

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC PROPERTY AND
PUBLIC WORKS

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, December 1, 2015
10:35 a.m.

PRESENT:

COUNCILMAN BOBBY HENON, CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN CINDY BASS
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE
COUNCILMAN DAVID OH
COUNCILWOMAN MARIA D. QUINONES-SANCHEZ
COUNCILMAN MARK SQUILLA

BILLS 150652, 150770, 150809, 150818, 150846,
150849, and 150850

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1
2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
3 morning, ladies and gentlemen. Sorry for
4 the delay. The Committee of Public
5 Property and Public Works is now in
6 session.

7 Clerk, would you please read
8 the title of the bills.

9 THE CLERK: Bill No. 150652 is
10 being held at the request of the sponsor.

11 Bill No. 150770, an ordinance
12 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
13 Property, on behalf of the City of
14 Philadelphia, to acquire by purchase,
15 condemnation or otherwise title in some
16 or all of the parcels of land together
17 with the improvements thereon situate
18 commonly known as 351-355 West Penn
19 Street and 5322-5334 Newhall Street,
20 under certain terms and conditions; and

21 Bill No. 150809, an ordinance
22 authorizing the City's Managing Director
23 or his designee to enter into a cable
24 television franchise renewal agreement
25 with Comcast of Philadelphia, LLC and

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Comcast of Philadelphia, II, LLC,
3 renewing the cable television franchises
4 granted by the City to Comcast for
5 Franchise Areas I, II, III and IV, under
6 certain terms and conditions; and

7 Bill No. 150818, an ordinance
8 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
9 Property, on behalf of the City, to
10 acquire title or a lesser interest such
11 as an easement, by purchase, condemnation
12 or otherwise, in parcels of land along
13 the Delaware River and the Delaware River
14 Trail, and authorizing an agreement
15 between the City and the Philadelphia
16 Redevelopment Authority for the PRA to
17 act as the City's condemnation agent,
18 under certain terms and conditions; and

19 Bill No. 150846, an ordinance
20 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
21 Property, on behalf of the City, to
22 acquire fee simple title, or a lesser
23 interest in real estate, in parcels of
24 land along the Delaware River and the
25 Kensington & Tacony Trail, under certain

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 terms and conditions; and

3 Bill No. 150849, an ordinance
4 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
5 Property and the Director of Commerce,
6 acting on behalf of the City, to enter
7 into an agreement with Tinicum Township,
8 Delaware County, for the lease and
9 purchase from Tinicum Township of an
10 approximately 21.8 acre parcel of land
11 adjacent to the Philadelphia
12 International Airport which is currently
13 in use as a safety area at the end of a
14 runway, under certain terms and
15 conditions; and

16 Bill No. 150850, an ordinance
17 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
18 Property, on behalf of the City, to
19 convey to the Philadelphia Authority for
20 Industrial Development all or part of a
21 parcel commonly known as 2721-2777 Ruth
22 Street, for further conveyance, under
23 certain terms and conditions.

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

25 I'd like to recognize that we

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 have a quorum -- that a quorum is
3 present. To my right, Councilwoman
4 Blackwell, Councilwoman Maria
5 Quinones-Sanchez, Councilman Squilla. To
6 my left, Councilman Greenlee and
7 Councilman Oh.

8 Is there anyone here from the
9 Administration that wishes to testify on
10 Bill No. 150770 today?

11 (Witnesses approached witness
12 table.)

13 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:

14 Good morning, Chairman Henon and members
15 of the Committee on Public Property and
16 Public Works. My name is Bridget
17 Collins-Greenwald and I am the
18 Commissioner of the Department of Public
19 Property. I am here today to testify in
20 support of Bill No. 150770, an ordinance
21 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
22 Property, on behalf of the City of
23 Philadelphia, to acquire by purchase,
24 condemnation or otherwise title in some
25 or all of the parcels of land together

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 with the improvements thereon situate
3 commonly known as 351-355 West Penn
4 Street and 5322-5334 Newhall Street,
5 under certain terms and conditions.

6 The City is acquiring these
7 properties to replace the former
8 Wissahickon Playground. The Department
9 of Public Property supports this measure
10 and, accordingly, I respectfully ask that
11 City Council approve Bill 150770.

12 I am requesting a suspension of
13 the rules so as to allow for the first
14 reading at the next session of Council.

15 Thank you. I will be happy to
16 answer any questions you may have.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.
18 I just have a quick question. In your
19 testimony, the acquisition of the
20 properties replace the former Wissahickon
21 Playground. What's the plan for the old
22 playground?

23 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:
24 What was that?

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: What is the

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 plan for the old playground?

3 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:

4 The old playground has been fenced off.

5 There's a PHA property right next to it.

6 So it's been fenced off. So there's no

7 real use for the old playground right

8 now, except for whatever PHA is going to

9 use it for, from what I understand. So

10 what we're doing is actually replacing it

11 in-kind. So we're putting this land

12 together so the people in the

13 neighborhood -- we made a commitment to

14 still have a playground in that

15 neighborhood.

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: That's

17 great. So there's been communication --

18 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:

19 Yeah.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: -- and

21 consulting with the neighborhood?

22 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:

23 Mm-hmm.

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Great.

25 Is there anyone on the

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1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Committee that wishes to ask any
3 questions?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Is there any
6 other member --

7 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Point of
8 information, Mr. Chairman.

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: I'm sorry.
10 Hello over there.

11 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Hello.
12 Good morning.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: The Chair
14 recognizes Councilwoman Bass.

15 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Good
16 morning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
18 morning.

19 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: I just
20 wanted to thank Bridget -- the
21 Commissioner, excuse me, thank the
22 Commissioner for her hard work in this.
23 This has been a very unusual process with
24 the acquisition of these properties to
25 replace the former Wissahickon

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Playground, which by all standards was
3 unacceptable in terms of a playground and
4 recreation space. So we're excited that
5 these new spaces will be added, but
6 they're not just going to be the end of
7 the conversation for what happens in that
8 community. There's going to be
9 additional long-term planning to make
10 sure that we have enough of the
11 recreation space that the residents want
12 and certainly deserve in their
13 neighborhood.

14 So I just wanted to thank you
15 for your hard work on this and thank the
16 Committee for their support.

17 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:
18 Thank you.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
20 Councilwoman.

21 Is there anyone else here that
22 wishes to testify on Bill No. 150770?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Well, thank
25 you.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Is there anyone from the
3 Administration that wishes to testify on
4 Bill No. 150818?

5 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:
6 Me again.

7 Good morning, Chairman Henon
8 and members of the Committee on Public
9 Property and Public Works. My name is
10 Bridget Collins-Greenwald and I am the
11 Commissioner of the Department of Public
12 Property. I am here today to testify in
13 support of Bill No. 150818, an ordinance
14 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
15 Property, on behalf of the City, to
16 acquire title or a lesser interest such
17 as an easement, by purchase, condemnation
18 or otherwise, in parcels of land along
19 the Delaware River and the Delaware River
20 Trail, and authorizing an agreement
21 between the City and the Philadelphia
22 Redevelopment Authority for the PRA to
23 act as the City's condemnation agent,
24 under certain terms and conditions.

25 The acquisition will provide

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 much-needed space for recreation and
3 physical activity by allowing for the
4 construction of the Delaware River Trail
5 from its current terminus just south of
6 the SugarHouse Casino to Penn Treaty
7 Park.

8 The Department of Public
9 Property supports this measure and,
10 accordingly, I respectfully ask that City
11 Council approve Bill No. 150818.

12 I am requesting a suspension of
13 the rules so as to allow for the first
14 reading at the next session of Council.

15 Thank you. I will be happy to
16 answer any questions you may have.

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

18 Any members of the Committee
19 that wish to testify?

20 The Chair recognizes Councilman
21 Squilla.

22 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you,
23 Mr. Chairman.

24 I just want to say thank you,
25 Bridget, also for this work. This has

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 been a work in progress trying to
3 continue the trail along the Delaware
4 River, and this is a parcel that has been
5 unable for us to have access. So we
6 believe this is the best way to move
7 forward, and looking forward to the
8 continuation of the trail.

9 Thank you very much.

10 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:

11 Absolutely.

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

13 Anyone else here who wishes to
14 testify on Bill No. 150818?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
17 very much.

18 We will now hear testimony on
19 Bill No. 150846. Would Commissioner
20 Greenwald please approach and begin with
21 your testimony.

22 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:

23 Good morning, Chairman Henon and members
24 of the Committee on Public Property and
25 Public Works. My name is Bridget

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Collins-Greenwald and I am the
3 Commissioner of the Department of Public
4 Property. I am here today to testify in
5 support of Bill No. 150846, an ordinance
6 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
7 Property, on behalf of the City, to
8 acquire fee simple title, or a lesser
9 interest in real estate, in parcels of
10 land along the Delaware River and the
11 Kensington & Tacony Trail, under certain
12 terms and conditions.

13 This ordinance will enable the
14 City to acquire land to complete the
15 Kensington & Tacony Trail recreation
16 path.

17 The Department of Public
18 Property supports this measure and,
19 accordingly, I respectfully ask that City
20 Council approve Bill No. 150846.

21 I am requesting a suspension of
22 the rules so as to allow for the first
23 reading at the next session of Council.

24 Thank you. I will happy to
25 answer any questions you may have.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

3 Are there any questions from
4 members of the Committee?

5 (No response.)

6 COUNCILMAN HENON: Being none,
7 thank you.

8 Is there anyone else here that
9 wishes to testify on Bill No. 150846?

10 (No response.)

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Commissioner
12 Greenwald, would you please begin your
13 testimony on Bill No. 150850.

14 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:

15 Sure. Good morning, Chairman Henon and
16 members of the Committee on Public
17 Property and Public Works. My name is
18 Bridget Collins-Greenwald and I am the
19 Commissioner of the Department of Public
20 Property. I am here today to testify in
21 support of Bill No. 150850, an ordinance
22 authorizing the Commissioner of Public
23 Property, on behalf of the City, to
24 convey to the Philadelphia Authority for
25 Industrial Development all or part of a

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 parcel commonly known as 2721 to 2777

3 Ruth Street, for further conveyance,

4 under certain terms and conditions.

5 This property is being sold to
6 Orinoka Mills L.P., a Pennsylvania
7 limited partnership in which New
8 Kensington Community Development
9 Corporation owns the general partner
10 entity. The building will be developed
11 into 51 units of affordable rental
12 housing, the New Kensington CDC offices,
13 a small retail component, as well as some
14 open space.

15 The Department of Public
16 Property supports this measure and,
17 accordingly, I respectfully ask that City
18 Council approve Bill No. 150850.

19 I am requesting a suspension of
20 the rules so as to allow for the first
21 reading at the next session of Council.

22 Thank you. I will be happy to
23 answer any questions you may have.

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
25 Commissioner.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 The Chair recognizes
3 Councilwoman Maria Quinones-Sanchez.

4 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
5 you, Mr. Chair.

6 I just also want to thank the
7 Department of Public Property for working
8 with our partner in this case, New
9 Kensington CDC, for taking on what is a
10 very, very challenging project with a lot
11 of stakeholders at the table. We expect
12 that this development at Kensington off
13 of Somerset will be a game-changer in
14 that neighborhood. So I really want to
15 thank the City and all the departments
16 who are helping us move this along.

17 Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER COLLINS-GREENWALD:
19 Great.

20 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
21 Councilwoman.

22 Are there any other questions
23 from any other members on the Committee?

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Anyone from

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 the public that wishes to testify on Bill

3 No. 150850?

4 (No response.)

5 COUNCILMAN HENON: Being none,

6 thank you.

7 We will now hear testimony on

8 Bill No. 150849. Jim Tyrrell, please

9 approach the front and begin -- state

10 your name for the record and begin with

11 your testimony.

12 (Witnesses approached witness

13 table.)

14 MR. TYRRELL: Good morning,

15 Chairman Henon. My name is James

16 Tyrrell. I'm the Deputy Director of

17 Aviation for Property Management and

18 Business Development at the airport, and

19 I am pleased to appear before you today

20 to testify in support of Bill No. 150849.

21 The bill will authorize the

22 City of Philadelphia, through its

23 Department of Commerce, Division of

24 Aviation and the Department of Public

25 Property, to lease/purchase approximately

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 21.8 acres of real property located
3 adjacent to the western end of
4 Philadelphia International Airport Runway
5 9R and the Delaware River from Tinicum
6 Township for a continued use as a runway
7 safety zone. The property is presently
8 being leased by the City from Tinicum
9 Township pursuant to Bill No. 050337,
10 which was authorized by City Council in
11 2005.

12 During the term of the previous
13 lease, the airport developed the premises
14 to comply with the current FAA standards
15 for runway safety zones.

16 The property will be
17 leased/purchased pursuant to an agreement
18 that has been negotiated by the Law
19 Department and Tinicum Township's legal
20 counsel. The agreement was also a
21 component of the comprehensive Settlement
22 Agreements executed in April of this year
23 between the City and Tinicum Township,
24 Interboro School District, and Delaware
25 County.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 The airport has made the safety
3 and security of our traveling passengers
4 our foremost priority. This agreement
5 will serve to continue the valuable
6 safety component, and at the end of the
7 term, the airport will own the property.

8 Please amend the ordinance to
9 include Exhibit-B, which is the actual
10 lease document. I ask the Committee to
11 approve the lease/purchase of the
12 property for use as a runway safety zone.
13 I ask that the rules be suspended in
14 order to permit the first reading at the
15 next Council session.

16 I greatly appreciate the
17 opportunity to speak with you today in
18 support of Bill No. 150849 and will be
19 happy to answer questions you may have.

20 Thank you.

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

22 The Chair recognizes Councilman
23 Greenlee.

24 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
25 you, Mr. Chairman.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Good morning. Just a question.

3 I know the length of the last lease for
4 this property was ten years; is that
5 correct?

6 MR. TYRRELL: I believe it was.

7 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And now I
8 know this is for 50 years, and could you
9 explain why -- obviously it's a
10 significant difference. Could you just
11 explain a little bit why that's so.

12 MR. TYRRELL: Well, the airport
13 has to show that it has control over the
14 property to satisfy the FAA requirements.
15 It also helped Tinicum Township agree to
16 sell us the property.

17 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So that
18 was part of the deal, if you will?

19 MR. TYRRELL: Yes. Yes,
20 Councilman.

21 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And
22 what's the appraised value of the
23 property? Is that in here? Do we know?

24 MR. MESSINA: It is not. We
25 did have -- Joseph Messina, the City

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Solicitor's Office.

3 Councilman, we did have the
4 property appraised, and based on the
5 present value of the payment stream going
6 out very far, it came in below our
7 appraisal.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Below?

9 I'm sorry.

10 MR. MESSINA: Below the
11 appraisal.

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: All
13 right. Thank you.

14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
16 Councilman.

17 Any other members of the
18 Committee have any testimony here, make
19 any statements?

20 (No response.)

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: Anyone else
22 here that wishes to testify on Bill No.
23 150849?

24 (No response.)

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 MR. TYRRELL: Thank you,
3 Chairman.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: We will
5 start with Bill No. 150652. There's a
6 few things that I want to state before we
7 hear some public -- 150652, my apology,
8 is being held at the request of the
9 sponsor. We will now hear testimony for
10 Bill No. 150809, in which I'm going to
11 make a brief statement before we hear
12 some testimony from the general public.

13 But first I want to -- before I
14 welcome all our witnesses, let me explain
15 where we are and why we will not be
16 taking any testimony from Comcast and the
17 Administration today, because we've,
18 quite frankly, heard a lot from each of
19 them throughout this process. And so
20 we're going to let the general public
21 have another opportunity to voice their
22 concerns, and we are going to allow the
23 members to state for the record what they
24 need to see in the franchise agreement.

25 So my goal throughout this

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 process has been to create a fair
3 process, to get the best possible deal
4 for the citizens of Philadelphia. So
5 we're going to take public comment.
6 We're going to hear from them. We're
7 going to hear from the members, and we're
8 going to go back and we're going to get
9 back together with Comcast and the
10 Administration to hash out the rest of
11 the issues.

12 So we're going to hold this
13 bill in the public meeting today until
14 Thursday, 8:30 a.m. -- or public hearing
15 and we're going to get this deal done
16 before we have our regular session on
17 Thursday, and that is the intent. I
18 can't promise anything, but that is
19 certainly the intent.

20 Finally, I wanted to thank the
21 negotiating team for the progress they
22 have made thus far.

23 So with that, I want to ask if
24 there is anybody here from the general
25 public that would like to testify on Bill

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 No. 150809, the Comcast franchise
3 agreement?

4 The Clerk has a list. If those
5 who have not signed up, please sign up to
6 my back left. And the Clerk, please,
7 would you read the names of the folks who
8 would like to testify publicly here
9 today.

10 THE CLERK: The first
11 three-person panel to approach the
12 witness table will be Kati Sipp, Lea van
13 der Tak, and Pele Laden.

14 (Witnesses approached witness
15 table.)

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: Good
17 morning. You can state your name for the
18 record and begin with your testimony.

19 MS. SIPP: My name is Kati Sipp
20 and I'm the Director of Pennsylvania
21 Working Families. Thank you, Councilman
22 Henon, and the rest of the members of the
23 Committee for allowing me to speak today.

24 I am -- we're back again to
25 sort of remind Council that we think it's

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 imperative in a city that has a Fortune
3 50 company, about which you could say
4 they've been really given a lot, that
5 it's time to make sure that they are
6 giving what the rest of the City needs.
7 And so there's a couple of things that I
8 will just again urge Council to make sure
9 get included into the franchise
10 agreement.

11 Number one, we need this
12 company to be creating jobs for residents
13 of the City of Philadelphia that pay the
14 prevailing wage. We're a union town.
15 There should be a neutrality agreement in
16 the franchise that allows workers, if
17 they so choose, to organize unions and to
18 bargain collectively. But we really
19 believe that regardless of whether or not
20 the workers at Comcast and in all of
21 their subcontractors and contractors have
22 unions, that they deserve to make at
23 least \$15 an hour and the prevailing
24 wage, if that is higher.

25 (Applause.)

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 MS. SIPP: The second thing I
3 want to reiterate is that, again, we
4 really think in the 21st century economy,
5 all of our kids need to be able to get
6 online to do their homework. I had a
7 situation a couple of weeks ago where I
8 was at a meeting at my kid's school and
9 my son was texting me, like the Internet
10 is out, I can't write a paper. And the
11 idea that we have to have folks wait
12 three months to get their Internet turned
13 on if they're eligible for Internet
14 Essentials is totally ridiculous. If
15 people are eligible, if they have the
16 money to pay and they're able to get
17 online, their kids should be able to do
18 their homework at home and not have to go
19 to the public library or go to a friend's
20 house or go anywhere else. We should be
21 getting rid of their requirement that in
22 order to get Internet Essentials you need
23 to have your service shut off for 90
24 days. It's crazy.

25 And the last thing that I want

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 to say is, we are a world-class city and
3 we need to have a world-class education
4 system, which includes preparing our kids
5 for the future by teaching them all of
6 the kinds of things that technology can
7 help them do. It's preparing them for
8 employment for the future. We've got to
9 have Comcast investing in career and
10 technical education in the School
11 District of Philadelphia and making sure
12 that that is something that our kids get.

13 So thank you very much.

14 (Applause.)

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

16 Can you state your name for the
17 record and begin with your testimony.

18 MS. VAN DER TAK: Good morning.

19 My name is Lea van der Tak. I was
20 introduced to PhillyCAM through the
21 six-month co-op program at Drexel.
22 Through that time, I got to meet,
23 befriend, and help tons of people in
24 groups in the community with their video
25 projects. Among those groups were many

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 non-profits whom I saw and edited videos
3 for that reflected the realities of our
4 City better than any mainstream local
5 news outlet I've seen.

6 PhillyCAM exposed me to the
7 voices of people I never otherwise would
8 have heard. I also learned more and felt
9 more fulfilled in those six months than
10 the majority of my time at Drexel. I'm
11 happy to say that in two weeks I'm
12 officially graduating Drexel with a job
13 at PhillyCAM, and I hope they get the
14 increased funding they need and deserve
15 to account for their clear growth in
16 membership, to get them deeper into our
17 communities, and to employ recent
18 graduates like me.

19 Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: Please state
22 your name for the record and proceed with
23 your testimony.

24 MR. IRGANG-LADEN: Hi, Council.

25 My name is Pele Irgang-Laden and I am a

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 member of 15 Now, the movement to raise
3 the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. I'm
4 also a resident of Philadelphia, living
5 in Councilman Squilla's district.

6 This is the final hour for the
7 public, for us to come and speak with our
8 elected representatives and demand that
9 they put the interests of us, of
10 Philadelphians, of the people, before the
11 corporation Comcast. We're here in this
12 last opportunity for the public to speak
13 to you to demand that you hold Comcast
14 accountable, that you -- as you know,
15 they can do more, and you make sure that
16 they are paying their workers a
17 prevailing wage of at least \$15 an hour
18 and, as workers, have the right to form a
19 union.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. IRGANG-LADEN: And as a
22 major corporation in Philadelphia and
23 with Philadelphia as its hometown,
24 Comcast has the obligation to pay their
25 workers a living wage and to be an

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 example for the City by paying workers at
3 least \$15 an hour and allowing them to
4 unionize.

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

8 Thank you all for your
9 testimony.

10 Clerk.

11 THE CLERK: Nina Fay, Bryan
12 Mercer, Reverend Greg Holston.

13 (Witnesses approached witness
14 table.)

15 MR. MERCER: I thank you,
16 Councilman Henon, and the whole of this
17 Committee for working hard to ensure
18 public input in this process.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Can you
20 state your name for the record, please.

21 MR. MERCER: My name is Bryan
22 Mercer. I'm a resident here in
23 Philadelphia living in the West
24 Philadelphia neighborhood.

25 I want to submit testimony on

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 the 90-day window requirement for current
3 Comcast Internet subscribers to receive
4 Internet Essentials.

5 Comcast states that the window
6 exists because Internet Essentials is a
7 digital inclusion program, but from
8 experiences working with low-income
9 people in search of Internet access, this
10 requirement means that Internet
11 Essentials is really a customer
12 acquisition program.

13 The 90-day window is just yet
14 another barrier that prevents people who
15 are balancing Internet with all the other
16 bills and utilities in their lives from
17 getting online. If you are a low-income
18 Comcast customer today and need an option
19 to save money in your home, then you have
20 to turn off your service for 90 days from
21 Comcast in order to get Internet
22 Essentials. But if you're a customer of
23 another Internet service provider today
24 and you want an option to save money,
25 then you could switch today to Comcast

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2 Internet Essentials program. It's clear
3 that from this discrepancy, that Comcast
4 is more interested in gaining new paying
5 customers and will actually penalize
6 low-income customers who have already
7 committed to them rather than rewarding
8 them. This barrier, along with high
9 eligibility requirements, means that
10 there are often zero affordable options
11 to recommend low-income people trying to
12 get online.

13 Comcast Internet Essentials is
14 not like programs available in some areas
15 like Mobile Beacon and JumpWireless that
16 allow any person to sign up for
17 low-income service that do address the
18 digital divide. Comcast instead uses the
19 issue of the digital divide to profit off
20 of the hardship of poor people.

21 Council should keep fighting
22 the hard fight to end this 90-day policy
23 for this franchise.

24 Thank you.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: Please state
4 your name and proceed with your
5 testimony, please.

6 REVEREND HOLSTON: Reverend
7 Gregory Holston. I'm the Pastor of New
8 Vision United Methodist Church here at
9 Broad and Westmoreland Streets. I'm also
10 the Co-Chair of POWER's Economic Dignity
11 Team, POWER - Philadelphians Organized to
12 Witness, Empower and Rebuild, 45 houses
13 of faith in the City of Philadelphia and
14 15 houses in the suburbs dedicated to
15 building a city of opportunity that works
16 for all. And, again, I've just been
17 recently named the national President of
18 OIC of America, 38 affiliates in 22
19 states across the country, all building
20 and working with the underserved and in
21 poor communities across our country.

22 I'm here more as a pastor
23 today, because in North Philadelphia we
24 have a breakfast we do every Sunday and
25 we serve 50 to 75 to 100 people, mostly

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2 men, many of them ex-offenders, many of
3 them trying to rebuild their lives. And
4 to rebuild your life, you need to be able
5 to get a job. Unfortunately, without
6 Internet access, it's very difficult to
7 be able to even apply for a job today.
8 And so their struggle, as we have allowed
9 them at times to have Internet access
10 through our church, is difficult for them
11 to be able to survive.

12 I applaud Council here today.
13 I applaud your work. I applaud your
14 leadership in beginning to have a
15 framework of a deal that can begin to
16 think about those individuals. But
17 Comcast can do more. Comcast can assure
18 that those individuals that we serve
19 every Sunday have Internet access so they
20 can begin to rebuild their lives.
21 Comcast, a company of \$64 billion in
22 revenue and \$8 billion in profit, can be
23 able to do more to help a city that is
24 the poorest big city in the country.

25 (Applause.)

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2 REVEREND HOLSTON: I thank you
3 for your leadership, because I've seen
4 you. I've been with you. Many of you
5 have been at my church and seen the faces
6 of this poverty that we exist, and I want
7 you to just keep those faces of those
8 individuals in mind when you're fighting
9 and negotiating with Comcast today, that
10 you got to fight for them, fight for
11 them, fight for them, and we can make a
12 difference. Comcast can do more.

13 (Applause.)

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: We do have
15 an awesome team up here. I just want to
16 state that for the record.

17 You can state your name and
18 proceed with your testimony. Thank you.

19 MS. FAY: Hi. My name is Nina
20 Fay and this is the third hearing that
21 I've been to and the second time that
22 I've taken off work without pay.

23 I'm a parent of a public school
24 student and a public school teacher. My
25 son who is a public school teacher, he

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 teaches at B and Allegheny and mostly
3 obviously low-income kids, and there are
4 no resources, including technology, in
5 his classroom. There are no computers.
6 There may be a few that they have that
7 are over ten years old.

8 My other son is lucky because
9 he actually goes to Science Leadership
10 Academy, and even though he's lucky and
11 it's a magnet school, we raise most of
12 the money for -- we raise hundreds of
13 thousands of dollars, the home and
14 school, for computers for the kids, for
15 laptops for -- we pay for a teacher. I
16 mean, we pay out of our own pockets to
17 subsidize a teacher because of the school
18 cuts.

19 So what I would like to say is
20 why can't all kids train to use
21 technology to succeed? Why can't all
22 young people have an affordable, reliable
23 Internet hookup at home? Comcast pays a
24 small percentage of property tax that
25 would otherwise -- they would otherwise

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 owe on their massive skyscrapers. In
3 exchange, we need them to make
4 Philadelphia the shining star of tech
5 education and Internet access rather than
6 the third worst of any big city in the
7 U.S.

8 We need Council to fight now,
9 today, for Comcast to expand affordable
10 Internet to every home in the City as
11 part of this franchise, and we need
12 Council to fight now, today, for Comcast
13 to pay its fair share through technology
14 education in our public schools. And I
15 would also like to say the 90-day, to
16 shut off your Internet for 90-day, I
17 thought it was pretty amusing when I was
18 here the last time that when they asked
19 Comcast why they do it, none of them knew
20 an answer. They didn't have an answer to
21 give on that, which was pretty silly.

22 Anyway, thank you for letting
23 me talk.

24 (Applause.)

25 COUNCILMAN SQUILLA: Thank you.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Can the Clerk please read the
3 title of the next panel.

4 THE CLERK: Hannah Sassaman,
5 Sean Brown, Molly Lawrence.

6 (Witnesses approached witness
7 table.)

8 MS. SASSAMAN: Good morning,
9 Councilmembers and members of the public.
10 My name is Hannah Sassaman and I am an
11 organizer with the Media Mobilizing
12 Project, and I was able to testify at the
13 last hearing, but as I know we're at the
14 11th hour now, I just wanted to state
15 that the different issues that you're
16 hearing about today, like getting rid of
17 that 90-day window on eligibility for
18 Internet Essentials and otherwise
19 expanding it to far more low-income
20 people, establishing career and
21 technology education programs at
22 Philadelphia public schools, and making
23 sure our workers earn a prevailing wage,
24 if we won those things, if you're able to
25 negotiate for those things, you would be

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2 building the strongest franchise in the
3 United States, as well as establishing a
4 precedent for every community around the
5 country to be able to fight for their
6 right to communicate.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. SASSAMAN: Now,
9 Philadelphia is special, like this is
10 Comcast's hometown, and the commitment
11 that they need to make here is very
12 different than the commitment that
13 they'll be making in other places, but
14 until we guarantee access to the Internet
15 as a human right, as something as
16 available to all people, whether you're
17 poor or rich, like water, like heat, then
18 this is the kind of work we need to do.

19 So I just want to say that
20 everyone here, thousands of other people
21 are standing with you to try to pass a
22 franchise now before the end of session
23 that does these things.

24 Thank you very much.

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you.

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2 (Applause.)

3 COUNCILMAN HENON: State your
4 name for the record and begin with your
5 testimony.

6 MS. BROWN: Thank you. My name
7 is Sean Brown. I'm on staff with Media
8 Mobilizing Project. I live in this
9 region, and I just wanted to offer a
10 little bit of insight.

11 So I think, no pun intended,
12 but there's an essential question here,
13 which is who has the power? The people
14 or the powerful? The corporation or the
15 community? Will Comcast add a few steps
16 to the staircase that leads us to
17 success? I'm sure it will. I'm sure
18 that ultimately Comcast will do the right
19 thing and the City Council will support
20 what we all know to be common sense
21 requests, which includes no three-month
22 waiting period. That seems odd that a
23 person has to go three months without any
24 Internet to get something which in the
25 name itself is considered to be

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2 essential.

3 We also need to make sure that
4 tech education is funded. We live in a
5 world where 60 percent of the jobs that
6 will exist ten years from now don't exist
7 today. Sixty percent of the jobs that
8 exist ten years from now don't exist
9 today. But we do know about those jobs
10 even though we don't know exactly what
11 will be in the job description, is that
12 you have to have strong technical skills,
13 whether it's being able to write code,
14 being able to create a presentation,
15 being able to create a spreadsheet, be
16 able to use the Internet to do research.
17 These are things that have to be learned
18 in the classroom, but these are also
19 things that Comcast can support with
20 their profits to support the School
21 District in order to make sure that
22 students in Philly, whether they're poor
23 or middle class, from poor/middle class
24 families, are able to know those things.

25 And, lastly, and just as

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2 importantly, no group of workers in this
3 country should be limited in their
4 ability to organize in order to be able
5 to be paid a fair wage. If we don't want
6 Philly to be the largest poor city in
7 America, then there are steps this
8 Council can take in partnership with
9 Comcast, setting a national example for
10 its workers to be paid a living wage,
11 which starts at \$15 an hour.

12 Thank you.

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
14 for your testimony.

15 (Applause.)

16 COUNCILMAN HENON: State your
17 name for the record. Go ahead, go for
18 it.

19 MS. LAWRENCE: Hello. My name
20 is Holly Lawrence. I'm from the
21 University Community Collaborative, and
22 I'm here to talk to you today about
23 Comcast.

24 The reality here is that
25 Comcast's administration by the rules of

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 the game have to ask you guys for these
3 tax breaks, have to ask you guys for
4 these concessions so that they can make
5 their highest profits possible. But the
6 reality is that when companies ask for
7 these big tax breaks, cities suffer in
8 long-term economic development because of
9 the lost revenue.

10 The revenue could be used to
11 fund more meaningful economic ventures
12 and education and technology
13 infrastructure for future development
14 that would mean much more to the City of
15 Philadelphia than a simple property tax
16 break. And these corporations don't need
17 them.

18 As a facilitator in
19 after-school programs, I work with high
20 school students from across the City of
21 Philadelphia from a variety of schools,
22 from public to charter to private, and
23 while I'm fortunate enough to work at
24 Temple University where we have access to
25 computers and different technologies so

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2 that students can make media projects
3 about issues in their community that make
4 an impact, they cannot do those same
5 things at their own schools. And often I
6 find myself as a classroom facilitator
7 having to supplement for what their
8 schools don't have.

9 As my seniors are applying for
10 college and many of them have to fill out
11 The Common Application, which is an
12 online application to send out to various
13 universities to apply for college, many
14 of them don't have access to computers at
15 home or in their schools to be able to
16 fill out these applications. Many of
17 them don't have counselors in their
18 schools on a regular basis to be able to
19 help them get into schools. Whereas, I
20 grew up in Delaware County. I had six
21 counselors dedicated to our high -- just
22 one high school alone to help you get
23 into college and help you fill out the
24 applications and do that process. We had
25 a dedicated counselor for college access.

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2 We had -- we now have iPads for every
3 student and laptop carts, computer labs
4 and computers in the library. There
5 should not be that great of a difference
6 in access and in resources between two
7 different counties in the same state as
8 far as what students have access to and
9 how they can be better prepared to get
10 into schools and get into jobs in the
11 future.

12 So we're asking today that we
13 increase the access to affordable
14 Internet in Philadelphia and that for --
15 that we end the 90-day shutoff period for
16 the Internet Essentials program, that we
17 end their policy to achieve zero dollar
18 debt on their current package, as many
19 low-income people would find that as a
20 very difficult struggle to be able to get
21 to zero dollars before signing up for
22 Internet Essentials. Clearly, they don't
23 have money. That's why they're trying to
24 sign up for these programs. And that
25 they can eventually pay it off over time,

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2 but requiring them to have that zero
3 dollar debt is a large hurdle, and the
4 limitations on having kids between a
5 certain age bracket in order to have
6 access to these programs.

7 As a sort of gauge of how
8 accessible this Internet Essentials
9 program is, it's almost as hard to be
10 accepted into the Harvard Law School as
11 it is for applicants to be accepted into
12 the Internet Essentials program.

13 Currently, there's a 7 percent chance of
14 being accepted into Internet Essentials.
15 There's a 4 to 5 percent chance of being
16 accepted into Harvard Law.

17 Philadelphia has the third
18 worst broadband connection out of the 25
19 biggest cities in the U.S. because our
20 city's deep levels of poverty and
21 Comcast's Internet monopoly.

22 And, finally, we want tech
23 education for our schools. We want
24 Comcast to fund our public schools and
25 tech education resources and tech and

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2 staffing support. The schools need at
3 least one computer for every student or
4 at least up-to-date tech labs with
5 working computers for their students;
6 staffing for tech labs given there are
7 seven trained IT support technicians for
8 216 schools in Philadelphia; and Comcast
9 should be more involved with the growing,
10 yet underfunded, developing and
11 programming education initiatives in the
12 City.

13 Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
15 for your testimony.

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Clerk, can
18 you read the next.

19 THE CLERK: John Bergen,
20 Malique Diarra, Mitch Chanin.

21 (Witnesses approached witness
22 table.)

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
24 for coming in this morning. If you could
25 state your name for the record and begin

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 with your brief testimony.

3 MS. DIARRA: Hi. My name is
4 Malique Diarra. I'm a member of Action
5 United and a resident of Southwest
6 Philadelphia.

7 I've talked before about how I
8 was up-sold by Comcast and as this
9 result -- of this result, that
10 experience, I no longer qualify for
11 Internet Essentials. I am still on a
12 fixed income. Here's the reason why: To
13 be eligible for Internet Essentials
14 again, I will have to go 90 days without
15 Internet service. My daughter cannot go
16 90 days without doing her homework. I
17 cannot go 90 days without paying my
18 bills.

19 Internet access is a basic need
20 for my family, and it forces us -- to
21 force us 90 days to go without Internet
22 Essentials is unfair. Also, I have a
23 back bill that I cannot afford to pay all
24 at once. Comcast is so greedy that they
25 want all -- want it all up -- sorry.

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2 They want it all up front. Sorry.

3 Sorry. I don't -- or I don't get any

4 service. As long as I am making an

5 effort to pay off my back bill, I should

6 be able to get affordable Internet,

7 otherwise I will fall deeper into debt.

8 I am sure there are many other people of

9 Philadelphia who are in similar

10 situations.

11 We demand that Comcast get
12 people off this waiting period and give
13 us access to affordable Internet while
14 working with us.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. DIARRA: I am so sorry, but
17 this is so deep to me. I live on a fixed
18 income, and I feel like Comcast should be
19 able to work with us. My story is so --
20 working with Comcast is a hard task.

21 Now, I went to the school and I
22 got the letter from the school that's
23 stating that I should be on affordable
24 Internet, only paying \$10 a month. And
25 then I got up-sold by Comcast paying \$37

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 a month. The bill just kept on going
3 higher and higher. Then I'm paying two
4 times in one month. That's so unfair to
5 us.

6 Thank you.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
8 for your testimony.

9 (Applause.)

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: State your
11 name.

12 MR. BERGEN: My name is John
13 Bergen and I serve as the Outreach
14 Minister at Old First Reformed UCC over
15 in the Old City. I'm a relatively new
16 resident of Philadelphia and I do not
17 have children, so I cannot speak to the
18 ways in which Comcast fails students and
19 parents in Philadelphia, but what I do
20 want to share is the difficulty faced by
21 many of the homeless men that I know
22 through my work as an Outreach Minister.

23 Access to Internet is crucial
24 for people working to escape
25 homelessness. Frequently somebody I

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 interact with asks me to use my phone for
3 the Internet or asks to have our WiFi
4 password at the church. Last week I
5 helped a man named Quinton use our
6 Internet to make a needed appointment at
7 the VA Hospital, which was necessary to
8 receive payments to help with his
9 transitional housing.

10 For people who can make it into
11 more stable housing, Internet access is
12 incredibly important. The Internet
13 Essentials program is not accessible to
14 many people who are moving into
15 transitional housing. Quinton and others
16 do not have school-age children. They
17 may have back bills owed. Other things
18 may disqualify them. Without Internet in
19 their home, even the very, very slow
20 Internet provided through Internet
21 Essentials, many people trying to escape
22 homelessness have to go to libraries and
23 wait in line to do basic things like
24 search for jobs, contact friends and
25 relatives or check their e-mail.

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2 Let me put this as simply as I
3 can. Without reliable access to
4 Internet, it is difficult to break the
5 cycle of homelessness. Comcast fails to
6 provide a needed service to help the men
7 I know like Quinton. Comcast Internet
8 Essentials program is not accessible, and
9 this hurts the homeless community in
10 Philadelphia.

11 Comcast must do better, and I
12 ask everyone in Council to push Comcast
13 to do better.

14 Thank you.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
16 for your testimony.

17 (Applause.)

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: State your
19 name for the record.

20 MR. CHANIN: Sure. My name is
21 Mitch Chanin. I'm an almost lifelong
22 resident of Philadelphia, born and bred
23 here.

24 So much of what I would want to
25 say has already been stated a lot more

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 eloquently than I could. But I guess I
3 want to just share a bit of a story that
4 my mother actually started telling at the
5 last hearing when she testified to
6 illustrate the importance of expanding
7 access to Internet Essentials.

8 My mother was a school
9 secretary in Northeast Philly for a long
10 time, 28 years, something like that,
11 working in a couple different schools,
12 and when she was here last time, she was
13 speaking about the fact that students'
14 grades would be influenced very
15 significantly by whether or not they had
16 Internet access at home; that the lower
17 income students in the schools where she
18 worked often did not have reliable access
19 to the Internet and they couldn't
20 complete their assignments on time or at
21 all and that they would actually get poor
22 grades. And the teachers were really
23 struggling with it, but they couldn't
24 extend the deadlines or exempt students
25 from doing certain kinds of work just

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 because they didn't have Internet access
3 at home. And that produced a lot of
4 frustration and alienation and a real
5 sense among some of the students that
6 they weren't valued as much as other
7 students were.

8 She worked in two different
9 schools. One school, Austin Meehan
10 Middle School, this was a very serious
11 problem. She also worked in a much more
12 affluent school, the Greenberg School,
13 further in the Northeast, and these kinds
14 of inequities weren't nearly as present
15 there. And this is just wrong.

16 Internet access is essential.
17 You cannot achieve your basic tasks that
18 you need to do on a daily basis without
19 it. If it's called Internet Essentials,
20 that's because it's essential, and I
21 think that it's really critical that
22 Comcast expand access to that program and
23 take away the barriers, like the 90-day
24 waiting period, the age restrictions, and
25 the requirement that you have a zero debt

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 balance with Comcast.

3 So please act in the best
4 interest of students and others
5 throughout the City and insist that
6 Comcast expand access to Internet
7 Essentials to everybody.

8 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
9 very much for your testimony.

10 (Applause.)

11 COUNCILMAN HENON: Clerk, do we
12 have any other --

13 THE CLERK: Ron Whitehorn,
14 Gretjen Clausing.

15 (Witnesses approached witness
16 table.)

17 MS. CLAUSING: I'm the last
18 one?

19 Good morning. Gretjen
20 Clausing. I'm the Executive Director of
21 PhillyCAM, and again I thank this
22 Committee and the negotiating team for
23 all of the incredible work that has been
24 put into this franchise negotiation, and
25 I am pleased to just have this

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 opportunity to address you one more time
3 as we are in this 11th hour. I feel like
4 I'm the Eagles and we're trying to get
5 from the 10 yard line into the end zone.
6 And there's still some really important
7 things that I hope you can negotiate into
8 this agreement.

9 PhillyCAM is still looking at a
10 significant budget cut under the current
11 terms of this newly renegotiated
12 franchise. Under the last one, PhillyCAM
13 received 90 percent of the funds
14 allocated for PEG, and under this
15 proposal we're only looking to receive 50
16 percent. And if the support continues at
17 this level, we'll be able to maintain and
18 sort of carry on the programs that we
19 have been doing, providing access to all
20 Philadelphians to be able to make and
21 share their own media content on our
22 cable channels and online. But in five
23 years, continuing on this -- with this
24 level of support, we will be in a
25 position where we're going to need to lay

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 off staff and cut our programs. And I
3 have not really gotten a satisfactory
4 answer from Comcast as to why in other
5 cities, including in most recently
6 negotiated franchises such as St. Paul,
7 Minnesota where they have fewer residents
8 and fewer cable subscribers, that they
9 received significantly more operating and
10 capital support from their respective
11 cable franchises. So why in our hometown
12 are we not able to have a public access
13 television station that is the most well
14 supported in the country?

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. CLAUSING: I'm going to get
17 a little wonky here. I'm going to go
18 quick. Wonky, but quick.

19 COUNCILMAN HENON: Please.
20 Thank you.

21 MS. CLAUSING: There is
22 language in there for the programming
23 guide, and this is how people are able to
24 find out information about the channels
25 and the programming that's being aired,

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 and this is vitally important. But
3 there's really no provision that ensures
4 that this is at no cost to the access
5 centers. So I would really urge the
6 Committee to make sure that that language
7 is included in there.

8 Also, in the previous franchise
9 agreement, there had been a commitment to
10 providing the access channels with free
11 public service announcements to be able
12 to promote the work that we do. That has
13 been scratched from this new franchise.
14 I really have no idea why. So I would
15 definitely urge the Committee to see the
16 return of those PSA's.

17 And also we have a vision to be
18 able to expand our channels to five.
19 Unfortunately, that's not going to
20 happen, because as part of this
21 negotiation, we've already lost the
22 opportunity to expand to one of those
23 channels and received no competition for
24 the return of that channel, but we still
25 have a vision to grow to four channels,

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 to have a youth channel, an arts and
3 culture channel, a heritage channel, but
4 in order to do that, we have to meet
5 certain thresholds that at this point are
6 really quite onerous. So I would ask
7 that the threshold be relaxed from 20 to
8 15.

9 And in closing, again, I just
10 want to thank this Committee for all
11 their work, and I hope that you will work
12 to make an even fairer franchise than the
13 one that you've gotten so far.

14 Thank you.

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
16 for your testimony.

17 (Applause.)

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: State your
19 name for the record and you may begin
20 with your testimony.

21 MR. WHITEHORN: Thank you. My
22 name is Ron Whitehorn. I am the
23 coordinator for the Philadelphia
24 Coalition Advocating for Public Schools.
25 We're part of the coalition that's here

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.
2 today.

3 I want to speak in particular
4 to the importance of funding, Comcast
5 funding, and supporting CTE programs in
6 our schools. I testified last month. I
7 talked about my own experience as a
8 teacher and the power of computer
9 technology in unleashing the creative and
10 critical thinking potential of our
11 students.

12 I think the case for supporting
13 our CTE programs is rather obvious to our
14 city. It would expand job opportunities
15 for our people. It would mean a more
16 educated labor force. It would be a
17 great fit for Comcast, which is a digital
18 technology company.

19 I want to urge Council, as has
20 been said before, to take this to another
21 level. Comcast has to do more. I think
22 fundamentally what we have here is a
23 moral question. When I look around our
24 city and I contrast the shiny tower that
25 Comcast has built with all its bells and

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 whistles and housing this corporation,
3 which is the most profitable in the
4 world, I contrast that with our schools
5 that are dilapidated, understaffed,
6 underresourced, where children are
7 getting a decidedly second-class
8 education, and I say to myself, What is
9 wrong with this city? What is wrong with
10 this country?

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. WHITEHORN: So I think we
13 can take a small step here to set things
14 right by making Comcast do more, by
15 holding them to a stricter standard.

16 So I thank you today for your
17 efforts and hope we can get it done.

18 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you
19 for your testimony.

20 Clerk?

21 (Applause.)

22 THE CLERK: There are no more
23 witnesses.

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: Okay. Are
25 there any members that wish to make any

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 statements for the record?

3 The Chair recognizes Councilman
4 Greenlee.

5 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
6 you, Mr. Chairman. And, first of all, I
7 just want to certainly get on record
8 recognizing your efforts and the efforts
9 of your staff in taking on this issue and
10 keeping people informed and dealing with
11 this very important issue that's going to
12 affect us for a long time. So, again,
13 you and your people should be
14 congratulated on that.

15 But I think many of us will
16 still agree that there's still some
17 things that need to get done before
18 Thursday morning, and I just want to
19 mention two of them, and I think other
20 members probably have some issues they
21 want to raise too, and these issues have
22 been raised by the public today.
23 Particularly the Internet Essentials
24 program. As one of the speakers said, it
25 is aptly named. It is essential. It is

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 essential as many people as possible have
3 access to the Internet, and thus, in my
4 opinion, it is essential that that 90-day
5 turn-off program be eliminated
6 immediately.

7 (Applause.)

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE:

9 Mr. Chairman, you may remember at the
10 last hearing I asked for a reason why
11 that program is in place. One of the
12 Comcast representatives got up and said,
13 I can't give you a good reason. And that
14 was probably the truest answer I could
15 hear. Now, in the interim there has been
16 more wordy explanations given by Comcast,
17 but with all due respect, I'd say it
18 still reverts back to the same thing,
19 there is no good answer why you have this
20 90-day turn-off policy.

21 (Applause.)

22 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And where
23 I don't like to draw lines in the sand,
24 it's not my style, I have to say
25 personally -- this is just for me -- if

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 that program, if that 90-day turn-off is
3 not eliminated, I have trouble voting for
4 this package.

5 (Applause.)

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Just one
7 other thing real quickly. Prevailing
8 wage has been an issue that has been
9 brought up many, many times in this City
10 Council. I know it's an issue you feel
11 very strongly about, and I would just say
12 and urge Comcast that any worker, any and
13 every worker, should have a prevailing
14 wage if they're involved with Comcast,
15 and we will certainly keep pushing for
16 that.

17 And, again, thank you,
18 Mr. Chairman, for all you've done, and
19 hopefully by Thursday morning, we can
20 have all these worked out and we can have
21 a package that we can all be proud of.

22 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
24 Councilman.

25 (Applause.)

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: The Chair
3 recognizes Councilwoman Maria
4 Quinones-Sanchez.

5 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: Thank
6 you, Mr. Chair. I also want to echo the
7 words of my colleague Greenlee. The
8 Public Property Committee and the
9 Chairman and the City team have worked
10 diligently with all of the Comcast
11 representatives to get us to a better
12 place, and hopefully over the next 48
13 hours, we will be at even a better place.

14 The issues of Internet
15 Essentials as you sign on into a 15-year
16 deal that we don't know what the world is
17 going to look like in 15 years is hugely
18 important. The issue of WiFi access is
19 going to be essential and even more
20 essential to underrepresented communities
21 and communities in poverty where access
22 to healthcare and other issues become
23 vital.

24 So I think there's still some
25 work to be done on that. I'm

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 particularly concerned about limiting
3 some of the Internet Essentials
4 programming, capping it at a quarter of a
5 million dollars, which will only really
6 cover about a thousand people who don't
7 fall into our priority areas of children
8 and seniors, and I think we can do better
9 in that.

10 (Applause.)

11 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: In
12 Council, we've been very consistent on
13 prevailing wage, on sick leave, and we
14 really need corporations like Comcast to
15 not shield subcontractors and some of the
16 other work that they do. This is about
17 all workers related to Comcast, ensuring
18 sick leave and prevailing wage and all of
19 the other things that we have fought for
20 and consistently have advocated here.

21 The 90-day blackout period,
22 that's a business model and one we
23 disagree on. There is no explanation.
24 It's a bad business model, and we need to
25 make sure that we continue to fight for

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 that.

3 (Applause.)

4 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: For me,
5 expanded local programming is hugely
6 important. If we're going to be a
7 world-class city, there should be a
8 Spanish language station, there should be
9 an Asian station, there should be a
10 station that allows cultural local
11 programming where young people and
12 Afro-Caribbean -- we just have so much
13 potential. And so this is one of those
14 times when we got to think big and then
15 think bigger.

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILWOMAN SANCHEZ: As it
18 relates to CTE, creating a jobs pipeline
19 is hugely important for Philadelphians as
20 we talk about our poverty rate and we
21 talk about our young people. As I shared
22 with the Comcast officials yesterday, I
23 have a beautiful lamp created by my CTE
24 students at Mastbaum. The auto mechanic,
25 welding, carpenters, and electrical

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 workshops made a lamp for me. We have an
3 incredibly talented pool of young people,
4 and they should be able to walk the halls
5 of that beautiful Comcast Center, not
6 when they graduate but before they
7 graduate, and they should be able to
8 start working immediately after
9 graduation. And while we want all our
10 kids to go to college, we understand that
11 Comcast can serve as a critical partner
12 in employing Philadelphians.

13 So we've come a long way. We
14 appreciate all the movement from Comcast,
15 and we're going to continue over the next
16 48 hours to ask for a little bit more.
17 This is about not just good business. As
18 studies have begun to show, when you pay
19 \$15 an hour, when you give employees
20 added benefits, it helps the bottom line,
21 and for me, the bottom line is
22 Philadelphians.

23 Thank you.

24 (Applause.)

25 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Councilwoman.

3 The Chair recognizes
4 Councilwoman Blackwell.

5 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
6 you very much. I too would like to
7 commend this Committee, and I would like
8 to associate myself and agree with all
9 the comments made in terms of the needs
10 in our communities, from certainly from
11 PhillyCAM to the 90-day requirement that
12 no one understands. As has been said,
13 there's no reason for it. People should
14 not have to consider, as a young mother
15 did, about being delinquent and not being
16 able to get service they need for their
17 families. That's just unfair. It's
18 unfair. Some things breed on being
19 immoral, and that's one of them.
20 Delinquency doesn't mean that you
21 shouldn't be able to have the service.

22 And also people should not have
23 to consider that they may get service at
24 less than the speed that is required to
25 have good service because maybe they

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 don't have money or they're on another
3 status level. Quality of care, whether
4 it be health or whether it be Comcast,
5 shouldn't depend on who you are and what
6 you have. Everybody deserves equality
7 when it comes to service. And we are
8 really saying that we want to get these
9 issues resolved before Thursday.

10 So from all of these issues,
11 the Internet Essentials, all that has
12 been mentioned here, we are looking
13 forward to being on one accord so that we
14 may move forward on Thursday morning.

15 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
18 Councilwoman.

19 The Chair recognizes
20 Councilwoman Bass.

21 COUNCILWOMAN BASS: Thank you,
22 Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to join in
23 with my colleagues in terms of the
24 comments that have been made thus far.
25 We certainly hope that this can be ironed

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 out by Thursday, but as has been said, I
3 think the 90-day rule, it's just a
4 non-starter. This is something that
5 makes absolutely no sense. And as one of
6 the parents who spoke before us today
7 mentioned, her child can't go 90 days
8 without doing her homework, and we don't
9 have the luxury of saying, I'm not going
10 to pay my bills for 90 days or I'm not
11 going to pay my rent or I'm not going to
12 buy food for 90 days.

13 So these are some of the things
14 that we've asked Comcast over and over to
15 explain, and we just really can't get the
16 explanation that makes any sense to any
17 of us.

18 We want Comcast to be here. We
19 want them to be successful, and I think
20 that Philadelphians overall have made the
21 investment for Comcast to see that
22 success. We've made the investment in
23 terms of tax breaks and subsidies and
24 support for Comcast. We've given. We've
25 given a lot, and we expect in return that

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Comcast will be supportive and help the
3 City that it calls home.

4 And so we certainly hope that
5 there's going to be a way to see our way
6 through all of these things. It seems as
7 if we often penalize low-income folks or
8 poor folks for being poor, because
9 waiting 90 days suggests this is access
10 to a luxury and not access to a
11 necessity, and this is absolutely a
12 necessity. There's no question about it.
13 It's needed to pay bills. It's needed
14 for a job. It's needed for homework and
15 to get the vital information that we need
16 to function in today's society.

17 And so, Mr. Chairman, I just
18 want to thank you for the work that
19 you've done on this. I know you've
20 worked very, very hard, and we look
21 forward to continuing the work or seeing
22 the work that you do to bring this to a
23 close, because I think that there's still
24 some things that have to be addressed
25 before the members will be ready,

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 according to our colleagues here today.

3 Thank you.

4 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
5 Councilwoman.

6 The Chair recognizes Councilman
7 Oh.

8 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you very
9 much, Mr. Chairman. Let me first start
10 by saying thank you for your hard work.
11 You and your staff have carried the bulk
12 of the weight on this very complex and
13 important matter.

14 I'd also like to thank your
15 staff and yourself for keeping us all
16 informed and having these very fair and
17 informative hearings.

18 I'd like to thank the
19 Administration for the hard work they've
20 put in, and I'd like to thank Comcast for
21 being a very important part of meeting
22 everyone more than halfway. I got a
23 briefing recently and even from the last
24 hearing that we had, Comcast has
25 certainly added more to the benefits that

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 folks are seeking from this franchise
3 agreement.

4 I'm a big fan of Comcast. I
5 think Comcast is one of the wonderful
6 corporations we have in our city. It
7 certainly brands us as a city. It's
8 investment in our city, it's a commitment
9 to our city. Its building of our new
10 Innovation Center is really changing the
11 face of Philadelphia.

12 That having been said and as a
13 big fan of Comcast, I believe that
14 Comcast has the heart and the will to do
15 a little bit more.

16 (Applause.)

17 COUNCILMAN OH: I really think
18 so. And I appreciate everything that
19 Comcast means to our city, and I'm asking
20 Comcast to step up just a little bit more
21 so that this city will truly be a city
22 that is proud to have Comcast here. And
23 we already are. Let me not say that -- I
24 think many people appreciate what Comcast
25 means to our city.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 But I think there's two
3 important issues for me. One is that as
4 an elected official on the other side of
5 this table, it is my duty to ensure that,
6 number one, customer service to those
7 paying customers, the folks in our city,
8 that's the best it can be.

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: Excuse me,
10 Councilman. May I go out of order for
11 one moment for a point of personal
12 privilege?

13 COUNCILMAN OH: Sure.

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: The Chair
15 recognizes Councilwoman Blackwell.

16 COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank
17 you, Mr. Chairman. I have to leave
18 Council Chambers. I have students
19 waiting for me to speak to them at Youth
20 Study Center, but I would like to be
21 voted aye for all bills that are reported
22 out and any suspensions required and also
23 for the continuation of this Comcast bill
24 until Thursday morning. Thank you.

25 Thank you, Councilman.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
3 Councilwoman. The record will duly
4 recognize your affirmative votes.

5 The Chair again recognizes
6 Councilman Oh.

7 COUNCILMAN OH: Thank you,
8 Chairman.

9 So customer service, one.
10 Number two, local employment and
11 opportunity. And I know Comcast has a
12 wonderful commitment to veterans and to
13 hiring folks in our city, but I would
14 also say it is certainly an issue for me
15 to see that as much of Philadelphia's
16 talent and innovation be highlighted
17 whenever possible, as Comcast is our
18 hometown corporation and has the ability
19 to do that. If it does not, certainly
20 PhillyCAM can be a part of delivering
21 that opportunity for Philadelphians,
22 highlighting our local talent and all the
23 good things in our city that deserve to
24 be highlighted. And so if that's -- if
25 those are things -- I know there's some

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 issues about mobile units and things like
3 that. I don't know where that is in the
4 discussion, but I think on Thursday, we
5 will see where we are in this entire
6 process. And thank you so much for all
7 that you do and for being a part of not
8 just a beating about the shoulders, but a
9 willing and enthusiastic, contributing
10 corporate citizen.

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 COUNCILMAN HENON: Thank you,
14 Councilman.

15 So based on what we've heard
16 here today, I'm going to ask that the
17 negotiation teams get back to business,
18 and here's where we are so I can sum it
19 up quickly from today's hearing. So we
20 need to go back to find some solutions on
21 the following issues: the 90 days,
22 additional funding for the program to
23 support people who don't have kids and
24 that are not seniors, prevailing wages
25 for workers who are doing work in our

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 public rights-of-ways, and career and
3 technical education, CTE partnerships. I
4 do have a request for another member that
5 could not be here today on behalf of
6 Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown, and
7 I will submit this letter for the record
8 and this -- pleased to allow this letter
9 to highlight her strong and continued
10 support for Philadelphia's arts and
11 culture community, supporting the
12 minority arts and cultural organizations
13 worthy of future and worthy
14 consideration. So she believes that the
15 Philadelphia Cultural Fund is the most
16 neutral and well-positioned vehicle for
17 that ongoing and continued support. So
18 on her behalf, I will submit that in for
19 the record in its entirety.

20 So once these issues are
21 addressed, we'll be able to say that we
22 will and do have the best agreement in
23 the country. So I appreciate that.

24 There being no one else here to
25 testify on this bill, the hearing on Bill

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 No. 150809 is concluded and we will now
3 move into our public meeting and
4 temporarily suspend our public hearing.

5 The Chair recognizes Councilman
6 Greenlee for a motion on Bill No. 150849.

7 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
8 you, Mr. Chairman. I move for the
9 adoption of the amendment to Bill No.
10 150849.

11 (Duly seconded.)

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: All those in
13 favor?

14 (Aye.)

15 COUNCILMAN HENON: It has been
16 moved and seconded. The ayes have it,
17 and the amendment to Bill No. 150849 has
18 been adopted.

19 The Chair recognizes Councilman
20 Greenlee for a motion for Bills No.
21 150770, 150818, 150846, 150849 as
22 amended, and 150850.

23 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
24 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the
25 just-read bills be voted out of this

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 Committee with a favorable
3 recommendation. Furthermore, I move that
4 the rules of Council be suspended so as
5 to permit first reading this day of the
6 bills at our next session of Council.

7 COUNCILMAN HENON: Do I hear a
8 second?

9 (Duly seconded.)

10 COUNCILMAN HENON: It has been
11 moved and seconded.

12 All those in favor?

13 (Aye.)

14 COUNCILMAN HENON: The ayes
15 have it, and the bills just read will be
16 reported out of Committee with a
17 favorable recommendation and with a
18 suspension of the rules as to allow the
19 first reading of said bills at our next
20 Council session.

21 I recognize Councilman Greenlee
22 for a motion to recess the public hearing
23 on Bill No. -- we will now move back
24 into -- a motion to move back into the
25 recessed public hearing on Bill No.

1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.
2 150809.

3 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
4 you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the
5 public hearing on Bill No. 150809 stand
6 in recess until Thursday, December 3rd at
7 8:30 a.m.

8 (Duly seconded.)

9 COUNCILMAN HENON: All those in
10 favor?

11 (Aye.)

12 COUNCILMAN HENON: The ayes
13 have it. It has been moved and properly
14 seconded that the public hearing of this
15 Committee on Bill No. 150809 will be
16 recessed until Thursday, December 3rd,
17 8:30.

18 All those in favor of the
19 motion signify by aye.

20 (Aye.)

21 COUNCILMAN HENON: Those
22 opposed?

23 (No response.)

24 COUNCILMAN HENON: The ayes
25 have it and the motion carries. The

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1 12/1/15 - PUBLIC PROPERTY - BILL 150770, etc.

2 public hearing on Bill No. 150809 will
3 stand in recess until Thursday morning,
4 December 3rd, 8:30 a.m.

5 This concludes the business of
6 the Committee for today, and thank you
7 very much.

8 (Committee on Public Property
9 and Public Works concluded at 11:50 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

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

MICHELE L. MURPHY
RPR-Notary Public

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