

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, March 3, 2026
10:18 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILWOMAN KATHERINE GILMORE RICHARDSON, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS, VICE-CHAIR
COUNCILMAN MIKE DRISCOLL
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR.
COUNCILMAN ISAIAH THOMAS

BILLS: 250769, 251066, 260021, 260112,
260113

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COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

RICHARDSON: Good morning. Good morning. Thank you all so much for being here. I now note that the hour has come to begin today's hearing.

Clerk, will you please call the roll to take attendance. Members who are in attendance will please indicate that you are present when your name is called.

THE CLERK:
Councilmember Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES:
Present.

THE CLERK:
Councilmember Thomas.

COUNCILMAN THOMAS:
Present.

THE CLERK:
Councilmember Ahmad.

(No response.)

THE CLERK:

1 Councilmember Driscoll.

2 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

3 Present.

4 THE CLERK: Vice-Chair

5 Bass.

6 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

7 Present.

8 THE CLERK: Chair

9 Gilmore Richardson.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: I am present. Thank
12 you. A quorum of this committee is
13 present and the hearing is now
14 called to order. This is the
15 public hearing of the Committee on
16 Finance regarding Bill Nos. 250769,
17 251066, 260021, 260112 and 260113.

18 Clerk, will you please
19 read the title of the bills.

20 THE CLERK: Bill No.
21 250769, an ordinance amending Title
22 20 of The Philadelphia Code,
23 entitled "Officers and Employees"
24 by changing the compensation of

1 members of the Zoning Board of
2 Adjustment, all under certain terms
3 and conditions.

4 Bill No. 260112, an
5 ordinance authorizing, generally,
6 the continued issuance and sale by
7 the City of Philadelphia of Gas
8 Works Revenue Notes of the City,
9 prescribing the forms of notes and
10 providing for their execution and
11 payment, pledging certain revenues
12 of the Gas Works as security,
13 adopting a rate covenant and
14 directing the imposition and
15 collection of rates and charges
16 sufficient to comply therewith,
17 prescribing the conditions
18 precedent to the issuance of
19 specific series of notes, including
20 a resolution passed by the Bond
21 Committee providing for
22 establishment of credit support for
23 notes, providing for designation of
24 a fiscal agent and sinking fund

1 depository, providing for
2 establishment of a sinking fund and
3 its management, providing remedies
4 upon default, and providing for
5 amendments and modifications.

6 Bill No. 260113, an
7 ordinance authorizing the
8 execution, delivery and performance
9 by the Philadelphia Facilities
10 Management Corporation on behalf of
11 the Philadelphia Gas Works of an
12 amended Service Agreement with
13 Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line
14 Company, LLC for gas storage
15 services under the Transco WSS Open
16 Access Rate Schedule.

17 Bill No. 251066, an
18 ordinance authorizing the
19 Commissioner of Records and the
20 Procurement Commissioner, on behalf
21 of the City, to execute a multi-
22 year concession agreement with
23 Ancestry.com in connection with the
24 digitizing, indexing, and public

1 access and search of City of
2 Philadelphia Department of Records
3 vital records, all under provisions
4 set forth in the concession
5 agreement substantially as set
6 forth in Exhibit A to this
7 ordinance.

8 And Bill No. 260021, an
9 ordinance amending Chapter 19-1700
10 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled
11 "Finance, Taxes and Collections" to
12 amend excluded transactions to the
13 realty transfer tax, all under
14 certain terms and conditions.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
16 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
17 very much. We will now proceed
18 with the panel and witnesses on
19 Bill No. 250769.

20 Clerk, will you please
21 call the first panel we have to
22 testify on Bill No. 250769.

23 THE CLERK: Ian
24 Haggerty, Executive Director of

1 Zoning Board of Adjustment.

2 (Witness approached
3 witness table.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Good morning. Thank
6 you so much for being here. Please
7 state your name for the record and
8 proceed with your testimony.

9 MR. HAGGERTY: Good
10 morning, Chairperson Gilmore
11 Richardson. My name is Ian
12 Haggerty and I am the Executive
13 Director at the Zoning Board of
14 Adjustment. Good morning, members
15 of the Finance Committee. I'm here
16 representing the Zoning Board of
17 Adjustment from the Department of
18 Planning and Development. Thank
19 you so much for the opportunity to
20 testify on this bill today. This
21 is an important piece to the ZBA
22 puzzle, so welcome any questions
23 you have at the conclusion of my
24 testimony.

1 This was introduced by
2 Councilmember Gauthier on September
3 18, 2025. Bill No. 250769 will
4 raise the annual cap on the
5 compensation of the members of the
6 Zoning Board of Adjustment from
7 \$22,000 per year to \$27,000 per
8 year. Should note that while this
9 bill changes the total maximum
10 board compensation, it does not
11 change the per-session
12 compensation. Board members
13 currently receive \$100 per session,
14 as they have since the last
15 compensation ordinance was passed
16 in 1988.

17 This bill is one of many
18 data-driven changes that the ZBA
19 has promoted to streamline the
20 process and reduce the amount of
21 time that it takes to receive a
22 board decision. We've reviewed and
23 made significant changes to our
24 internal processes for intake and

1 post-hearing processing. We've
2 also added some new supports for
3 our first-time applicants and added
4 additional Tuesday sessions to make
5 the process more efficient.

6 These efforts have
7 drastically cut the wait time to
8 get on the ZBA calendar by about 43
9 days for regular appeals and 48 for
10 accelerated appeals, with the goal
11 of continuing to build on these
12 reforms and improvements. While
13 most of our gains have been made
14 through efficient clearing of
15 cases, we're also interested in
16 eliminating barriers to holding
17 more hearings.

18 One such barrier is the
19 compensation of our board members.
20 This bill allows us to create
21 additional hearing capacity for
22 major contested cases and other
23 unexpected demands on the board's
24 time. For example, last year the

1 board held an ad hoc meeting for a
2 set of appeals by the Philadelphia
3 Housing Authority to allow that
4 agency to meet a stringent funding
5 deadline.

6 Extra meetings like this
7 allow the Board to absorb time-
8 sensitive appeals without adding
9 delays to the many cases that are
10 waiting for their hearing date in
11 our hearing queue. Proposed
12 increase in annual compensation
13 ensures the Board members will be
14 paid for their time if such extra
15 meetings need to be added.

16 Regarding fiscal impact,
17 the anticipated cost of the city is
18 at most \$35,000 per year, which is
19 5000 each ZBA seat. The maximum
20 would only be reached if we were to
21 hold hearings every Tuesday and
22 Wednesday throughout the year,
23 which is not anticipated. For
24 context, we are limited by the

1 availability of our room and the
2 Board members' time, and we
3 generally set our meeting dates in
4 July for the following calendar
5 year.

6 We expect that the
7 additional compensation costs will
8 not exceed the current cap this
9 fiscal year. And in coming years,
10 we anticipate that additional costs
11 will be covered with our
12 department's Class 100 personnel
13 underspend and will have minimal
14 impact on the Department of
15 Planning and Development's budget.
16 Thank you so much for the
17 opportunity to testify and welcome
18 any questions.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
20 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
21 very much for your testimony, and
22 thank you for detailing that this
23 increase would be covered by
24 underspend.

1 I wanted to go back to
2 the beginning of your testimony
3 relative to not changing the
4 per-session rate. So per session
5 at \$100 will remain the same,
6 correct?

7 MR. HAGGERTY: That's
8 correct.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
10 RICHARDSON: The increase is really
11 to address, as an example, an ad
12 hoc meeting that needs to occur or
13 to help with ensuring that we're
14 able to hear more cases?

15 MR. HAGGERTY: Correct.
16 If I have to ask my Board members
17 to come in for an extra day of
18 hearings, I want to make sure that
19 they'll get their paycheck.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Received. Okay.

22 Are there any additional
23 questions for this witness?

24 (No response.)

1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Seeing none, we thank
3 you very much for being here today
4 and we thank you for providing your
5 testimony.

6 Is there anyone else
7 here to testify on Bill No. 250769?

8 (No response.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Okay. And there being
11 no further panels on Bill No.
12 250769, we will now proceed with
13 Bill No. 260112.

14 Clerk, will you please
15 call the roll of the first witness
16 or first panel we have.

17 THE CLERK: Jacqueline
18 Dunn, City Treasurer; Gemela
19 McClendon, Executive Director
20 Philadelphia Gas Commission. Also
21 available for questions are
22 representatives for PGW.

23 (Witnesses approached
24 witness table.)

1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Excellent. Okay. You
3 can proceed. You can come to the
4 witness table. Thank you. We have
5 you on our first panel, so you can
6 state your names for the record and
7 you can proceed with your
8 testimony.

9 MS. McCLENDON: I'm
10 sorry. Just to clarify, I'm here
11 to testify on 260113.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: 3.

14 MS. McCLENDON: Yes.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: Okay. So just state
17 your name for the record really
18 quickly so we can have that for the
19 stenographer.

20 MS. McCLENDON: Gemela
21 McClendon, Executive Director of
22 the Philadelphia Gas Commission.

23 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

24 RICHARDSON: Excellent. We will

1 call you back up for 260113 along
2 with the panel for 113. Okay.

3 Thank you very much.

4 All right. So for Bill
5 No. 260112, we have our City
6 Treasurer. You can state your name
7 for the record and proceed with
8 your testimony.

9 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

10 Good morning, Chair Gilmore
11 Richardson and members of the
12 Finance Committee. My name is
13 Jackie Dunn, City Treasurer. And
14 with me this morning are Matt
15 Bowman, Deputy Treasurer; and
16 Joseph Golden, Executive Vice-
17 President and Acting CFO of the
18 Philadelphia Gas Works at PGW.

19 I'm here to testify
20 today in favor of Bill 260112.
21 This bill would provide
22 authorization to issue gas works
23 revenue notes in an aggregate
24 principal amount not to exceed \$150

1 million outstanding at any one
2 time. PGW has had a commercial
3 paper notes program in place since
4 at least 1998 and the existing
5 authorization for the working
6 capital portion is due to expire
7 later this year.

8 This ordinance extends
9 the program authorization for an
10 additional five-year period.
11 Proceeds from the sale of the notes
12 shall be used to finance working
13 capital demands of PGW as well as
14 to pay cost of issuance or
15 capitalized interest on the notes.
16 The authorization provides PGW with
17 financial flexibility should the
18 need arise. Though PGW has not
19 drawn on this element of the
20 program since 2009, the program
21 would preserve access to short-term
22 financing at competitive interest
23 rates in the event of an unforeseen
24 financial or liquidity need.

1 Commercial paper has
2 maturities of up to 270 days and is
3 backed by a letter of credit or a
4 revolving line of credit. The
5 Administration recommends adoption
6 of this ordinance and respectfully
7 requests that the Committee give
8 this bill its favorable
9 recommendation and further that the
10 Committee recommends that the rules
11 of Council be suspended so as to
12 permit first reading of the bill at
13 the next session of Council. Thank
14 you for your consideration and
15 we're happy to answer any questions
16 that you may have.

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
18 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
19 all very much for being here today
20 and for meeting with my office in
21 advance, as we always do, to
22 address any questions that we have.

23 For the record, for this
24 hearing I wanted to review the

1 credit rating of PGW, you know, the
2 City and PGW. We have continuously
3 worked to improve our credit rating
4 over the years. And so, for the
5 record can you highlight what the
6 current credit rating is for PGW?

7 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

8 Sure. The Philadelphia Gas Works
9 is currently single 'A' rated by
10 the agencies.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Excellent. And can
13 you talk about some of the
14 projected interest rates for some
15 of the projects that you're sort of
16 referring to potentially?

17 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

18 Sure. So the commercial paper
19 program is a tool, in this element
20 the working capital portion.

21 Fortunately, PGW has not needed to
22 draw on the program in quite some
23 time. It's there for emergencies.

24 The current program that we have in

1 place, the annual fee is 12 basis
2 points. And that was from 2021
3 when rates were quite low.

4 Fortunately, rates,
5 while a lot has happened over five
6 years, we're in an open RFP period
7 and we've still gotten competitive
8 bids from potential respondents.
9 So we expect to stay relatively in
10 line with that schedule.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Okay. And so, you say
13 you're in the open period now.
14 Have you begun to receive
15 responses?

16 CITY TREASURER DUNN: We
17 have, yes.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: Okay. And how many?
20 I know you can't get into detail.
21 But just how many?

22 CITY TREASURER DUNN:
23 For this program, we received five
24 responses.

1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Okay. And is there
3 any impact relative to commercial
4 paper on the City's debt service?

5 CITY TREASURER DUNN:

6 Yeah. Not related to the overall
7 City's credit. This would be
8 specific to the Philadelphia Gas
9 Works, so the authorization counts
10 towards their debt limits. And if
11 they end up issuing the working
12 capital or the commercial paper
13 portion, that's tracked and
14 reported in their financial
15 reporting.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Okay. Excellent. And
18 then I know you don't know and
19 can't predict the future, but are
20 there any specific projects that
21 you have in mind that you may need
22 to utilize this for?

23 MR. GOLDEN: There are
24 none at this time. I'm sorry.

1 Joseph Golden, Jr.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Okay. And then I
4 noted in your testimony that you
5 haven't needed to draw down on this
6 in quite some time, which is
7 appreciated. But can you give us
8 some examples of past projects?

9 MR. GOLDEN: Yes. This
10 commercial paper program is all
11 utilized to finance inventory and
12 receivables. So as we come into a
13 cold winter like this winter,
14 luckily we had enough cash on hand
15 to support the inventory and the
16 growth in the accounts receivable.
17 Otherwise, that's what it would be
18 utilized for.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: Okay. Excellent. And
21 I will save the last question for
22 the end of the RFP process. But
23 I'm just going to put on the record
24 that we want to ensure that we are

1 working with companies and
2 organizations that look like
3 Philadelphia.

4 All right. I wanted to
5 also recognize Councilman Driscoll,
6 who's here. I know you serve on
7 the Gas Commission and we thank you
8 very much for your work and your
9 service and dedication to our city.
10 Councilman Jones was here as well
11 and will be back after another
12 meeting.

13 Are there any questions
14 for this panel? Any additional
15 questions?

16 (No response.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
19 thank you. Thank you very much for
20 your work and for always working
21 with us in advance. Have a
22 wonderful day.

23 Is there anyone else
24 here to testify on Bill No. 260112?

1 (No response.)

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: All right. Seeing
4 none, we thank you all so much for
5 being here for 260112.

6 We'll now proceed with
7 Bill No. 260113. Will the Clerk
8 please call the panel and the three
9 witnesses that we have for Bill No.
10 260113.

11 THE CLERK: Daniel
12 Cassidy, Vice-President of
13 Technical Operations PGW; Gemela
14 McClendon, Executive Director of
15 PGW, Philadelphia Gas Commission.

16 (Witnesses approached
17 witness table.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you.
20 Thank you very much. Please state
21 your name for the record and
22 proceed with your testimony.

23 MR. CASSIDY: My name is
24 Dan Cassidy, Vice-President of

1 Technical Operations for the
2 Philadelphia Gas Works. Good
3 morning, Chairwoman Gilmore
4 Richardson and members of City
5 Council's Committee on Finance.
6 I'm appearing today on behalf of
7 PGW in support of Bill No. 260113,
8 which approves an amendment to a
9 service agreement under rate
10 schedule Washington Storage Service
11 or WSS with Transcontinental Pipe
12 Gas Pipeline Company LLC, also
13 known as Transco.

14 In 2001, PGW first
15 entered into a natural gas storage
16 agreement with Transco, which has
17 continued since on a year-to-year
18 basis with amendments in 2011. In
19 2024, Transco sought approval from
20 the Federal Energy Regulatory
21 Commission or FERC to adjust its
22 service terms, resulting in a
23 settlement with PGW.

24 Under the new

1 settlement, PGW has the right to
2 elect a rate and term option that
3 began in 2025. The current service
4 agreement with Transco is set to
5 expire on April 1, 2026 to continue
6 benefiting from the chosen rates.
7 Transco has offered PGW an
8 extension of the agreement through
9 April 1, 2035, which would lock in
10 rates that protect PGW and its
11 ratepayers from marketplace price
12 fluctuations. PGW must seek final
13 approval to enter into this
14 agreement no later than March 31,
15 2025.

16 This service agreement
17 extension insulates PGW from market
18 price fluctuations and penalties
19 and better ensures reliability for
20 our ratepayers for the next decade.
21 I have submitted written testimony
22 with further details about the
23 service agreement extension, and I
24 am happy to answer any questions

1 you may have. Also, PGW
2 respectfully requests that the
3 committee give this bill a
4 favorable recommendation and
5 further that the committee
6 recommends that the rules of
7 Council be suspended so as to
8 permit the first reading of these
9 bills at the next Council session.

10 On behalf of PGW, I
11 would like to thank the Gas
12 Commission and staff for their work
13 and timely consideration of this
14 matter. I, too, am grateful to
15 City Council for its past support
16 of our efforts to serve the
17 ratepayers of Philadelphia.

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
19 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
20 very much.

21 You can state your name
22 for the record and proceed with
23 your testimony.

24 MS. McCLENDON: My name

1 Gemela McClendon. I'm the
2 Executive Director of the
3 Philadelphia Gas Commission. Good
4 morning, Chairwoman Gilmore
5 Richardson and members of the
6 committee. We appreciate this
7 opportunity to testify in support
8 of Bill No. 260113, which embodies
9 the recommendations unanimously
10 adopted at the Gas Commission's
11 public meeting held on January 13,
12 2026.

13 This testimony
14 supplements the Philadelphia Gas
15 Works' testimony in support of this
16 bill. We respectfully request that
17 this bill be reported out of
18 committee with a favorable
19 recommendation together with the
20 suspension of the rules so it may
21 have its first reading of the next
22 City Council session.

23 The Gas Commission
24 recommends that City Council of

1 Philadelphia approves the agreement
2 on behalf of the Philadelphia Gas
3 Works to enter into an amendment to
4 the service agreement with
5 Transcontinental Gas Pipeline
6 Corporation for firm transportation
7 service under rate schedule WSS and
8 the revised form that is set forth
9 as Exhibit A to Bill No. 260113.

10 The Commission's
11 recommendations to Council are
12 detailed in its resolution in order
13 dated February 4, 2026, which is
14 attached to my written testimony as
15 Appendix 1, incorporating the
16 recommended form of ordinance,
17 which is the same as the bill
18 before City Council.

19 After its standard
20 review and due diligence, the Gas
21 Commission found that a favorable
22 recommendation to Council in this
23 matter was appropriate for the
24 following reasons: This service

1 agreement provides natural gas
2 storage services, accounting for
3 approximately 20% of PGW's total
4 storage capacity. And as PGW's only
5 opens access storage contract, it
6 represents one of PGW's most
7 important market area storage
8 services.

9 According to PGW's
10 testimony before the Commission, if
11 PGW is not permitted to execute
12 this amendment to the service
13 agreement, it will have to attempt
14 to replace this service through
15 firm storage agreements and/or
16 paying market-based rates at time
17 of need. None of these replacement
18 options would be guaranteed. And
19 even if replication of this storage
20 could be accomplished, the
21 estimated cost would be much higher
22 than the rates proposed in this
23 amendment and would result in
24 increased costs to PGW's

1 ratepayers.

2 Further, PGW's testimony
3 before the Commission stated that
4 the amendment would protect PGW and
5 provide it with stability in a
6 fluctuating natural gas market.

7 This stability will ensure that PGW
8 can reliably provide natural gas to
9 its customers, while saving
10 ratepayers money. PGW has
11 estimated that the proposed
12 amendment will cost PGW
13 approximately \$1.8 million per
14 year, whereas without the amendment
15 PGW would have to pay, in the
16 worst-case scenario, an estimated
17 \$5.3 million per day to obtain spot
18 gas on certain days without this
19 storage contract.

20 And finally, this
21 proposed third amendment will aid
22 PGW in complying with the
23 Pennsylvania Public Utilities
24 Commission lease cost fuel

1 procurement policy requirement, as
2 required by the Pennsylvania Public
3 Utility Commission.

4 In conclusion and as
5 detailed in my written testimony,
6 the Commission respectfully
7 recommends that Council approve
8 Bill No. 260113. And on behalf of
9 the Philadelphia Gas Commissioners,
10 I thank you for this opportunity to
11 provide this testimony and would be
12 happy to answer any questions that
13 you may have.

14 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
15 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
16 both so much for your testimony.
17 Thank you very much for being here
18 this morning. I wanted to ask a
19 question regarding the current
20 options relative to the rate lock
21 in the third amendment when I read
22 through the testimony, relative to
23 this being the third amendment to
24 the service agreement that would

1 extend the terms for an additional
2 10 years.

3 What are our total
4 current options? Is it just the 10
5 years?

6 MR. CASSIDY: So we were
7 given options for 3 years, 5 years,
8 10 years, but the 10 years was the
9 most economically advantageous.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
11 RICHARDSON: And that would be an
12 advantage for our consumers as
13 well?

14 MR. CASSIDY: Correct,
15 for the ratepayers.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
17 RICHARDSON: Okay. I just wanted
18 to get that on the record. And
19 then I believe you all sort of
20 factored this in during the last
21 adjustment that was made back in
22 December, correct, because it's
23 already factored in, no?

24 MS. McCLENDON: The last

1 adjustment I'm --

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Mm-hmm. No?

4 MR. CASSIDY: For rates?

5 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

6 RICHARDSON: Mm-hmm.

7 MR. CASSIDY: So this

8 would not have been factored in at
9 that time because it's not in place
10 yet.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

12 RICHARDSON: Right. But just for
13 forecasting from a budgeting
14 perspective?

15 MR. CASSIDY: Correct.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Okay. And so, will we
18 still have the ability to offload
19 gas moving forward under this
20 agreement? Meaning, I know this is
21 a storage agreement. I understand
22 that. But what would be our
23 additional ability outside of this
24 agreement moving forward?

1 MR. CASSIDY: So --

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Meaning, if the market
4 shifts. If something happens in
5 the market, what will we be able to
6 do moving forward?

7 MR. CASSIDY: So this
8 gives us flexibility. So as a
9 storage contract, this gives us
10 flexibility mainly to buy gas
11 during warmer periods and inject it
12 at lower cost and then take it out
13 during colder periods when it makes
14 more financial sense. So from that
15 perspective, this doesn't change
16 our overall -- are you asking if
17 our send-out is reduced, will
18 this --

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

20 RICHARDSON: Yes.

21 MR. CASSIDY: So with
22 the amount of send-out that we have
23 and with the amount of storage that
24 we have, it doesn't have an impact

1 in that perspective.

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Okay. And also, I
4 heard what you said about the 5.3
5 million. So of course, that makes
6 economic sense.

7 Are there any additional
8 questions for these witnesses?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none,
12 thank you. Thank you very much for
13 your testimony and thank you so
14 much for being here.

15 Is there anyone else
16 here to testify on Bill No. 260113?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

19 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
20 thank you all so much for being
21 here.

22 We will now proceed with
23 Bill No. 251066.

24 THE CLERK: James

1 Leonard, Department of Records.

2 (Witness approached
3 witness table.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Excellent. Will you
6 please state your name for the
7 record and proceed with your
8 testimony.

9 COMMISSIONER LEONARD:

10 James Leonard Department of
11 Records. Good morning, Majority
12 Leader Chairperson Gilmore
13 Richardson and members of the
14 Committee on Finance. I am James
15 Leonard, Commissioner of the
16 Department of Records. I am here
17 today to testify in support of Bill
18 No. 251066 on behalf of Mayor
19 Parker's Administration.

20 This bill authorizes a
21 multi-year concession agreement
22 with the company Ancestry.com to
23 digitize what is known as the
24 City's archives, genealogical

1 record collection. Ancestry.com
2 was selected through a rigorous
3 competitive request for proposals
4 process conducted in collaboration
5 with the Procurement Department and
6 the Office of Information
7 Technology, which provided
8 technical expertise on digitization
9 matters. And with the highly
10 skilled and dedicated support of
11 the Law Department, the City's
12 archives maintains approximately 20
13 million historical genealogical
14 records that have long been
15 available to the public for
16 research.

17 These records document
18 the rich family history and lineage
19 of Philadelphia residents. They
20 include birth records, death
21 records and marriage records,
22 collectively known as vital records
23 as well as naturalization documents
24 and property records. These are

1 among our most frequently accessed
2 materials.

3 The vital records are
4 from 1915 and earlier, over 110
5 years ago and older. The
6 naturalization records documents
7 are historical court records from
8 the early 20th century and older.
9 The property records are from the
10 mid-1950s and older. Some of these
11 records are from the 1800s and even
12 the 1700s. All of them have long
13 been public under Pennsylvania law,
14 and they do not contain living
15 people's private information.

16 And if I could draw your
17 attention to -- I brought some
18 posters, a few examples of our more
19 famous historical records. And we,
20 with John Fenton's help, printed
21 some copies out for you. The first
22 is the death record of Octavius
23 Catto from 1871. This is on your
24 far or my far left. And you can

1 see that his cause of death was
2 violence from gunshot wounds.

3 Next, we have a property
4 record from William Steele, the
5 prominent Philadelphia abolitionist
6 conductor on the Underground
7 Railroad and one of the leaders of
8 the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery
9 Society. And this was for his
10 property at 12th and Washington
11 Avenue.

12 And next to my right, we
13 have the birth record of Raymond
14 Pace Alexander, who was the first
15 Black Councilmember of the 5th
16 Council District. And that record
17 is from 1897. And then finally,
18 the first page of the deed of
19 Raymond Pace Alexander and his very
20 famous spouse, Sadie T. Mossell
21 Alexander from their property at
22 17th and Jefferson, which they sold
23 in this deed before they moved to
24 Mount Airy.

1 Today these records are
2 primarily available to the public
3 only in person at the Archives
4 Building at Spring Garden Street.
5 Our digital access is very limited,
6 and this partnership will change
7 that. The partnership will cost
8 taxpayers nothing. Ancestry.com
9 will bear all costs and expenses.
10 This includes scanning records in
11 the digital format, indexing all
12 the records and information in them
13 and hosting all 20 million records
14 on its website.

15 The digitization will
16 take approximately two years. The
17 City will receive some concession
18 and revenue from this agreement,
19 but that is not the primary
20 purpose. The real financial
21 benefit is that this project would
22 be cost-prohibitive for the City to
23 undertake on its own. Perhaps most
24 important is the unprecedented

1 public good we will achieve in
2 making our great city's history
3 available online.

4 We knew from the outset
5 that to make this project truly
6 meaningful, we had to ensure broad
7 public access. This partnership
8 delivers on that commitment. Every
9 Philadelphia resident will have
10 free access to these records
11 through multiple channels in every
12 Council District.

13 First, patrons will be
14 able to access Philadelphia's full
15 digital collection on Ancestry for
16 free at the city archives and at
17 our City Hall offices. Second,
18 over 50 library branches across all
19 10 Council Districts already
20 provide free Ancestry access to
21 patrons. Through this partnership,
22 Philadelphia's digital collection
23 will be available at no cost at
24 those branches.

1 Third, every public
2 middle and high school in the
3 school district will have free
4 access to Ancestry Classroom, an
5 educational product. This offers
6 classroom resources, professional
7 learning tools and access to
8 Ancestry's historical record
9 collections to help students learn
10 about their personal place in
11 history. Philadelphia's collection
12 will be included in Ancestry
13 Classroom.

14 This means that
15 residents and students in every
16 Council District will have multiple
17 free and convenient community
18 access points. For those who wish
19 to access Ancestry from personal
20 computers, mobile devices or
21 tablets, paid Subscriptions will be
22 available. Both the District and
23 Free Library are supportive of this
24 partnership.

1 The proposed concession
2 will provide Ancestry an initial
3 period of up to two years to
4 complete all digitization and
5 indexing work. After that period,
6 the agreement will have a 10-year
7 base term with city options for 2
8 five-year renewals, then subsequent
9 two-year renewals.

10 I wanted to explain why
11 this extended term is necessary for
12 sound economic reasons. Ancestry
13 is investing substantial resources
14 to digitize the 20 million records
15 at no cost to the city. The
16 initial term of 10 years provides a
17 reasonable period for them to
18 recoup that investment. This is
19 standard practice in these
20 partnerships nationwide. The
21 renewal options provide the City a
22 mechanism in its discretion to
23 continue our collection being
24 available online. Importantly, the

1 City retains full control over
2 whether to renew.

3 I also would like to
4 address the security of our
5 irreplaceable documents. The
6 records will travel to Ancestry's
7 Utah facilities for scanning and
8 indexing. Ancestry has a proven
9 track record of safe handling of
10 historical records. Contractual
11 protections are built into the
12 proposed concession. The
13 Department of Records has
14 thoroughly vetted those procedures.
15 We are also very familiar with such
16 transport processes from when we
17 relocated the archives in 2018.

18 I also want to assure
19 you that this is not an
20 experimental approach. Over 60
21 state and local archives nationwide
22 have partnerships with Ancestry,
23 including the Pennsylvania State
24 Archives and archives located in

1 New York, Washington, D.C., Boston,
2 Atlanta, Phoenix and Seattle.

3 Philadelphia has one of
4 the oldest and largest municipal
5 archives in the country. Our
6 joining this established network is
7 a significant milestone. The
8 partnership will preserve
9 Philadelphia's historical legacy
10 for future generations and will
11 transform access from local and
12 limited to global and easily
13 accessible. Our genealogical
14 collection is one of the larger
15 municipal collections in the
16 nation. This partnership will
17 position Philadelphia as a leader
18 in public-private cooperation for
19 digital preservation.

20 In conclusion, this bill
21 authorizes partnership that
22 delivers maximum public benefit at
23 zero taxpayer costs. It follows a
24 proven national model. It expands

1 access to all 10 Council Districts
2 through libraries and schools, and
3 it preserves Philadelphia's history
4 for generations to come. I
5 respectfully request the committee
6 to approve Bill No. 251066 and send
7 it to the full Council with a
8 positive recommendation and to
9 suspend the rules of Council. I am
10 happy to answer any questions you
11 may have. Thank you for your time
12 and consideration.

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
15 so much, Commissioner Leonard.
16 Thank you to you and to your entire
17 team on this work. We appreciate
18 all that you've done to ensure that
19 we have information relative to how
20 this partnership could work.

21 I am very excited about
22 this. As someone who was adopted
23 from birth and have used Ancestry
24 through the years, I'm very

1 excited. I just have a few
2 questions regarding the
3 partnership. One, I noted that you
4 stated in your testimony that it
5 would take two years to complete
6 the entire project. And you know
7 this year is a really big year for
8 Philly.

9 And so, I wanted to know
10 if there were any documents that we
11 could prioritize that would be
12 available around the time of the
13 Semiquincentennial for review?

14 COMMISSIONER LEONARD:
15 We can certainly look at that.

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
17 RICHARDSON: Okay. I think that
18 would be great. Maybe just a few
19 documents of historical context for
20 Philadelphia that visitors and
21 residents alike would love to see
22 in time for July 4th. I think that
23 would be awesome.

24 Also, I wanted to ask a

1 couple questions relative to you
2 talked about Ancestry sort of
3 taking on the initial cost for this
4 project and that it would cost
5 taxpayers nothing, which we love to
6 hear. However, I'm missing how our
7 residents will be able to, outside
8 of the Free Library, access these
9 materials.

10 So would there be an
11 opportunity for them, as an
12 example, to come to City Hall to
13 review the digitized records? Is
14 there a way for the City of
15 Philadelphia residents to have
16 access to the city-only records via
17 their own Ancestry account?
18 Because I have ancestry. Like I
19 said, I was adopted from birth. I
20 used Ancestry to help me with the
21 search.

22 You have to have a paid
23 account to see certain materials.
24 Is there a way to ensure that our

1 residents that live in this city,
2 who may not have a paid account,
3 but may have an account or can
4 create an account can see the city-
5 only records? Is there a way to do
6 that?

7 COMMISSIONER LEONARD:

8 Yes. So anybody -- of course, if
9 you have a paid Ancestry account,
10 you'll be able to access them as
11 long as you have the tier of access
12 that permits that. But anybody
13 without a paid account, so at no
14 cost, will be able to go to the
15 Free Library. There's 50 branches
16 that I have a list of all of them
17 that already have Ancestry free
18 access at them.

19 And once our collection
20 is added to Ancestry, anybody who
21 goes to one of those branches will
22 be able to access all of our
23 records for no cost as well as the
24 same goes for if they come to the

1 City Archives at Spring Garden
2 Street or to our offices in City
3 Hall.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Okay. And so, they
6 would have to do that through the
7 library or here in City Hall,
8 right?

9 COMMISSIONER LEONARD:

10 Yes. And students of course would
11 have access to it at school.

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Okay. Through
14 Ancestry Classroom. I'm not
15 familiar with Ancestry Classroom.
16 What type of access would you have
17 utilizing the Ancestry Classroom
18 versus the regular Ancestry?

19 COMMISSIONER LEONARD:

20 So Ancestry Classroom, my
21 understanding is Ancestry Classroom
22 has the entire Ancestry collection.
23 It's not going to just be our
24 records, the city's records. It's

1 much broader. And we have
2 communicated with the school
3 district, with Dr. Jermaine Dawson,
4 Deputy Superintendent of Academic
5 Services about it. And we'll at
6 some point do a demo for them of
7 Ancestry Classroom.

8 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

9 RICHARDSON: Okay. That'll be
10 great. And then my last question
11 is relative to the renewal options
12 for the city. And I noted in your
13 testimony that you stated that the
14 city retains full control over
15 whether to renew the partnership.
16 But if we didn't renew maybe after
17 10 years or 10 years plus the 2
18 years, then what happens to all the
19 digitized records? Do we still own
20 them?

21 COMMISSIONER LEONARD:

22 Yeah. Well, two things. That's a
23 great question. We retain
24 throughout ownership of the images.

1 In the event that the City opts not
2 to renew at any point, all of those
3 digitized images come back to the
4 City.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

6 RICHARDSON: Okay. All right. Are
7 there any additional questions for
8 this witness?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Well,
12 thank you so much, Commissioner
13 Leonard. And listen, I want to
14 thank you for these historical
15 documents that you shared with us
16 at the hearing today. I was
17 especially excited to review the
18 deed for Raymond Pace Alexander and
19 Sadie T. Mossell Alexander and
20 Theresa Moore, the wife of Cecil B.
21 Moore, right.

22 I guess they were doing
23 the deal together and purchasing
24 their home at 1708 West Jefferson

1 Street in North Philadelphia. And
2 I was excited to see this because I
3 saw the date of August 24, 1951.
4 And that was the same year and
5 around the same time that my
6 grandparents purchased their first
7 home after coming to Philadelphia
8 from Tarboro County, South
9 Carolina, and they purchased a home
10 just a few blocks from the
11 Alexander family, so this was
12 really exciting to see.

13 We know that this
14 project will enable us to see many
15 more records like this and be able
16 to have the search feature and not
17 have to go downstairs and go
18 through all the books. And that
19 was the process that I undertook
20 actually to locate my biological
21 family. I checked the marriage
22 records here in City Hall in those
23 big old books, and now we would
24 enable Philadelphians and others to

1 search this information digitally.
2 So we thank you very much for all
3 of your work on this, you and your
4 team.

5 I know Tracy is here.
6 We appreciate you so much and the
7 work that you're doing. So thank
8 you, Commissioner Leonard.

9 COMMISSIONER LEONARD:
10 Thank you.

11 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
12 RICHARDSON: Yes. Thank you so
13 much. This is awesome.

14 All right. Is there
15 anyone else here to testify on Bill
16 No. 251066?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
19 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
20 will now proceed with Bill No.
21 260021.

22 Clerk, will you please
23 call the first panel to testify for
24 Bill No. 260021.

1 THE CLERK: James
2 Leonard, Commissioner of Department
3 of Records. Also available for
4 questions is the Department of
5 Revenue.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Excellent. I see our
8 Revenue Commissioner here and also
9 Fran Beckley from the Law
10 Department. We appreciate you all
11 for being here. I just quickly
12 wanted to say thank you so much for
13 your work on this legislation.

14 For me, this is about
15 generational wealth, but it's also
16 very personal to me. It's
17 something that my family and I went
18 through. We paid thousands and
19 thousands of dollars just to
20 maintain our family homes and keep
21 them in our families. And we know
22 that many families in Philadelphia
23 who are struggling with tangled
24 titles or deeds are, too, trying to

1 figure out ways to preserve their
2 generational wealth and keep these
3 properties in the family.

4 And this commonsense
5 amendment and commonsense bill will
6 help us do just that and will save
7 families thousands and thousands of
8 dollars in fees relative to our
9 realty transfer tax. And so, I
10 wanted to thank you all for your
11 work on this legislation in the
12 background.

13 I know we also worked on
14 some changes to the LOOP program
15 for families that are suffering
16 with tangled titles or deeds. And
17 so, we just wanted to uplift and
18 appreciate that work, and thank you
19 for helping us to get to this
20 point.

21 Community Legal Services
22 and all our legal service
23 organizations, thank you for
24 bringing this commonsense

1 legislation to us and helping us to
2 help families eliminate a
3 significant financial barrier that
4 can really prevent families from
5 passing a home from one generation
6 to the next.

7 And we are going to
8 clarify in this legislation,
9 hopefully with the support of my
10 colleagues, that heirs are not
11 required to pay the city's realty
12 transfer tax when inheriting a
13 family home with an outstanding
14 mortgage that cannot be paid off by
15 the estate.

16 Currently as it stands,
17 only property transfers for no or
18 nominal actual consideration or
19 homes that are paid off are exempt
20 from the realty transfer tax. And
21 for homes with an outstanding
22 mortgage, the property does not
23 qualify as being for no or nominal
24 actual consideration. And so, as

1 it stands currently heirs are
2 required to pay that realty
3 transfer tax on any of the
4 remaining debt they assume from the
5 estate before a new deed can even
6 be recorded, again which we know
7 costs thousands and thousands of
8 dollars. And I know that from
9 personal experience.

10 And so, treating the
11 inheritance of a family home as a
12 taxable transaction is inequitable,
13 and it places an undue burden on
14 families with very few resources
15 and continues to create unnecessary
16 barriers to maintaining
17 homeownership. And so, this
18 legislation removes that obstacle.
19 And we will help more families keep
20 their homes in their family and
21 continue to build in their
22 generational wealth. So thank you
23 all again so much.

24 And now, we'll hear from

1 our Commissioner Jim Leonard from
2 the Department of Records. And I
3 know Revenue is here and available
4 for additional questions.

5 COMMISSIONER LEONARD:

6 Good morning, Majority Leader and
7 Chairperson Gilmore Richardson and
8 members of the Committee on
9 Finance. I'm James Leonard,
10 Commissioner of Records for the
11 City of Philadelphia, and I'm here
12 today to testify in support of Bill
13 No. 260021, on behalf of Mayor
14 Parker's Administration.

15 I want to begin by
16 thanking Majority Leader Gilmore
17 Richardson for her leadership on
18 tangled titles and for introducing
19 this legislation. The Majority
20 Leader has been a consistent
21 champion for Philadelphia
22 homeowners, and this bill reflects
23 that commitment. I would also
24 thank Community Legal Services of

1 Philadelphia for shining a light on
2 this issue and for advocating on
3 behalf of the legislation. Their
4 work with Philadelphia homeowners
5 gives them a front-row view of the
6 real-world consequences of unclear
7 property ownership and their
8 advocacy has made a difference.

9 Bill No. 260021 codifies
10 a longstanding practice in how the
11 city calculates realty transfer tax
12 for inherited properties. Under
13 the bill when a primary residence
14 passes from a decedent to an heir,
15 any outstanding mortgage or lien on
16 the property existing before the
17 transfer will not be treated as
18 actual consideration for purposes
19 of calculating the city's realty
20 transfer tax.

21 In plain terms, the bill
22 ensures that the presence of an
23 existing mortgage does not
24 artificially inflate the transfer

1 tax owed when a family home is
2 passed down to heirs. This is the
3 right outcome. It reflects how
4 these transactions actually work
5 and it protects families at a
6 moment when they are already
7 navigating the loss of a loved one.

8 Why does this matter for
9 tangled titles? The Department of
10 Records sits at the center of
11 Philadelphia's tangled title
12 crisis. When a homeowner dies
13 without a will or an estate plan,
14 their property can become a tangled
15 title, a property where ownership
16 is unclear because the deed was
17 never properly transferred.

18 Philadelphia has over
19 10,000 such properties,
20 representing \$1.1 billion in value.
21 These properties are concentrated
22 in communities that are 87% Black.
23 Untangling a title is already a
24 difficult and costly process.

1 Families must navigate legal
2 proceedings to establish clear
3 ownership. They should not face an
4 inflated tax bill on top of those
5 burdens.

6 This bill helps keep the
7 cost of untangling titles down.
8 That is good for families and it is
9 good for Philadelphia. Preserving
10 homeownership through the reduction
11 and prevention of tangled titles is
12 central to Mayor Parker's H.O.M.E.
13 Initiative. Bill No. 260021
14 directly supports that mission.

15 By reducing the
16 financial barriers families face
17 when a home is transferred after a
18 death, this bill helps keep family
19 homes in the family and helps build
20 generational wealth. I urge the
21 Committee on Finance to support
22 Bill No. 260021. It is a
23 straightforward fix that will have
24 a meaningful impact on Philadelphia

1 families working to preserve their
2 most important asset, their home.
3 Thank you for your time and I'm
4 happy to answer any questions.

5 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

6 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
7 very much, Commissioner Leonard.
8 And again, thank you for your
9 partnership and for all of your
10 work in helping us to get to this
11 point. I actually had a question
12 of Revenue to put on the record
13 relative to the other program that
14 we worked on for families that are
15 suffering with a tangled title or
16 deed regarding how many families
17 have actually taken advantage of
18 the LOOP program now that we added
19 the language regarding families
20 that have a tangled title or a
21 deed.

22 COMMISSIONER McCOLGAN:

23 Good morning. I'm Kathleen
24 McColgan, Revenue Commissioner. I

1 don't have that specific stat with
2 me, but I can tell you that we have
3 approximately 3000 equitable owners
4 enrolled in water assistance
5 programs as well as 2000 enrolled
6 in tax programs. So I'll just have
7 to get you the number on LOOP
8 specifically.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: Okay. That'll be
11 great. But you said 3000 equitable
12 owners enrolled?

13 COMMISSIONER MCCOLGAN:
14 In water assistance programs.

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: You said water
17 assistance?

18 COMMISSIONER MCCOLGAN:
19 Water assistance.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: Okay. And then you
22 said 2000?

23 COMMISSIONER MCCOLGAN:
24 Oh, I'm sorry. I actually do have

1 the number of equitable owners that
2 are enrolled in LOOP. That is 54
3 that have been enrolled.

4 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

5 RICHARDSON: Okay. Great. So 54
6 since you worked on that. That's
7 awesome. That is awesome, okay,
8 with LOOP. Okay. Excellent.
9 Thank you so much for that,
10 Commissioner. And thank you again
11 for the work of your department for
12 helping us with that.

13 Are there any additional
14 questions for Panel 1?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, we
18 thank you very much for being here.

19 Will the Clerk please
20 call Panel 2 for Bill No. 260021.

21 THE CLERK: Rachel
22 Gallegos, Community Legal Services;
23 Michelle Waller, Community
24 Representative; Kevin Boswell,

1 Housing Justice Senior Law Center;
2 and Garrett O'Dwyer, Philadelphia,
3 Association of Community
4 Development Corporations.

5 (Witnesses approached
6 witness table.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Okay. We thank you
9 all so much for being here. Again,
10 I want to thank Community Legal
11 Services, the Senior Law Center,
12 Philadelphia Association of
13 Community Development Corporations,
14 who we know as PACDC, and most
15 especially to our community
16 representative who joined us here
17 today and who's been with us from
18 the beginning of this hearing.

19 So state your name for
20 the record and proceed with your
21 testimony.

22 MS. GALLEGOS: Good
23 morning. My name is Rachel
24 Gallegos. I'm a Divisional

1 Supervising Attorney with Community
2 Legal Services, and I appreciate
3 the opportunity to be here. Good
4 morning, members of the committee.
5 My name is Rachel Gallegos. I'm a
6 DSA in the Homeownership and
7 Consumer Rights Unit at CLS where I
8 lead our tangled title work.

9 I'm pleased to testify
10 today in support of Bill No.
11 260021, which will exempt
12 intergenerational family homes from
13 the realty transfer tax. As
14 Council knows, Community Legal
15 Services was established by the
16 Philadelphia Bar Association in
17 1966 to provide civil legal
18 representation to low-income
19 Philadelphians as the city's
20 largest provider of free legal
21 services.

22 CLS assists
23 approximately 12,000 of
24 Philadelphia's poorest residents

1 with their legal problems each
2 year, starting in 2021 with the
3 city's historic investment to help
4 homeowners with tangled titles as
5 part of the Neighborhood
6 Preservation Initiative. CLS has
7 been able to focus more resources
8 on helping clients preserve their
9 intergenerational family homes.

10 Today CLS has a
11 dedicated team of nine advocates, a
12 combination of attorneys and
13 paralegals focused exclusively on
14 representing clients with tangled
15 titles. In 2025, we worked with
16 673 clients with tangled titles.
17 We successfully cleared 118 titles.
18 We did wills for 274 homeowners and
19 we participated in 90 wills,
20 clinics and community outreach
21 events.

22 The work on tangled
23 title remains robust and ongoing,
24 requiring continued collaboration

1 with our legal partners, city
2 agencies and elected officials.
3 The next evolution of our work
4 remains focused on direct client
5 services, but includes needed
6 policy reform. Today we are here
7 in support of Bill No. 260021,
8 Councilmember Gilmore Richardson's
9 bill, to exempt family homes that
10 have outstanding mortgages from the
11 realty transfer tax when they pass
12 after the owner's death.

13 Committee members may
14 have thought that when a home
15 passes after someone's death, that
16 the home is already exempt from the
17 transfer tax. And to be honest, so
18 did many housing and homeownership
19 advocates for many years. But in
20 the last several years, the
21 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and
22 now the City of Philadelphia has
23 begun enforcing a longstanding law
24 to assess realty transfer tax on

1 the value of the outstanding
2 mortgage balance on family homes
3 passed through testate or intestate
4 succession.

5 Their position is that
6 the heir is assuming the mortgage
7 debt from the estate and that this
8 is therefore no longer a transfer
9 for no or nominal actual
10 consideration and exempt from the
11 tax. Currently, homes that pass by
12 intestate or testate succession are
13 exempt from the realty transfer tax
14 if they are for no or nominal
15 value. But when a home passes to
16 heirs and the home is encumbered
17 with a mortgage or other liens and
18 the heirs assume the mortgage, the
19 state and city require that
20 transfer tax be paid on the value
21 of the outstanding mortgage.

22 This means that as we
23 work to keep family homes in the
24 family, the heirs get hit with a

1 big transfer tax bill that needs to
2 be paid before the deed is
3 recorded. This at best delays a
4 client in obtaining record
5 ownership, and at worst, outright
6 prevents it, as the cost is too
7 high and burdensome for our
8 clients.

9 When an heir inherits a
10 home that is subject to the realty
11 transfer tax, some may qualify for
12 assistance from the Tangled Title
13 Fund administered by our sister
14 legal aid organization Philadelphia
15 VIP. This grant provides for costs
16 associated with probating an
17 estate, including probate fees,
18 inheritance taxes and transfer
19 taxes.

20 The Tangled Title Fund
21 is critical to doing this work, as
22 our clients cannot afford these
23 fees out of pocket. However,
24 Philadelphia VIP reports that in

1 2025 the Tangled Title Fund spent
2 \$165,000 in transfer taxes based on
3 mortgages and/or other
4 consideration. These are dollars
5 that could otherwise assist more
6 clients to resolving tangled
7 titles.

8 You're going to hear in
9 a moment from our client Ms. Waller
10 seated next to me, who's graciously
11 agreed to be here to tell her
12 story. And when she inherited her
13 mom's house and took over her mom's
14 mortgage, this requirement was not
15 being enforced at that time. If it
16 had been, Ms. Waller would have
17 been required to pay over \$3,000 in
18 transfer tax to the City of
19 Philadelphia. On her limited
20 income, this would have been
21 unaffordable. We would not have
22 been able to put the house in her
23 name, and the foreclosure would
24 have resulted in the loss of a

1 home.

2 In cases with mortgage
3 delinquency such as Ms. Waller,
4 this is particularly devastating,
5 as a mortgage foreclosure cannot be
6 resolved without having clear
7 title. Without a deed in her name,
8 Ms. Waller would be unable to
9 assume the mortgage and obtain a
10 loan modification and ultimately,
11 the house would be lost.

12 The proposed bill would
13 have immediate impact for
14 Philadelphia homeowners. The city
15 has put tremendous resources and
16 energy around combating tangled
17 titles and creating homeownership
18 opportunities for its residents.
19 It has supported the effort to
20 build and preserve
21 intergenerational wealth, and this
22 amendment is just another step in
23 this larger effort.

24 CLS strongly supports

1 amending The Philadelphia Code to
2 exempt the value of a mortgage or
3 other liens from the definition of
4 consideration as used in the
5 context of property that passes by
6 testate or intestate succession.

7 Thank you to Councilwoman Gilmore
8 Richardson for always leading the
9 charge on tangled titles and the
10 City of Philadelphia with the
11 support of other Councilmembers.

12 Your voice means so much to our
13 clients and to our organizations.

14 And a special shout-out
15 to Eliza sitting here today. Eliza
16 has been wonderful and a wonderful
17 liaison with us as we work to get
18 these things done, so we appreciate
19 her time as well. So thank you to
20 Council for hearing us out today
21 and for the opportunity to speak.

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: Thank you and thank
24 you so much for your continued work

1 with our office and all the work
2 that you all do to help us bring
3 forth commonsense legislation to
4 help Philadelphians preserve their
5 family homes and their generational
6 wealth, particularly now when
7 housing prices and values are
8 rising each year. So thank you so
9 much.

10 Please state your name
11 for the record and proceed with
12 your testimony.

13 MS. WALLER: Yes. Good
14 morning. My name is Michelle
15 Waller --

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
17 RICHARDSON: Hold the microphone up
18 if you can, ma'am.

19 MS. WALLER: Yes, ma'am.

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
21 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much.
22 That's good. We have to make sure
23 the stenographer can hear you.
24 Thank you so much. So you stated

1 your name for the record. Please
2 proceed with your testimony.

3 MS. WALLER: Thank you
4 so much. Good morning. My name is
5 Michelle Waller. I'm a resident of
6 the city of Philadelphia and have
7 lived here my entire life. My
8 home, belonging to my mother,
9 Wallette Waller, she had lived in
10 the home alone for a few years
11 before becoming ill. When she
12 became ill, she was diagnosed with
13 cancer. She started chemo and was
14 no longer able to do things for
15 herself.

16 At that time, I moved in
17 to take care of my mother. I was
18 helping my mother manage day-to-
19 day, cooking, cleaning and caring
20 for herself. Things took a turn
21 and she was then hospitalized for a
22 year. I was trying to maintain
23 both her home and my own home at
24 that time. My daughter stayed at

1 my home to maintain things and help
2 out while I stayed at my mother's
3 home and took care of things while
4 she was hospitalized.

5 My mom got better for a
6 little while, but then eventually
7 she got worse. She was unable to
8 walk and she needed dialysis, and
9 it was a lot. I was also working
10 at the time. And so, I was
11 managing her health care for her
12 and while also trying to pay my own
13 bills as well. She was very sick
14 for many years and ultimately
15 passed away in 2016.

16 My mom would always pay
17 her bills and usually would pay
18 them well in advance. She did this
19 with her mortgage and she was
20 always ahead of the mortgage
21 payments. After she passed, I
22 called the mortgage company to --
23 excuse me. I called the mortgage
24 company. They assured me

1 everything was okay and that I
2 could maintain residency.

3 I remained in my
4 mother's home after she passed
5 away. This home holds, and it
6 still does, sentinel value and it's
7 very important to me. A couple of
8 years after her death the mortgage
9 company told me I had to assume the
10 mortgage and they eventually
11 informed me the payments were
12 passed due. Unfortunately,
13 throughout this time assuming the
14 mortgage and working with the
15 mortgage company has become very
16 difficult.

17 Despite my mother's
18 paying well in advance, the
19 mortgage company did not
20 communicate with me until the
21 payments were well past due. I am
22 currently working with CLS to
23 resolve mortgage issues and I hope
24 that it comes to an end soon.

1 During this time, I also had to
2 probate my mother's estate. My
3 brother and I were her only heirs,
4 and we were in agreement about how
5 to handle her affairs. He agreed
6 to transfer the property to my
7 name.

8 Community Legal Services
9 helped me to probate the estate and
10 then record a new deed with my name
11 on it. It was really important for
12 me to keep my mother's home. We
13 went through a lot -- yeah, we went
14 through a lot at the house and it
15 meant more to me to maintain the
16 other home I had lived in. It's
17 also more convenient for me to live
18 there.

19 I am not as mobile as I
20 used to be due to some physical and
21 health problems. My mom's house is
22 convenient to things I need for my
23 own living in the home and makes it
24 easier for me to get around and

1 live comfortably. I am also
2 grateful to be living in my
3 mother's home and now our family
4 home.

5 Community Legal Services
6 helped me to draft an estate plan
7 after the house was in my name and
8 I will leave this home to my
9 daughter. I want this home to be
10 the place for the next generation
11 of my family. I want my grandkids
12 to benefit from this legacy as
13 well. I have family to take care
14 of, and this house will help me to
15 do that. I want to say thank you
16 to City Council for inviting me to
17 testify today and I'm glad to have
18 been able to share my story.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
20 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
21 so much, Ms. Waller. Thank you so
22 much for sharing your story. And
23 I'm so sorry for your loss of your
24 mom in 2016. And 10 years later,

1 you can now tell the story that you
2 were able to preserve her home as
3 your family home. And so, I thank
4 you for sharing your story, and
5 feel what you went through.

6 I lost my mom also in
7 2016 and went through the same
8 process that you went through. And
9 that's the reason why we wanted to
10 do this legislation, so more
11 families like me and like you can
12 preserve our generational wealth
13 and keep our moms' homes and our
14 family and pass them down to our
15 daughters.

16 MS. WALLER: Exactly.
17 Exactly. My mom worked hard and
18 the struggle is real.

19 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE
20 RICHARDSON: Received. Received.
21 I thank you for being here today.
22 Really appreciate you so much.

23 Please state your names
24 for the record and proceed with

1 your testimony.

2 MR. BOSWELL: Good
3 morning. My name is Kevin Boswell.
4 I'm a supervising attorney with the
5 Housing Justice Project at Senior
6 Law Center. Thank you, Chair
7 Gilmore Richardson and other
8 members of the Committee on
9 Finance, for inviting Senior Law
10 Center to come here and testify
11 today. Thank you to our partners
12 for their words in support of this
13 bill.

14 I am here to offer my
15 enthusiastic support for the
16 proposed amendments to The
17 Philadelphia Code on the realty
18 transfer tax exemptions.
19 Currently, the law unfairly
20 penalizes heirs who inherit a
21 mortgaged family home by stripping
22 them of their estate tax exemption.
23 This tax penalty constitutes a
24 legacy of redlining, actively

1 undermine Council's commitments to
2 fight the tangled title epidemic
3 and build generational wealth, and
4 hurt Senior Law Center clients.

5 Senior Law Center is the
6 only nonprofit organization in
7 Pennsylvania whose mission is
8 dedicated solely to seeking justice
9 for older adults, and one of the
10 very few in the nation. Since the
11 allocation of city funding, Senior
12 Law Center has advised or
13 represented over 1000 clients
14 struggling with tangled titles.
15 Almost three-quarters of these
16 cases come from the hardest-hit
17 districts of West and North
18 Philadelphia.

19 Pew Research confirms
20 that the weight of our tangled
21 title crisis falls heaviest on
22 Philadelphia's Black neighborhoods.
23 The arbitrary exclusion from the
24 estate exemption functions as a

1 poverty tax that reflects the
2 legacy of redlining. While the
3 wealthy heir inherits a property
4 free and clear without paying a
5 cent in transfer tax, a low-income
6 heir is penalized for inheriting a
7 mortgage, forcing those with the
8 fewest resources to pay more
9 because they inherited a debt is an
10 absurd and surely unintended
11 result.

12 This tax penalty
13 actively undermines Council's long-
14 term commitment to building wealth
15 by blocking many families from
16 their inheritance before they even
17 receive the keys to their house.
18 More fortunate clients are able to
19 rely on the Tangled Title Fund to
20 cover these costs. Since May of
21 2025, 58 applicants excluded from
22 the estate exemption have requested
23 \$165,000 from the Tangled Title
24 Fund to pay taxes that they should

1 already be exempt from. This is
2 money that should be helping your
3 constituents resolve their tangled
4 titles, not paying unnecessary
5 taxes.

6 This exclusion impacts
7 many older homeowners represented
8 by Senior Law Center. I will
9 highlight one, but please see our
10 written testimony for several
11 others. Our client John inherited
12 property from his father, a 30-year
13 school district veteran who worked
14 his entire life to achieve the
15 dream of homeownership. His father
16 wanted his hard work to transcend
17 his death by passing that wealth to
18 John and to his grandchildren. But
19 because his father died with a
20 mortgage balance of over \$100,000,
21 John was disqualified from the
22 estate exemption.

23 After scraping together
24 \$3,500 for inheritance tax and

1 probate fees, he was hit with
2 another \$4,500 in transfer taxes.
3 Now, mind you, John qualified for
4 the estate exemption in every way
5 except that he inherited a
6 mortgage. The absurdity is this:
7 John was being taxed on a debt that
8 he couldn't even afford. While he
9 struggled to probate the estate,
10 the mortgage company sued to
11 foreclose.

12 Senior Law Center
13 defended him in the foreclosure
14 action where loan modifications
15 saved the home, but the current law
16 nearly cost him the legacy his
17 father spent 30 years building.
18 Not everyone is so lucky. The
19 proposed bill 26002100 ensures
20 everyday heirs aren't penalized
21 just because their parents had a
22 mortgage. It is a narrowly-
23 tailored fix, covering primary
24 residences that levels the playing

1 field.

2 It gives working
3 families the same footing as the
4 city's wealthiest. It's a simple
5 fix with a massive impact that
6 would allow Philadelphians to age
7 in place with dignity and secure a
8 vital path to generational wealth.
9 Older homeowners, often affected by
10 fixed incomes eroded by inflation,
11 face mounting physical and
12 financial hurdles to staying in
13 their homes.

14 By helping older
15 homeowners gain title to their
16 homes, we stabilize their
17 neighborhoods and secure
18 Philadelphia's most vital form of
19 affordable housing so homes of
20 residents already live in. We urge
21 you to pass this commonsense
22 legislation to ensure our past
23 progress continues into tomorrow.
24 Thank you very much.

1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

2 RICHARDSON: Thank you so much and
3 thank you for the stories that you
4 shared within your testimony as
5 well. I don't know if you added
6 this because I was rereading this,
7 the DHS claims as well. So I'd
8 love to as a next step talk about
9 that as a next step and the next
10 bill that we need to offer, because
11 that relates to our city code.
12 Okay. So I think that's a follow-
13 up bill that we must undertake.
14 Okay. Thank you so much for your
15 testimony.

16 Please proceed with your
17 testimony.

18 MR. O'DWYER: Good
19 morning, Chair Gilmore Richardson
20 and members of the City Council
21 Committee on Finance. My name is
22 Garrett O'Dwyer and I'm the Policy
23 Director at the Philadelphia
24 Association of Community

1 Development Corporations or PACDC.
2 Thank you for the opportunity to
3 offer testimony in support of Bill
4 No. 260021, which will exempt
5 properties that contain a lien,
6 mortgage or other encumbrance from
7 exposure to transfer taxes when
8 conveyed at nominal or no
9 consideration.

10 We'd also like to thank
11 you, Councilmember Gilmore
12 Richardson, for your leadership in
13 introducing not just this bill, but
14 for continually working with
15 advocates to address the challenges
16 that tangled titles pose to
17 Philadelphians. PACDC is the
18 leading voice of nonprofit
19 community development corporations
20 and other community development
21 organizations in Philadelphia.

22 Many of our 60 CDC
23 members provide referrals for
24 housing counseling needs or provide

1 these services directly and see
2 firsthand what tangled titles mean
3 for individuals and families.
4 Estimates are that Philadelphia has
5 over 10,000 tangled titles,
6 representing well over \$1 billion.
7 This is family and community wealth
8 in jeopardy due to inadequate legal
9 preparation to ensure the orderly
10 transfer of property as well as
11 systems that compound rather than
12 mitigate challenges when that
13 occurs.

14 The cost to address a
15 tangled title typically approaches
16 \$10,000 which is often cost-
17 prohibitive. Heirs need the
18 assistance of lawyers to navigate a
19 Byzantine, drawn-out process that
20 may not even be successful. In the
21 meantime, families may be displaced
22 from their homes and structures can
23 fall into disrepair and
24 neighborhood blight as heirs are

1 unable to access capital or city
2 home repair and property tax relief
3 programs without proper title.

4 Assessing expensive
5 transfer taxes as a result of an
6 existing mortgage is a powerful
7 disincentive to the orderly
8 transfer of property to heirs. By
9 exempting these transfers, we
10 believe Bill No. 260021 will help
11 resolve existing tangled title and
12 prevent new ones from developing.

13 Through PACDC's
14 partnership and the National
15 Community Stabilization Trust
16 Heirs' Property Partnership, we are
17 working to build the capacity of
18 Neighborhood Advisory Committee
19 coordinators to handle tangled
20 title, and we believe that they can
21 play a key role in ensuring that
22 information about this exemption,
23 when passed, can be disseminated
24 and acted upon by homeowners and

1 heirs. There's no silver bullet
2 for this issue, but we look forward
3 to continuing to work with City
4 Council to identify reforms at
5 every step of the probate process
6 to reduce the time and expense of
7 addressing tangled titles. Thank
8 you for the opportunity to offer
9 testimony.

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: Thank you. Thank you
12 so much. And thank all of you
13 again for your work on this issue,
14 for all the clients that you
15 represent that we may not hear
16 about those cases where you're
17 really helping folks to maintain
18 their generational wealth and keep
19 their family homes in the family.

20 We want to say thank you
21 again, Ms. Waller. Thank you so
22 much for coming. So sorry for the
23 loss of your mom, but so glad that
24 you were able to maintain and be

1 able to share the story with us
2 here in Council. So thank you so
3 much.

4 Any additional questions
5 for these witnesses?

6 (No response.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: All right. Seeing
9 none, we thank you. We thank you
10 all so much for being here today.

11 Are there any additional
12 witnesses to testify on Bill No.
13 260021?

14 (No response.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: And I note that we
17 have another bill forthcoming.
18 Based on your testimony, Kevin,
19 from Senior Law Center, we have
20 another bill forthcoming.

21 Any additional witnesses
22 to testify on Bill No. 260021?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

1 RICHARDSON: Okay. Seeing none, is
2 there anyone here to provide public
3 comment on any of the bills or
4 matters that we heard today?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: Is there anyone here
8 whose name has not been called to
9 provide testimony or public comment
10 for today?

11 (No response.)

12 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

13 RICHARDSON: Excellent. Okay.
14 Seeing none and having no further
15 testimony, we will begin our public
16 meeting. And so, I will now make
17 the call for the additional
18 committee members who are still
19 here in the building to return to
20 chambers so that we can proceed
21 with our public meeting. Thank you
22 so much.

23 (Brief recess.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

1 RICHARDSON: Okay. Thank you so
2 much. We will now proceed with our
3 public meeting on the previously
4 mentioned bills.

5 Clerk, will you please
6 call the roll to take attendance.
7 Members that are in attendance will
8 indicate that they are present when
9 their name is called.

10 THE CLERK:

11 Councilmember Jones.

12 COUNCILMAN JONES:

13 Present.

14 THE CLERK:

15 Councilmember Thomas.

16 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

17 Presence.

18 THE CLERK:

19 Councilmember Ahmad.

20 (No response.)

21 THE CLERK:

22 Councilmember Driscoll.

23 COUNCILMAN DRISCOLL:

24 Present.

1 THE CLERK: Vice-Chair

2 Bass.

3 (No response.)

4 THE CLERK: Chair

5 Gilmore Richardson.

6 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

7 RICHARDSON: I am present. Thank
8 you. A quorum of the committee is
9 present.

10 The Chair now recognizes
11 Councilmember Thomas for a motion
12 on Bill No. 250769.

13 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

14 Thank you, Madam Chair.

15 I move that Bill No.
16 250769 be reported from this
17 committee with a favorable
18 recommendation and further move
19 that the rules of Council be
20 suspended to permit the first
21 reading of this bill at the next
22 session of Council.

23 (Duly seconded.)

24 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

1 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
2 the record that Councilmember Jones
3 seconds the motion.

4 It has been moved and
5 properly seconded that Bill No.
6 250769 be recorded from this
7 committee with a favorable
8 recommendation and further move
9 that the rules of Council be
10 suspended as to permit first
11 reading at the next session of
12 Council.

13 All those in favor of
14 the motion will indicate by stating
15 aye.

16 (Aye.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

18 RICHARDSON: Those opposed?

19 (No response.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
22 the motion carries. Bill No.
23 250769 will be reported from this
24 committee with a favorable

1 recommendation with the request
2 that the rules of Council be
3 suspended as to permit first
4 reading at our next session of
5 Council.

6 The Chair now recognizes
7 Councilmember Thomas for a motion
8 on Bill No. 260112.

9 COUNCILMAN THOMAS:

10 Thank you, Madam Chair.

11 I move that Bill No.
12 260112 be reported from this
13 committee with a favorable
14 recommendation and further move
15 that the rules of Council be
16 suspended to permit first reading
17 of this bill at the next session of
18 Council.

19 (Duly seconded.)

20 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

21 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
22 the record that Councilmember Jones
23 seconds the motion.

24 It has been moved and

1 properly seconded that Bill No.
2 260112 be reported from this
3 committee with a favorable
4 recommendation and further move
5 that the rules of Council be
6 suspended as to permit first
7 reading of this bill at the next
8 session of Council.

9 All those in favor of
10 the motion will indicate by stating
11 aye.

12 (Aye.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

14 RICHARDSON: Those opposed?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

17 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it, and
18 the motion carries. Bill No.
19 260112 will be reported from this
20 committee with a favorable
21 recommendation with a request that
22 the rules of Council be suspended
23 to permit first reading at the next
24 session of Council.

1 The Chair now recognizes
2 Councilmember and Vice-Chair Bass
3 for a motion on Bill No. 260113.

4 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

5 Thank you, Madam Chair.

6 I move that Bill No.
7 260113 be reported from this
8 committee with a favorable
9 recommendation and further move
10 that the rules of Council be
11 suspended to permit first reading
12 of this bill at the next session of
13 Council.

14 (Duly seconded.)

15 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

16 RICHARDSON: The chair notes for
17 the record that Councilman Thomas
18 seconds the motion.

19 It has been moved and
20 properly seconded that Bill No.
21 260113 be reported from this
22 committee with a favorable
23 recommendation and further move
24 that the rules of Council be

1 suspended as to permit first
2 reading of this bill at the next
3 session of Council.

4 All those in favor will
5 indicate by stating aye.

6 (Aye.)

7 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

8 RICHARDSON: Those opposed?

9 (No response.)

10 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

11 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
12 the motion carries. Bill No.
13 260113 will be reported from this
14 committee with a favorable
15 recommendation with a request that
16 the rules of Council be suspended
17 as to permit first reading at the
18 next session of Council.

19 The Chair recognizes
20 Councilmember and Vice-Chair Bass
21 for a motion on Bill No. 251066.

22 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

23 Thank you, Madam Chair.

24 I move that Bill No.

1 251066 be reported from this
2 committee with a favorable
3 recommendation and further move
4 that the rules of Council be
5 suspended to permit first reading
6 of this bill at the next session of
7 Council.

8 (Duly seconded.)

9 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

10 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
11 the record that Councilman Thomas
12 seconds.

13 The motion has been
14 moved and properly seconded that
15 Bill No. 251066 be reported from
16 this committee with a favorable
17 recommendation and further move
18 that the rules of Council be
19 suspended as to permit first
20 reading at the next session of
21 Council.

22 All those in favor of
23 the motion will indicate by stating
24 aye.

1 (Aye.)

2 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

3 RICHARDSON: Those opposed?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

6 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
7 the motion carries. Bill No.
8 251066 will be reported from this
9 committee with a favorable
10 recommendation with a request that
11 the rules of Council be suspended
12 as to permit the first reading of
13 this bill at the next session of
14 Council.

15 The Chair now recognizes
16 Vice-Chair Bass for a motion on
17 Bill No. 260021.

18 COUNCILWOMAN BASS:

19 Thank you, Madam Chair.

20 I move that Bill No.
21 260021 be reported from the
22 committee with a favorable
23 recommendation and further move
24 that the rules of Council be

1 suspended to permit first reading
2 of this bill at the next session of
3 Council.

4 (Duly seconded.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

6 RICHARDSON: The Chair notes for
7 the record that Councilmember
8 Thomas seconds the motion.

9 It has been moved and
10 properly seconded that Bill No.
11 260021 be reported from this
12 committee with a favorable
13 recommendation and further move
14 that the rules of Council be
15 suspended as to permit first
16 reading of this bill at the next
17 session of Council.

18 All those in favor of
19 the motion will indicate by stating
20 aye.

21 (Aye.)

22 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

23 RICHARDSON: All those opposed?

24 (No response.)

1 COUNCILWOMAN GILMORE

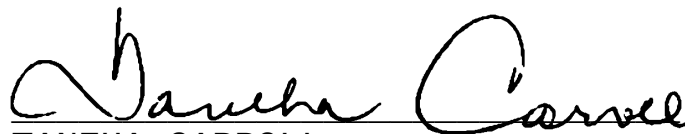
2 RICHARDSON: The ayes have it and
3 the motion carries. Bill No.
4 260021 will be reported from this
5 committee with a favorable
6 recommendation with a request that
7 the rules of Council be suspended
8 to permit first reading at the next
9 session of Council.

10 There being no further
11 bills or resolutions on the agenda
12 today, this concludes the business
13 before the Committee on Finance.
14 Thank you all so much for your
15 attendance.

16 (Committee on Finance
17 concluded at 11:49 a.m.)
18
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24

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence noted are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me in the foregoing matter, and that this is a correct transcript of the same.


TANEHA CARROLL
Court Reporter - Notary Public

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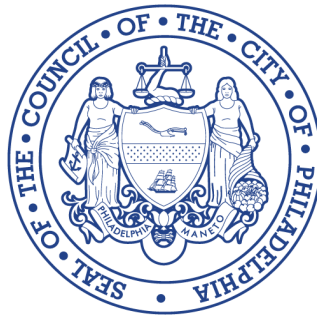
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City of Philadelphia

*City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107*



Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

10:00 AM

Room 400, City Hall

Committee on Finance

- [250769](#) An Ordinance Amending Title 20 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled “Officers and Employees,” by changing the compensation of members of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, all under certain terms and conditions.
- [251066](#) An Ordinance Authorizing the Commissioner of Records and the Procurement Commissioner, on behalf of the City, to execute a multi-year concession agreement with Ancestry.com in connection with the digitizing, indexing, and public access and search of City of Philadelphia Department of Records vital records, all under provisions set forth in the concession agreement substantially as set forth in Exhibit A to this ordinance.
- [260021](#) An Ordinance Amending Chapter 19-1700 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled “Finance, Taxes, and Collections,” to amend excluded transactions to the realty transfer tax, all under certain terms and conditions.
- [260112](#) An Ordinance Authorizing, generally, the continued issuance and sale by the City of Philadelphia of Gas Works Revenue Notes of the City, prescribing the forms of notes and providing for their execution and payment, pledging certain revenues of the Gas Works as security, adopting a rate covenant and directing the imposition and collection of rates and charges sufficient to comply therewith, prescribing the conditions precedent to the issuance of specific series of notes, including a resolution passed by the Bond Committee providing for establishment of credit support for notes, providing for designation of a fiscal agent and sinking fund depository, providing for establishment of a sinking fund and its management, providing remedies upon default, and providing for amendments and modifications.
- [260113](#) An Ordinance Authorizing the execution, delivery and performance by the Philadelphia Facilities Management Corporation on behalf of the Philadelphia Gas Works of an amended Service Agreement with Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC for gas storage services under the Transco WSS Open Access Rate Schedule.