing.

3 COUNCILMAN JONES:
4 Ms. Clausing, are you connected?
5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILMAN JONES:
7 Ms. Clausing?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Can we
10 go to the next witness, Mr. Glass.

11 THE CLERK: Yes,
12 Mr. Chairman.

13 Our next witness will be
14 Mike Banks.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES:
16 Mr. Banks, are you connected?

17 MR. BANKS: Yes, I am.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
19 you. Good afternoon. Thank you
20 for your patience. Please state
21 your name for the record and begin
22 your testimony.

23 MR. BANKS: Sure. Thank
24 you, Chairperson Jones. My name is
25 Michael Banks, Executive Director

1 of The Promise. And before I go to
2 my official remarks, I definitely
3 want to thank all those that stuck
4 around to testify about the impact
5 that we're having in the City
6 through The Promise. I think their
7 patience and their perseverance
8 speaks to the impact that everyone
9 is having in the community, and I
10 thank you for your time today.

11 So good afternoon,
12 Chairperson Jones and other members
13 of the Committee on Appropriations.
14 I am Michael Banks, Executive
15 Director of The Promise, the
16 Philadelphia Poverty Action Fund.
17 I'm here today to provide remarks
18 regarding Bill No. 230676,
19 authorizing transfers and
20 appropriations for Fiscal Year
21 2024.

22 I always welcome the
23 opportunity to speak before this
24 great body, not just because I
25 think of you as friends and valued

1 colleagues, but because I know that
2 your priorities are the shared
3 priorities of myself and of The
4 Promise to the Philadelphians out
5 of poverty. It was, in fact, City
6 Council nearly four years that
7 released its groundbreaking Poverty
8 Action Plan.

9 At that time, Council
10 President Darrell L. Clarke called
11 this our City's moonshot moment.
12 Out of that plan was born The
13 Promise, the Philadelphia Poverty
14 Action Fund, and its public-private
15 partnership has moved forward. The
16 Promise is immensely grateful for
17 the 20 million in City funds
18 received to date. These
19 contributions support a larger tax
20 base, improved neighborhoods,
21 reduce crime, expand our workforce
22 and produce more dollars for
23 education.

24 Dalila Wilson-Scott,
25 governing Board member of The

1 Promise, will soon highlight the
2 tremendous results of our Family
3 Stability challenge. But first, I
4 would like to talk about a
5 different major initiative of The
6 Promise, our Jobs and Opportunity
7 challenge. This work helps the
8 many Philadelphians with prior
9 criminal records find employment.
10 The results are equally
11 significant.

12 We have helped 36 clinics
13 on record clearing attended by more
14 than \$5,000 individuals. 1700 of
15 them were able to meet with the
16 attorneys and two-thirds of them
17 are eligible to move forward with a
18 record sealing expungement and/or a
19 pardon. You can read these
20 accomplishments of our PowerPoint
21 presentation and the fourth and
22 fifth pages detail those results.
23 This work in turn allows people to
24 get on with their lives to expand
25 their employment opportunities and

1 to avoid the difficult cycle of
2 joblessness and further
3 incarceration.

4 We are grateful to the
5 organizations that hosted those
6 clinics and to our legal partners,
7 Community Legal Services, the
8 Defender's Association and
9 Philadelphia Lawyers for Social
10 Equity. Both the Families Philly
11 challenge and Jobs Opportunity
12 challenge demonstrate how the
13 City's investments have already
14 yielded huge returns changing lives
15 and providing folks for
16 (inaudible). And that is why the
17 appropriation before you now for 10
18 million in Fiscal Year '24 makes
19 sense for Philadelphia in multiple
20 ways.

21 It is an investment that
22 demonstrates that we in the
23 community have long known.
24 Philadelphia City Council is
25 committed to eradicating

1 (inaudible).

2 Councilmembers as I speak
3 before you today, I cannot help but
4 think back to my upbringing to
5 better understand how I personally
6 feel so strongly about the value of
7 The Promise and impact of its work.
8 You see, I relate to the feelings
9 and experience of many served by
10 The Promise.

11 I was born in North
12 Philadelphia raised by a single mom
13 in the 5th District. I understand
14 that when poverty is all you know,
15 all you have seen, you do not
16 always see a path out. What is out
17 when you do not have resources,
18 role models or experiences others
19 do.

20 Growing up even though we
21 were poor and often struggled, we
22 worked hard. My mother was always
23 working and I excelled in school.
24 An honor roll student since I was
25 in 3rd grade. Education was going

1 to be my path out. (Inaudible)
2 until I was 17 years with
3 scholarships and potential colleges
4 line up, I was arrested and faced
5 multiple legal charges.

6 I knew I was innocent, but
7 the interesting thing was it didn't
8 matter how many times that I said I
9 am not guilty, no one believed me.
10 I learned that the innocent until
11 proven guilty narrative is not
12 applicable to people of color,
13 especially for those not in
14 poverty. This experience nearly
15 broke me. I was lucky and as lucky
16 as I could be in my situation.

17 My mother who was working
18 as a crossing guard at that time,
19 she met a lawyer who was willing to
20 take my case for very little money
21 and I thankfully ultimately found
22 not guilty. Still I had a record
23 and still learned I needed
24 something called an expungement.
25 Again, we were poor. My community

1 was poor. Not many of us knew what
2 expungement was and I certainly did
3 not know. I was a lucky that I had
4 a lawyer, a resource and someone to
5 walk me through the process towards
6 a full expungement, finding
7 employment opportunities and
8 rebuilding my life.

9 That's what The Promise is
10 here to do, to be that resource for
11 our neighbors. In this role, it is
12 amazing to think of the folks I
13 have been able to serve and
14 wishfully offer some level of hope
15 that I received. At times I
16 struggle and I think why did I get
17 out, why didn't I end up like many
18 of my friends who couldn't get out
19 of that neighborhood who were never
20 able to escape from that situation.

21 Thinking back, I was lucky
22 to have had help. For others who
23 unfortunately were not as lucky, to
24 know that there are not enough
25 services like the one The Promise

1 coordinates. I'm talking about
2 services that go into those
3 neighborhoods, to offer resources
4 and help people to get out of their
5 situation whatever it may be. That
6 is why the work of The Promise is
7 so important. It gets people
8 economical mobility and support
9 they need to get their life back on
10 track.

11 And with the Chair's
12 permission, I'd now like to hand
13 the floor over to a governing Board
14 member of The Promise, the
15 Philadelphia Action Fund, Dalila
16 Wilson-Scott, Executive Vice-
17 President and Chief Diversity
18 Officer of Comcast Corporation and
19 President of the Comcast NBC
20 universal Foundation. Thank you
21 for your time and your support.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: (Muted).

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
24 you're on mute.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES:

1 Technology. Thank you for your
2 testimony and thank you for your
3 sharing of the mic.

4 Please state your name and
5 begin your testimony.

6 MS. WILSON-SCOTT: Good
7 afternoon, Chair Jones, members of
8 the Committee on Appropriations.
9 Thank you for the opportunity to
10 testify today and to discuss this
11 issue that we all know is critical
12 for our City. My name is Dalila
13 Wilson-Scott, VP and Chief
14 Diversity Officer here at Comcast
15 Corporation and President of our
16 foundation. While Comcast is one
17 of the proud supporters and funders
18 of The Promise, I'm here today in
19 my capacity as Chair and member of
20 the governing Board of The Promise,
21 the Philadelphia Poverty Action
22 Fund and to speak to the request
23 under your consideration.

24 I want to start with a
25 simple fact and, that is, that

1 every single person in this room is
2 thinking about the future of our
3 City, our potential for growth,
4 innovation, good jobs, quality of
5 life, a brighter economic future.
6 And simply put, we can't have a
7 brighter economic future for our
8 City unless we are focused on
9 poverty. It's arguably one of the
10 single largest threats to our
11 City's future and we cannot, will
12 not move forward if we are leaving
13 our most vulnerable behind.

14 Now, this is an area that
15 we have to come together if we want
16 to see real impact. An issue of
17 this scale can only begin to move
18 when multiple sectors come together
19 as we have over these past few
20 years under The Promise umbrella.
21 And while the work is far from
22 complete, The Promise has already
23 become to pay dividends.

24 Mike Banks referenced this
25 earlier, but just one example, in

1 the Family Stability challenge with
2 the help of over 30 grassroots
3 organizations across the City,
4 92,000 clients have been able to
5 draw down 105 million in benefits
6 and tax credits. That's dollars in
7 the pockets of Philadelphians to
8 support their families, 105
9 million. And that's money that
10 would have been left on the table
11 were it not for The Promise and our
12 partners. That's major progress in
13 a small amount of time but there is
14 still so much more work to be done.

15 I would be remiss if I
16 didn't take a moment to thank all
17 of our grantees and partners, some
18 of which you've heard from. And I
19 know we have others today and of
20 course to thank our exceptional
21 leader and Mike Banks. Without
22 them, none of this is possible.

23 The other point that I
24 think is important to note is other
25 cities are watching us. National

1 funders are taking notice, this
2 model, this innovation, public-
3 private partnerships. It's
4 producing results and it's centered
5 on the community that needs it
6 most. It's a model that I think
7 others will seek to replicate and
8 quite frankly I think that funders
9 beyond Philadelphia will want to
10 support it as well. But that will
11 ultimately come to pass if we,
12 ourselves, here in Philadelphia do
13 not continue our investment. We
14 cannot ask others to do what we're
15 not willing to do ourselves.

16 And finally, I can't
17 guarantee that The Promise will
18 eradicate poverty in the next 365
19 days. No one here can. But I do
20 know that if we stop now, if we
21 don't continue this investment,
22 many across our City, those with no
23 safety net, those that many of us
24 here have pledged to serve will
25 have nowhere to turn and will fall

1 deeper into poverty. And our
2 potential as a city, our economic
3 future will never be realized. I
4 know that's the future that none of
5 us want.

6 So with that, thank you for
7 your time today. Thank all of you
8 for your commitment and service to
9 Philadelphia. And with that, that
10 concludes my testimony. Thank you,
11 Chair.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
13 you so very much for your
14 testimony, and thank you for your
15 corporate commitment to ending
16 poverty. When the private sector
17 take steps of embracing the public
18 sector along with nonprofits, we
19 can get stuff done. And so, we
20 will consider this request. You
21 have many, many advocates within
22 Council for it and some outside of
23 Council, Marie Quinones-Sanchez
24 still stalks City Hall to make sure
25 that these funds are appropriated.

1 So thank you for your testimony.

2 And, Mr. Glass, do we have
3 anyone else to testify?

4 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
5 Councilmember Johnson would like to
6 be recognized.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: Member
8 Johnson.

9 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank
10 you very much. I just want to also
11 echo the sentiments of Chairman
12 Jones just commending Mrs. Wilson-
13 Scott and the Comcast Corporation
14 for their commitment in addressing
15 this issue. Comcast is one of the
16 few major Fortune 500 corporations
17 here in the City of Philadelphia
18 that actually stepped up and
19 actually put some skin in the game
20 to actually improve the quality of
21 life for the residents here in the
22 City of Philadelphia. By
23 Mrs. Wilson-Scott participating in
24 this hearing but most importantly
25 being a part of The Promise

1 initiative is a testament to their
2 commitment to move the City of
3 Philadelphia forward. And so, I
4 just wanted to take a moment to
5 thank her and the Comcast
6 Corporation for their dedication
7 for helping us eradicate poverty
8 here in the City of Philadelphia.

9 And most importantly, I
10 want to take a moment to
11 acknowledge my good friend Michael
12 Banks, who always wears his heart
13 on his sleeve, who has a
14 significant commitment to
15 transforming the lives,
16 particularly young people here in
17 the City of Philadelphia, and
18 similar to myself using his lived
19 life experiences of how he
20 transformed his life to help others
21 as a part of his mission and
22 current position with the United
23 Way and being the Executive
24 Director of The Promise initiative.
25 So I just wanted to take a moment

1 to acknowledge them for their hard
2 work and dedication, and obviously
3 I will be supportive for this
4 particular request.

5 Thank you very much,
6 Chairman Jones.

7 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
8 you, Member Johnson.

9 Mr. Glass, who do we have
10 next?

11 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
12 Gretjen Clausing will be our next
13 witness. They are connected.

14 COUNCILMAN JONES:
15 Ms. Clausing, thank you for your
16 patience. Please let me know
17 you're connected and state your
18 name for the record and begin your
19 testimony.

20 COUNCIL TECH SUPPORT:
21 Gretjen, if you want to unmute your
22 mic, you can press star 6.

23 COUNCILMAN JONES: Hello?

24 MS. CLAUSING: Councilman,
25 can you hear me?

1 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, we
2 can.

3 MS. CLAUSING: I --

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes, we
5 can.

6 MS. CLAUSING: Okay. Good
7 afternoon, Chairman Jones and
8 members of the Appropriations
9 Committee. My name is Gretjen
10 Clausing and I'm Executive
11 Directive of the Philadelphia
12 Community Access -- Philadelphia
13 Public Access Corporation also
14 known as PhillyCAM. And I wish I
15 could see you. I'm not sure why I
16 wasn't able to join by video, but I
17 can visualize your (inaudible)
18 Committee to support PhillyCAM's
19 request in the FY2024 middle year
20 transfer.

21 PhillyCAM launched our
22 cable channel back in 2009, has
23 become a valued community resource
24 that provides transformative
25 opportunities for community members

1 that (inaudible) reflective of the
2 experiences of everyday people.
3 Our workshop, our media program
4 (inaudible) provides people with
5 valuable digital media skills and
6 results in Local content that
7 reflects a (inaudible) perspective
8 in individuals that makes our City
9 what it is. And as you know, the
10 15-year Verizon franchise agreement
11 is set to expire in February 2024.
12 As of now, the Philadelphia Law
13 Department offices and other
14 respective consultants, we're
15 negotiating a deal with Verizon and
16 unfortunately that proposed
17 ordinance did not make it to City
18 Council for this session.

19 This means that the
20 agreement will not be passed and
21 we're going to be kind of going
22 into the next year without an
23 agreement in place, which put
24 PhillyCAM in a bit of a vulnerable
25 situation. For the past three

1 years, PhillyCAM has received no
2 funding as a result of the Verizon
3 franchise agreement, and we had
4 planned for that. But now going
5 into Year 4 is becoming more
6 problematic, and it's really
7 limiting our ability to execute our
8 current mission and really make it
9 impossible for us to do any other
10 work that we want to be able to do
11 to expand our reach of our
12 programs.

13 So we are asking Council to
14 consider a way to support our
15 operating costs. We believe that
16 \$350,000 in the midyear transfer
17 will tremendously support our
18 organization while the
19 Administration continues to
20 negotiate the franchise. Money is
21 vital to keep our operation
22 thriving and continuing to make it
23 possible for -- many of the
24 nonprofits that have testified
25 today have been an amazing group of

1 organizations to hear all that
2 they're doing.

3 Many of them are members or
4 carry on PhillyCAM and it's
5 important for us to be able to
6 expand our educational
7 opportunities, meet people where
8 they are in their neighborhoods and
9 allow people to be the stewards of
10 their own areas. And anyway, with
11 that I just want to say our work is
12 really only possible with the
13 support and ways that we all can
14 work together in partnership in the
15 incoming year and the new
16 administration. So thank you so
17 much for your attention this
18 afternoon.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
20 you so much for the work you do. I
21 had the opportunity to see many
22 people come through and be trained
23 by you and your organization. My
24 current (inaudible) person went
25 through a number of your programs

1 and certifications. So thank you,
2 thank you and thank you.

3 MS. CLAUSING: Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES:

5 Mr. Glass, who do we have next?

6 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
7 our next public comment will be
8 Melissa Santiago.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES:

10 Ms. Santiago, are you connected?

11 Good afternoon.

12 MS. SANTIAGO: Yes.

13 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
14 afternoon.

15 MS. SANTIAGO: Good
16 afternoon. Thank you.

17 COUNCILMAN JONES: State
18 your name for the record and begin
19 your testimony.

20 MS. SANTIAGO: Sure. My
21 name is Melissa Santiago. I am the
22 Assets Building Coordinator at
23 Ceiba. Ceiba is (inaudible) in the
24 Latino community in Philadelphia
25 and the backbone of the Latino

1 Equitable Development Collective

2 that Councilwoman Lozada was

3 referring to a few minutes ago.

4 Thank you, Councilwoman Lozada.

5 The Collective brings

6 together 11 Latino nonprofit

7 agencies in the City of

8 Philadelphia to encourage

9 collaboration. And in this

10 Collective we seek to amplify our

11 impact on the community we serve.

12 These include working together as

13 one of the cohorts for The Promise.

14 We believe that by

15 combining together, each

16 organization being The Promise, the

17 Ceiba Latino Equitable Collective

18 service delivery model allows

19 certain people in the immediate

20 need by also connecting them to a

21 pipeline for opportunities for

22 personal transformation.

23 The Collective believes

24 that this is essential to creating

25 opportunities in the community. A

1 place that is (inaudible) by
2 affordable housing, great schools,
3 safe streets, creative spaces and a
4 (inaudible) community life. I
5 would like to highlight one of our
6 clients by the name of Alexander,
7 which he is a Venezuelan immigrant
8 who fled his country due to the
9 political and economic turmoil.

10 He was able to obtain much
11 needed assistance from The Promise
12 when he arrived in Philadelphia in
13 the summer of 2022. Upon his
14 arrival to the U.S. he was
15 undocumented, homeless, jobless and
16 hopeless. Ceiba helped him apply
17 for an ID and tax ID number that
18 helps immigrants pay their taxes.
19 Ceiba also connected him with a
20 lawyer to assist in his immigration
21 process.

22 Once his (inaudible) was
23 approved by the IRS, he was able to
24 secure not only a job but also save
25 his apartment as he was behind on

1 his rent and facing eviction. He's
2 able to afford his rent. He's a
3 responsible taxpayer and an active
4 member of society. By working
5 alongside people like Alexander, we
6 can expand the economy allowing
7 those experiencing poverty to
8 support themselves and contribute
9 more to their communities.

10 This contribution supports
11 our larger tax base neighborhood
12 improvement, reducing crime,
13 workforce expansion and more
14 dollars to invest in education. I
15 believe that dismantling poverty
16 and changing Philadelphia's
17 reputation as the poorest big city
18 in the nation, The Promise and its
19 partners must be adequately funded.

20 Philadelphia Councilmembers
21 who have long championed these
22 goals are encouraged to allocate
23 funding to The Promise in support
24 to this transitional partnership
25 and proven successes. With budget

1 decisions being made at this
2 moment, City Council's commitment
3 to funding The Promise helps secure
4 a promising future for our City.
5 Thank you for your attention and we
6 look forward to working with you on
7 this and other opportunities to
8 build a better Philadelphia.
9 Gracias, thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
11 you for -- I'm sure Councilmember
12 Lozada wants to be recognized.

13 Member Lozada, are you
14 there?

15 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Yes,
16 I am.

17 Thank you Melissa. I want
18 to reiterate my support for this
19 request. I've seen very directly
20 the work of the Collaborative on
21 the ground. Organizations like
22 Ceiba and Esperanza, Aciente, APM,
23 HACE, all of them have a very
24 strong commitment to the people of
25 that community and beyond because

1 each one of those organizations
2 while they are in very centralized
3 parts of the 7th Council District
4 have always been willing to work
5 with and serve the constituents
6 across the City of Philadelphia.
7 And so, I'm grateful.

8 As many of you know, many
9 of us here on Council who were
10 elected as a result of a Special
11 Election last November today are
12 celebrating our first year
13 anniversary. And so, it has been
14 an honor for me to serve as an
15 elected to the residents of the 7th
16 Council District, but more of an
17 honor to work alongside
18 organizations like that of the
19 Collective, the Ceiba Collective
20 who always have (inaudible) when
21 serving and addressing the needs of
22 the residents of the 7th Council
23 District.

24 And so, I can't speak
25 enough to the need that we have in

1 the District and how important this
2 request is. It will transform the
3 lives of many not just in the 7th
4 but across the City of
5 Philadelphia. And so, I ask that
6 we seriously consider this request
7 and do whatever we possibly can to
8 ensure that we continue to improve
9 the quality of life not just for
10 the residents of the 7th Council
11 District but for all of those
12 individuals who are served by the
13 work of the Poverty Action Fund.
14 Thank you so much.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
16 you, Member Lozada. I echo your
17 comments. It is citywide. It is
18 impactful. It spreads to every
19 part of the City of Philadelphia,
20 so thank you.

21 Mr. Glass, who is our next
22 person to testify?

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
24 our next witness is Jay Grant.

25 COUNCILMAN JONES:

1 Mr. Grant, good afternoon. Are you
2 connected?

3 MR. GRANT: Yes.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes.

5 State your name for the record and
6 please begin your testimony.

7 MR. GRANT: Good morning.

8 My name is -- good afternoon.

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good
10 afternoon.

11 MR. GRANT: My name is Jay
12 Grant. And I came to The Promise
13 by way of The Elevation Project. I
14 participated in the record-clearing
15 clinic in 2022. On October 24,
16 2021, I was doing a double shift at
17 the MSB Building. I received a
18 distressing phone call informing me
19 of a shooting that took place at my
20 home. Racing back, I found my
21 house riddled with 43 bullets, my
22 wife shot in the head and my
23 children in danger.

24 Regardless of my desire to
25 protect my family, my criminal

1 record rendered me helpless in that
2 crucial moment. Later I discovered
3 a record-clearing program on
4 Instagram, a social media platform,
5 by The Elevation Project.

6 Skeptical but hopeful, I contacted
7 a representative. I filled out the
8 questionnaire and began the
9 process.

10 Last month stating that my
11 expungement as of June 26, 2023 I
12 received an unexpected early
13 birthday present that continues to
14 give me for the rest of my life, an
15 expungement. Eager to contribute
16 to the program, I called my
17 representative Ms. Webb expressing
18 my willingness to share my story.
19 As a child, I made regrettable
20 choices. Poverty will do that.
21 But this program did the groundwork
22 allowing me to move forward,
23 married for 15 years, a homeowner
24 and crime-free.

25 I owe much to The Promise

1 confirming that I can be anything
2 that I want to for my family with a
3 fresh start. I contemplated
4 careers as a 911 emergency
5 operator. I just want to say thank
6 you to everybody here, The Promise,
7 you, Councilperson, and Kenyatta
8 Johnson and everybody here.

9 I just want to say thank
10 you and I really appreciate this
11 chance in which you guys done for
12 me. And I'm living my second
13 childhood but I'm grown now. Thank
14 you.

15 COUNCILMAN JONES: It's
16 okay --

17 MR. GRANT: Thank you so
18 much.

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
20 you for that insightful testimony
21 and the personal story that you
22 gave us. And I'm glad that the
23 program has helped you. Thank you
24 so much for your testimony.

25 Mr. Glass.

1 THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman,
2 that was our final witness for
3 public comment and our final
4 witness for this panel. Next up we
5 will have to move into our public
6 meeting. Because there is an
7 anticipation of continued
8 negotiations, we will have to
9 recess with a motion.

10 COUNCILMAN JONES: I
11 recognize Councilman Johnson for a
12 motion to recess Member Johnson.

13 (No response.)

14 COUNCILMAN JONES: Okay.
15 Who do we have on?

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS: Chair,
17 Councilmember Thomas is here. Do
18 you need me to make a motion for --

19 COUNCILMAN JONES: Yes.
20 Would you make a motion so that we
21 can recess until 4:30, sir?

22 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
23 Mr. Chair, I make a motion that we
24 recess the current hearing until we
25 are ready to reconnect and go back

1 to our public meeting.

2 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA:

3 Second.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: That
5 will be at 4:30 p.m. approximately.

6 All those in favor will
7 signify by saying aye.

8 (Aye.)

9 COUNCILMAN JONES: All
10 those opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILMAN JONES: The ayes
13 have it. This Committee on
14 Appropriations will stand in recess
15 until 4:30 p.m. today.

16 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: Thank
17 you.

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank
19 you for your patience guys. And
20 for the record, for all those who
21 waited to testify who started at
22 10:30, we started about a half hour
23 earlier, okay, so we can relate.
24 Thank you all.

25 COUNCILWOMAN LOZADA: We're

1 going to get it done.

2 COUNCILMAN JONES: All

3 right.

4 (Recess.)

5 COUNCILMAN JONES: Good

6 evening, everyone. This is a

7 continuation of the public hearing

8 of the Committee on Appropriations

9 from earlier. We will now conclude

10 that public hearing and go into our

11 public meeting. I thank everyone

12 for their testimony. Thank you for

13 your patience. And as people exit

14 or who may have stayed on, can we

15 then call the roll to establish a

16 quorum for the public meeting.

17 Mr. Glass.

18 THE CLERK: Yes,

19 Mr. Chairman.

20 Councilmember Thomas.

21 (No response.)

22 THE CLERK: Councilmember

23 O'Neill.

24 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:

25 Present.

1 THE CLERK: Councilmember

2 Lozada.

3 (No response.)

4 THE CLERK: Councilmember

5 Gilmore Richardson.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Good afternoon,

8 Mr. Chair and colleagues. I am

9 present.

10 THE CLERK: Vice-Chairman

11 Johnson.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:

13 Present.

14 THE CLERK: And, Chairman

15 Jones.

16 COUNCILMAN JONES: Present.

17 Does that establish a quorum,

18 Mr. Glass?

19 THE CLERK: Yes,

20 Mr. Chairman. A quorum has been

21 established.

22 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank

23 you very much.

24 Can I call on a motion from

25 Member Johnson, Vice-Chair.

1 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON:

2 Mr. Chair, I would like to make a
3 motion that we recess until
4 Thursday, November 30th at
5 8:30 a.m.

6 COUNCILMAN JONES: Is there
7 a second?

8 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
9 Second.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
11 RICHARDSON: Second.

12 COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: It has
13 been moved and properly seconded
14 that we recess until 8:30, Thursday
15 morning.

16 All those in favor?
17 (Aye.)

18 COUNCILMAN JONES: All
19 those opposed?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILMAN JONES: The ayes
22 have it.

23 Thank you all for a very
24 long day and look forward to
25 concluding our business on

1 Thursday, 8:00 a.m. Thank you all.

2 THE CLERK: Thank you,

3 Mr. Chairman.

4 COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank

5 you.

6 (Hearing concluded at

7 2:30 p.m.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T I O N

2 I, hereby certify that the proceedings
3 and evidence noted are contained fully and
4 accurately in the stenographic notes taken by
5 me in the foregoing matter, and that this is
6 a correct transcript of the same.
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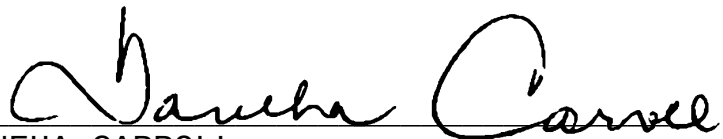
17

18 (The foregoing certification of this
19 transcript does not apply to any reproduction
20 of the same by any means, unless under the
21 direct control and/or supervision of the
22 certifying reporter.)

23

24

25

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Taneha Carroll". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Taneha" and the last name "Carroll" clearly distinguishable.

TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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