COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Monday, March 28, 2016
10:15 a.m.

PRESENT:
COUNCILMAN CURTIS JONES, JR., CHAIR
COUNCILWOMAN JANNIE L. BLACKWELL
COUNCILMAN ALLAN DOMB
COUNCILMAN DEREK S. GREEN
COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE
COUNCILWOMAN HELEN GYM
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COUNCILMAN KENYATTA JOHNSON
COUNCILMAN AL TAUBENBERGER

RESOLUTION 160081 - Resolution authorizing the Philadelphia City Council Committee on Public Safety to hold hearings regarding the establishment of a comprehensive strategy for reducing and eliminating youth gun violence.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Good morning, everyone.

(Good morning.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: We're going to get started. It is 12 -- I mean 10:15. It's 12 o'clock somewhere in the world, but not here. We're going to get started. This is the Committee of Public Safety to hear and talk about Resolution No. 160081. Its primary sponsor is Councilman Johnson.

Will the Clerk please read the title of the resolution.

THE CLERK: Resolution 160081, authorizing the Philadelphia City Council Committee on Public Safety to hold hearings regarding the establishment of a comprehensive strategy for reducing and eliminating youth gun violence.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I mentioned the primary author, Councilman Johnson. Also with us today is Councilman Domb and Councilman Greenlee. We do not need a quorum for this resolution, although we

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believe during the course of the hearings we will actually have one.

I would like to recognize Councilman Johnson for some remarks on this resolution.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First and foremost, I want to thank everyone for taking time out of their schedule to be here as we address a critically important issue here in the City of Philadelphia. Today we are embarking on a process to bring attention to an issue that is of great concern to me, my colleagues, and the City of Philadelphia as a whole. Today's purpose is to hold hearings aimed at identifying and addressing the underlying causes of youth gun violence.

With the tragic events of March 9th fresh in our collective memories, a night in which five Philadelphians were murdered by gun violence, and even this last Easter weekend, down in my district

in South Philadelphia we saw a young man pull out a gun while families were trying to enjoy themselves at a carnival, it's important that we rise to address this issue and make it the number one priority here in the City of Philadelphia.

Most of you may or may not know that I've been working on this issue since 1998 when a cousin of mine was murdered in the streets of South Philadelphia and several of my friends were murdered. And so for me, this is an issue that always has been very passionate to me. And at that particular point in time in my life, I made a decision to not be a problem in my community, but be a part of the solution and use my anger and energy to embark on addressing the issue of youth gun violence.

I remember when several of my friends were organizing to go retaliate after the guys who murdered my cousin, that I made a conscious decision to use

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that pain and that anger to carry on his legacy in a positive manner and hosted my first youth gun violence rally to begin focusing on the issue of peace in our neighborhood and not guns.

Most recently, Council President Clarke has appointed me to the Criminal Justice Reform Committee with my colleague Councilman Curtis Jones to begin looking at how do we address the issue of reentry as it relates to addressing the issue of youth gun violence.

A week ago we had more than 70 faith-based leaders in a roundtable discussion on how can we comprehensively address this issue that has been taking over our city. And as the weather gets warm -- and I don't think that's an excuse for people to operate in an uncivil manner, but as the weather gets warm, we usually see a rise in the level of gun violence.

So this isn't a hearing just

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for the sake of having a hearing. This is a hearing for us as officials of government, as leaders of our various City agencies but, most importantly, the community, because of every idea that has been effective that I have worked on in the capacity of me even being a State Representative on the state level or a Councilperson has come from the community, and as we go embark upon this budget process, we want to make sure that we're addressing an issue that's very, very critical. And amongst African American young men between the ages of 15 to 30, the number one killer is homicide by gun violence.

So we should never live in a community where it's normal for a life to be taken. We should never live in a community where it's normal for when we go and speak in these schools throughout our city and we ask the young people who are there, How many of you have witnessed someone being murdered and half the kids

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in the classroom raise their hand, how many of you know someone or who are related to someone who has been murdered, half of the hands are raised.

And so we are really in a state of emergency. We are in a state of emergency, and this Committee will do everything in its power possible to reduce the issue of youth gun violence. And as I turn the mic over back to Mr. Chair, we also talk about the homicides, but we rarely talk about the number of shootings that result in young men with the loss of their arms, with the loss of their limbs. We often don't talk about the mental health, post-traumatic stress. When we go out and do vigils in the community and you see children coming up participating in the prayer vigils with a shirt on that says "rest in peace," these are children we're talking about. And so we need to also begin engaging on -- we have the Health Department, Mental Health Department --

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the Department of Behavioral Health to also give us insight on how we're dealing with -- if the soldiers come back from Iraq, they do a post-traumatic stress. So we have young people dealing with post-traumatic stress here in the City of Philadelphia and you wonder how, as they grow up, they channel their energy. Most retaliate. Most find forms of aggression.

And so I want to sincerely thank everyone for taking the time for being here today, and at this time, I'm going to turn over the microphone. And I think Councilman Curtis Jones and myself and Council President Clarke probably have the most violent districts in the City of Philadelphia. I know at least the Strawberry Mansion area when I look on the news, there's shootings, North Philly, West Philly, and South Philadelphia. And so we want to -- and I'm committed to stay on this issue, as I have always been, but we need to take

this to a whole different level. We shouldn't be quiet while our young men -- I think this weekend it was young ladies who got shot, North Philly, somebody sitting on the porch. And at the time when you can't even protect the women in your community, that's a problem. That's a problem.

So I'm going to turn the microphone over to Chairman Curtis Jones, and thank all my colleagues for taking time out of their schedule for participating in this hearing.

Chairman Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilman Johnson.

For the record, we have Councilwoman Gym and Councilman Henon and Councilman Taubenberger who have joined this Committee today.

I want to thank you for sponsoring this bill. From the time you walked in this building, you have made this your number one priority, during a

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whole array of other things, but always coming back to this very important issue.

We share a common bond in that regard, that for me personally -- and you may think we fell off the turnip trucks into these jobs, but we lived a life before we got here. When I was 16 years old on Upland Way, we were walking to a social, and some of you are old enough to know what a social was. And a young lady I was walking with with a crowd of people, a young man came out of the driveway, shot into the crowd and murdered the young lady I was with.

This is not an academic pursuit made up of X's and O's for me. This is real life, day-to-day quality of life in my community. Ever since then, every year there is someone, someone I know or am related to, that winds up a victim of this.

It got so bad that at one of my rec centers, the young lady -- one of the young ladies that was out there when the

homicide happened that I was involved with, she had kids who were victims -- and we look up and we look across the vigil and I see her, and we see that this is a generational phenomenon and a scourge. And I would say to you and those of you who are going to testify today that if 300 wales washed up on the Schuylkill shores, every marine biologist in the nation would be down in Philadelphia at the Schuylkill to find out why this tragedy has befell the wales. And wales are important, but black lives matter too, and our babies are getting killed at a rate that is epidemic. It is generational. It impacts every aspect of our life, not the victim, not just the perpetrator but all of their relatives and families are impacted by this. It is a drain on our tax dollars. It's somewhere in the neighborhood of a quarter of a million dollars every time we prosecute a murder. With the new technology, victims are

seeing their kids murdered on tapes in the bowels of our justice system. This is a real issue that requires real solutions.

And then finally the one thing I will say is, we think we're pretty smart up here, but you're not educated -- we are not educated in the street of what's really going on day to day. The reality that we live in is not the reality some of our babies live in, and you're going to hear some of that today. You're going to hear some of that.

So my smart people to the left and to the right and in the audience, take note of what's being said and try to incorporate that into a solution. You'll find that as Chair of this Committee, I don't do group well. I mean, I know what group is about and what we're supposed to do and release all that, but if it's not related to a solution, something that you or we need to do to solve this, it is just a feel-good thing.

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We want to put our money where our mouth is. We want to find ways to support what is working, create what is necessary to make our streets and our children safe.

So with that in mind, will the Clerk please read the first panel to testify.

THE CLERK: Commissioner Richard Ross, Philadelphia Police Department; Dr. Kamilah Jackson, Deputy Chief Medical Officer; Terrell Bagby, Office of Reintegration; George Mosee, First Deputy District Attorney; Josh Shapiro, Chairman of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Most of you have testified before, so you know to say your name for the record. Welcome here. If you have written testimony, make sure the Clerk has that. Feel free to abbreviate as much of it as you want, but

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make sure that your salient points are put on the record.

Thank you and welcome.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: Well, good morning, Mr. Chairman and other Committee members. Glad to be here today for this very important issue.

You actually have my notes of testimony. So if you will, I will summarize much of what I have to say, but what both of you have said thus far is so on point and so critical. I want to say also that we work with many of the people seated here today. They are our partners, both community-based organizations as well as those in government, and so we're happy to have that kind of collaboration.

But you spoke about this epidemic that plagues this country and particularly big cities, and it is just

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that, an epidemic, and we work tirelessly in law enforcement, along with our partners, to try to stem the tide of this gun violence that we see across the City.

And what I would also point out is -- and you touched on it -- is the impact, and it's not just a medical impact. I mean, it's the opportunity cost with some of these victims as well as the offenders. They never get a chance to make additional income, to get educated, to have children. And so some have estimated those costs in the millions just per victim.

So some of the things that we are doing -- and not all encompassing by any stretch of the imagination -- our law enforcement efforts, first and foremost, you know we are very data driven in the Police Department, and I think both of you at one time or another may have either seen or aware of our CompStat process where we target and we actually identify every crime that is committed

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across the City, particularly gun violence. And some of the things that we think are effective, at least to the degree that we can be, is our hotspot areas. We talk about smart policing. You have to know where it's happening, first and foremost.

Our biggest issue, along with many other cities across this country, is retaliatory violence, and that drives so much of what we deal with each and every day. We don't have crystal balls, but to the degree that we have the intelligence that we need to identify when Group A and B are feuding, we are somewhat effective at getting in front of some of that, but we unfortunately will never know when the first incident will happen and it will kick off stuff -- sometimes, as you know, it could be as simple as something over a girl. Everybody thinks that sometimes when it's two drug dealers rivaling, it's always over drugs. Sometimes it is, but in many instances, it's reduced to young

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men who use gun violence as a means to resolve their conflict. And so we use methodologies like smart policing to map everything that's going on across the City.

You know also you both have some very dynamic captains in your areas in particular. We use foot beats. Everybody that comes out of the Police Academy walks a foot beat, and they typically are crime beats. So they're not feel-good beats. They go in targets. In fact, we had the luxury of bringing them down last week from one of our particular districts and they were shown an area that was really -- I won't say crime free, but to the degree that it could be, and you're showing new officers the impact that they're having, but also the ability to cultivate relationships, which is so, so important with us.

In addition to that, we also try to work with other departments. You obviously all are familiar with YVRP,

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Youth Violence Reduction Program, in order to get in front of these young men in particular who are already identified as being on probation, trying to keep them alive. That's just the bottom line. And so that's one of the things that has been helpful over the time. That is one of our intervention things that we work with.

You may be familiar with the fact that we work with Juvenile Probation and we have a Juvenile Enforcement Team. These are police officers that work in conjunction with the Probation Department -- and I know they're here today, Mr. Bennie Price and his folks -- to identify some of this juvenile violence that we're talking about in an effort to stave off what in many instances is this retaliatory violence, which is what we deal with.

But the biggest thing is just targeting these individuals, understanding that our big focus is to

keep them alive. I mean, and it's sad to say, but this is what we have to do.

But we don't stop at just the law enforcement efforts. We look at being preventive. You know, for example, of the CeaseFire initiative that was going on in North Philadelphia. We have some people here from even that group in an effort to outreach.

Look, we have to be real about certain things. We aren't always, wearing this uniform, going to be able to say things that are going to resonate with young people, particularly young people who are inclined to resort to violence. But when you have people here like Terry Starks, who is back here today, who have been in this whole endeavor and this struggle with us, these are the things that help us in this collaboration.

So we're very confident about some of those things, but they need funding. So I'm going to be honest about

that. I mean, whether you're talking about this or whether you're talking about what many of you are very, very supportive of in terms of Focused Deterrence. And I know, Councilman, you're well aware of that from South Philadelphia. It actually works well down there, but all these programs are only as impactful as the services that come behind them. If you don't have the requisite service to follow them up, you can get these young men, you can threaten them, you can tell them that if their rival gang or their fellow gang member gets involved in a shooting, that this is what's going to happen, that's nice up to a point, but the next step has to be something that gets them to want to be out of that life. And if you only have something that's only a couple weeks in length, it's not really going to be enough. So I can't stress enough about the services and what that will provide.

Also diversion. You know about

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our efforts in diversion. A lot of this was spearheaded by Deputy Bethel when he was here, but we continued that. Already this school year we've had 339 kids that have been diverted and not put into the criminal justice system with school-related incidents, and that's important. It's important in terms of building relationships with young people, but we can't have people put in the system in the first place. That probably causes more issues than anything else. So to the degree that we're able to reduce that incidence of young people being put in our criminal justice system, diverting them has been a tremendous thing for us, and we're going to continue to do that.

You know about the Police Athletic League. We got to maintain these connections out there with young people, keeping -- it's not only about keeping them off the street, which most people identify with, but let's be

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honest, in this climate we're in with police-community relations, we also have to do that. So we have to build these relationships, and that's critical.

The bottom line is building these relationships, collaborating with people behind me, working in conjunction with our partners seated at the table as well are all things that we need to do.

But, again, I thank you for having this forum, and I hope that we can continue to collaborate, because we must do this to save these young men, because there's no other way we're going to do it.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Commissioner, and it's not the first time -- this is nothing new for you.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: Unfortunately, no.

COUNCILMAN JONES: What we hope to do is take what you're talking about, codify it in a way that we can put resources to it. We want to reinforce

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what is working. We want to purge what is not. And in order to do that, we have to get testimony from folk like yourself that are out there boots on the ground so that we can fund those things that have an opportunity to change this stem and tide.

Why don't you stick around. We're going to hear from the entire panel and then we'll ask questions, if that's okay with the body. Thank you.

Pull the mic to you. Good morning.

DR. JACKSON: Good morning. Thank you for inviting the Department of Behavioral Health to present today. I'm here representing our Commissioner, Arthur Evans, as well as the work of the larger Department. My name is Kamilah Jackson. I'm a Child, Adolescent, and Adult Psychiatrist and Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Children Services within the Department.

I want to thank you for

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recognizing this problem and bringing attention to it, particularly with regard to developing a comprehensive approach to the solution.

We believe, as you all do, that gun violence is an urgent public health crisis nationally and certainly locally, and our department is committed to addressing this issue. We believe that a comprehensive strategy is required, focusing especially and particularly on prevention efforts to this problem.

Our work is really with stakeholders here as well as in the audience and whom you'll hear from today. And we've really sort of grouped our comments today around specific areas, looking at building community resilience, responding to events when they do happen both at the individual and community levels, and also fostering long-term recovery. I'd like to highlight a few of these initiatives.

We, again, work with many of

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the folks in the room today, and you'll hear from them about their specific areas.

Around the area of building resilience, a few of the initiatives we'd like to highlight are addressed around reducing the stigma of mental illness. Councilman Johnson mentioned that earlier today, and we know particularly from the resolution that the high percentage of males, young males, African American in particular, involved in this issue are a population of whom it's difficult to address mental health issues with. So the Department has been engaged with an Engaging Men of Color initiative. I think a few of you have been involved in that. Partners in the School District are also involved, where we really seek to enhance the awareness of behavioral health challenges experienced by males of color and to enhance their service access, engagement, and treatment, often highlighting in particular a few local

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celebrities who have had their own struggles to really try to engage this difficult-to-reach population.

We've also worked through this initiative with partners at the Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Services Center with a series of monthly workshops and other areas of work to really partner and, again, engage this difficult-to-reach population. To date, EMOC has served over 2,500 people in the City, and the work continues.

I'd also like to talk about our Mental Health First Aid initiative. I know a number of folks here on Council have also been engaged in that particular initiative, which is really helping Philadelphia emerge as a national leader in the public health promotion of behavioral health via Mental Health First Aid. We've partnered with folks here at the table and the Police Department, with the School District of Philadelphia, with SEPTA, and the work -- currently we've

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trained over 12,000 individuals in the City, which makes us number one in terms of cities across the country. The work continues particularly with the youth version of Mental Health First Aid as well as targeting Spanish language training.

Around the area of building resilience, we also have a faith-based initiative. The Faith and Spiritual Affairs initiative really, again, involves a public health approach to reaching individuals and families about the signs and symptoms of mental illness and to really reduce the stigma for engaging in treatment.

Now I'd like to focus on responding to incidents when they actually do happen. The Department has partnered with one of the panelists later you'll hear from today in terms of hospital-based violence intervention programs. Often individuals who have been violently injured have reported that

while in the emergency department, their thoughts are to either change their way of life or to retaliate. So later this morning you'll hear from Dr. Ted Corbin of the Healing Hurt People program, which is through Drexel's School of Public Health Center for Non-Violence and Social Justice. That initiative and program is really aimed at screening young people to assess their need for behavioral health services and other follow-up support services at that critical period of time after they've been injured. You'll also hear from another partner in this work, CHOP's VIP program and Dr. Joel Fein, later today.

Along the lines of responding to incidents, we also have developed a Violence and Trauma Response Network. Under the leadership of Phil DeMara, DBHIDS convenes the Victim Community Support Committee whose goal is really to develop a coordinated interdisciplinary response process to ensure that the most

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appropriate services are available and provided to those most affected. Throughout 2015, Committee member organizations have been responding to incidents of violence across the City in coordination with DBHIDS. And so those would be specific from the Arsan (ph) reports, for example, about violent shootings across the City and then mobilizing the community workforce to be able to intervene, particularly around some of the things mentioned earlier about folks in the community witnessing the aftermath of these effects.

We also have Community Response Teams that go out and provide emotional support to communities affected by disasters, emergencies or other large-scale events.

Around fostering long-term recovery -- and that's the last piece that I'll cover today -- we know from all the academicians in the world that childhood maltreatment is really a

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leading cause of high-risk behaviors, including delinquency and later adult criminal behavior and violent crime. The Department has received funding through SAMHSA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, to develop a network of provider agencies who are specifically trained in evidence-based treatments for trauma for children and families across the City. This is our fourth year of this project where we're training behavioral health agencies in this most robust model for intervening after disclosure of trauma has happened. To date, we have served over 7,000 children and adolescents with screening and assessment for trauma and then about a thousand in these specific evidence-based treatment models. We've really increased the number of trauma referrals as well through partnership with these victim community support groups as well as with medical providers, the child welfare system, the School

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District of Philadelphia, and the juvenile justice system.

I want to thank you for allowing me to talk about a few of these initiatives. Our full testimony is on the record, and we wholeheartedly look forward to helping support your efforts as you bring more community voices to this work and explore how we can reduce gun violence in Philadelphia.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your testimony.

We're going to allow the three of you, then we're going to go in, because so much information has been given and we have -- so we want to be able to address questions where they're germane right away.

So if you could, Mr. Mosee, put your testimony on the record and we'll begin some questions, and then we'll bring up the second group to speak.

MR. MOSEE: So good morning.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Good morning.

MR. MOSEE: Both the Commissioner and Dr. Jackson have talked about the need for collaboration if we're going to be effective in reducing youth violence. I would like to point out that Philadelphia is well poised to accomplish things because of the excellent spirit of cooperation that exists here, and, frankly, it doesn't exist everywhere.

Certainly in terms of my office's relationship with Council, it's been a relationship that has been characterized by that spirit of collaboration, which has inured greatly to public safety in Philadelphia. So I want to thank you for having this in-depth --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Your name.

MR. MOSEE: -- examination of youth violence here in Philadelphia.

My name is George Mosee. I'm the First Assistant in the District

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Attorney's Office. Seth Williams wanted to be here today. Unfortunately, he's traveling. He's out of town. He tried to change his schedule and tried to accommodate these hearings. It just didn't work out, and he asked me to appear in his stead.

We all know about the traditional role of prosecutors in the criminal justice system, and I don't want to diminish the importance of that role, because certainly I don't believe that we can have real change unless people are held accountable, and that's especially true when we're talking about young people. There was a time in the history of this city when young people were getting away with it. In fact, I think the phrase that they coined was "we beat the case." And if kids beat the case, well, not only do they continue to do whatever it was that they did to get them into the system in the first place, but they tell all their friends. And so it's

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really important that we be effective in our traditional role.

But it's interesting that in order to really be effective, we have to be non-traditional in our approach. And in Philadelphia, I'm happy to say that the Philadelphia DA's Office has created what I like to refer to as a continuum of prevention.

So certainly when you think about prosecutors, you don't think about them being involved in prevention, but who is better positioned to know what it is that people need to avoid, the pitfalls of delinquent and criminal conduct, than prosecutors? So in Philadelphia, for example, our District Attorney has made it his personal mission to address bullying in schools. Bullying, of course, has its genesis and an attitude that I think we would all agree is at the heart of just about every kind of violence. And so he's been to 35 schools individually to address young

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people and to help them not just to recognize that it's wrong to bully but to develop systems in those schools that will help any child who feels that they're being harassed -- and these are crimes, by the way -- to have a way to report it and a way to overcome it.

One of the other things that we developed was a curriculum on juvenile justice and criminal justice. It actually educates young people about the justice system, and I think that does three things. First, it introduces them to potential means of employment. It also helps them to understand American juris prudence, which is still the very best system on earth. But, finally, it teaches them what the consequences of delinquent and criminal conduct are.

It's interesting to me that -- and this isn't to create a debate about the efficacy of mandatory minimum sentencing or what the sentence should be for a particular crime or sending young

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people to the adult system, but young people don't know about that stuff. And so whatever your position is regarding the law, it's a severe injustice to not use the law for what it was primarily designed to do, and that is to deter crime. But you can't hope to deter crime with the law if people don't know what the law is.

So we developed this curriculum to be taught to 6th, 7th, and 8th graders, to expose them to the system, and to teach them about what the consequences will be if they make the wrong choices.

One of our other prevention programs that I think is really at the heart of so much that's happening in Philadelphia today that's gone awry is our truancy prevention program. On any given day, I'm told that almost 50 percent of our young people are not in school. And I don't think it takes a rocket scientist to recognize that when

they're not in school, they're not doing the right thing. And if they're not doing the right thing at that point and it's not being confronted, they're not being held accountable, no one is compelling them to go to school, then it's creating a scenario where they're learning to do the wrong things.

We've talked about homicides, and I think it's certainly important to emphasize that people are being killed in Philadelphia at a rate that is just unacceptable. One would be unacceptable, but the 280 that died last year is really just unacceptable. Two hundred and eighty is a large number. We can compare to prior years and say that the number is down, but we shouldn't rest on our laurels in that regard.

But forget about the homicides for a minute. Think about the shootings, which is what you pointed out, Councilman Johnson. Twelve-hundred people were shot in the City last year. That's -- my math

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isn't that good, otherwise I'd be a doctor, but that's three people a day being shot in the City. And but for the fact that we have these excellent emergency centers and these wonderful hospitals that we have, the number would be even greater.

And so we have to do something about the proliferation of the illegal possession of firearms. And my office, through Seth Williams' initiatives, has made firearm possession, the illegal possession of firearms, a top priority. We created what's called GunStat, which is very similar to the CompStat process that's used by the Philadelphia Police Department, and through GunStat, we hold our people accountable for the way that they prosecute gun-related crime, whether that's possession of a firearm or an armed robbery. We bring those cases before the entire command staff of the DA's Office and we analyze the way those cases were handled so that we can do it

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better.

And so we're trying to reduce the number of shootings by doing something about the guns on the street. We also need to do something about the people who will perpetrate these crimes. And the Commissioner talked about the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership. Councilman Johnson, you know about Focused Deterrence, and I have some people who are really expert in Focused Deterrence who are here today. They'll be participating on some subsequent panels, so I'm going to leave the details to them, but these are efforts to address the individuals and the groups who would perpetrate firearm-related violence.

The Youth Violence Reduction Partnership, another excellent example of collaboration between the Police Department, Adult and Juvenile Probation. And just an interesting side note, although for juvenile justice purposes a juvenile is someone between the ages of

10 through 17, we've taken it upon ourselves to view anyone up to the age of 25 as a youth for purposes of the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership, and that was well in advance of the science related to adolescent brain development. We're trying to keep those young men alive and making sure that they don't kill somebody before they reach the age of 25. The statistics bear out that if we can keep them alive until 25, then chances are they'll be around with us for the duration.

The collaborative effort involves actually going out to visit their homes with that tandem of a police officer, someone from Juvenile Probation or Adult Probation, and a member of the Philadelphia Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Network. Mr. Brown is here. He's the Executive Director, and I hope you'll have an opportunity to hear from him later on.

So I could go on and on, as I'm

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sure you can tell. I just want to emphasize to the Committee that the Philadelphia DA's Office is more than willing to continue to be an active collaborator and that we recognize that it's more than just our traditional role. We have to do things that actually get to the root of the problem.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I want to thank all of you for testifying today. A couple of quick questions, and I know my partner Johnson is going to have a lot of questions for you.

A couple of things. Number one, as I listen to -- I have an opportunity to hear and be in different rooms. I've been in the District Attorney's Office. I've been a part of Focused Deterrence. I've been a part of some of the different collaborations that will be heard from today.

One or two things strike me as a problem. One, are we putting enough

resources, dollars, into these programs so that they trickle down and become effective? And, B, who knows about them?

A part of our problem is the average person in the street, whether you are a victim of crime, whether you are a potential person that wants to get out of that life, doesn't know what those pathways out are. And I wanted to know, is it that they don't know that these things exist or there's not enough resources to go around to do that? Particularly as I've heard your testimony on a trauma team, critical in the first 24 hours, first couple of hours that a trauma team needs to be on the ground dealing with condolences, of course, but also the potential for retaliation, because if it's going -- some of this stuff is generational. Like not since the Hatfields and McCoys have families grown up in the same community, gone to the same schools, shop at the same grocery markets, and that issue of my

nephew, your nephew, your son, my daughter, that's a constant reminder and boiling pot for -- and how do we address that issue? You're talking about blocks separating perpetrator from victim.

DR. JACKSON: I think it's probably both. I know you've heard from Dr. Evans before during his testimony, and our resources in terms of the Department are particularly bucketed around treatment once things happen. And so Mr. Mosee spoke earlier about pushing yourselves, and I think as a department under Dr. Evans' leadership, we really pushed ourselves to move beyond waiting for something to happen and for someone to end up in an emergency room or in an actual office, because we know there are lots of issues that keep them from actually coming to the treatment resources that we have and that we're working on intentionally to develop more robustly. And so these partnership efforts are things that I think

resource-wise we're really pushing the envelope in terms of the community connectedness with the agencies that I talked about before and the leadership of the part of the Department who works with the Office of Emergency Management to make sure that that happens more systemically across the City.

So that's a resource question for sure in terms of how much of our bucket is dedicated towards prevention efforts and not intervention once something actually happens.

I do think the issue, however, of awareness, community awareness, is incredibly important, and that's why some of our initiatives around Mental Health First Aid, Engaging Men of Color, again, opportunities to get out front to people before you even think about behavioral health treatment needed, to actually get into the community through faith communities, schools, et cetera, so that we're not waiting for, again, something

to happen before we get there.

But there's still more work to be done, because it sounds like in terms of letting people know in Philadelphia about the robust partnership efforts that are happening and that they can avail themselves of, there's still room to go.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So we're going to have budget hearings starting this week. What I'm going to need you to do -- and you're going to hear this question come from me again -- what is it that you do that is impactful? How much does it cost? And how much more to be more impactful? How much does good cost? How much more do you need to be better at it? And that's a bold statement coming from someone that has to speak for their department, but I'm going to need you to be forthright with us so that we can do the right thing. All right? You don't have to answer it now. You can go back, talk --

DR. JACKSON: Dr. Evans will be

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able to answer. I'll let him answer.

COUNCILMAN JONES: We're going to drag that out of him. All right?

DR. JACKSON: Okay.

MR. MOSEE: I'll certainly seize this opportunity to say that many of the wonderful things that I've talked about that the District Attorney's Office has implemented and continues to do have been by virtue of in-kind contributions. We've started diversion programs that have inured to the cost effectiveness of this city and the criminal justice system, and there's been no return.

So it's come to the point where we need a return on that investment. And so rest assured that we will come armed with the details.

COUNCILMAN JONES: The data driven is better for us. We have some Councilpeople that know how to count pennies, but a life is priceless to us, I want you to know. It's okay that doing better means costing, and we're okay with

cost accounting. We're going to be okay with that.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: So very briefly, you mentioned the returning citizens and you just very briefly touched on that. We have to provide a gateway for people coming back, because if you don't have some avenue for them to get gainful employment, then it's going to be -- the cycle is going to repeat itself. So irrespective of where that lies, that funding and everything else, but it's a real issue, because there are people -- whether you're conservative, moderate or liberal, whether you believe in redemption or you just believe in practicality of what will people do, this is something we got to deal with.

And, lastly -- and it's kind of like a total pivot away from this, but you talk about what do people know, and one of the things you pushed us to was this, you know, de-centralize Cadet or Explorer Program. And so initially we

didn't do a good job of letting people know we had done that, and so we had some districts that did not need -- and all these things dovetailed into one another. I mean, there's no denying that if you don't have some connectivity where people understand how you get young people out of an issue, how you get them connecting with police, how you get them on the track and the mindset of understanding how they become productive members of society, you're going to have a problem.

So we have some work to do in the Police Department with regard to outlining some of our things that we do, even that we do well, we don't necessarily tell people about.

COUNCILMAN JONES: We appreciate you hearing us, and we hear you. It's a two-way conversation. When you tell us that you need, we hear you and we try to address that financial need. And we appreciate when we say to you we would like to have more services

and you respond to us. That's how government works best together.

I'm going to turn it over to my colleague, but I'm going to ask you a question. The other thing is communicating to the public -- to the young people in languages they understand. So I'm going to ask the question. I don't need you -- if you know the answer, speak up. If you don't, don't press yourself.

Does anyone at this panel know what a crash dummy is?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: I'm going to leave that there, because somebody in the audience is going to let you know what that is. If we cannot speak their language, we cannot relate to them in a meaningful way that they understand that you're there for them. So your homework assignment is find out what a crash dummy is.

The Chair recognizes Councilman

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Johnson.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Crash dummy? That still flew over top of me, but I'm working on it.

Just a couple of questions. So for Mr. Mosee regarding the District Attorney's Office, give me an overview again of -- and I want to come from the law enforcement perspective first, because my first and foremost priority is to keep my constituents safe, and that safety revolves around the level of guns that are flooding the streets of Philadelphia. I always like to say there are no gun factories in Point Breeze, there's no gun factories in Strawberry Mansion, and there surely aren't any gun factories in Wynnefield. And so these guns are coming from somewhere.

We know there's a challenge to address the public policy and laws on the state level, so we do the best that we can do on the City level such as going after straw purchasers.

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Give me an overview of where we stand in terms of GunStat. I know there was a Gun Court particularly at one point in time that specifically focused on when a young person is arrested for carrying a gun, this is the court that they will go to and they will be addressed for carrying a handgun or in some cases an assault rifle.

Where are we in that area? And then also give me an overview of how many juveniles are certified as adults for shootings, homicides.

MR. MOSEE: So this is like the multi-state exam with multiple questions.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: That's why we're here, though.

MR. MOSEE: So let me start with the last question. Certification is the process by which a prosecutor proactively pursues the transfer of a juvenile to adult court. And what you have to demonstrate is that they're no longer amenable to treatment as a

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juvenile.

In Pennsylvania, we have a law which causes the young person to begin an adult court, and that's called direct file. If a crime is committed that involves a deadly weapon and it's a crime of violence and it's perpetrated by someone who is 15 years or older, their case automatically starts in the adult system.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I didn't know that.

MR. MOSEE: So when I look up that word, you guys can look up "direct file." Because that's part of the problem that I was talking about earlier, that young people don't know that. So some old head can come up to him and say, Look, we want you to be the lookout. You stand outside. We're going in the store, take down the corner store. Old head has his Tec-9. He pulls it out. They get all the money. They walk down the street. They all get arrested. That

juvenile, the 15-year-old who was just the lookout, is going to have his case start in adult court, and that's after the old head said, Don't worry about it, nothing is going to happen to you, you get a slap on the wrist.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So now you know what a crash dummy is. That's what they call them. They say, Listen, young boy, go do this, you're not going to get adult time, you'll be out in two years. And they do it. They perpetrate that crime, and then they wind up with a life sentence, and when they realize it, they realize the dummy that they were. And so they sell them this pipe dream that you're not going to be impacted as an adult. That's what a crash dummy is.

MR. MOSEE: And that's the extension of the scenario, because the next part is that the old head goes in the store and the store owner has a gun of his own. Store owner pulls out his gun. Old head shoots him and kills him.

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Now everybody who was involved is looking at life.

And so there's a whole lot of publicity right now about changes coming down from the Supreme Court, but what people are missing is that life in prison is still an option for juveniles. And in terms of the ages that I was talking about earlier, age means nothing when somebody dies. The case starts in the adult system whether you're 18 or 8. So, you know, there are dire consequences.

The numbers have dropped tremendously. And one of the best kept secrets in Philadelphia right now is that the number of juvenile petitions has dropped from 10,000 in 2003 when I was the deputy for the Juvenile Division to fewer than 2,500 in 2015. So that's a 75 percent decrease. And you might say, Well, those are the cases that stay in Juvenile Court. Likewise, there's been a tremendous decrease in the number of direct file cases. So we were doing

about a thousand per year back in 2003, and last year we didn't break 300. And those are the cases that start in the adult system. We actually review those cases and make a determination as to whether or not the young person is still amenable to treatment in the juvenile justice system. So even some of those cases come back. So those numbers have been greatly reduced.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So I want to recognize for the record that Councilman Green is here and Councilwoman Blackwell has joined us as well.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Can you elaborate on GunStat, please, and going after straw purchasers as well.

MR. MOSEE: And so in addition to GunStat, my office, in collaboration with the Attorney General's Office, has a Gun Violence Task Force, and the Gun Violence --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: How is that coming along? Because I remember

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when it first kicked off. I haven't heard too much lately. So give us an update on that Gun Violence Task Force.

MR. MOSEE: So they're still doing what they do, which is to investigate to find out where the gun is coming from. And, you know, I really appreciated what you said about no guns being manufactured in Philadelphia. In fact, no guns are manufactured in Pennsylvania. I used to prosecute cases in federal court, and there you have to establish that there's an interstate nexus in order to have jurisdiction. All I had to say was, Your Honor, this is a gun case and it occurred in Pennsylvania. I had my nexus, because that gun had to come from out of state.

So the Gun Violence Task Force actually does it the right way. When somebody is caught with a gun, they speak to them. We do what's called a proffer. So the information won't be held against them, but we get information about where

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it is that they got the gun. We go into homes at the request of parents to find guns that they know have been brought into the home by their children. We do all those things primarily to get the gun off the street.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Can we go back -- I don't mean to interrupt you, but that's something very critical that was just mentioned when you talk about the parent, because just on a personal responsibility component, parents have a right to look under the bed of their children. Parents have a right to look inside their cars. And I always often tell folks and sometimes I get looked at cockeyed in the neighborhood in which I had grown up in, but I have to have a real conversation. Half of these homicides and shootings that happen, a lot of times we know who did it, why they did it, what corner was going to war with what corner. Then I usually get a phone call from, you know, somebody saying,

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Here's the overview of what's going on. And from a prevention side, that parent can't cosign the young man and their friends hiding the guns downstairs in the home when they know there's something else going on besides you just hanging out with -- your children just hanging out with a bunch of your men. At least that's the era that I grew up in, but go ahead.

MR. MOSEE: And so I'm still very much encouraged by the work of the Gun Violence Task Force.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So we're going to go with Councilwoman -- go ahead.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just one last question regarding mental health, the Department of Behavioral Health, and I'll turn it over to my colleagues. Because if we had not had this particular hearing, I would not have known the Department of Behavioral Health engaged in all these different programs that

address the issue of youth gun violence. And one part that Councilman Curtis Jones talked about, which is critical, is the retaliation component. Being in a hospital room where people are gathering after the homicide or the shooting takes place, because that's normally when the planning takes place on how you're going to go retaliate. People are emotional. Tempers are flaring. And that's usually where the plan is, Okay, we're going to go and retaliate. And I had no idea we had this program.

So when you do come back for the budget process, how can we intertwine your program with the other agencies? Because that intervention component is something that should be shared, the information. It should be part of that the DA's Office is meeting with the Philadelphia Police Department, some type of connection.

But when you talk about also mental health, are we addressing also the

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issue of drug addiction? It's common knowledge on the street level that a lot of young men who do carry the guns, they smoke what you call wet, PCP. So they're out of their minds and they don't have a problem riding up on a bicycle, you know, doing a brazen crime or shooting in public. I remember one shooting took place 20th and Federal. The police station right there on -- the police station is at 20th and Federal. So how can somebody actually get out of a car and have a shootout, the police station/fire station right there, without no regard that nobody is going to even think about catching you? But there is a mental health component regarding drug addiction, rather it's smoking wet, rather it's drinking syrup, rather it's taking pills that kind of played a role in young people self-medicating and don't have a problem going out and shooting someone.

Is that an issue that's being

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addressed from the Department of Behavioral Health or a role that should be taken a look at as it relates to youth gun violence?

DR. JACKSON: Absolutely. I think that's a very important observation about the challenges. I just focused on a few of the initiatives today, but obviously there's a whole arm of our department. We're focused on substance abuse challenges and substance use disorders as well.

In terms of the partnership work, I know that you're going to hear later from Healing Hurt People, that program in particular that our department supports. And I think on the ground, to the point that was made a little bit earlier in the panel, on the ground I think a lot of these relationships exist between the Police and those programs as people go into emergency departments, et cetera. But I think your comment about how we bring broader community awareness

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to these issues is a very important one.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So we want you to put a price tag on it. If the federal government takes Taliban youth and sends them to reeducation programs, then some of our kids have been traumatized in a similar way. They bought into this false kind of crash dummy system, that we need to let them know the realities and pathways out. So we need to know what that costs. All right?

I'm going to recognize Councilwoman Gym.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

First of all, thank you very much to my colleague Councilman Johnson for raising such an important issue.

A lot of my questions are going to focus a little bit on the unique psychology of young people. I think that there is something very specific about what's going on. I mean, in part we're

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having this hearing to focus specifically on youth because we recognize that youth are fundamentally different from adults in terms of how their brain develops, how they react to trauma, how they react to stress, and what procedures that we're trying to learn about it so that we can handle situations better.

So my first question is for Commissioner Ross and to ask a little bit about the fact that young people -- and the Department of Justice has done a number of retaliatory interventions. We've got lots of psychologists and trauma experts who talk about young men in particular who are victims of violence are victims of repeated violence, repeated assaults, that if you're shot once, you're likely to be injured on multiple occasions. And I'm interested in how police procedure with interaction with juveniles in particular has evolved and changed. In particular because it seems that the more aggressive that a

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police response would be to juveniles, the more likely that you could trigger more aggressive reactions in juveniles. So that there needs to be a fundamentally different way in which we handle young men and particularly juveniles in particular so that we're de-escalating constantly as opposed to immediately going in with traditional police procedures.

So could you just talk about how police procedure is altering in response to better understanding about juvenile development.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: Sure. And I think the best way to talk about that is with respect to what we do with diversion in the schools, and there's a significant difference in how we respond to young people. For example, when I gave the stat about the number of people who were diverted so far this year, over the last couple years we've diverted a significant number of juveniles, largely

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because of the recognition that juveniles were being arrested for minor crimes where we could have otherwise treated them differently. We get the call from the School District, we show up, and I'll give you a very particular example that didn't just involve us, it involved Climate and Safety. And so in many instances, what was happening is Child A and B get in a fight. Someone in the position of authority intervenes and then they get assaulted. And so now that young person gets a case for something that really their intent was not even to assault that faculty member or that security member. And so there was a recognition and a realization that rather than in cases like this, put a case on a young child, let's divert this child. Even in cases of minor instances of small weapons on school property, small amounts of marijuana, all these things not only go a long way towards reducing the incidence of kids in the justice system,

but in how they relate to us and realizing that our sole intent is not to put people in the criminal justice system.

And so I think that's a major demarcation from what we were doing. I can't get into the psychology part of it, but just in terms of its practicality, that's one of the things that I think that's proving most fruitful for what we've been doing in our interaction that --

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: So if I could direct my question a little bit more clearer. I think that I'm very interested in this issue of trauma, stress, and gun violence. So the moment when the shooting happens, either you have victims or juveniles in the area, and I think -- first of all, I'd like to express praise for your diversion program. I think it's been a model program, and I really am very hopeful about it and would love to see if you

wanted to expand that.

But I'm particularly interested in whether the Police Department is altering its procedure in its handling of juveniles at the point of highest stress. And this is where you're saying that juveniles are very quick to make rash decisions. They're not thinking it through. A violent incident has happened. They're going with people that they instinctively trust to respond to what they are experiencing, which is also under -- being filtered through massive stress and other types of factors. And at that point, I guess I'm wondering is the Police Department altering its procedures on how it interacts with juveniles there? I mean, there's some evidence to indicate that -- like the Department of Justice's retaliatory intervention program is looking at moments of de-escalation, trying to solve problems, trying to reassure juveniles that they are going to have this crime

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solved as opposed to immediately sweeping up interrogations and that kind of process.

So I'm wondering if you can speak to this issue of the point of highest stress and how the Police Department procedures are evolving to take into account juvenile brain development and psychology.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: Well, to be candid with you, Councilwoman, we haven't gotten that far in terms of breaking it down towards juveniles. I mean, so I'm not in a position to answer that right now with regard to how we deal with the psychology of the shooting and the trauma that is resulting from that. So obviously it's something we're going to have to work on with regard to the Justice Department study that you're referring to.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: I'm just curious, because you do say that a lot of juvenile violence is triggered by

retaliation.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: A lot of violence, period.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Period. And that in particular, retaliation is a relatively -- I mean, it can't be long term obviously, but there can be rapid-fire retaliation that happens, and it's just an area where I'm interested in whether the Police Department in particular is looking at that and the de-escalation of engagement with young men in particular so it doesn't just keep ramping up the aggression.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: Right. And this still may not cover your question, but I think some of what Focused Deterrence looks to do is to deal with issues like that, when they call these young people in and they talk about not only the ramifications of committing further violence but what it causes in a particular neighborhood. But I can't honestly say that we have a particular

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program other than that that deals with the type of trauma that you're talking about with juveniles.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Do you have a different procedure at which point the police interact with juveniles versus adults in terms of when a gun violence incident happens?

COMMISSIONER ROSS: It's not anything pointed like you're suggesting. I mean, we just try to stave off as much of this violence as we can. A lot of it is not just germane to gun violence, and this is why we have programs like the Police Athletic League, why we have programs like the Police Explorers Program. We try to connect with juveniles in as many ways as we possibly can. Some of them have nothing necessarily to do with gun violence. They have to do with just criminality and just connecting with young people as a whole.

But, again, I can't honestly

say that we're doing a program that is as structured as you're describing.

COUNCILWOMAN GYM: Okay. Thank you very much.

Dr. Jackson, I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about -- we've been working a lot to try and bring a more holistic trauma-informed care model and crisis response plan to the School District of Philadelphia. As you may or may not know, an incident can happen in a school and it can go all the way from like the most perfect response you've ever seen to being completely ignored. There's not really a consistent level of approach towards dealing with crisis and not natural disasters or terrorist attacks, but genuine crises that are likely to happen in schools.

So in terms of like trauma-informed care, we're bringing a community schools approach to Philadelphia public schools. The City is advancing on it. Could you talk a little

bit from a behavioral health perspective about what types of partnerships you think would be ideal to make sure that a community schools approach dealt with a more trauma-informed model, particularly involved grief counseling, which I think is just tragically overlooked for perpetrators, victims, anyone who experiences gun violence -- I'm just constantly stunned that we don't provide grief counseling and support services to young people in trauma -- and other types of areas where you think that the community schools approach would help bring a more behaviorally -- DBH and mental health-informed approach towards schooling.

DR. JACKSON: I can actually speak a little bit about what's happening now with regard to some of the major crises that are happening that affect school-involved kids. Karyn Lynch I know is coming a little bit later and so can talk a little bit about that, but there

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is an established relationship at this point where one of their consultants in the department, Dr. Steven Berkowitz, who is a local trauma expert, has developed some trauma-informed care models, has worked with Karyn's office in the School District to look at the crisis protocol that currently exists for deploying resources in the event of a crisis.

One of the things that happens now is that our department does provide support in the immediate aftermath in terms of postvention support. So the School District's central office has their own command team with their psychologists involved, and if they need some additional resources, they'll reach out to our department, and we coordinate with our provider network, particularly ones involved in that community and so maybe more familiar with kids and families in that community to provide on-site, on-ground support, some of the things that were mentioned earlier in

terms of how do you break the news to a classrooms of students, how best to be trauma informed in that work to really take care to, pay attention to relationships and making sure that people who are closest to kids are the ones involved in providing the most immediate support and ongoing support for any needs that may arise and then letting people know about resources.

I think one of the things that happens is in the immediate aftermath, it's hard to think about mental health, but that's when people -- we want people to be thinking about it, because we know in that immediate period of acute stress, we have some opportunities to actually prevent post-traumatic stress from developing, and that's when we can provide some support. But it's really important to work with people who are directly involved with the young people so that we're not seen as this sort of random outside person who has no idea

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what's going on. We're actually partnering with adults in their lives that they trust and they care about how they help them navigate through resources.

So I think there is an opportunity with the new resources that are going to be deployed within schools to have -- I think one thing that's important is consistency in approach. So where these programs exist, to make sure that they're working from a similar model in terms of how they provide support while tailoring it to specific communities that they're working with, because we know there are different nuances with different communities.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you, Councilwoman.

The kid that's in a funeral that's passed out on the floor I don't worry about as much. The one that's real quiet sitting in the back simmering is the one that needs that mental health.

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Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Chairman Jones. I want to thank you for having this important conversation about coming up with a comprehensive strategy for reducing gun violence.

Mr. Mosee, I know from your experience in being in the DA's Office, I want you to talk a little bit about The Choice is Yours. I've been having hearings and talking about a conversation, an opportunity of using public-private partnerships through social impact bonds to provide additional funding for The Choice is Yours. From my understanding, that program has had about 187 participants since 2012, and I think you've had an investment from both our Lenfest Foundation and William Penn about a million dollars. And if you had additional funding -- and that's something I've been talking about through this upcoming budget process -- you probably can ramp that up to get many

more people in that program. My question -- I think Chairman Jones raised a good point about resources. The question is, if someone wants to go through that program, would they be eligible to go through that program if they had any type of BUFA (ph) or gun violences to go through The Choice is Yours?

MR. MOSEE: One of the things that we try to do is look at each case individually, and right now I don't believe that we've drawn any lines of demarcation that would preclude somebody with a particular charge from coming in. It would depend on the facts surrounding that charge.

But the point that you make about the resources actually driving our ability to provide this wonderful program to people who really need it is right on point. The more money we have, the more people could get involved in. And for those of you who don't know, this is an

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opportunity to go to school, to go to college in fact or higher education as opposed to being dealt with by way of some criminal justice consequence.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And could you, I guess, for the record kind of explain the nature of the program. I mean, I have a lot of knowledge about the program, but for the record, could you kind of explain the program for some people in the audience who may not be aware of it.

MR. MOSEE: It's a proposition that's actually presented to someone who in fact committed a crime, that you can either deal with the consequences in a traditional way by way of probation or even incarceration or you can commit to pursue higher education. That means college or some professional training, vocation or otherwise. You make that commitment and you stick with it, then you actually paid your debt to society while having the benefit inure to you.

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COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. And so my understanding, the cost for The Choice is Yours is about 5,200 per participant, whereas being on State Road if you're doing county time is about 35,000 a year. Is that correct?

MR. MOSEE: And that's that cost effectiveness that I was talking about earlier. It just makes all the sense in the world, not just from a behavioral health and rehabilitation but also in terms of the dollars and cents.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And so if you had additional resources, would it be feasible to be able to ramp this program up in the course of a year or two years to 250 or maybe 500 participants per year?

MR. MOSEE: And the increase, of course, would have to be commensurate with the additional funding.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right.

One of the other questions I have -- and this actually came up from

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Councilman Johnson in reference to Behavioral Health being here in the conversation. And too often we're in these silos where it's often public safety and we're dealing with the DA's Office. The Police Department, Public Defenders Office, First Judicial District and some of the other entities are not involved. That's why I'm very happy to see that Behavioral Health is involved in the conversation.

But has there been any conversation or thought about reaching out to other agencies, especially entities like Commerce for economic development? One of my perspectives is that one issue that impacts youth violence is lack of economic opportunity and lack of job opportunity or entrepreneurial opportunities. Have there been conversations to talk about how we could bring partners into this conversation that are talking about entrepreneurship, economic development,

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and providing young people an opportunity like The Choice is Yours but from an economic opportunity perspective or entrepreneurial perspective to try to see a different path than the path they're currently on?

DR. JACKSON: I just want to say I think that's an excellent point. I think if we had more opportunities for completing education and employment opportunities, we probably wouldn't be here today. So I can't -- there are not any specific initiatives that I can point to. Through our work engaging young people, we have a Youth Advisory Board, for example, for the Department as well as for the trauma grant that we have. We certainly encourage those opportunities. But in terms of specific partnerships with commerce agencies, I'm not aware of any.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, I would definitely encourage both the members of this body and also you as

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you're putting together a strategy to make sure you're reaching out to the African American chambers and the ethnic chambers, the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, as well as with Harold Epps from the Commerce Department and the Administration to really talk about a more holistic perspective in how we can provide opportunities for some of the young people or persons coming through The Choice is Yours or other programs to really see potential entrepreneurship opportunities or job opportunities, because I think that's something that's missing from the conversation.

DR. JACKSON: That's a great point.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

Councilman Taubenberger.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank you.

Panel, I thank you very much for sharing your collective wisdom with

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us, because we truly need this.

Mr. Mosee, with the District Attorney's Office we received a briefing, I think it was in February, all the new Councilmembers, and at that time, a statistic was cited. Correct me if I got that right. At any time about 50 percent of the School District's kids are not in class. Is that about accurate? I mean, I'm not going to haggle over numbers.

MR. MOSEE: That's the statistic I quoted earlier, and that's what I've been told.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Okay. And the question I have, we were briefed actually on a program that the District Attorney has that has not been fully accepted or embraced by the School District. Is there any way as City Council we could get that moving? It seemed to make sense to me at the date of the briefing.

MR. MOSEE: We would very much like to have the opportunity to implement

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our program in the Philadelphia public schools. Right now we are doing, I think, what's amounted to a really effective job of curbing truancy in the charter schools in the City. In every school where we've implemented the program, there's been at least a 75 percent increase in attendance. One of the things that's been holding the implementation of this program in the public schools has been their perceived inability to share the relevant information necessary for us to be effective regarding truancy with us.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I understand through my colleague Councilman Green that Karyn Lynch is in the room in regard to the question I just asked. Is she here? If she could just answer the question that I just asked Mr. Mosee regarding the implementation of this program in the School District.

(Witness approached witness table.)

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MS. LYNCH: Thank you. For the record, my name is Karyn Lynch. I'm Chief of Student Support Services with the School District of Philadelphia.

I believe the question that you asked was about the truancy program that the District Attorney is interested in implementing in the School District.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Yes.

MS. LYNCH: So the School District of Philadelphia has tried on numerous occasions and met with the District Attorney on at least two occasions to talk about this very program. What we have shared with him -- and it's not the School District that has decided this. It is in fact the federal government, FERPA, that speaks to the sharing of information with non-educational entities. And so on behalf of the District Attorney and for this particular reason, we actually sent an opinion and urged him to seek an opinion from the federal government on

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this very topic, and it was said that we can definitely absolutely share names and addresses of students. It's considered to be directory information. That information can absolutely be shared, and we've offered to do that. That information can be used to send letters to families across the City and let them know about truancy, the importance of their children attending school. We're very eager for the District Attorney to participate in this effort.

What we cannot share is the student-specific information beyond directory information. Name, address we can share. The exact truancy numbers we cannot share. What the District Attorney has said is that he would like to have not just the names, not just the addresses, not just the phone numbers of students and families, but he would also like to have the child-specific information on truancy. And we've asked repeatedly is there any other way we can

go about this, can we send the letters for you, can we jointly send a request to the federal government, what can we do? And thus far, there hasn't been a solution that's been reached.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Well, one, is it possible to have some of that correspondence sent to the panel?

MS. LYNCH: Say again.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: You said you had correspondence with the District Attorney's Office.

MS. LYNCH: To see the correspondence?

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Yes. The requests that you made. I mean, if it's possible. If it's not, then --

MS. LYNCH: Is it possible to see the correspondence?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Point of information. So what my colleague is referring to, we are officially requesting from the School District of Philadelphia and the District Attorney's

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Office to turn over the correspondence between the School District of Philadelphia and the District Attorney's Office regarding this particular issue.

Is that correct, Councilman?

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: That is correct.

MS. LYNCH: Sure.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: That's an official request for the record.

MS. LYNCH: Absolutely.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank you, Chairman.

Because let me be very direct in hearing what I had just heard, that if charter schools can do this and there is a 75 percent increase in attendance, that's a good thing.

MS. LYNCH: So I can't speak to the 75 percent increase in attendance. I've not heard this before. I do know that there are several charter schools that have participated in this effort. There are -- and I can't speak to whether

or not the charter schools are in violation of the FERPA Act or not. I can tell you that I have had correspondence with the federal government where we have asked can we do this specifically, and they have said, no, you cannot do this specifically.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Well, we'd like to see that.

MS. LYNCH: Absolutely. I have not had any correspondence where I have asked about charter schools or what they can or cannot do, but I'm curious how they do that as well.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I mean, half of the taxpayers and the residents of the City of Philadelphia or half our children at any given day are not attending school is a major Herculean problem. There's something wrong with the system.

MS. LYNCH: So I would also share with you that I have never heard that data point either, that half the

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children in the City of Philadelphia -- in the School District of Philadelphia are not attending schools. That was a new information point to me. I can share with you that in fact in the last year, our attendance has increased and our truancy has decreased. I can also share that we are not --

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: If I could ask, what is it? What are those numbers then?

MS. LYNCH: I'm sorry?

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: What are the exact numbers then? I mean -- or approximately. I don't need the exact numbers, but pretty close to. How many children, what percentage of the School District children are in school this very moment, approximately?

MS. LYNCH: So the way that we track the data is the numbers of children that are attending school, a percentage of the 185 days, and that number is closer to 90 percent. And if you will, I

can share with you over the -- and have sent to your offices the information, the trending information on attendance in the District that has taken place thus far.

I can also talk with you today about several of the initiatives that we have underway, both practices that have been known to be successful. We've partnered over the last year, as a matter of fact, with Harvard where we're sending --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Excuse me, if you don't mind, respectfully --

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: That's fine.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- Councilman Taubenberger, separate from the question during your time on the panel. Then you can just roll out the best practices that you're working on with the District. Is that okay?

MS. LYNCH: Okay.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Is that okay?

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COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: That will be fine. That is fine. I do have one more question, actually not for you but for the panel and possibly Commissioner Ross, if he could answer this question. Hopefully it goes quickly.

When a shooting occurs, how often is the gun also captured as well? I mean, if there's an arrest made, how often is the gun also brought in as police evidence?

COMMISSIONER ROSS: Good question, and there's no percentage I can provide you on that, because sometimes what happens, that gun might not be recovered initially. It might be recovered at some point through our information systems where you're matching up guns that are subsequently recovered. Some of these guns are used in multiple shootings, as you might imagine. So that I don't think there's any hard and fast data that says that they are recovered in

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X percentage of times. Not nearly as much as we'd like to see them, to be honest with you. It's certainly not probably as frequently as people would believe.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: And when it is brought forward as evidence, what are the chances to actually then track that gun to see how it got in the hands of the shooter?

COMMISSIONER ROSS: I thought you were going to ask about the incident, but the shooter itself, that just is dependent upon the investigation and how a deputy investigator may or may not be in getting the confession, because some of that information will only be gleaned from someone admitting that this is how they got the gun themselves.

Now, if you're talking about how the gun was tracked to a particular crime, we're able to do that through our crime information systems and where we're able to track shell casings and ballistic

evidence back to a particular gun, assuming it's ever recovered. Obviously every gun is test fired. When that happens, there are scientific ways in which you can connect guns to a particular crime, but in terms of how an individual got the gun, that's not always that easy. Most of the time it comes down to either a statement by a witness or usually a suspect to tell you how they got it. That does happen on occasion, but that's the only way you can really determine that.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Commissioner, thank you very much. Thank you all.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So we're going to move on to the next panel, but, Mr. Mosee, can you stick around, because I know Councilman Green had a follow-up question regarding yourself and Ms. --

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: May I ask a question?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Oh, sure.

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Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you.

Good morning, everyone.

(Good morning.)

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: I wanted certainly to commend you all. You know, we've been very excited about the program that -- the initiative you had Kevin Bethel do, start with expungements, and I wanted to ask you about that status and about the status of programs where they have probation officers in schools for kids who have records so we don't lose them that way as well.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: So with regard to the diversion that Deputy Bethel, your buddy -- and he's doing well. Yeah. Over the last couple of years, there's been over 800 or something kids that have been diverted, and that's this school year, 330 something, and we are very optimistic about that program in particular.

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As far as the probation officers, I don't know if Karyn Lynch is able to speak to that or if you're aware of what they're doing.

I don't know -- I'm not at liberty to call somebody else up, but we do have Juvenile Probation here who could better speak to that, Councilwoman, than I could.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Yeah. We just wanted to, even if not today -- I won't hold the hearing up, but somebody could let us know, because in those schools I assume where we have more crime than others, if they can check in there, then they don't have to lose time from school, or we get them easier if we can get them where they are to make sure they check in as they have to by law.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: That's right.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: So we were interested in that.

I had one more thing. I'm

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trying to think of it real quick.

Well, it's gone for the moment, but thank you all.

I just remembered. You know we're still working on that issue with Juvenile Justice Center that we've been talking about, trying to keep children here. So I'll stay in touch with you about that.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: That's great.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Councilwoman Blackwell.

So I want to thank all of you for your testimony. And just one last information I'm going to request Commissioner Ross. Can you have your team put together the numbers for me for the Youth Violence Reduction Program. And I know under the Street Administration they had the Adolescents Violence Reduction Program. I think that

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was eliminated under the prior Administration or is that still in operation?

COMMISSIONER ROSS: I don't think we have AVRP.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You had an AVRP program. But if you can provide the numbers to me for Youth Violence Reduction Program as well as your Juvenile Enforcement Team program, just to look at who is participating, the demographics of the program in general, because that's something -- I've always been a big fan of those two particular initiatives.

COMMISSIONER ROSS: You want them for last calendar year, year to date?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just give me the last calendar year. That would be great.

Thank you all for your participation.

Next we have Chairman of the

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Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Mr. Josh Shapiro. Also the Honorable Judge Lerner.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just please state your name for the record, please.

MR. SHAPIRO: Good morning. My name is Josh Shapiro. I'm Chairman of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You can begin your testimony.

MR. SHAPIRO: Great. Well, thank you, Councilman Johnson. I very much appreciate the opportunity to testify here today. Let me also thank Councilman Green, Councilman Greenlee, Councilwoman Blackwell, and Councilman Domb as well for your interest. It is clear from both your presence here today as well as the presence of other members of Council that you not only understand

the issue of gun violence in our communities, but you understand that it takes a multidisciplinary approach to tackle it. We've had education advocates. We've had economic development advocates here. We've had public safety advocates. We all need to be together in dealing with this scourge of illegal guns in our communities and the toll it's taking particularly on our youth.

I'm here today to testify as Chairman of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. As some of you know, PCCD was created by the General Assembly back in 1978. I sit as Chairman of the 48-member Board. We have a threefold mission, to put it succinctly: to enhance the quality and coordination of criminal and juvenile justice systems, to facilitate the delivery of services to victims in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and to increase the safety of our communities.

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A major part of the work that we do is accomplished through the awarding and administering of grants provided through several state and federal funding streams. In addition to that, we focus on collaboration and partnership in communities all across Pennsylvania to increase the safety and well-being of our communities.

This week -- and this is a critically important point I wanted to share with this Committee. This week PCCD will be releasing a competitive funding announcement in the amount of $5.4 million to assist communities and law enforcement in combatting and preventing crime. Again, that's $5 and a half million that will be put out through a competitive funding process, and I hope that Philadelphia takes advantage of this opportunity.

I'd like to talk about some of the examples of the ways PCCD has partnered in the past and funded

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initiatives here in the City of Philadelphia to give you a sense of our commitment to the residents of the City but also a sense of the diverse work that we do and ways in which you can benefit from this partnership with PCCD.

First, we have previously funded the Don't Shoot program in Philadelphia under a PCCD funding stream. As most of you know, Don't Shoot is an aggressive multi-strategy, anti-gang, anti-gun violence program designed to save lives and reduce the number of people impacted by gun crimes. We hired local analysts to comb through social media, prison recordings, and other means of communications to learn more about gun crimes, to learn more about the offenders, to help build cases, to help identify offenders, to help understand patterns of crime, and ultimately to help reduce violence.

Second, we have funded a program called Philly CeaseFire. A

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$250,000 grant was funded through Temple University to promote violence reduction in Philadelphia's 22nd Police District. Here we've trained personnel to intervene with people who are at high risk of gun violence. We've intervened to help them get counseling and community-based support.

Third, we have paid particular attention to returning citizens. I believe it was Councilman Green who asked about that earlier in the first panel. I can tell you from personal experience as Chairman of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners, we have instituted similar programs in Montgomery County where we have focused on providing returning citizens in our county prison with job training, with anger management, with parenting education, among the three skills we have focused on. And in a county prison where our recidivism rate is roughly 62 percent, which is very high but it is shockingly low compared to

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other counties across the Commonwealth, we've reduced our recidivism rate for those who have participated in that program to under 20 percent. PCCD is focusing on returning citizens and, in particular, focusing on funding programs in our county prison system. Allegheny County is another example where we have funded an initiative there that is working to reduce recidivism, and I would encourage the City of Philadelphia to follow suit.

We have also focused particular attention on minority youth contact with police. Back in 2015, we provided a $200,000 grant to the Defenders Association here in Philadelphia to allow for a special collaborative program with police across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to provide training, to provide role plays, to provide behavioral health development, as Councilwoman Gym was talking about before. We think this is particularly important where you're

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having disproportionally high contact between minority youth and police. We have found in talking with police under law enforcement a real desire on their part to participate just as much as we have found the desire to participate by those in the community.

I want to also talk about parenting. I want to commend the City of Philadelphia for leveraging our funds to support the implementation of the Positive Parenting program here in Philadelphia, an evidence-based program that teaches parents and families strategies for positive parenting. We have proven -- this program has proven repeatedly to be effective at reducing risky and problematic behavior in our children that can often lead to gun violence.

Listen, here's the deal. In the absence of stricter laws that will get the illegal guns off our streets, that will go after the straw purchasers,

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that will expand background checks, that will require reporting of lost and stolen, we have to step up in communities like Philadelphia all across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and deal with this, as you've talked about here today, in a multidisciplinary approach.

I was heartened to see Commissioner Ross sitting next to one of the leaders of your social services agency right here in the City of Philadelphia. We have got to bring both sides of this equation together, all sides of this equation together, behavioral health, education, law enforcement. Everybody has got to be rowing in the same direction. If Harrisburg is not going to act, if Harrisburg is not going to increase the laws on the books and go after those who are selling illegal guns in our communities, then we as a city, we as a community have to collaborate. PCCD stands ready to collaborate with you in

that effort.

I'm happy to answer any of your questions but, most importantly, I want to thank each and every one of you for having this hearing today and shining light on an issue that is so important. As I look at the people who are sitting here behind me, people who are advocates, people who are neighbors, people who are community leaders, they all desire the same outcome that you do and that I do, safer communities for our children, safer communities, period.

I thank you for your time today.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Commissioner Shapiro, for your testimony. For the record, can you state the source of funding for PCCD.

MR. SHAPIRO: PCCD receives

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fundings from multiple sources, from federal sources of funding and state sources. We are often the agency that is required to administer those funds. So at any given moment, we could be administering federal or state funds.

The dollars that I spoke of earlier are a combination of VOCA funds, which are federal funds, as well as a combination of federal and state funds for some of the community safety programs that I talked about.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And as a follow-up question, for counties to participate in those funding streams, are all of those funding opportunities based on RFPs or competitive challenge grants?

MR. SHAPIRO: Everything is competitive and everything is available on our website at pccd.pa.gov. It is critically important that City Council, whoever does your grant applications, or other communities who are represented here today apply online. We understand

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the needs in Philadelphia are great. We're committed to making sure the resources get to the City of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Commissioner, I just had one question. I also want to strike for the record, I think I just referred to you as Chairman, but, Commissioner Shapiro, just briefly elaborate on the best practices that reduce the recidivism rate on the county level from the 62 percent to 20 percent. Because I know right now the Council President has assigned myself to work in partnership with the Chairman of Public Safety, Councilman Jones, on a Criminal Justice Special Committee to reduce the recidivism rate here in the City of Philadelphia on the county level. Just briefly elaborate on your best practices that have attributed to the 20 percent number.

MR. SHAPIRO: Sure. Look, this

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is a critically important issue to deal with returning citizens. Here's something that each and every county prison and those who administer it -- and I do as the Chairman of the County Commissioners in Montgomery County. Here's something we all have in common. Each and every one of the people in our county prisons are going to return to society. They're going to return. And we have a responsibility to make sure that when they return, they're better off and that they don't come back. The best ways to do that -- and I wear two hats when I talk about this, through PCCD and as the leader of Montgomery County's government -- is to make sure, number one, there are job training programs in the prisons; number two, we deal with anger management. That's such a big issue for so many of our inmates; number three, we provide parenting education.

When I first walked in to our prison in Montgomery County, I watched an

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inmate visiting with her young children, and they were visiting in a very sterile cafeteria. You can imagine what this would look like, the round metal tables with the kids sitting there with their parent. Let me tell you something, I'm a father of four young kids. I know you're a father to a young family. We don't sit around sterile metal tables talking with our kids. We lay on the floor. We do puzzles. We make Legos. We read books.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I build clubhouses.

MR. SHAPIRO: You build clubhouses. Well, you're a better father than I am, I guess. I can't build a clubhouse. But here's the thing. We didn't have a room like that in our county prison. So you know what we did? We took a section, we painted the walls bright colors, we put carpeting down, we got local church organizations to donate toys and things like that that they could play with, and now when a child comes in

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to visit with their inmate parent, they lay on the floor, they interact, they make better eye contact. And when you give that prisoner the opportunity to hope for something while they're inside and then the returning citizen something to hold on to when they get out so they don't go back, we're finding just tremendous benefit in that kind of training. And what we're seeing from that three-pronged approach, the behavioral health side, particularly folks on anger management, the job training side, as well as the parenting side, we've reduced our recidivism rate from roughly 60 percent to roughly 20 percent. We're seeing this replicated in other prisons across Pennsylvania.

These are the kinds of programs that I would encourage, I would encourage the City of Philadelphia. And I say that respectfully. You're the decision-makers here in the City. I am not. But I would encourage you to apply for grant funding

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through PCCD to be able to build that out in your prisons. It works. And we all have a responsibility to these returning citizens.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You know, just in wrapping up before I bring Judge Lerner up, it was a couple years ago I had the opportunity to go up to State Road with one of the foremost leaders here in the City of Philadelphia, Mr. Dorothy Speight-Johnson -- make sure I got it right. Johnson-Speight. She always checks me: Councilman, get it together, and we have the same last name. But she allowed me to go on State Road with her to speak to some juveniles who were either sentenced or about to be sentenced, and I remember speaking at their -- one time I spoke at their graduation from a program they were participating in and the other time I

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came to do a group round session with the young people. And I looked at the level of maturity of some of these young men, not -- of them not recognizing that some of them were going to be going away for a very, very long time, and I don't think they really comprehended that that was going to be their fate.

And so for me, if we can grab a hold on the state level, and we're working with the lifers in Graterford to try to make a connection between those who are upstate in state prison, working with some of the young men who are coming in on the county level as a way to deter them from becoming life-long criminals, but it's something that we have to take a stronger look at. And I know we're on that path, but to go from 62 percent to 20 percent is a commendable accomplishment that should really be taken a look at as we address the issue of recidivism here in the City of Philadelphia. But thank you for taking

your time out of your schedule and being here.

Go ahead.

MR. SHAPIRO: My pleasure. If I may just for one more moment. You talk about the pathway, and I wish Councilwoman Gym was still here, because she has done some really terrific work in focusing on schools, and Councilman Taubenberger spoke about this earlier about kids staying in schools. That pathway that you speak of is something that we have to get serious about addressing in a holistic and multidisciplinary way. If we can get our kids into early childhood education, give them quality schools, give them the opportunity to be somewhere during the day in a learning enriching environment so they don't get in trouble with the law by making some stupid mistake the first time -- and you'll forgive me for saying stupid in these distinguished Chambers, but they make a mistake and then guess

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what happens. They get put in prison. And you know what happens while they're waiting in prison? They become real criminals. We have got to do a better job focusing early on on education, focusing on making sure that these young people look up to people who are in jobs that are going to be able to provide for them, you know, their girlfriends or boyfriends, their families and ultimately for their children and grandchildren. Give them positive examples.

This Council seems to understand that. I really want to commend you for taking the lead on this issue, for understanding we can't arrest our way out of this problem. We can't pass laws to get our way out of this problem. We've got to deal with this in a holistic multidisciplinary way.

I very much thank you for your attention, members of Council, and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you this morning.

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COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Commissioner.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Judge Lerner.

We're going to call the next panel, please. Thank everyone for being patient. Thank you for your time for being here.

THE CLERK: Karyn Lynch, School District; Dr. Joel Fein; Terrell Bagby.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

JUDGE LERNER: Good morning -- or good afternoon.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just state your name for the record, Your Honor.

JUDGE LERNER: I am Benjamin Lerner and I am the Deputy Managing Director for Criminal Justice, and I appreciate very much the opportunity to be here in this new role for me.

Councilman, I'm going to ask your indulgence since, as you know, I

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have been in this position for all of one week. I'm going to ask your permission to have our office's chief of staff, Julie Wertheimer, present the prepared testimony, and then, of course, I'll be available to answer any questions that Councilmembers might have.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Sure.

JUDGE LERNER: Thank you.

MS. WERTHEIMER: Good morning, Councilman Johnson -- or good afternoon, and members of the Committee on Public Safety.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just state your name for the record before you start, please.

MS. WERTHEIMER: Julie Wertheimer. I am Chief of Staff to the Deputy Managing Director, and I'm here to testify on behalf of the Administration regarding Resolution 160081.

To date, the Managing Director's Office has been engaged in managing and overseeing a number of

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programs that either have the primary or secondary focus of preventing youth gun violence, many of which you've already heard about from our other government partners.

Gun violence can often be the symptom of other problems such as lack of education or employment opportunities. These initiatives seek to address those chronic issues.

I'm going to run down a few of these. The first is, as you may be well aware, the City is engaged in a planning grant under MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge. I bring that up because it was a collaborative effort between the First Judicial District, the District Attorney, the Defender, the Police Department, the Prison System, and the Department of Behavioral Health, the type of collaboration that I think we've all been aiming towards here.

In addition, it was the development of a comprehensive set of

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data-driven strategies that are aimed at reducing Philadelphia's overreliance on jails. In addition, we know that if we can address the pretrial jail population and break the cycle of unnecessary incarceration, it will have a positive effect on reducing gun violence as well.

The Philadelphia Reentry Coalition is composed of 100 criminal justice and reentry stakeholders, including related government agencies from local, state, and federal level, as well as community-based non-profits and service providers, researchers, returning citizens, and community advocates. The Coalition's purpose is to advance communication, collaboration, and coordination towards a collective reentry strategy in Philadelphia and to ultimately reduce recidivism rates for the 30,000-plus individuals who return to the City each year from jails and prisons.

Home for Good, the Coalition's

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five-year collective action plan, focuses on five overarching strategies to achieve this purpose, including strengthening foundation; adopting a shared methodology, including a risk-needs-responsivity; engaging the community; and aligning efforts. The Coalition is focused into several teams, including data and metrics, community engagement, and communication under the leadership of a representative Implementation Team and supported by staff.

Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative was created in 2012 under a United States Department of Justice grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Philadelphia was selected at the time to be among ten cities, now 15, in the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention. On a national level, the Forum is a network of communities and federal agencies that work together, share information, and

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build local capacity to prevent and reduce youth violence. The Forum brings together people from diverse professions and perspectives to learn with each other about the crisis of youth and gang violence and to build comprehensive solutions, both at the local and national levels.

Here in Philadelphia, over 30 leaders from government, academia, and other stakeholder groups in Philadelphia are part of the Collaborative and represent the City's leadership across a wide cross-section of disciplines in recognition that many factors contribute to and can alleviate youth violence. Successes of the Collaborative to date include stewarding funding for youth employment and after-school programming as well as creating linkages between community-based organizations and government agencies. This takes place primarily in the 22nd Police District as a pilot program, and as Councilman Green

asked a previous panel, we have done some work with the Commerce Department and around entrepreneurship programs, but on a small scale, and perhaps the opportunity to explore looking into expanding that.

The Youth Violence Reduction Partnership you've heard about at length, so I will not go into that as much. I'll skip over that.

CeaseFire Philadelphia is the evidence-based public health approach to reducing gun violence developed by Dr. Gary Slutkin in Chicago. The model, known as CureViolence but CeaseFire here, relies on credible outreach workers and interrupters to intervene and mediate any potentially volatile conflicts, with a focus on preventing retaliatory shootings. The program also works to offer social services and supports to those who interact with the program. The work is currently funded by the United States Department of Justice and executed

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in partnership with the Temple University Katz School of Medicine, of which I believe Dr. Reeves and Marla Davis-Bellamy are here.

Focused Deterrence you have also heard about, the David Kennedy violence intervention model currently being implemented in South Philadelphia in conjunction with the Police Department, Probation and Parole, and the District Attorney's Office. The program runs call-ins for identified individuals known to be associated with violence and provides activities and social services for the community at large. I should also mention ongoing support of the work that the U.S. Attorney's Office under the leadership of Rob Reed is doing in Strawberry Mansion with Dr. Sandy Bloom around developing and implementing this sanctuary model in that neighborhood.

The MDO also works with two programs that offer both transitional jobs and other services to young adults

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who have previous justice system involvement, PowerCorpsPHL and the Center for Employment Opportunities, or CEO, not to be confused with the Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity.

PowerCorps has adapted the AmeriCorps model for justice-involved young people, partnering with Education Works and Philadelphia Youth Network. PowerCorps annually enrolls 100 individuals ages 18 to 26 in a nine-month program, six months of full-time service as AmeriCorps members with various City departments such as Parks and Rec, followed by three months of intensive job placement support. Referrals are made to PowerCorps from a variety of programs, including RISE, the Mayor's Office of Reintegration Services, and also YVRP.

CEO is a nationally recognized model for transitional jobs. The current effort is a collaboration between the City's Parks and Rec Department, the state Department of Corrections, and the

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Greenlight Fund. Young adults returning to Philadelphia from state incarceration are eligible to be referred to the program, which is conducted on an individual basis rather than through a cohort model. Permanent employment is sought after the training and transitional job periods are complete.

These resources and programs strive to address the chronic issue of gun violence and other criminal justice-related issues and are all pieces of the puzzle working towards the solution. These programs are programs that we need to continually evaluate and then expand if effective. I echo the sentiments that it takes a holistic, collaborative model to address this issue, and we look forward to the opportunity to work with both City Council and community members to find solutions.

Both the judge and I are happy to answer any questions you may have at

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this time.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Ms. Karyn Lynch.

MS. LYNCH: Thank you. Again, Karyn Lynch from the School District of Philadelphia.

I think the real purpose that the School District has today is to just highlight and point out that we have a variety of partnerships. A good number of City agencies that you will hear from and have heard from today we partner with. There are other organizations, community organizations across the City.

I will be brief and respond to any questions that you might have.

There was one thing that the Police Commissioner did not share when he elaborated about the project that we have engaged with to reduce arrests, and I really -- I have to stress it, and that is the collaboration and the active role of the Department of Human Services in the implementation. Every single one of

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the children that participate in the arrest diversion has an assessment that's done by trained professionals that are DHS social workers and social workers from CUAs and social workers from the contractors that actually go into the homes, work with students. They learn a great deal about behavior and conduct throughout the course of the diversion. And so I just want to stress for everyone that it's not just an arrest diversion. It's also a social services initiative.

Regarding the attendance, which I started to speak to earlier, we have several initiatives underway. The one that has been probably the most successful is a partnership that started with Harvard University several years ago, where, believe it or not, we send letters to families when their children have had more than five and then more than ten absences, and those letters speak to the child's status within the class, their status within the school,

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and it compares them to children within their region that have had attendance issues. And when parents see and have more information about just the impact of their child not attending school, we have many parents that have changed their approach and ensured that the attendance records of their children have improved.

Lastly, I would share that among the many partnerships that we have, we are partnered with the International Restorative Practices Organization as well as Devereux, who does our PBIS. It's our thought that by changing the behavior and giving young people the skills that they need in order to know how to resolve issues and know how to address conflict, that we're not just impacting our schools and our students, we're impacting the community as well. And each of those organizations and others are very interested in in fact creating restorative communities within the City of Philadelphia. So not just

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students, but also parents have the skill sets that they need within the community in order to help resolve problems and issues.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilman Johnson.

Ms. Wertheimer, since you opened the door in reference to commerce and economic development and, Judge Lerner, since you're part of the Managing Director's Office, it's my understanding that as part of the Mayor's initiative in reference to parks, recreation, and libraries and major capital investment that he's proposing as part of his budget proposal and I know that is, from my understanding, an idea that came from Managing Director DiBerardinis. So my question is, what role has job opportunities and opportunities for returning citizens been part of that

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conversation?

When you're talking about spending hundreds of millions of dollars to improve our parks, recreation, and libraries, that's a huge capital investment, but also an opportunity not only for an economic development, anti-poverty but also a job opportunity perspective for returning citizens.

What role has your office played in reference to that initiative with the Mayor's Office?

JUDGE LERNER: I can't really answer the question as to what role we've played in the past because, as you know, this is new for me. So I turn that part of your question in a minute over to Ms. Wertheimer. But I can tell you that in terms of going forward, I don't think anybody understands your point more clearly than I do. I am from a background which has seen over the past several years that one of the two or three major issues in terms of

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restorative justice and rehabilitation and reducing recidivism has to do with not only training for real job opportunities, but having those job opportunities available in the communities in which our criminal justice-involved individuals and individuals returning from custody are going to be residing in.

I would like to think that just as with the PowerCorps program, the City is in a position to tie together the work that's going to be done and the employment opportunities that are going to be created through these programs with real job opportunities for returning citizens, for people who are involved in the criminal justice system generally. That's the kind of thing that I think this Administration wants to put together.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Have you advocated that point to the Mayor?

JUDGE LERNER: I have not

personally yet, but I expect to have that opportunity in the near future.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I mean, I think it's very critical, because time is of the essence. As this program is not only being conceptualized but being put together, I guess, the initial building blocks of this type of initiative of course depends on what happens here in this body from a budget standpoint, but I think it's very important as this program is being laid out, that conversation needs to be part of the broader conversation of using every -- I'm a big proponent on using every dollar that we have to leverage other assets. So if we can use this opportunity, if it does get passed, as a way to help citizens of the City of Philadelphia who are returning back into our city to provide a job opportunity to lead to a road against recidivism, we need to do that. And I think from your role having been a member of the bench and also an attorney, that's

something very important, and I think it's incumbent upon you to do that, because these are the questions I will be asking over and over and over and over again.

JUDGE LERNER: I hear that loud and clear, Councilman, and I assure you that I will do that.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Did you want to respond, Ms. Wertheimer?

MS. WERTHEIMER: The only thing I'd add is, the Managing Director I'm sure will provide more detail and a more thoughtful response during the course of the budget hearings that commence tomorrow, but I do know that the inclusion of both opportunity to youth and adult returning citizens is very much a part of the workforce development conversation in general.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I mean, having it as part of the conversation is important, but also I want to see ranges, numbers, goals, because that's what's

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important in reference to the value proposition of these dollars, if it does get passed.

MS. WERTHEIMER: We will make sure that that message is passed along.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And I just want to do a follow-up question with Ms. Lynch.

Mr. Mosee, could you come to the table.

(Witness approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms. Lynch, earlier in your colloquy with Councilman Taubenberger, you made a statement in reference to about 90 percent of students being in class at a time. I wanted to make sure the record is clear in reference to that point.

MS. LYNCH: I would stress the part where I said that I was going to forward the information. I talked about the percentages of the 180 days, not 90 percent of children are in school on a

given day.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So any given day, what's the current truancy rate, without specific number, but a range, average, in the City of Philadelphia, in the School District?

MS. LYNCH: I don't have that. I did say that it was greater than 50 percent.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So it's greater than 50 percent truancy?

MS. LYNCH: It's greater than 50 percent, which was the figure that was used. I hesitate to use a figure because I would want to be most exact when I said it. That's why I said that I would share the information.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: But when you say greater than 50 percent, what are you stating?

MS. LYNCH: When I say greater than 50 percent?

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Right.

MS. LYNCH: As I understood the

figure that was offered, it was shared that on any given day, 50 percent of the students enrolled in the School District of Philadelphia are not in attendance, and I said that that number is not accurate and it's greater than that. There are more students in school each day than just 50 percent of our enrollment.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. So would you say -- would you agree there is a truancy problem here in the City of Philadelphia with students in the School District?

MS. LYNCH: Yes, there is a truancy problem in the City of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: By significant numbers?

MS. LYNCH: It's a large truancy problem in the City of Philadelphia, yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Now, you earlier stated that you're working with

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Harvard University on a program where you send letters to parents for children that have been truant five or more days?

MS. LYNCH: Yes. I just named that as a single initiative that we have. I think when George was at the table, he also spoke to the fact that the DA goes into schools quite frequently. More engaging programs that we have, we're working with Department of Human Services. They have staff that are within our schools that go into homes and specifically determine what the issues of truancy are. We're working with City Year, who does the very same, works with truancy. We have a staff that are engaged in our Truancy Court effort, which is an initiative that we have had in the City of Philadelphia for many years that involves the courts. I mean, that's just five initiatives that are underway that deal solely and specifically with truancy and attendance within the School District of

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Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: But I guess the Harvard-inspired program, that's the only program where you actually send out correspondence to parents or guardians in reference to truancy?

MS. LYNCH: No. No. The partnership we have with the Department of Human Services actually involves parents and family members as well. It's trained professionals, social workers, going into homes and finding out the causes and the reasons and addressing the issues, the specific issues, within a household related to truancy and the attendance of a child. And so that's an initiative that is intended to both prevent long-term truancy and promote attendance. That's just one that involves notifying parents, notifying children and...

COUNCILMAN GREEN: But in spite of all of these initiatives as well as a new initiative, you would agree that we

do have a significant truancy problem in the City of Philadelphia based on your statement earlier.

MS. LYNCH: I would agree that we have a significant truancy issue in the City of Philadelphia, and I would share that several of the initiatives have proven to be positive and helpful in increasing attendance.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I guess one of my questions and concerns since you stated on the record there is a truancy issue in the City, when you have an initiative that the District Attorney's Office is trying to initiate, there's been some communication back and forth. So I want to get Mr. Mosee's perspective on what's your understanding in reference to the federal law about sharing information, that you've been able to initiate this program in other non-traditional public schools but not with the School District.

MR. MOSEE: And so what FERPA

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provides is that the School District has some ability to determine who can be part of the information-sharing process, and that would be done by way of a memorandum of understanding. An MOU currently exists with the court system, for example. They're certainly not an educator per se, but they have access to the information, and that's why they've been able to start a Truancy Court.

For purposes of what we want to do with truancy, we would consider ourselves to be just as much a part of the educational process as anyone, and considering the effectiveness, it would make all the sense in the world to create an MOU with the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office so that we would have access to the information, which would allow us to bring pressure to bear on the parents and, get this, of young children who aren't going to school, because that's the scenario where -- we're not going to say that it's solely the child

who is, you know, avoiding school and doing these things of their own volition. It's because they don't have the support of their parents.

One of the things that I would point out just to bring some specifics to this Commission about what it is that our truancy program does is, it captures people who, by definition, are absent. If you're truant, then you're not available to be confronted by all of the resources that the School District has. The first step is to get them back into the picture, and that's what the Philadelphia DA's Office brings to this scenario. When we send out our letter, when we have an Assistant District Attorney involved, well, these people know that there's the potential for prosecution. And when you have that potential, when you have that leverage, then people show up, and once they show up, then they can avail themselves of all the resources. And that's all we want to

do.

We've been doing this, by the way, since 1999, and we used to do it with the School District and we had, you know, even greater percentages in terms of the effectiveness.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So my understanding, you have an MOU with the First Judicial District?

MR. MOSEE: We don't have an MOU. The School District has an MOU with the First Judicial District that doesn't include us.

MS. LYNCH: I'm not aware of any MOU with the First Judicial District. Not at all.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. I mean, there's two different perspectives here. Either one person is saying something that's accurate or not. So, Mr. Mosee, you're saying there is an MOU and, Ms. Lynch, you're saying there's not an MOU.

MS. LYNCH: I'm not aware of

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any MOU with the courts.

MR. MOSEE: What I know is that the courts have access to the information. We met, and the question earlier was to get some of the correspondence between my office and the School District regarding these issues. I'm not sure that there's correspondence, but there has been meetings. There have been meetings.

MS. LYNCH: There have definitely been meetings. In fact --

MR. MOSEE: And at those meetings what we've tried to determine is whether or not we can execute an MOU between the District Attorney's Office, the School District, and the courts.

Now, they've already begun the process and they've been sharing information with the courts. That says to me that they have an understanding. Whether there's a memorandum that memorializes that, okay, maybe there isn't, but they have the understanding.

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They've been sharing the information with the courts. They do not share that information with the District Attorney's Office.

MS. LYNCH: In fact --

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms. Lynch, Ms. Lynch, hold on. I guess my follow-up to that is at one point was there some type of -- let's not use the word MOU. At one point was there some type of understanding between the School District and the District Attorney's Office where information was being shared?

MS. LYNCH: I am not aware of any sharing of information or the implementation of this initiative any time in the past. And I will share with you that I have tried repeatedly to address this issue and to come up with solutions, and at one point I can recall we all sat in the District Attorney's Office. And when I say all of us, I mean the Commissioner for the Department of Human Services, Judge Dougherty, members

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of the truancy staff both in the School District as well as at DHS. We all met numerous times to try and resolve this issue, and Judge Dougherty threw up his hands and said, There's no way that this information can be shared. At one point we even asked whether or not there could be an administrative order from the courts giving this information to the DA's Office, and Judge Dougherty said that there was no legal justification for him to share the information in that way, and the DA asked us to please leave his office.

We have tried repeatedly to try and resolve this issue and we haven't had any success.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. Let me just as a follow-up to that, Mr. Mosee, so you're currently sharing information with non-traditional public schools, charter schools; is that correct?

MR. MOSEE: That's correct.

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COUNCILMAN GREEN: And how are you doing that?

MR. MOSEE: With a memorandum of understanding.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And it's your understanding that those various schools do not believe sharing that information is in violation of FERPA?

MR. MOSEE: I certainly hope they don't, because they shared the information.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Okay. I guess one of the questions -- I don't want to belabor this back and forth, but clearly there is a need for some understanding and coming together, and one of the aspects that City Council is engaged with every spring is a budget process where various departments come to City Council to advocate in reference to funding. So I would think there's an opportunity to have this conversation as we're going through the budget process to come to some type of understanding.

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Maybe in this enlightened spring process of budget information-sharing, this information can come together. Because I've been around this space for a little while, and there seems to be some perspectives that's not totally being provided. So I'm not sure what the difference of opinion. Maybe it's some policy perspectives where one entity doesn't believe the other entity should have this type of information, but clearly based on the testimony today, we have a truancy issue in the City of Philadelphia. The purpose of this hearing is to address youth gun violence. One of the ways we can take some steps to do that is making sure that our children are in schools and not out on the streets who are prone to either a stray bullet or some other type of issue. So one of the things I will come back to in reference to both departments -- both the School District will be here to testify as well as the District Attorney's Office -- to

come up with some type of understanding or process going forward by the time you come back to the budget process of where we are in reference to this conversation, because obviously we're doing this kind of Ring Around the Rosie perspective that's not coming to some type of understanding going forward.

MS. LYNCH: I would also urge that in that discussion, that the courts also be a party to that conversation, because truancy and Truancy Court is within their domain.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I understand that, and the courts are also up in the budget process. So I'm saying it's incumbent upon both the School District, the District Attorney's Office and, Judge Lerner, since you're a former member of the bench, you can also reach out to some of your former colleagues in the First Judicial District to move this process along, because to me it seems that we're doing what's called a three-card Monte.

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JUDGE LERNER: Can I just add briefly something from my judicial experience which might have some relevance here. Mr. Mosee talked earlier about the direct file proceedings where juveniles are charged in adult court. Those proceedings then lead to something called a de-certification hearing where a judge decides under state law whether it's in the public interest to keep that juvenile in adult court or send him or her back to juvenile court. For the last 15 years, until the end of February, I was the judge who was assigned to those hearings, and I can assure you, Councilman Green, that one of the major considerations that I took into account was the school records, both in terms of attendance and behavior of each of these juveniles, and I am -- maybe I'm not sure exactly how, but we were able to work out with the District Attorney and with the School District the providing of those records to the court, to the District

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Attorney, and of course to defense counsel as part of the information that I used in ruling on those de-certification issues, and I think we did so without a formal memorandum of understanding, but with an agreement that the School District would accept a court order issued by me to make these records available in these cases.

MS. LYNCH: And we did. We asked for the court order and we asked for the court to give us that court order, and the court refused at the time. So it's very possible. We spoke with Judge Dougherty, and he did not issue the court order. And so it's very possible that there may be a change, but if that's the way that you received it, we were more than willing to --

JUDGE LERNER: Absolutely.

MS. LYNCH: Yes. We were definitely more than willing, but the court was not willing.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So just

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for resolve on this issue -- and I'm following up on my colleague Councilman Green's perspective, and I think Judge Dougherty was a fine jurist, now Supreme Court Justice. There's a new administration in leadership at Family Court, but I think we still need to revisit just to find out if it's legal, not legal, and then how we move forward to make sure everybody is on the same page. And that's why we have these hearings, to kind of connect the dots as it relates to what's in the best interest of our youth.

And so I'm going to turn it back over to Mr. Green, if you have any other questions before we wrap up for the next panel.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I'm just going to close. Obviously, Judge Lerner, you were able to get it done through the bench by working with both the District Attorney's Office and the School District. Now that you're in a different

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role, but obviously we still need you to mediate disputes between various parties in this type of conversation as we go forward. So hopefully we can lean on your learned experience to help bring about some at least movement toward a resolution of this issue.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I just have one comment before I bring up the next panel regarding this public works project that the Administration is moving forward, "public works project" meaning the proposal to float a bond I think in the amount of, I think it's, $560 million. I may be off some figures, but I know it's a significant amount of funding to refurbish, revitalize parks and recreation facilities throughout the City of Philadelphia, which will probably be the biggest public works project since NTI. And what Councilman Green specifically is getting to is, we think that most certainly that proposal should

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include young people, returning citizens an opportunity to participate in these job opportunities, the development, rather it's establishing a partnership with the building trades. But if we're going to be building recreation facilities and libraries throughout the City of Philadelphia, we know that if you want to tell a young man to put down a gun, we should be able to provide them some type of opportunities and resources to occupy their time.

My grandmother once told me that as a young man the idle mind is the devil's workshop, and as a young man growing up in South Philly, when we didn't have anything to do, if I wasn't going to Power, if I wasn't -- well, I didn't go to Power. I went to -- I went to Power. It was at the Armory when I was younger, Broad and Wharton Street. If I wasn't going to Chew Playground -- I couldn't afford Christian Street YMCA. I think you can go -- at that time, it cost

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a dollar to come in and use the gym, but for the most part, your parents had to have some type of money for you to have a membership to go to the Y. But when I wasn't doing those things, to be quite frank with you, I'm down at FDR Park, I'm downtown on my bike, I'm at the Parkway riding around with my friends from 18th and Dickinson and, being quite frank with you, probably wasn't doing the things I should be doing, but I'm just riding a bike trying to have fun, because I'm not engaged in something that's positive. But I know if you give a young man a job, they'll be so tired they don't want to come outside and be on the corner, because they're working all day. And the classic example of how it works is PowerCorps. Like when I see the PowerCorps young men walking through my neighborhood, there might be like 25 or 30 of them, with these blue jumpsuit uniforms on, for the most part these are young men that are engaging in something

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that's positive, regardless if they have a background in terms of a record, and they have an opportunity to put money in their pockets.

So when you're focusing on doing something positive and you're making money, it just takes away other opportunities for you to be standing on the corner and getting involved in something that's negative.

And so what my colleague is talking about is making sure that a part this conversation with this proposal involves our young people as it relates to building up our recreational facilities. And I'm quite sure we're going to be working together as a unit on this and to make sure it's a priority, but this is your position and this is your purview as it relates to criminal justice here in the City of Philadelphia. So I just wanted to share that.

JUDGE LERNER: I understand that perfectly, and based on my own

experience, I absolutely 100 percent agree with it.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Last, for the School District of Philadelphia, Ms. Karyn, I'm going to follow up with you as well. We're working with a project with the lifers in Graterford on a program called FACT. That's Fathers Achieving -- Fathers and Children Together, and it's connecting dads who are incarcerated who will be returning home to work with their children as it relates to the Philadelphia School District. And so we probably have some ideas to see in that capacity as it relates to reentry is there any opportunity to kind of connect the two and go from there. So I'll keep you abreast on what that looks like moving forward. But thank you for your service from the social service standpoint as well --

MS. LYNCH: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- with

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the School District of Philadelphia.

Thank you very much for your testimony.

Could you please call the next panel, please.

THE CLERK: Faustino Castro, Juvenile Chief of Probation, Family Court Division; Dr. Joel Fein, the Violence Prevention Initiative at CHOP; Attorney Robert Reed, U.S. Attorney's Office; Terrell Bagby, Mayor's Office of RISE.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Mr. Fein from Children's Hospital, could you just state your name for the record, please, and start the -- can you sit at the podium. You can't sit at a Councilperson's desk. But that's all right. You can have my seat at any time, but just for the record, we have to have you at the panel.

Just state your name and your position, please, for the record.

DR. FEIN: My name is Joel Fein. I'm an attending physician in the

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Emergency Department at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, a Professor of Pediatrics and Emergency Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. I'm also the Director of CHOP's Violence Prevention Initiative and the Director with Dr. Ted Corbin, co-director, of the National Network of Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs. I'm presenting today on behalf of myself and Dr. Ruth Abaya, who is also an attending physician in the Emergency Department at CHOP and a lead researcher on a youth gun violence research study completed at CHOP.

I want to apologize that I will have to leave exactly after my testimony to get to a dissertation. I'm so sorry about that.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Sure.

DR. FEIN: We want to thank the Philadelphia City Council Committee on Public Safety for your leadership in highlighting the troubling issue of gun

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violence in Philadelphia and the entire Philadelphia City Council for supporting Councilman Johnson's resolution proposing to create a Commission on Youth Gun Violence.

Youth violence, including violence involving guns, is a public health problem that is impacting the health and wellness of an increasing number of children and families in Philadelphia. In CHOP's emergency department, we've seen an increasing number of youth injured through violence, with numbers rising from 308 in 2013 to 480 in 2015. Children from as young as 12 years old have bullet wounds from intentional peer-to-peer violence. Even children as young as 2 years old have unfortunate injuries involving a firearm.

Approximately one out of every dozen adolescents who visit the emergency department for whatever reason have considered suicide, and unfortunately these youth who have access to a firearm

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are more successful in completing that suicide.

Research has also told us that children exposed to trauma such as early life stress go on to have poor health outcomes later in life, never reaching their full potential. This is what makes violence not just a social justice issue but a true health issue that obligates our medical facilities to play a large part in ameliorating the impact and incidence of violence.

In 2006, our doctors, our nurses, and other emergency department staff cared for the young girls injured in the Amish school shooting at West Nickel Mines School in Lancaster County. The gunman shot eight girls ranging from ages 6 to 13, killing five of them. This highly publicized incident no doubt traumatized that community and shocked our nation. Shouldn't our nation be similarly shocked at the gun violence affecting the children and their families

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every single day in Philadelphia's neighborhoods? We can't and must not consider this part of our urban landscape or we risk raising another entire generation of youth who are caught in a vicious circle of violence and trauma.

Rather than being just horrified witnesses to the carnage of violence in our city, Philadelphia's healthcare community has played and will continue to play an undeniable role in reducing its incidence and impact. Each and every healthcare provider can participate in this effort, from primary care and emergency nurses and physicians to trauma specialists and healthcare researchers. CHOP has recognized this obligation and for decades has been creating programs that assist Philadelphia area children and families impacted by violence, most recently organized into the CHOP Violence Prevention Initiative, which I co-lead with Dr. Stephen Leff. The Violence

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Prevention Initiative, recognized nationally by the American Hospital Association, applies a public health approach, intervening at multiple touch points in children's lives, creating and implementing programs at CHOP facilities and throughout our community to prevent school bullying, domestic violence, and peer youth violence. This initiative seeks to provide the right care at the right time and in the right location. It gives CHOP an opportunity to partner with other organizations with similar goals and provides much-needed continuity between our hospitals, our schools, and our community.

We know that healthcare providers, particularly those who care for children, play a key role in identifying and treating those patients who experience injury-related post-traumatic stress. Understanding that even our own medical treatment of these children can cause greater trauma,

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we have trained more than a thousand front-line CHOP staff to practice trauma-informed care, ameliorating the potentially traumatic aspects of treatment and recognizing how prior life events and stressors play into the child and parents' interpretations and responses to our treatment.

However, it's not enough just to try out what we think would work against this insidious disease. Our academic institutions need to do the important research that uncovers the "why" before we establish the "how" of violence prevention. In one such research project performed by our team at CHOP and led by Dr. Ruth Abaya, we wanted to learn firsthand why teenagers in Philadelphia might access a gun. As part of our standard care, teenagers who are seen in our ER are already asked a standard questionnaire. It's a web-based computerized behavioral health screen answering questions about depression,

suicide, violence, post-traumatic stress, and substance use. When a teenager gives a positive response to the question "could you obtain a gun within one day," we asked him or her to participate in a one-on-one interview to learn more about what that meant to them. This was a small research project, but one that gets to the heart of what we may need to do to keep our children safe from gun violence.

So what are the lessons that we gathered from these youth? We learned that teenagers in Philadelphia who have access to firearms are motivated to use them primarily for protection due to a fear of threat of harm to themselves or their families. Some youth were more specifically concerned about threats to my mother, my sister or my grandmother and that they would use a gun, quote, "only if somebody close to me was in a life or death situation, like if something were ever to happen to my mom."

Youth respondents also listed

retaliation as a motivation for accessing a firearm, with one youth stating, quote, "sometimes in that situation you feel a lot of anger or you just feel like something can be resolved if you just had it," unquote. The majority of them said that it would be quite easy to obtain a firearm, with one youth stating "I have friends that have access to their guns and I could just call them." A few of the youth stated that "guns are everywhere" and they know that family members would have them as well.

In light of these insights, our efforts may best be focused on reducing the situations where youth feel that they need to arm themselves for protection. Once a teenager feels that he or she needs a gun, there are few things that could convince them otherwise. One respondent told us "it's a mindset. If you have that on your mind that you need a gun, you'll go beyond everything to get a gun, beyond what anybody says."

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Gun carrying is often a choice that may appear to the youth to be the only choice. One very poignant comment that we heard from a teenage boy is, "I don't want a gun, but the world is just so crazy right now." They know intuitively that having a gun means you have crossed a certain line from which they may not return. One youth said "when you pull a gun out on somebody, then you've started something, and you got to walk around with a gun all the time."

So what could keep a child from accessing a weapon? We start with the wisdom of some of the teenagers who stated that even though they could easily get a gun, they would choose not to. These kids with whom we spoke knew firsthand the devastation that guns can reap. One child even reported discharging his weapon at a tree. Upon seeing the extensive damage that was done to that tree, he stated "I can't do that

to somebody." They have experienced palpably and personally the harm done to families, to parents who threaten each other with weapons, and to their neighbors in fights that ended badly. In many cases, these fights involve people who felt angry, frustrated, and powerless unless they had the gun. Despite their knowledge of the danger of firearms, children know that they live in a violent world and that they struggle to find safe ways to navigate that environment.

What these kids are telling us is that our efforts need to provide them with ways of dealing with the anger and frustration and, most importantly, give them the power and confidence to change their situations and their world without using violence. In addition, we have to recognize the important role of family and close friends in helping children make the choice not to access guns. Teenagers in our study were concerned about how family members would feel if

they got hurt or killed or even incarcerated because they obtained a weapon. Some of them also worried about what could possibly happen to other family members, especially younger siblings, if there was an accessible gun around. One youth said "if I hold it in my hand, I'm going to think about what's going to happen to my family, what's going to happen to my future, what's going to happen when I'm gone."

CHOP has been working to change the landscape of violence in Philadelphia through programming specifically designed for assault-injured children. Our Violence Intervention Program is similar to the Healing Hurt People program at Drexel, the important work of which you'll hear from my colleague Ted Corbin. The CHOP Violence Intervention Program has been refined for even our youngest Philadelphians, children and adolescents who come to our ER after a violent injury. Because we know that these

assault-injured youth are at the very highest risk for future violence and poor outcomes, the CHOP VIP has specifically trained our clinicians and staff members to see 50 or more assault-injured children every year. Our specialists help these youth and their families navigate school support, the justice system, and medical follow-up. And almost all of these children require some sort of mental or behavioral health services, and our VIP specialists can provide direct therapy to prevent post-traumatic stress disorder, as Dr. Jackson has mentioned before.

The most important priority for any parent is the health and safety of their children, and exposure to violence in many cases is Philadelphians' most significant threat to health and safety, and it needs to be addressed directly and with as much vigor as any other public health issue. This is why I am grateful to be invited to represent CHOP and to

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share our research and information on youth violence prevention. We at CHOP look forward to continuing to participate in this dialogue and being an active part of the solution to keep our children safe and out of our emergency department and trauma unit. Please consider us as a resource in your work on gun violence prevention, and thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Please state your name for the record.

MR. CASTRO-JIMENEZ: Good afternoon. My name is Faustino Castro-Jimenez, Chief of Probation, Juvenile Division.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Proceed.

MR. CASTRO-JIMENEZ: Good afternoon and thank you for the invitation to speak on this important subject; namely, the prevention and desistance of gun violence among our most precious commodity, our young people of Philadelphia.

I have the privilege of

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overseeing Philadelphia's Juvenile Probation Department, and I am a public servant who firmly believes that the work we do today will have a direct impact on the future leaders of tomorrow. I serve under the leadership of Family Court's Administrative Judge, the Honorable Margaret Murphy, who unfortunately could not be here today. Accompanying me here today is my Deputy Chief, Mr. Bennie Price.

Juvenile Probation's jurisdiction covers youth between the ages of 10 through 17 who are arrested in the City of Philadelphia and require treatment, rehabilitation, and supervision. And although youth arrested need to be processed by the Juvenile Division prior to their 17th birthday, our jurisdiction can potentially extend to the age of 21.

I currently oversee a complement of dedicated men and women who each and every day strive to improve the

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lives of our most vulnerable population. I must underscore that our probation officers work arduously to ensure that our youth have a fighting chance to fulfill their potential, that the patterns of delinquency behaviors are minimized, and that as behavioral change agents, they devote their efforts to maximize the talents and attitudes of our young men and women.

It is evident, however, that there are many obstacles that our young people face today. Many who fall under the poverty line struggle with the basic necessities of life. Some are in single-parent homes where the parent is the only breadwinner and caregiver, and unfortunately there are youth who drop out of school prematurely. Younger youth who do not partake readily in academics and older youth who struggle to find sustainable employment are the two glaring predictors of future delinquent behaviors.

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Our young people today face many roadblocks. However, we also must recognize our young people are extremely resilient and have the will to succeed if properly guided. To that end, it is an opportunity missed if we do not address the issues and challenges they face today, as we will certainly run the risk of having to face those unresolved issues in their adulthood.

Juvenile Probation is committed to doing our part. Last summer, 478 juvenile justice-involved youth were successfully employed through Philadelphia Youth Network. Additionally, doing court order residential placements, 282 youth received their high school diplomas and 47 of our older youth proudly earned their GEDs. We are now working towards connecting our older youth to apprenticeship programs that will hopefully sustain long-term employment.

As previously mentioned, we

have jurisdiction for those youth placed on Probation's supervision until they reach the age of 21, but the probation population encompasses only a small percentage of the total juvenile population within the City. Although we have decreased the number of youth year after year from re-penetrating the system, I recognize that there's still much work to be done.

In 2006, for example, at any given point during the year, we had close to 6,000 youth under Probation's supervision. This year the supervision population stands at 2,428. And even with our decreased supervision numbers, our biggest challenge is still in fact the senseless and unfortunate gun violence that infects our communities.

A victim of shooting of a homicide is a catastrophic event that causes trauma, invades the peace within families, and at times perpetuates further retaliatory acts of violence. I

can share with you that every time a report comes across my desk that documents violent events involving one of our youth, I always ask myself, What other programs should have been in place? What interventions, if any, would have prevented the youth from being a victim or a perpetrator of gun violence? Many of these issues we attempt to resolve are rooted in behavioral, mental health, familial, environmental, and economic factors. In Juvenile Probation we respond to these factors with a myriad of preventive services that address the individual crimogenic needs that our youth exhibit while involved in our system.

With respect to gun violence, specific endeavors to address gun violence, Juvenile Probation continues to respond through targeted enforcement, increased supervision of our youth who exhibit high risk, and the use of enhanced GPS monitoring and a host of

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other preventive evidence-based programs.

Through our Juvenile Enforcement Team, or JET, our armed officers, along with Philadelphia Police, conduct probation searches and apprehend youth on priority bench warrants due to weapon offense charges. Importantly, our JET team also conducts interviews and actually has gathered intelligence that led to significant gun confiscations and arrests. Although the gathering of information is time consuming, it is an essential process to identify key members of groups involved in retaliations.

Our JET team also continues to be involved in Focused Deterrence, a joint interagency effort that responds to group violence and that every active member is targeted for enforcement to the use of appropriate sanctions. Further, Juvenile Probation was a partner in the National Youth Violence Collaborative that focused on reducing gun violence. In Philadelphia, efforts to mobilize

resources were geared towards the City's 22nd Police District.

Similarly, our Youth Violence Reduction Unit, or YVRP, is tasked with intensely supervising those juvenile that are at high risk to be victims of homicide. In fact, in 2015, a total of 1,294 enforcements were carried out by both JET and YVRP. Also along with Philadelphia Police, our YVRP team supervised our high-risk youth who had been adjudicated on gun charges, sent to state or private residential placements and thereafter were reintegrated to communities within the 12th, 19th, 22nd, 24th, 25th, and 39th Police Districts. Via these successful targeted enforcements and since 2013, we have been able to confiscate 62 illegal firearms from youth on Probation's supervision. Indeed, it is difficult to measure how many additional shooting incidents were avoided by this accomplishment, but nevertheless, the removal of the firearms

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decreased the likelihood of their use in our city's neighborhood.

Moreover, our involvement at the Delaware Valley Intelligence Center, or DVIC, has allowed information-sharing with other state and federal partners and to further build our capabilities to assess, identify, and target youth that may be involved in potential criminal behavior. This year we are beginning to have conversations with ATF to further enhance our enforcement efforts with respect to confiscations of illegal weapons.

Our GPS program is another tool we use to monitor youth with underlying weapons charges. The GPS program allows our young people to remain safely in their communities while assuring they are in compliance with the terms of supervision. Our GPS devices can restrict the youth movement by placing restrictive zones on places a youth should not be in. This is especially

useful for youth with known violent group associations where the GPS program alerts us if a youth is congregating in a specific area. We monitor our GPS youth 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and when violations occur, they are immediately listed before a Juvenile Court judge to address the violations.

These are just a few of Juvenile Probation's ongoing initiatives. We are encouraged by our progress, but we are certainly open to conversations with City Council to improve outcomes for our youth. We want to assure that we responsibly respond to their needs, that they do not get involved in today's popular delinquent behaviors, so as to avoid our young people from populating the prisons of tomorrow.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: State your name for the record.

MR. REED: Hi. My name is Robert Reed. I'm the Executive Assistant

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United States Attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office here in Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Rob.

MR. REED: And I do not have written testimony, but let me see if I can say something that makes sense.

First of all, I am a stat person. I like baseball stats, but I follow the crime stats, statistics very closely, and I even am looking right before me of these horrible statistics that we see, and it's not just from a year, it's not from two years. If we go back to 2001, there have been more than 4,700 people murdered in the streets of Philadelphia and over 22,000 people shot. That is human beings with a bullet hole through them.

It's unbelievable, and I will tell you that I am on the police system, so in the past week, I can't tell you how many precisely the number of shootings and stabbings there were, but it's

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completely unacceptable in a civilized society.

So let me say this, that there have been a lot of -- and I'm really humbled to be in this room with all of these great people. We have been here and done this before. You know this isn't the first hearing that we've had on this or the first time we've gotten together. So one suggestion is, let's not throw out things that we have done even if they may not be perfect.

For example, my colleague here talked about the National Youth Violence Collaborative that the former Administration received a grant to focus on youth violence in the 22nd Police District. We got almost everybody in this room working on that, and it seems to me that that should keep going. Maybe you do it a little differently. Maybe it's organized somewhat differently, but the bottom line is, there's a lot of institutional intelligence that needs to

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keep working on this.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Are you referring to CeaseFire?

MR. REED: No, I'm not. That's different, although it was part of it. No. There was a Department of Justice grant that the City received, and they focused on bringing all resources to deal with youth violence from 14 to 24 in the 22nd Police District.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: In the 22nd Police District.

MR. REED: Twenty-Second Police District. And this went on from 2012 and it really just ended. And it was funded in part by the Stoneleigh Foundation. So we had education, law enforcement, we had Department of Human Services. Judge Dougherty, who was then the Family Court judge, was the head of it.

So let me say this, that as I say, everything we have, we have here. I will just tell you from the point of view of the U.S. Attorney's Office, we have

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really undertaken -- and you heard the words "holistic" or "comprehensive." I think we've tried to do that over the last six, seven years under U.S. Attorney Zane Memeger. We continued to -- we are the heavy hitters in the game. As you know, if you come into federal court with a violent crime, a drug crime, you are going to spend a lengthy period of time in federal prison, and that prison sentence could be served anywhere in the country. But on the other hand, we're doing a lot with reentry, and we are probably one of the most -- we have probably one of the most robust respected reentry programs in the United States, and I'll talk about that in a minute. Actually, let me just -- since I've got people here from Juvenile Probation, let me say this, that we started a program working with Juvenile Probation and Family Court and Judge Dougherty. It's called Sports for Juvenile Justice, and we started it a number of years ago. It

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brings children, kids, who are in the juvenile justice system, it gives them the opportunity to play sports and learn sports and be mentored while they're on juvenile probation. And as a result -- where we are right now, there's 400 people who have gone through that program. It just seems to me that that's a great model to work with. That does not cost us any money. I believe Department of Human Services has been supporting it.

We have just made a film, which I'm happy to share with the City Council. I think it's a very moving film, to see what impact this has had, which is just an idea that it says how can we get kids to think out of the box, to see that there is hope.

So let me just talk about some of the prevention things that we've done. And I know Councilman Jones is very supportive of youth courts, but we started youth courts in a number of

schools, including Strawberry Mansion. Councilman Jones actually brought the youth court here in 2012.

When I first appeared at the youth court and I was helping teach it actually, which is not something I would normally do, one of the kids said, I think that all prosecutors and judges should burn in hell. Well, fast forward to last year, last academic year, 88 people went through youth court, which is a restorative justice program, and those kids at Strawberry Mansion were not suspended. That's a great success. This year I believe it's 40 out of 50 were not suspended in hearings. So this is an important program.

We've had another program called Voices of Youth to let kids speak in their own voices. It's great to have people want to learn algebra and literature, but we need to be mindful of what they're going through. And so I talk about movies. We're going to have a

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great movie about Strawberry Mansion students coming out to talk about transformation and to see how these kids have really overcome some obstacles.

We've helped bring football and ballet to the Strawberry Mansion team -- neighborhood, I should say. We've worked with Don't Fall Down in the Hood doing what George Mosee says. The U.S. Attorney and I go quarterly. It's a great program we think which helps teach the kids of consequences, but also saying that we're not against them. We actually want to support them. But in that group, the one I just saw within the last month, there were 24 kids, and six of them were there for, I think, aggravated assault and five for robbery. That's just unbelievable.

So we have to get that down to the foundation of what is causing these problems, and I really do believe -- and I think some of the people who have taught me are here. Joel Fein was

sitting in this very seat. Ted Corbin is in the back, John Rich with Drexel and Healing Hurt People. I do believe the trauma-informed care is critical, and the implementation of that throughout the criminal justice system is incredibly important.

You should know that in 2014, our office applied for and received a Department of Justice grant under Project Safe Neighborhoods to bring trauma-informed care to the community within Strawberry Mansion. That has never happened ever before in the United States, where an urban area was given the opportunity to learn about trauma and to try to learn about how to heal trauma. It has never happened before. We've been at it for now a year and a half, and we're hoping to expand it over time.

The community has started -- they call themselves SMASH, Strawberry Mansion: A Sanctuary for Hope. And the idea here is that we are working with the

community so they really can understand historical trauma and what they really go through every day with poverty and addiction and abuse and racism and all of these issues that face them, but if you throw violence on top of it and you look at these -- what people in that community and others in Philadelphia, in South Philadelphia, in West Philadelphia, and Kensington suffer every day, and it's been going on for generations, it's no wonder that people suffer from trauma.

So to get to the root causes, we don't have to wait, I think, and we should not wait for trauma teams on the day of the shooting. We should have trauma-informed care now. I hear it's going on in schools. I know teachers have been educated about it, but we need to work with communities to provide opportunities for them to learn about it and to implement programs.

So the last thing I will say is that I think mentorship -- and everyone

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talks about mentorship, since I believe you brought up Graterford and the Graterford program. Our office has started a program with lifers, two lifers organizations at Graterford, where we're working with these groups to -- we've created a reentry program, a ten-week behind-the-walls program, followed by -- and they're called transformational navigators. These are the lifers who are going to be mentoring the people behind the walls who are going to be coming back to the community of Philadelphia. And then when we get out, we're going to have another ten-week program, and there's going to be external transformational navigators. The idea here is that through the support of the lifers, the support of people who really can relate and, of course, can relate to the experience of being in prison -- I mean, that's not my experience. I can support programs, but I think that there are so many returning citizens who can be of

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support and mentor young people coming out to let them understand the dangers of proceeding and continuing in activity that they have been involved in.

So anyway, I could obviously talk for about three million years. I thank you for this opportunity, and this is great what you're doing here.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

Next panelist, please.

MR. BAGBY: Terrell Bagby, Interim Director of RISE.

Good morning, Councilman Johnson, Councilman, members of the Committee on Public Safety. I'm providing this testimony on behalf of Acting Prison Commissioner Michael Resnick and Deputy Commissioner Blanche Carney.

When I read the resolution, as a professional I was excited to see that the Commissioner does have a seat on the Commission. As an individual, I was also excited because I know one of the primary

functions of government is to protect the citizens. And this is from a personal perspective. As a father of three young men in the City of Philadelphia, I do understand the situation when it comes to youth and gun violence. I teach my children to resolve their conflicts positively, but it looks like that listening to all the stats and the testimony out here today, there's such a proliferation of guns that they may be outnumbered. So I'm glad that you're taking this initiative, and we look forward to assisting you in any endeavor that we can at the Philadelphia Prison System.

I get in trouble when I start off script, so I'm going to get back on script.

My name is Terrell Bagby. I'm the Interim Director of RISE, which is the Reintegration Services, and I am pleased to appear before you today to testify on Resolution No. 160081

3/28/16 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 160081 regarding youth gun violence in Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia Prison System, the PPS, has a significant interest in reducing gun violence, more specifically youth gun violence, both because it would reduce the number of citizens behind our walls and it helps the Greater Philadelphia community thrive. The RISE office assists and facilitates the successful reentry and reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals.

Out of the approximately 32,000 individuals who were released from the PPS in 2015, approximately 14,000 walked through the doors of RISE seeking help. Many of those did so on their own volition because they sought guidance in reintegrating into their family relationships, their friendships, and within the communities.

But also out of that number, we do wonder what happens to those who don't come through the doors of RISE. Do they

go to other programs, do they go back in the community and try to adjust on their own or do they also end up as a victim of this type of violence that you're seeking to address today.

At RISE we provide many services to our clients, including case management, adult basic education, GED, life skills training, job readiness training, computer literacy, culinary arts, which is done by Philabundance, forklift certification where we have an agreement with Goodwill Industries. We also offer an expungement assistance for those who want to get some of the matters off their record expunged, and that's done through the Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity. And we have a fatherhood parenting program, which is done by our in-house Father Enrichment Program, which focuses on parenting and healthy relationships, anger management, conflict resolution, and also job readiness and search assistance and other services.

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We also offer COMPASS/Benefit Bank screening. In addition, we're also a provider partner for PhilaCorps -- I'm sorry, PowerCorps, what we talked about earlier, for those of the ages of 18 to 26. RISE is a partner provider for PowerCorps.

Under the direction of Acting Commissioner Michael R. Resnick and Deputy Commissioner Blanche Carney, we are collaborating with President Darrell Clarke's office and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society on the vacant lot initiative that provides green jobs for returning citizens. We started with maybe 106 candidates and we whittled it down to maybe 30 to 35 who will get jobs with ten contractors across the City of Philadelphia.

For any of our individuals, our candidates, who complete our RISE program, they get employment placement, which the RISE program consists of job skills, job readiness, life skills,

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computer literacy, and we offer case management for up to a year.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity in providing testimony on this critical issue and the PPS's commitment to serve our citizens behind the walls and in the community. I am happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Thank you for allowing us to testify.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Councilman Taubenberger.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank you, Chairman Johnson.

It really is a request and with your permission, Mr. Reed, you had mentioned that there is a film that you would make --

MR. REED: Sure.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I would like to formally request that film for all members of this Committee.

MR. REED: I would love to give

it to you. And Bennie Price is in it. He's the Juvenile Chief of -- Deputy Chief of Police.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: That's great. At some point, yes, please get it to our offices.

That's all. I thank you for your time and your expert testimony. I think it's meaningful and I think it's important to get it from your perspective. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Thank you, Vice Chair Johnson.

Mr. Bagby, I know we met during the press conference with Council President Clarke's green initiative and we had a brief conversation. So from that initiative, that press conference, I believe you're working with the Energy Coordinating Agency in reference to that reentry program for job opportunities; is

that correct?

MR. BAGBY: Say that again. I'm sorry.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: You're working with the ECA, or Energy Coordinating Agency, in reference to that green jobs opportunity for returning citizens?

MR. BAGBY: We've been working with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Oh, PHS, right.

MR. BAGBY: I'm sorry. Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So how many people are currently in the program now?

MR. BAGBY: Yes. We had 106 approximately candidates, and through the process, maybe 30 to 35 are going to be hired with ten contractors throughout the City. We haven't finalized the list yet, but it's in the process of being finalized.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And what's

the source of funding for that program?

MR. BAGBY: It was $500,000 that was taken out of the PPS's budget and it's under City Council.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So that was funding that came through the Philadelphia Prison System working with the Horticultural Society as well as RISE in the collective effort?

MR. BAGBY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And that was, you said, $500,000?

MR. BAGBY: Yes, $500,000.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And what's the maximum number of people that could participate in that program?

MR. BAGBY: Right now it's 35. Our pilot is for 35, but if we can do an evaluation and show that this is successful, then we're looking to hopefully increase those numbers.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And under that pilot, are you doing data collection --

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MR. BAGBY: Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: -- in reference to success?

MR. BAGBY: Yes. One thing I can tell you about the PPS and now that RISE is under the umbrella of the PPS is that we collect data on every individual that's part of our process, our programs. For the PPS, everything is kept in the Integrated Jail Management System. For RISE everything is kept into what's called an ETO, Efforts of Outcome platform. So we are collecting the data on those individuals.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And what would be considered a success for that program?

MR. BAGBY: Job employment retention, seeing the individuals on that job for more than a year. We do have some success with people getting jobs, but the problem is, it's easier to get a job, but then there's a challenge with people keeping the jobs. So if we can

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have someone in that process maintain that job for close to a year, I would consider that a success.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: And do you provide any type of either skills training or other type of assistance to people who receive the jobs?

MR. BAGBY: Yes. Like I said before, we do job readiness and life skills. Under the direction of Acting Commissioner Michael Resnick, we're looking into -- we were awarded a JAG grant to have an employment placement agency come and place close to 140 people, which we're looking forward to. But we also kind of ventured out into different areas that we never tapped into before, like the contractors. We're having our staff trained in CAST, which is the Construction and Skills Test. So that way -- that's kind of like the entry test everyone has to take to get into the utilities. So we did go through the training. We're just going to have some

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of our facilitators teach those classes so that we can hopefully get individuals hired in some of these utility companies across Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: So if you had additional funding, would you be able to double or triple the number of people participating in the program?

MR. BAGBY: Yes. And I think you're probably -- our testimony in front of City Council is April 13th, and I'm pretty sure Commissioner Resnick and Deputy Commissioner Blanche Carney are going to present to you their needs for employment placement and also a housing component. We've have a Second Chance grant that we got from the federal government and it was with 105 individuals who were sentenced, and a part of the grant was that you had to do 90 days of prison programming and then upon release, you got reentry services. And a part of that was job placement and housing, and we saw that the housing was

a great need for some of the individuals in that program.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: You may have heard from our earlier questions looking at alternative funding streams, because we have an unlimited amount of needs and limited amount of resources through the General Fund, and looking at alternate ideas of public-private partnerships like social impact bonds, and this seems like something that could possibly be a candidate for that type of funding.

MR. BAGBY: Yes. This was very informative. I heard the gentleman talk about the PCCD grants, which we did have some grants, but it's primarily for our veterans population, but I'm definitely taking notes. I'm going to go back to the powers-that-be and let them know that maybe we need to start looking at some PCCD grants for our juvenile population as well.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

I just had one question for

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U.S. Attorney Reed, and I know you also work in partnership with the Focused Deterrence program, because I remember there was an incident that took place in the Grays Ferry community maybe two summers ago where one of your officers came upon a young man who had an assault rifle, I guess going to commit a crime. And so I remember your organization actually being on the ground as it relates to a little turf war that was going on around the 27th Street area.

For me and my purpose of asking you to come, we're going to look at the best practices that you're already involved in. But just give me an idea, how do we on a U.S. Attorney's level raise this level of youth gun violence in the City of Philadelphia to be like one of the number one priorities such as homeland security? Because I know based upon the feds and what's the most critical issue that's addressing as resources are diverted from one area to

another. And so for me on the federal level, I surely think that the loss of life of young men, the shootings of young men and young ladies on a day-to-day basis and you mentioned yourself here in the City of Philadelphia since, what, 2001 we have, what, close to 5,000. That would be shootings --

MR. REED: No; over 22,000 people shot.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Twenty-two thousand people shot. How do we continue to advocate? And I say this, before I wrap this panel up and let our stenographer take a short break and we continue the panels, but most of the people on the ground are actually doing this work. Give me an insight how we raise that level of attention and making this a priority across the board, primarily on the federal level.

MR. REED: Well, I think that it is actually a priority on the federal level. President Obama and former

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Attorney General Eric Holder and now Loretta Lynch are certainly supportive of Smart on Crime and My Brother's Keeper initiatives, which really focus on the very issues that we're involved with today, and that goes back to the forum on youth violence or the National Youth Violence Collaborative in the 22nd. That was an effort by the Department of Justice to really focus resources dealing with youth in a collaborative holistic way.

So I do believe that these are on the national level. I will tell you, though, that in addition, we have taken some of the things that we've been involved in as well as trauma-informed care, I've gone down to our training facility in South Carolina and, with Dr. John Rich and Dr. Sandra Bloom, talked about trauma-informed care and the impact on youth, adults, and the impact on communities.

So I think -- as a matter of

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fact -- well, maybe I shouldn't even get into it, but there is a lot of conversation about -- everything you've heard today we are talking about on a national level.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: On the federal level.

MR. REED: On the federal level, yes.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And I know your work and I know the work that's been going on in the City of Philadelphia. So I do commend you for those efforts. I'm always just trying to continue to advocate, push and I try to tell at least my constituents that I represent -- and I don't want to make a political statement, but even the folks who represent us on a congressional level, this has to be a part of your agenda. The same way I don't get a pass as a City Councilman, as a former State Representative, on the federal level -- this is not for you to respond to, but on the federal level, for

all the activists who are here, they have to have an agenda for individuals who hold office on the federal level and saying what are you doing to reduce youth gun violence here in the City of Philadelphia. Because I don't get a pass. You know, I come outside the house. I may have people knocking on my door or I'm walking down the street. It's a conversation. So I think that goes up to the federal level as well to make sure that this is a priority in urban centers, but also -- not urban centers, but across the board. Because obviously the issue of youth gun violence affects us in all neighborhoods.

And so I just wanted to touch base with you on that level.

We're going to take a quick ten-minute break, give our stenographer a chance to take a short recess, and then we come back. We have two and a half panels that -- I think there's three panels left that are primarily grassroots

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related, and we also have the District Attorney's Office and then we'll be wrapping up the hearing. And I want to thank everybody for your patience. We knew this would be a marathon type of hearing, but we know that this is a very critical, important issue, and we wanted to make sure we touched all aspects, law enforcement, public policy but, most importantly, the people that are on the ground actually doing the work. So please be patient with us, and we want to take a quick ten-minute recess.

(Short recess.)

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So we're going to go ahead and get started. Thank you for your patience. We're going to call up the next panel, please, and keep this process moving forward, but I do thank everyone for their patience. I want to thank everybody for sticking around.

I do want to just let everyone know, because it has been a very long day

and we started at 10 o'clock -- I think we officially started at 10:15 -- that your testimony is critically important, and we do thank you for your patience, because your voice is definitely needed. And so we're going to call the next panel and keep this process moving forward.

Thank you very much.

THE CLERK: Bilal Qayyum; Kathleen Reeves, Senior Associate Dean of Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Temple Medicine; Theodore Corbin, Drexel University, Healing Hurt People; and Dorothy Johnson-Speight, Executive Director of Mothers in Charge.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So before I get started, I just want to acknowledge two of the panelists that have played a pivotal role in helping me become the young man who I am today. In 1998, a cousin of mine was murdered, schoolyard, 17th and Dickinson Street, and the people

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I grew up with were preparing to retaliate and were meeting up in the corner one evening. And obviously me growing up in the neighborhood, I had an opportunity to go with them to participate in the retaliation that took place as a result of my cousin being murdered. And I decided that evening that I wasn't going, and from that point forward, decided to focus on the issue of peace, not guns in my neighborhood and didn't really know how to organize, and was already a graduate from Mansfield University and was working in a program called City Year, but that wasn't the same as actually addressing the issue on a pure grassroots level. And I called a gentleman to assist me in organizing my neighborhood and began working with members of the law enforcement community and other neighborhood organizations that wanted to focus on the issue of youth gun violence, and a gentleman by the name of Bilal Qayyum came down to South

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Philadelphia and participated in the first ever Peace Not Guns youth gun violence march, youth gun violence rally, and we've been friends from that point forward. So I just want to thank him for taking time out of his schedule.

And the other young lady who also stepped up to the plate and encouraged me and wrapped her arms around me as I addressed the issue of youth gun violence in South Philadelphia prior to me becoming a State Representative in 2008 on the same issue is Dorothy Johnson-Speight.

I just wanted to take time and acknowledge you two, because I know the shoulders that I stand on. And I know a lot of times people get involved in community organizing, which I think is great, because we have an awesome list of young people who are taking up the mantle, but they also should always understand and recognize the people whose shoulders they stand on who have been

doing this work for years, advocating. In Bilal's case, like super radical in holding people accountable, but advocating, agitating, making sure those in elected office and not are responding to this issue responsibly.

So I just wanted to take time and just acknowledge you two, because I know what you mean to this movement, and you don't have to do it. So we thank you. We personally appreciate you.

I'm going to ask for Ms. Dorothy, the founder of Mothers in Charge, to please state your name for the record and start off the panel, please.

MS. JOHNSON-SPEIGHT: Thank you. Dorothy Johnson-Speight, Founder and Executive Director of Mothers in Charge.

First of all, I want to thank you for the opportunity to give testimony and thank you both for hosting this forum today. It's such a very, very important issue in our city, but also around this

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country.

I represent thousands of mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and sisters over the last 13 years who have lost sons, daughters, and loved ones to violence, mothers, grandmothers, aunts and sisters who could have laid down and died because of the pain of having to bury a loved one. But instead in addition to supporting families every single day who have lost loved ones, we are on the front lines working around prevention and intervention on the ground every single day.

I want to address some of the programs, which you talked about the importance of solutions, so I want to talk about some of the things that we are doing that many people don't know. They say, Oh, we didn't know you did that. We didn't know Mothers in Charge. We just thought you all were mothers who went to vigils. Well, yes, we do that too. In fact, there's a mother here this morning

who buried her son two weeks ago, and we showed up for her at a vigil, at the funeral, and provided support to her. She's been here since 10 o'clock this morning. I hope she'll have an opportunity to testify as well about the pain that -- there's no words to describe the pain that you feel when you have to bury a son, daughter, a loved one to violence, but it's a pain that we live with every single day, and in spite of that pain, we're working every single day to make a difference.

So every Thursday we have grief support, and folks come from all over the City to come to grief support every Thursday in our office.

Twice a week we have anger management. We were once funded by Access to Recovery, ATR, which was a Department of Behavioral Health program, but they lost the funding. We were probably provided that funding for a couple years, and the funding ended. But

because we were getting so many referrals from Adult Parole and Probation, from Darlene Miller and Judith Plonski, and also the Philadelphia courts, we decided to continue to offer anger management, because as you heard the Commissioner mentioned earlier, a lot of the conflict in the City is about girlfriends, social media, all kinds of things, people who don't know how to handle their anger, don't know how to manage their emotions.

My son was shot to death over a parking space by someone who didn't know him, but someone who was very angry and out of control, who shot -- who killed someone else five months before he killed Khaaliq. So we understand how important this anger management thing is for our young people. Anger is a normal emotion, but it's what you do with that anger.

So we have been able for the last three years to offer anger management to Adult Parole and Probation, people all over the City. And of course

they come, I'm not angry, I don't need to be here, but they leave nine sessions later with tools that they now know how maybe not to pick up that gun and kill somebody because they're angry.

No funding. No funding for the grief support. No funding for the anger management now that ATR does not offer that through the Department of Behavioral Health. We kept it going anyway, facilitators, twice a week, because anger management is important to reduce the violence that you're talking about here today.

We also -- and you know this. We also for the last six or seven years in the Philadelphia Prison System, you spoke at the graduations, Thinking for a Change. It's a cognitive skills program that we offer. We started with the juveniles. No funding for that. We started with the juveniles many years ago, maybe seven, eight years ago. You came and talked to the juveniles back

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then. We still do that. No funding. Dr. Pat goes in. She was going two nights a week to meet with the juveniles. She had to cut it down to once a week, because we're trying to help find funding to help her keep doing this, but she does that.

In addition now, we're in three facilities - Riverside, CCC, and PICC - doing Thinking for a Change two nights a week, cognitive skills.

You think people just know how to handle their anger or they know how to understand the feelings of others or they know how to negotiate. These are the lessons and thinking -- the 25 lessons in the curriculum that we teach in the three facilities.

Now, we do get funding to cover our facilitators to go in there through the Inmate Welfare Fund, not through any City budget or anything like that. The funding that is designed for the inmates that are housed in the Philadelphia

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Prison System is how we're paid. I've just been told that we have to decrease our program because it's a deficit, because there are not as many inmates that are housed there now and that money is through commissary, things that they buy, that that money is designed for programs for them, but now we've got to cut those programs because that money is dwindling. So maybe there won't be a Thinking for a Change.

So we looked at recidivism rates, and they look at it over a three-year period. You heard Terrell Bagby from Prisons talk about that. So the average national is 55 to 60 percent. People who come home from prison end up going back in three years 60 percent. With our program they looked at Riverside Correctional Facility. We had a recidivism rate of 25.3. 25.3. The folks who graduated from our program, it's a 12-week program two nights a week, graduated with a cap and gown, the

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Philadelphia School District -- I mean, I'm sorry, in the prison. They were 25.3 is the recidivism rate compared to the 60 percent on the national level. So it's working. It's working. It's a cognitive skill. They do homework. They do role playing, and then there's a graduation, which you have spoke at, Councilman Johnson.

We also offer a program called Women Working for a Change. These are women who have come home from prison and we offer them a jobs training program. So for ten weeks, 20 hours a week, we provide them with job skills training, and we pay them $10 an hour, 200 a week. That sounds like a little bit of money, but it's a lot for women who are coming home from poison who have nothing. And we provide them with all kind of resources and supports. We've hired several of the women who have graduated from our program, and their graduation was at the Philadelphia School District.

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We've done three cohorts now, and we're looking to start another one. Limited funding for that. But it's working. Because these are the mothers and grandmothers oftentimes that are housed in the Philadelphia Prison System and their children become victims or perpetrators of violence because they're not there. In most cases they are the head of the household. So they are oftentimes housed at Riverside and oftentimes because of drug addiction and crimes related to the addiction. So instead of being treated for the addiction and the illness and the sickness, they're housed at Riverside Correctional Facility.

So we do many different programs. I just want to stop here. We do other ones as well. As I said, very limited funding. We raise money. We have -- actually, we have a fundraiser coming up on April 21st, 13th anniversary. This is our major annual

fundraiser, and you all are invited, Thursday, April 21st, our 13th anniversary awards dinner.

But what I want to say is that there are many things that we could do if we had funding. There are more things that we could do. We've talked about going into the community. I have on my text just now a woman said that she can't come in the office, but she needs grief support for her family because her son was murdered. So if we could do in the community, community-based kinds of things where the mothers -- and oftentimes people want to talk to mothers who have lost a son or daughter, because nobody really understands them but us. So we know their pain. We've walked -- and then we become models for them, because they'll say, Well, you know, maybe if she survived it, maybe I will too, when initially you don't think you're going to survive.

Right, Felicia?

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MS. PENDLETON: No.

MS. JOHNSON-SPEIGHT: You know, so we're there to hold their hands. And then in addition to that, sometimes mothers will call us. You talked about the retaliation of murders in the City. Mothers will call us and say, I heard. They may not call the police, but they'll call us, because they know we get it.

So we want to be able to reach out to those mothers to say, like you said, you need to look in your son's drawer, you know, underneath that bed where you're paying the mortgage or paying the rent. You need to do that, and let me tell you why. Because you don't want to walk in these shoes. You don't want to feel this pain. We can express that to them in a way that they get it. And those mothers, they will be more involved to do and get on board with getting their sons and daughters to do the right thing when it comes to violence.

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Mothers in Charge is really committed to this work. I mean, we do it from our heart, from our passion, you know. I remember the pain of getting that phone call when Khaaliq had been shot seven times over a parking space. I still feel that pain. I live with that pain. And it pains me also to do this work, because I'm touching -- the mothers that you see that go into the community to work with other mothers who have lost children -- I'm saying mothers. I mean families - mothers, fathers, cousins, nephews. We're doing the work with the family. We touch our own pain every single day. So it's not easy work that we're doing, but we're committed to doing it because we understand that it's something that's got to be done.

So we're working in the City of Philadelphia and have been for 13 years, and I just think that, you know, we really need to look at how we fund the programs that are successful, those that

are still around. It has not been easy to maintain an organization for 13 years, a non-profit organization, with limited funding. And I say to the mothers -- and some of them are here, some of them had to leave, and some of them weren't able to come. But I say to these mothers, I thank them for the courage that it takes in spite of everything that they're going through to be involved, to make a difference with this issue, to be able to touch your own pain but also to be able to support another mother, a family when they're going through it. And it's because of them -- it's not just me. It's not just Dorothy Johnson-Speight. You see my face and my name a lot, but it's because of these mothers that get up every single day to do this work. And there are other groups on the ground that are doing this work that we need to recognize. Sometimes the same large organizations get the funding year after year after year. But what

about us? We need that help and support too, because we could do so much more. We're doing a lot with limited. And I say limited. I mean limited resources. But we could do so much. And we're willing to work with any and everybody, because that's how it has to happen. It's not just a Mothers in Charge issue. It's an issue for this entire City of Philadelphia, and not just even City of Philadelphia, because we're now a national organization and have ten chapters of Mothers in Charge across this country. So we get it. It's not a Philadelphia problem. It's a national problem, and we're organizing nationally across this country, looking at homicide as a public health epidemic, because it is the leading cause of death among African American males 14 to 30. And we've got to address it that way, as a public health epidemic, like Ebola. Like those resources that you put in to stopping the spread of a disease like

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that, that same resources and dollars and federal funding has to be put in place to stop the spread of homicide, which is the leading cause of death among African American males.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for that testimony, and the work you do behind the walls is very important. I also have spoken at some of those graduations, and the things that young men don't know about decision-making and delayed gratification, why you invest in your family as opposed to little shiny things, they get taught. Sometimes in that environment they slow down enough to listen.

MS. JOHNSON-SPEIGHT: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So it's very important that we keep funding the things that work, take a hard look at the things that don't, and reallocate some of these resources so it gets down to the ground

level. We're going to do that during this budget season.

MS. JOHNSON-SPEIGHT: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

Who is next? Go ahead. Bilal?

Please state your name for the record.

DR. REEVES: Good afternoon. My name is Kathy Reeves. I am the Senior Associate Dean for Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University. I also direct the Center for Bioethics Urban Health and Policy, which houses CeaseFire, and I'm a Professor of Pediatrics, and I'm very grateful and humbled to be here today to offer some testimony regarding the epidemic of youth violence.

Over the past decade, we have clearly seen a pattern. Our youth are suffering from the effects of the gun violence much more than any other

demographic group. They suffer because of the health effects, the overall cost, the environment, the loss of education, and the loss of family through death, injury, and incarceration.

And there is important, strong evidence that violence and exposure to violence is a disease. It is not a choice. And this understanding must be part of the solution, because right now, as the Institute of Medicine has said, violence is a public health crisis. In 2012, gun violence in the United States cost us $229 billion. That is almost $90 billion more than the entire budget for the U.S. Department of Education, and it is almost as much as we spent in the country on Medicaid. That's over $700 per U.S. citizen and $650 per gun. What that also means is we now have more guns than we have people.

When I have the privilege to take care of a child, I ask about the effect of gun violence and what it's

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meant in their life. For those who live in North Philadelphia, almost every child personally knows someone who was shot. Many witnessed the violence directly. For others it was their parent or caregiver who is no longer present for them because they were either killed, injured or sent to prison. And for others, it was a sibling, a cousin or a neighbor.

All of this not only creates a sense of helplessness, it also exposes the child to a very well-researched negative health effect. The Adverse Childhood Experience Study is one of the most influential, best done studies in our generation. It was completed way back in 1998, and it studied over 17,000 people. And what it showed was really great science, is that children who suffer from adverse experiences like witnessing gun violence or suffering from the effects of gun violence can be seven times more likely to suffer from chronic

health diseases like diabetes and heart disease; that their life expectancy can average as much as 20 years less than their healthier counterparts; that they are ten times more likely to suffer from depression and substance abuse; and they are significantly less likely to graduate from high school. If these statistics existed in suburbia, it would be all over the news.

The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study was replicated in Philadelphia in 2013 by my colleague, Dr. Joel Fein, who you've already heard from. In Philadelphia, the rates of exposure to adverse childhood experiences is much higher than the national average, and that is primarily due to the effects of gun violence and to violence.

All of these statistics come directly from the Centers for Disease Control. In working with the CDC, the Institute of Medicine and the National Academy of Sciences have made two very

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important declarations in 2013. First, that violence is a contagion. It is like an infection. And for us right now, it's an epidemic. It is something that we should require the kind of approach we see with the flu, like Ebola and the Zika virus, and with that should come all of those resources. We are seeing in the news all the time about the amount of money and resources that are going towards the Zika virus.

The second declaration was that if we collectively treat violence like a disease, it is absolutely preventable and treatable, and we need to look at evidence-based proven methods of prevention and treatment.

There is even evidence now that exposure to violence can actually alter our DNA, can alter our genetics, and we can pass that alteration and damaged DNA down to our children. This is a disease. This is not a choice. And like any disease, we need to talk prevention and

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treatment.

To date, there are methodologies with evidence that show that they can prevent violence. We have two of those in Philadelphia right now. We have Focused Deterrence and CureViolence. We may have many others like were just presented, but people may not have the opportunity to study that. We need to study all the wonderful things you're doing. We need to look and see what really works, and then we have to get health dollars to do that, because it's a public health crisis.

I'd like to concentrate just for a moment on CeaseFire. CeaseFire is a program that's run out of our School of Medicine under the direction of Marla Davis-Bellamy. It does provide a 360 degree approach to violence. It's a program where we hire people who have been in prison because of how violence had affected their lives, and we work with them to go back into their

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neighborhoods and mentor young people away from violence. We have engaged over 700 youth in the past five years, and we have evidence that it works.

This epidemic of youth violence has also brought our large academic medical centers together. We have for far too long been way too silent about the epidemic. We have partnered with Dr. Ted Corbin on Healing Hurt People, which you will hear a bit more about, where some of the youth that we encounter we refer to Ted and his program to help with issues of post-traumatic stress disorder. We'd love to partner with you and work with some of the people that you're working with and provide the health resources that are needed.

We've also worked closely with Julie Wertheimer and the Managing Director's Office, with the Philadelphia Police, and the Philadelphia School District to make an impact. As Commissioner Shapiro has said, as Rob

Reed has said, this must be a collaborative, holistic approach.

So we must look at where these programs work best, which programs work best, where they are more effective, where they are less effective, where one might be better than the other or where some can work together for even stronger results. We need evidence, we need collaboration, and we need resources.

Since this is a disease, we must also talk about treatment. Everybody agrees that education is part of the antidote.

Regarding our children, the central focus of this treatment must be in our schools, as a loss of education is one of the biggest tragedies resulting from this epidemic. Today, Philadelphia schools suffer from an environment that is not conducive to learning, and our students in large percentage are suffering significantly from the diseases of violence and adverse childhood

experiences. So like we would with any other disease in any other community, we should start treating our children in our schools.

There is good evidence that an effective treatment for adverse childhood experiences is the creation of trauma-informed schools. I do not believe as a pediatrician we are ever going to scare it out of them. It isn't like if there were other options, that our youth wouldn't choose those other options. I also believe that if Mayor Kenney really wants community schools, for them to be successful those schools will need to be trauma-informed first.

So what are trauma-informed schools? They're schools, first and foremost, that are safe. We have CeaseFire in one of the charter schools right now present to be in place to help the students feel safer, to help the staff feel safer. So far they have engaged over 3,000 individuals to work

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towards having a safer school community.

Trauma-informed schools also screen all students for adverse childhood experiences so that they can be provided appropriate therapy. These are schools where teachers and administrators, cafeteria workers, nurses, and everyone who has contact with students are trained in the trauma-informed method. This gives adult educators the tools they need to handle a student's bad behavior, a behavior which is often a direct result of the adverse experiences that child has had, not that child's fault, and they handle it in a positive, non-punitive way so that we don't add even more trauma to that child's life, so that we can change that prediction of heart disease and substance abuse and a shorter lifespan.

I wholeheartedly support the creation of a Commission on Youth Violence with a partnership with the Department of Health, with a focus on youth violence as a public health issue.

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The Commission could review the specifics of evidence-proven methods and have the expertise to figure out how to best implement these programs. The Commission should be given the resources to truly make an impact, including funding as well as substantial support and involvement from the Department of Health, from all of the academic medical centers in the City, and from the Philadelphia School District. Communities, law enforcement, schools, faith-based organizations, and healthcare providers must come together to explore the best strategies to address this epidemic. This is what we do for any epidemic. And since there is evidence that we can actually prevent and treat the epidemic of violence, it's our duty to do this for our children. Violence and exposure to violence is a disease, with hope for prevention and treatment. It is not a choice. It is not the fault of our children, but rather a true bona fide public health crisis

that deserves a true bona fide crisis level response.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I would like you to summarize, because I want to change the order real quick. We have some victims, families that want to testify, and I just think right at this segue, it is important for you to hear them because some of the things you are addressing, if I understood your testimony correctly, if I could do that.

DR. REEVES: Sure.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Next panel.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your patience and your family's patience. Could you bring the mic to you and state your name for the record and your testimony.

MS. PENDLETON: My name is Felicia Pendleton. I am a grieving mother of Jayvon Mitchell-Pendleton, which was murdered two weeks ago from

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homicide, shot three times, once in the leg, the buttocks, and in the head, by a 15-year-old and a 20-year-old.

My son had his whole life ahead of him. He had a plan, he had a goal, and they took that from him. And I'm here, one, because parents have to start taking responsibility for their children. That 15-year-old, they found him inside of a house squatting with 20-year-olds, 18-year-olds with guns. If curfew was in place, that wouldn't be an issue. If truancy would be -- was in place, it wouldn't be an issue.

They stopped the truancy act. When all the kids acting all crazy in Center City with the flash mobs and stuff, they was doing their truancy things heavy. But once that ceased and slowed down, it stopped.

Curfew. Who is on curfew? These parents don't even know where their children are at. This kid was 15 years old. And what we mean by crash dummies,

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we mean by a 20-year-old having a 15-year-old alone with him to do the dirty work alone with him, because they think he's going to go to the Juvenile Justice Center. They think that everything is going to be put on this juvenile and they're not going to do no time.

Parents have to start taking responsibility. They have to start being made accountable of their children.

I knew -- my son was 20 years old. I knew where he was at at all times. I called. Even if he's in the car with someone, do they have a driver's license? Who car are you in? Who house are you in? What address are you at? Because if anything was to happen to you, I need to know where you at. Make sure you keep your non-driver's license on you, your identification on you.

But some of these young folks, they don't realize it. Some of these kids are so cold-hearted, they're going

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to these older folks because of the crash dummy system, because they feel like they don't have anyone. A lot of these kids has dropped out of the 8th grade. They feel like they don't have nobody, no resources, and no one can help them. It should be help for them, because they feel like, I'm not in school, I dropped out of the 8th grade, now that I'm 18, 19 years old, I have no education, I have nothing to else to do but go to the streets.

And I've heard all of these programs that's out here. This is the first time I'm hearing of any of these programs. The only time I hear about stuff is when election time is coming up. I don't even know who my City Councilman is in my neighborhood, and I live 2225 North Lambert Street. I have not seen my City Councilperson. I have not heard from my City Councilperson. I have not witnessed who he is unless I see him on the news, backing up another political

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person. Don't come knocking on my door, putting letters in my door or on my car during election time if you can't help me or help these children that's out here and my son been murdered by a 15-year-old and a 20-year-old. That makes absolutely no sense to me.

Now, I have a group of young men, my son's friends, my friend's friends. It's a group of them, five of them. They basically stay in this one house, no adult chaperones, but they're trying to work. They're trying to go to work. One of them was actually with my son when the situation happened, but he's been treated as he was the murderer himself, when they have the murderers on camera. Why is he being treated as he was the one that committed the murder himself? Kicked his door in. So all of the young men in the neighborhood know that his door was kicked in, so he obviously snitched. So how is he supposed to go back to the community

where he lives and people are looking at him like, Oh, he's a rat, he snitched. And I'd have been at the Round House. This young man didn't say a word out of his mouth, but these young men don't know that, but because his door was kicked in and he was tooken down, Oh, he done told somebody something, because these young men is incarcerated now.

Right now all I'm asking for, help these young men, my son's friends. Help them. They don't know none of these programs that's out here, none of these programs that I've even heard today.

I've helped my son by myself. My son graduated from Imhotep. He played football for Imhotep. My son was an active student in Cheyney University and was actually filling out scholarship papers to take summer programs in the Cheyney University summer courses in Philly instead of traveling all the way out of the county.

We need to wish and help for

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some of these. Everybody don't have high SAT scores. Everybody don't have high GPAs, but they want to be in school, and they should be able to be in school without having to worry about financial issues. But they don't -- these resources is not made available to them at all.

I talked to my son's friends. They come to my house. They respect me. I told them at my son's funeral, do not come with T-shirts and do not come with hoodies on. These young men came dressed. And I'm saying over 500 people came to my son's funeral. Out of respect for me, this is how these young men came. And they're not looking for no handout. They're not looking for no free ride. They're not looking for nothing free. All they asking us for, an honest chance. They feel like they don't have an honest chance, because, one, right now they're angry. They're angry for what happened to my son. I am angry for what happened

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to my son. But if we don't get to these young men right now that want help right now, their anger will turn into something else, and that's not what we want, because it will just be another statistic or another murder.

My son didn't deserve this at all. And it could have been him, it could have been anybody. And my son was no drug dealer. And one I know it, because if somebody would have seen my son was hanging on somebody's corner, I'm coming to get him. If somebody said that my son was doing this, that, and the other, I know a lot of people in the neighborhood. I'm coming to get you. And it may not sound like to none of y'all, but my son is 6'4". I'm 4'11". I'm coming with a baseball bat, because you're getting your behind in my car and I'm getting you out of these circumstances right now.

But a lot of these kids, they don't have mothers like me. They're

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actually out here fending for themselves. They're trying to take care of their self. They're trying to maintain for their self. They know nothing about no programs that's out here. When I say some of them has -- some of these kids that I know -- not my son's friends, because all my son's friends, they graduated. Some of them have high GPAs. They don't have the guidance or the tools to move forward in their lives. And like I said, right now they're angry, and if we don't get to these kids right now, listen, I'm ready to mentor you right now today. I am here to help you right now today. You need resume writing? I have a place that somebody will stand there with you, because some of them has never written a resume a day in their life. So they don't know what comes along with a resume. They need somebody -- it's a lot of City officials. It was a lot of men in this room. We have a lot of young folk out here that need a lot of these

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City officials and grown folks in their lives, because some of their fathers is not. You see who is here? Mom, mothers. That's all y'all -- that's all we really have, is mothers. My sister, single mother. My mother, single mother.

It's a lot of suited men in here. Some of these young men don't even know how to dress for an interview, what to say on an interview, how to act. Some on them are intimidated to go on an interview, because they think they're going to be looked at in the wrong way. They don't have the attire to wear on an interview.

I told some of my son's friends, Listen, if you need a button-up shirt, I don't have no money, but if you need a button-up shirt to go on an interview, I will go and buy you a button-up shirt. If you need somebody to talk to you, you come call me. If you hungry, come to my house. I will feed you. But I'm just one person amongst

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others that's trying to help these young people. They need help right now, today.

(Applause.)

MS. PENDLETON: They need it today.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I want to first say this is probably the most important testimony we heard today, because what I took from -- what I've heard before and I've taken from today is that you are as much concerned about the loss of your son, but as concerned about those who are still alive. And your hurt you turned to caring for them, which is to me phenomenal.

You pointed out some things that I want to ask you a couple of questions. Number one, I acknowledge you come from a strong female collective family.

MR. PENDLETON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And that there seems to be absence of men.

MS. PENDLETON: Yes.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: When we went to your house to offer our condolences, some of the guys on the corner asked, Are you a cop? Are you a preacher? Are you with the District Attorney's Office? They don't see guys like us on a day-to-day level in their world. Sometimes we sit up here -- I come to your hood too, but the point is, we need to have more of us as examples to them.

A couple things. You mentioned truancy.

MS. PENDLETON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And that that is a problem. That's something that we can take away from today and say that we need to fund more anti-truancy efforts. Keep them off the streets. Keep them in classrooms, where they belong.

You talked about curfew.

MS. PENDLETON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: We need to start to pay attention to that, not just

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on Chestnut Street but on Champlost Street and start --

MS. PENDLETON: On Susquehanna Avenue, on Huntingdon Street, on Somerset Street.

COUNCILMAN JONES: You also talked about young people raising their own.

MS. PENDLETON: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Household of five individuals that have no adult supervision, and they get recruited into the crash dummy system. If we're talking about holistic programs and community schools, Bilal, we got to reach out and figure out in advance of a murder where these high-risk young people are and get help to them.

What I hear is a lot of programs up here, but if we don't translate that down to the real world where they are, there's a disconnect.

You talked about also jobs today.

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MS. PENDLETON: Today.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Not just jobs --

MS. PENDLETON: Not job readiness. Today.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Talk about that. What these folks really want, not a handout, they want some help.

MS. PENDLETON: Exactly.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So I heard you.

I wanted all of you to hear this, so as we go through our budget process, everything that we do should be to that end, whether we're talking about increased funding for education, whether we're talking about suicide prevention, because there's mental health issues involved here. We talked about trauma teams. Talk about that you needed a trauma team to come out and deal with it. There was none.

MS. PENDLETON: There was none. When I found out my son was shot, when I

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got to the hospital, I was just in his room by myself. They wouldn't even let my family -- maybe one or two people come in the room with me. I'm crying out of my mind. Nobody from the hospital would talk to me. No police officers will come and talk to me. I'm just sitting, now waiting to hear that my son is dead. No help whatsoever, and it took a lot out of me.

I'm a broken mother right now. My son was 20 years old, and he had a plan, and his plan was not to be murdered at the age of 20. My son's plan, he had a plan at the age of 26. What young man do you know number is 26? Mom, I will be graduating from college before I turn 26. Mom, I'm going to marry my girlfriend, which is his college -- they all go to college together -- at 26. I'm going to move you out this neighborhood at 26, Mom.

The age of 26, that was his target number. And I don't want to make

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it seem like my son was this goody two-shoes, because my son come from a behavioral health situation. My son was diagnosed with ADHD. My son was diagnosed with bipolar. But I never gave up on him. I was that one mother that went on every single school trip from pre-K to high school with my son, and he's 20 years old. I was never going to allow my son to become a victim of his circumstances. It wasn't happening on my watch. You acting up in school, I'm at the school.

I stopped working at my job to be more of a productive parent with my son. I made -- I fought for mental health services for my son. It wasn't nothing -- Oh, we have these services here for you or we have these services here for me. I knew nothing about mental services until I had to do it with my son.

I figured these things out on my own, and my son turned out to be the

man that I groomed him to be, the man that I wanted him to be. He overcame so much. People from back then would never think that Jayvon is who he is today.

So we can't just say, you know, the mental health, the mental health, the mental health, because they can overcome anything, as my son did. I kept my son active in baseball, football. People didn't know that my son played chess and was very good at it, good chess player. He played for the South Philly Sharks since he was the age of 11 years old. Then when he moved over to North Philly, he played for Imhotep Football Team where he graduated from. He recruited to play for Cheyney High School, but when he got there, he was like, Mom, I just want to focus on school. And I told him, I said, Jayvon, if this is what you want to do, this is what you want to do. I'm all for it. You're in school. That's where you wanted to be. Nobody forced him to be there. He made it -- he will -- like,

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Mom, I'm going to the executive office to talk to them. If he had issues, I'm going to the higher officials to speak with them.

But now that my son is gone, I'm not going to let his death be in vain, because he has some friends out here that need help. They're not bad children. They're not drug dealers. They don't need job readiness. They need jobs right now, because if they don't get jobs right now, they're going to end up on somebody's corner --

(Applause.)

MS. PENDLETON: -- selling drugs or trapping in somebody's trap house if they don't get help today.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Listen --

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Once again, most important testimony of the day, because we can plan and think, until you've lived that. One other thing and I'm going to pass up to Councilman Green.

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The close proximity of the alleged perpetrators and you, for us in this room, we're not talking about on the other side of the City. Tell us what we're dealing with by way of proximity.

MS. PENDLETON: Right now I am dealing with between my mother house and my house, I have to cross the path of the perpetrator's family and the perpetrator friends that's constantly on social media, free this person, free that person, free this person. That's how close we are. We share the same supermarket. We share the same laundromats, same schools. I went to school with one of the young men's mother. That's how close in proximity I am to these people.

No one has picked up the phone and said, Ms. Pendleton, can we move you and your mother out of this situation? Because we're full of anger. When we ride past this area, we're full of anger. They took my baby from me. He's 20 years

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old, and he had a plan. These young men don't have no plan that killed my son. The young man that's 15 years old, this is not the first time I even heard of him being in part of a homicide. He just got caught this time at 15.

My mom -- between my house and my mom house, we are right there. We are right in between. Nobody said, Ms. Pendleton, do we need to move your family or do we need to move your mother out of this area because of retaliation.

Some of these media places, Philly.com and some of these places, have put my address inside of these papers. Why? I'm a victim. Why do the 2200 block of Lambert Street has to be inside of these papers? We're victims. We're not the ones that did the murdering. Why do my block and my address have to be in these papers? I don't understand that. I still have to live there. I don't have money to just pick up and relocate. Neither do my mother. And everybody

knows us.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So my point to you is there's close proximity. It's not like you moved to another city. You have to see them every day. So a witness who might want to come forward gets intimidated by the same kids riding around in a four-block area. Is that your --

MS. PENDLETON: Exactly. I mean, these people has been on social media. F what the family says. And that's another thing, some of these parents, y'all need to start holding these parents accountable. They need to know what's going on in their children social media sites. They need to know what's going on inside of their homes. They could check these homes. They need to stop being afraid of these kids.

My son was 6'4" and I'm 4'11". They will never be a time that I'll be afraid of this kid, ever in my life. I'm mom all day long. All day.

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They on social media, F what the family says. You know, talking about vindication. Who are you vindicating? My son is dead. These people can still see their children. They can still talk to them. They can still eat, send pictures or whatever. I can't do that. My son is gone.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Ms. Pendleton, our condolences on your loss.

MS. PENDLETON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I'm also inspired by your strength and your conviction. And earlier when we were having the testimony, I wish representatives from the DA's Office and the School District were here, because that back and forth is, for lack of a better word, I'll just say it, BS that we hear about. You're dealing with this issue every day, and they're going back and forth on procedures and policies.

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And to hear the pain in your voice, and we're dealing with some procedural stuff that to me at the end of the day seems more personality driven as opposed to solution driven. And these are things that we need to hear and be reminded about no matter if you're in this seat or that seat or some other seat, about the issues that we're dealing with every day.

So about the issue of accountability of parents, clearly you have done that in your life, and we need to make sure that we use tools like the truancy issue, because I will probably venture the 15-year-old and the 20-year-old that unfortunately murdered your son probably had truancy issues in their background. And so we've got to get beyond the back and forth of the games of what we can and cannot do and what we can do. And that's one of the issues that I know I'll be speaking about as we go through the budget process.

But you also talked about the

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issue of jobs, and we talked about earlier today, both Councilman Johnson, Councilman Jones, other members of this panel have talked about we cannot forget about the economic development perspective to this issue. Too often we talk about this from a public safety perspective, and at least now we're talking about behavioral health, but what about the economic development and jobs opportunity from this perspective. And too often we leave that aspect out, and we need to make sure we continue to hear about it.

Just earlier today before I came to this hearing, I learned that Lincoln University has a program that if you're a Pennsylvania resident and you go to Lincoln University and maintain a 3.0, you can go to any state-related college or university for grad school for free. Now, I'm someone who I think I'm somewhat informed about issues. I didn't even know that. So how do young people like

the young people that your son was friends with that have good GPAs, that could go to a Lincoln University, they may have to pay student loans for undergrad, but they could go to law school, med school or some other school for free if they graduate with Lincoln. So that's some of the things that we need to do a better job in getting the word out.

MS. PENDLETON: It's one thing if you have a GPA of a 3.0, but it's another thing if you don't have a high GPA, if you don't have high SAT scores, but you're accepted in school and you want to be in school. What about those people that just want to be in school? They don't have -- some of them have mental health issues. My son was one of them. He had an IEP throughout high school. He didn't have a high SAT score. He didn't have a high GPA. But he was accepted in college, and that's where he wanted to be.

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COUNCILMAN GREEN: And I agree with you, having a son who is 15 who is autistic, I think Lincoln and Cheyney, those type of HBCUs who take the clay and they mold that into someone with a 3.0, and I think we need to make sure that we continue to do that and provide opportunity and information to the young people that you're helping to mentor that want to do the right thing. So thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your testimony. And what I want you to know is that these words will be translated into action as we go into the budget process next week. That's why it was important that Councilman Johnson added you to the witness list. They needed to hear this. We need to adjust our -- we are the power of the budget, and there's other people that are out here that are testifying that are saying the same things, that it's important for us to do the big global policy stuff, but

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until we break it down and translate it to young people who can hear it, to mothers who can use it, what are we doing? So we're going to do a better job.

Councilman Taubenberger.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Ms. Pendleton, I'm very deeply saddened by your loss.

MS. PENDLETON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Deepest condolences not only to you, but to the friends of your son and any other mothers that have lost a child in this way. I think it is terrible.

Chairman Jones, I think you said something that really moved me this morning, and I'm going to repeat it. I'm not going to do it as eloquently as you, but it reached home.

If ten wales swam up from the Atlantic Ocean from Cape May and all the sudden got themselves to Penns Landing

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and died, the national news media would be here. They would all be here. Well, you know what, I think wales are important, but I think human beings are much, much more important.

(Applause.)

MS. PENDLETON: Absolutely. Absolutely.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: I don't have a question for you, but I have a comment. I'm a newly elected Councilman. I was elected in November, but I spent five years here as a staff assistant to Councilwoman Joan Krajewski and I was Chief of Staff to Councilman Jack Kelly when he was a district member. I've heard a lot of testimony. I've never heard more and better testimony that made more sense to the problem we're discussing. I commend you for being here.

MS. PENDLETON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: If the roles were reversed and it was a

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family member of mine, I do not think that I could find it in my heart to be anywhere in the public. The message you have given, all of Philadelphia should see. All of the news media should see.

MS. PENDLETON: I agree.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: The nation should see.

MS. PENDLETON: I agree.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: The news media right now is not here. But I will tell you this. I will tell you something about Council. We actually tape these hearings. You're on video and so am I. I've never done this, but I want to watch your testimony again, because it's moving, powerful, and it's real. And my comment is, we must as human beings do something to help other human beings. This problem must come to an end.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER:

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for your leadership and my colleagues as well.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Councilman Johnson.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes. Thank you.

We do have the media documenting this particular hearing, but not the actual television stations. They were here earlier on, but I think the press box -- no. Actually, the press box over there are individuals representing the various newspapers documenting.

COUNCILMAN TAUBENBERGER: Sorry.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: It's okay. Just for the record. But we don't have the actual television crew, which usually portrays these acts of incidents of violence on a day-to-day basis that isn't here right now, which should be here is what my fellow Councilman is alluding to.

I just want to just commend you on your strength and just being here.

And it's quite obvious that your testimony is not only just about yourself and your current feelings and conditions as a result of you losing your son, but also the plight of African American young men in general, and that says a lot about a person's character. Because normally one would want to be selfish in incidents like this.

And so we just want to say thank you for taking your time out of your schedule and being here, and to all the mothers. This group has been on the forefront of addressing this issue. I think it's kind of shameful, to be quite frank with you, that from a funding standpoint, you aren't like a United Way type of organization here, and we'll probably have to have a frank conversation with the Councilman to figure out why that isn't the case in terms of your contracting opportunities with the various City agencies that's actually going out there and doing the

work, because I remember when your program first started. Also I remember Men United Against a Better Philadelphia before I even got involved as being an elected official and was also on the ground going to the neighborhoods, doing intervention, being proactive, reaching out to the young men on the corner and the young ladies. And the young ladies. Because when you look at who is being arrested for trafficking the guns, there's young ladies, not the young men.

What you call it, crash dummies, Councilman? Well, the other conversation with the crash dummies is, the young man who has the record that gets the young lady to go buy the guns and for you to go -- straw purchasing, to go carry the guns.

And so I just commend you ladies for being the strength. But I also call us men out, particularly African American men, because it's really our role to protect the women in our

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community. No disrespect to anybody else.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: But it's our responsibility, and once you lose that, that's a very telling problem about where we're at as it relates to us as a people and really stepping up to the plate.

But I will say this, because I also don't want to do a disservice to some men that I do work with, such as Kenyatta Bey, Point Breeze Youth Development Basketball League, Dawud Bey, and Imam Suetwidien and his team with the -- and Bilal and Eber Devine, the Interfaith Coalition. There are some men who are out here doing some work, doing what I call side work therapy in the middle of the neighborhoods. We also have -- I don't want to put him on the spot, but a young man who has used his celebrity to step up to the plate and go on the school store and talk about

redemption in his own life, Meek Mills, who is here today, who just stopped past to talk about it. And not so much to put him on the spot, but he's from that generation of young people that maybe even could identify probably more than myself, which is sometimes a hard pill to swallow because I come from 18th and Dickinson, South Philadelphia, lived on one side of the law and changed my life to be a betterment of my community, but at the end of the day, I think these hearings will help bring all of us together to begin looking at how do we use all of this power together to kind of address this issue of youth gun violence. But I thank you for stepping up.

MS. PENDLETON: I just would like to say I'm one woman with one small house. I invite five to ten young men to come to my house and I talk to these boys all of the time. Do you need me to help you with anything? Do you need food? Do you need something to wear, even to my

son's funeral? If you don't have a button-up shirt, I will buy you a button-up shirt. But I'm one woman and one house. That's all I can do, because my son's death is not going to go in vain. It's not going to happen. I don't care if I have to go in these corners. That's what we need.

People -- they used to have -- the Black Panthers used to come on the corner and stuff like that. You need to have people come in these corners and let these young folks know what's available to them, because if they only have an 8th grade education, they don't know no better. They don't know that they have a Job Corps that they can get into or they still can get a job even with an 8th grade education.

Get to these corners. Y'all know where these target corners at. Y'all know where they at. It's on the news all the time. We need more men mentors. Listen, young fellow, I hear

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Ms. Felicia say you trying to work? Let me take you under my wing. Let me show you dressing up like a man, shaking hands with a man, looking me eye to eye in my face to show that we respect each other. That's what we need. And, furthermore, making these parents accountable for these children, period.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So also we have representatives from the DA's Office.

You got to fix the problem of people wanting to come forward and feeling safe. I get all that no snitching stuff, this, that, and the other. I came from the streets. Let me tell you, I didn't sign up for no criminal conspiracy. If I see it, I'm saying it. If I know it, I'm telling it, straight up from the door.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: We have to make sure that the victims are safe, because they're our mothers, they're our

daughters, they're our sisters. And, you know, we have to as responsible elected officials make sure that they come -- or nobody is going to say nothing. They got to go back -- after we get done these speeches, they got to go back home.

MS. PENDLETON: Same neighborhood.

COUNCILMAN JONES: To the same neighborhood.

MS. PENDLETON: We ride the same bus.

COUNCILMAN JONES: You ride the same bus.

So what I'm saying to you is, we got to do our job. All right? I'm from here. Anybody who want to get out the game, I got the left hand of fellowship -- right hand of fellowship. Isn't that right, Pastor? Right hand. I'm going to offer him -- we got OIC over there. We'll put you in a job training program. We're going to break the budget down so that we can -- right hand of

fellowship. I'm Muslim. I've got the right hand of fellowship for you, but if you are convinced that you have to be this guy that's going to murder our babies, then I got the left hand of punishment. You gotta go, gotta go. And what we got to understand is that we are victims both ways, because -- there's a guard that let a guy go the other day, a couple weeks ago, and he said, you know, I heard about your cousin down north. He trying to get his rep up. Sooner or later he going to be up here, and I need the overtime to get my summer home.

We are pawns in a game that ain't funny. There are more people murdered in this city in the last ten years than all of the Klu Klux Klan lynchings combined. I'm going to say it again slow. All the people in the pointy hoods all together haven't killed as many of our own babies as we have. And at some point, we got to open our eyes and peep the fact that they're throwing the

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guns in the community, they're throwing the drugs in the community and let's kill ourselves.

MS. PENDLETON: Can I just add this. The 15-year-old that was a part of the murder that murdered my son came to my son's vigil. He was at my son's vigil. So you tell me these kids is cold-hearted. That's why I say he's 15. Where are the parents?

COUNCILMAN JONES: So I'm going to quote Brother Meek. I'm an old head, but I'll quote him. Being elected don't make you thorough, and I won't finish the thing, but you got two of them up here that are. We come from where you come from. We want to help. Tell us how.

MS. PENDLETON: I need to see it. I need to see it outside City Hall. I need to see it outside of City Hall offices. These kids -- y'all inside of these offices. I lived in South Philly for a little while, so I know what you about, Kenyatta Johnson, and I'm fully

aware of Councilman Jones. I have no clue who my City Councilman is in my area of 2225 North Lambert Street. I've never seen this man unless he's on the news backing somebody up.

This is a big building, with full of men in suit. I need to see some work being done for these youth and these kids out here, because my son's friends, I refuse to see them murdered, hurt or anything, because y'all be seeing me back up here picketing outside here, because they need help and they need help now. They don't need job readiness. They need jobs now.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your inspiring testimony, seriously.

MS. PENDLETON: And I thank y'all, because this is hard for me.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So what I want to do, if it's okay, I want to segue and we're going to come back to you, is that okay, sir, from the academia

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standpoint? Yes. I want to segue into Bilal Qayyum, because it is very critical that the grassroots component segues directly into what he's trying to do with his anti-violence coalition.

Now, I will say this, though, and that's not my area where you live at. However, my office can be supportive, and I don't have a problem coordinating with the Councilperson that represents your area --

MS. PENDLETON: Whoever that may be.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- on the immediate and direct services that you may be requesting for the young men that are a part of your friends. And so my staff, Peter -- and you come here by way of Councilman Curtis Jones. We will figure out a way to make sure that those immediate issues can be addressed to the best of our ability.

Is that okay, Chairman?

COUNCILMAN JONES: That's all

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right with me.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Real quick, we want to recognize Councilman Domb, then we'll segue to you.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: Thank you, Chairman Jones. Thank you.

I'm deeply sorry for your loss, Ms. Pendleton.

MS. PENDLETON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: I've been sitting on and off since 10 o'clock this morning hearing everything, because this is such an important issue. But unless we change something dramatically, this is not going to change.

MS. PENDLETON: Exactly.

COUNCILMAN DOMB: And so I'm just going to give you one example of probably a hundred things we need to do, but one is the Cristo Rey model at 5200 North Broad. It's a high school for people in poverty. Every child works one

day a week, one day, in a job from 9th to 12th grade in Center City, in King of Prussia, wherever it is, and gets a job experience. They're going to graduate 100 percent of these kids from that high school this year, 100 percent from kids all in poverty, and all of them have had four different job experiences. In fact, I know it firsthand because I'm a supporter of Cristo Rey and I have four young women in my office different days of the week, and one of them came to me last week and said, Can I work for you in the summer?

I said, Sure. And I'll pay her for it. But we need to use that Cristo Rey model in the public school system and expand it dramatically so we connect business with the people in our city and get them jobs.

MS. PENDLETON: Absolutely.

(Applause.)

MR. QAYYUM: Good afternoon. I'm Bilal Qayyum, Father's Day Rally

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Committee and also Chair of a newly formed coalition in the City called Philadelphia Anti-Violence Coalition.

First of all, Councilman Johnson, thank you for your earlier remarks. I really am humbled and appreciate that. And I will submit a written testimony, but I was informed by your chair, Councilman Jones, that he wanted folks to come here to talk about solutions today. And I could give you all the historical stuff and even to the point of in the '70s when we had the great gang problem in the City of Philadelphia and we spent night and day out in the streets resolving that gang problem, where it was 70, 80 gang deaths per year down to zero and your colleague, Councilman Johnson, Councilman Jones was one of those folks we had to save during those years, this guy right there.

But I think it's very important, there was an important -- I'm not sure what elected official said this,

but a very bright, intelligent elected official said that you can always find out how serious elected officials are by looking at the budget. And I want to talk about the budget today, because you're getting ready to go to your whole starting -- I think you said tomorrow, this week was the budget.

First of all, I think that Council needs to collaborate with the Mayor and we need to create a $5 million youth violence prevention initiative where we're funding all the grassroots groups out here that are doing this work every day, like the Mothers in Charge, like the Mayor's other groups that are behind me. We need to fund these groups. We can no longer accept folks to be doing work and putting their life on the line and you're not supporting them financially. This is totally unacceptable if we're in this crisis we're in. So we need a $5 million youth violence prevention initiative.

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In the City of Seattle, they had a little gang problem. I'm saying a little gang problem because Seattle is small in their population, and the Mayor understood that, and the Mayor stepped up and he put $5 million and created a youth violence prevention. So we need that in Philadelphia.

We also need to -- Council needs to -- and all these points I'm raising now are points that Council can do in negotiating with the Administration on the budget.

You need to increase the dollar amount for youth employment for the summer. You could do that. You need to increase that.

Another issue you need to look at is -- and it has come up back and forth, Councilman Green. We need to question the School District's budget and what are they doing. And you talk about this truancy and other issues. I was in a meeting with President Generals from

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Community College a couple weeks ago, and I think I saw him come in here, and he talked to -- our meeting was around how we could increase the number of African American males to go to Community College. And he informed us that they have like a 30,000, 35,000 student body day and evening, and almost half of them, particularly black males, drop out after the first year, because they come to Community College and they're unprepared to have the efficiency in English, math, and science. So their first year they're spending in remedial courses at Community College to catch up, and they're paying. So they take out a loan or they go to the mom and the pop or whatever they got to do to get the money, and then they get disgusted. Well, that is not an indictment on Community College. That is an indictment on our public school system in the City of Philadelphia.

Why are we graduating young males, young women in the City of

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Philadelphia school system that are not prepared to go out to either find a job or not prepared to function in the college environment? So you have the power as City Council when they come before you and talk about their budget to start asking those hard questions.

I also think that you need to increase or look at increasing the budget for Community College. Community College is a major institution that's serving a lot of folks. Inflation is going up, and they need money just like anybody else. So you should consider increasing the budget for Community College.

The other point I want to make is for the Department of Commerce when they come before you. You need to look at their workforce development stuff, who is getting these contracts and who are they hiring. I do know that you have Councilman Clarke's bill, I think the inclusion bill, that would hopefully open up that issue about including more

minorities in these jobs that are now being done for contracts for the City. But if there is no commitment up front in writing from the labor unions to make sure that there is inclusion, we should not -- "we" when I'm saying we or City Council should not support that effort for those projects.

The other problem I raise is, someone raised the thing about the Department of Human Services. If you look at the City's budget -- and I don't know what the present budget is, but I know between the Department of Human Services and Behavioral Health, I think it's like -- is it $2 billion? Who are they contracting with? And I know my good sister, Dorothy, talked about that earlier. But who are they contracting with? Who is getting those dollars? And what agencies are getting those dollars, and what is those agencies doing to help prevent the climate that youth violence would participate in? So you need to

look at DHS's budget, who they're contracting and who are they not contracting with who are out there doing the work.

Another proposal I have is the City of Philadelphia taxes development, I think it's 1 percent arts for every development project in the City. There's a 1 percent art tagged on to that. Council needs to consider to add a 2 percent for youth employment onto that. So that means when a developer comes in, Councilman Taubenberger, as you know, and they want some money, if we do a project and you support them, same way we put a 1 percent for the arts, we should be putting a 2 percent that will go in the pot to create additional employment for youth in the City of Philadelphia.

Public safety, as you're questioning the public safety, Mr. Chairman, budget, you need to look at how they could create a program to hire ex-offenders. In the City of Richmond,

California, they are paying ex-offenders to go out on the streets and work with other folks to keep them from being -- and it's very successful in Richmond, California. So when we talk about ex-offenders, it's one thing to talk about it, but if you don't give them the support. And the number one thing is they need employment. So jobs for ex-offenders got to be crucial.

So all these threads I'm talking about for all these agencies can help change the climate.

Some of y'all might remember -- and I know I'm a little older, but during the Rizzo Administration, he was afraid back in around '70-something, early '70s -- no. Actually, it was in '69. He was afraid that the City was going to have a potential riot, and what he did, he called the state of emergency. In that state of emergency he kept the recreation centers open from 9:00 in the morning to 11 o'clock at night. He

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properly staffed those recreation centers for those 9:00 in the morning until 11 o'clock at night, so the kids were off the streets all day and all evening. So he put up the commitment because he understood that the City was in a crisis. Well, I don't know if we going to have a riot or not.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: We might.

MR. QAYYUM: We could, but we are in a crisis mode in the --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: State of emergency.

MR. QAYYUM: -- City of Philadelphia, a state of emergency. Let's call for a state of emergency this summer. Let's keep the recreation centers open from 9:00 in the morning until 11 o'clock. Let's properly staff those recreation centers. All of this is a budget issue, as you know.

Now, how are we going to help pay for that? Councilman Green, I know you had the bill about the social bond.

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A good friend of ours, part of our Coalition, Sultan Ahmad, has been proposing a $600 million bond to fund the kind of stuff I'm talking about to making sure that every single group in this -- who is behind me that's doing these grassroots, they going to get funded. We could do that. There is a bond ballot question on every ballot every year -- every election. So why don't we put a social bond question on the ballot where we are going to spend 200, 300, 400, 500 million dollars that will go to the communities and support the folks out there that are doing the work every single day.

To be consistent, we have to do everything in our power to make sure that we're saving and protecting our children. Yes, Councilman Johnson, you are right about the roles of men. I've been out here for 40 years now, 40 years. I thought about it this morning. Worked with the House of Umoja. Dave Fattah,

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Falaka Fattah's husband, used to call me at 4 o'clock in the morning and say, Bilal, we got to go to North Philadelphia. We got to go negotiate between the Timberlands and the Valley, or we would have to go negotiate between Cedar Park or some other gang in Southwest Philly. We would be out 2, 3, 4 o'clock in the morning doing that kind of work, negotiating. But that work was so important that we did bring, in the '70s, gang deaths from 90 per year to 1979 to zero. So the intervention works, but you got to get the support to the folks that are out there on the ground, the support that they need to make that intervention work.

So Council has the power. You could change these budgets around, look at the budgets. I know everybody is going to fight to save their budget and what they're doing, but you heard from testimony today from a lot of sources that a lot of folks out here don't

understand what the hell is going on in the streets, not in connection with the streets.

I've been at two vigils in the last two weeks. I haven't seen no one from the mental health side out there doing grief counseling like the sister said earlier that she didn't get. So where are they? And if they're not out there and they're not helping the problem, then why are we funding them? That's got to be the question that City Council is going to have to ask every single department that comes before you in the next couple of weeks or the next month about their budget. They need to be justifying what are they doing with their budget that's really making a difference for the citizens of the City and really making a difference in our communities. And I would not hesitate to say that, because black men and Latino men and black women and Latino men are being killed on these streets, and if the

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resources not going to these folks, then it's a waste of time. And if we're serious, like Councilman Domb talked about, then we would make a total change. If you're not serious, then you're wasting my time and everybody else's time in Council today.

So with that, I will close by saying, because no one has kind of mentioned it, I do support the Resolution for 160104 for the creation of the Youth Gun Commission, because I see that as a step forward. Is that going to solve all the problems? No. I've been on two commissions. I chair the Commission on African American Males and got some questions about where that's going or what happened in the past, I'll be honest. So commissions -- but getting that report, getting that information, that data is very important. I understand what you're talking about, data, but data can be misleading.

And also my last comment about

the data stuff is, you also need to be questioning these major institutions, like a Temple, like a Drexel, who get millions of dollars to study us, but don't share none of that dollars to help us. So when they come to ask you for that kind of support, you need to be asking those institutions what are you giving back to the community for those folks who are putting their lives on the lines every day.

With that, I end my testimony.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And the last person for this panel, please state your name for the record. And then we have, I think, two last panels coming up and that's it for the day.

DR. CORBIN: Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Theodore Corbin. I'm Associate Professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Drexel University College of Medicine here in Philadelphia.

Much of what I am going to say today you've heard from my colleagues

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earlier, but I'm just going to reenforce the importance of that and also provide some qualifiers as to why we do the work, where we do the work.

At Drexel I also serve as Co-Director for the Center for Non-Violence and Social Justice where I direct a trauma-informed violence intervention program called Healing Hurt People, generously funded and supported by the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services. Our program focuses on victims of interpersonal injury that were seen in the emergency department and are at risk for recurrent injury, perpetration by retaliation or death. The program uses a trauma assessment, intensive case management, and trauma treatment to address both the physical and psychological wounds of trauma. Today I'll be speaking from my experience as an emergency medicine physician in a city, a city that is home to me, with a high rate

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of violent injury.

From a public health perspective, we think of violence as a critical public health problem because of the toll of death and disease that it exacts on our communities. The data is apparent and compelling. But the data dramatically undercounts the impact of violence. The numbers fail to capture the grandmother who was sitting on her porch who saw the young person lying injured or dead in the street as a result of gun violence. They don't count the little girl who had to walk past a pool of blood and yellow police tape on the way to school. They don't capture the anxiety of the parents several blocks over who hears the sound of gunfire and wonders if the victim is a friend or a family member.

The fact is that trauma is a universal condition for many urban residents here in Philadelphia. The consequences of such trauma go beyond the

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physical injuries, but have a dramatic impact on physical and mental health. This resolution is a groundbreaking step in acknowledging the impact of trauma on those who experienced or been exposed to violence, whether in combat or in their own neighborhoods, while also paying attention to the need to impart gun laws. In fact, a comparison between war casualties of Afghanistan and homicide deaths in Philadelphia between 2001 and 2011 makes this case compelling. Over this period, 1,446 soldiers lost their lives in combat in Afghanistan. Over that same period, 3,391 people lost their lives due to homicide in Philadelphia.

The consequences of exposure to urban violence are consistent regardless of the population affected. Post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, other dramatic symptoms affect not only combat veterans but also the young people of our city.

The work of our center has

documented that among young urban victims of violence seen in Healing Hurt People, 75 percent have full-blown PTSD. As my colleague, Dr. Rich, documented in his book Wrong Place, Wrong Time: Violence and Trauma in the Lives of Young Black Men, young victims of violence who are faced with the disruptive symptoms of post-traumatic stress often feel constantly unsafe, have severe flashbacks and nightmares, and often feel numb, isolated, and cut off from any sense of future. These very real symptoms often lead them to take action such as use of alcohol, marijuana to ease their distress or getting a weapon, which puts them in even greater risk of injury. This vicious cycle is happening every day in our city.

Our work has also documented that more than 50 percent of the clients seen in Healing Hurt People have suffered four or more adverse childhood experiences. This level exposure to

trauma in early childhood puts these young people at risk for future health problems, including diabetes, heart disease, obesity, depression, drug use, and a range of other important chronic diseases, as my colleague Dr. Reeves had mentioned earlier. To the extent that poor people and people of color suffer greater levels of stress and adversity due to such factors as discrimination and poverty, we will see higher levels of chronic disease and health disparities in these groups.

A trauma-informed public health perspective recognizes that we must prevent exposure to trauma among young people who are victims. A trauma-informed approach compels us to recognize that often hurt people do in fact hurt people. It compels us to ask not only what's wrong with the person, but what's happened to this person.

At the Center for Non-Violence and Social Justice at Drexel University

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School of Public Health and College of Medicine, we are seeking to change the conversation about violence away from one that focuses on punishment or treatment toward one that emphasizes healing from trauma. Through programs like Healing Hurt People, training healthcare professionals and front-line workers, research on impact of trauma and policy, we're working across disciplines to move toward more effective trauma-informed practice firmly rooted in what we now know about the science of trauma and stress. We believe that such a shift can fundamentally redefine our approaches to violence.

For example, we know that so-called scared straight programs that seek to instill fear or shame in young people do not work and actually make young people worse. On the other hand, a trauma-informed perspective would lead us to develop programs to enhance safety of young people who have been injured by

trauma and help them heal. This healing involves safety, emotional management, dealing with loss, establishing a future, key elements of the sanctuary model that Robert Reed spoke to earlier, which guide the practice of our program at the Center for Non-Violence and Social Justice.

I feel the Commission on Youth Gun Violence is imperative to focus on gun access laws and policies while also paying attention to the complexities that our youth face in trauma and help them heal. A core element of the transition to trauma-informed practice involves training and education not only for providers but also for people affected by trauma. Currently, we are undertaking such training of providers in partnership with our colleagues at CHOP, Penn, Temple with funding from the Office of Victims of Crime from the U.S. Department of Justice using innovative in-person and online methods. In fact, we are training not only healthcare providers and

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front-line workers in hospital-based programs but also our partners in law enforcement, juvenile justice, behavioral health, schools, and other related partners.

The public health perspective also compels us to use an eco-social perspective and understand that the risk of violence can be thought of as existing on multiple levels. Risk factors exist at the societal level, the community level, interpersonal level, and individual level.

Research on violence tells us that the environment in which children grow up and which families and communities live are powerful determinants of their overall health and of their risk of violence. At the societal level, income inequality and overall level of trust are powerful predictors of the level of homicide and violence.

At the community level, a

number of factors, including residential segregation, community cohesion, presence of liquor stores, prevalence of vacant lots or other unwanted land uses, general level of investment in the community, trust in the police, all affect the risk of violence and the risk of other important chronic diseases.

At the individual level, exposure to violence either directly or as a witness, failure in school, and a range of other factors increase the risk of violence.

At each of these levels a trauma-informed approach is relevant and has the potential to improve policy and practices. As we go forward, increasing awareness through training, supporting model trauma-informed programs, and building the research that demonstrates the effectiveness of trauma-informed practices have the potential to transform how we think about the public health approach to violence.

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And with that, I just want to add that, like I said, I'm extremely humbled to be here, and as a front-line provider in the emergency department, I see our young people come in that are shot, stabbed, and assaulted, and there is a pivotal moment where we can have an impact there. And we're fortunate through the support of Dr. Arthur Evans and the Department of Behavioral Health to replicate that program at Temple, Einstein, Penn, and -- Temple, Einstein, and Penn Presby to really identify these young people and work with them to address these more proximal issues of post-traumatic stress, depression. We work with them. We had a bit of a carrot in that we provide case management, but then we also infuse behavioral health counseling, because there is a lot of stigma that's associated with anyone who is receiving behavioral health counseling.

So I appreciate your time, and

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I appreciate everyone's testimony here today.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you to all our panelists. And I also just want to acknowledge from the mental health and healthcare institutions' perspective, I just think it's critical that you're part of this conversation, because oftentimes when you talk about mental health, when you talk about the result of young people who are going into the healthcare system, particularly as it relates to violence, violence, it's critical that you be a part of this conversation, because that's where you can do the intervention at, separate from the work that's being done on the grassroots level. Especially when you talk about when a person is shot or a person is murdered, the post-traumatic stress that the young person or the family members have to deal with is oftentimes -- that's when retaliation kicks in at. When you're in that

hospital room, when you're going through the motions or you're rehabilitating, paying attention to who is coming to see the victim, making sure that part of their mental health component as it relates to conflict resolution is being addressed.

And so I do want to just thank you for being a part of this conversation and looking at the best practices on how we move forward.

We're going to call up the next panel. I think we only have two more panels and then -- this has been a very long day. Continue to be patient with us. We didn't want to rush or cut people off in this process on this very important issue. So we're just about wrapping up. So the next panel is as stated.

THE CLERK: Randolph Sims, Youth Advocate Programs; Dr. Kevin R. Johnson, President and CEO of Philadelphia OIC; Imam Suetwidien

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Muhammad; Eber Devine, Philadelphia Interfaith Coalition, Vice President; Khayla Coleman-Smith, South Philadelphia Junior Stakeholders.

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Please state your name for the record and please begin.

MR. SIMS: My name is Randall Sims and I am the Regional Director of the Philadelphia Youth Advocate Program. I'd like to thank the Council for inviting me here today to share our expertise and our experience in working with young people in the City. As advocates for our young people, we very much appreciate the light you're shining on this critical issue of gun violence. We're acutely aware that every fatal gun encounter among our young people leads to the end of one life and the complete destruction of many more. We support the resolution introduced by Councilman

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Johnson to create a Commission on Youth Gun Violence.

The youth gun violence statistics in Philadelphia are devastating. Nearly half of the 1,378 gun violence victims are under the age of 25. The rate of firearm possession in Philadelphia is among the highest in the nation. The gun homicide rate in Philadelphia is higher when compared to what happened in our state and our nation. And over 80 percent of the violence by guns, victims and the perpetrators, are African American, young men of color.

Researchers have found that young people under the age of 25 die every 70 minutes from gun violence. One physician who studies gun violence estimated that one million years of potential life are not -- are lost annually due to gun homicide.

Today, I'd like to share with you our insights about gun violence, our

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youth gun violence, and what our expertise tells us will work best to reduce and stop it. First, let me provide you a brief overview of the scope of our work and expertise.

The Philadelphia Youth Advocate Program, or locally known as PYAP, is a division of the Youth Advocate Program. Youth Advocate's mission is to keep young people out of institutions, including youth and adult prisons, by providing intensive community-based services. PYAP currently provides alternative to detention programming for up to 250 young people and their families at any given time in the City of Philadelphia.

Nationally YAP is located in several counties in Pennsylvania and in 18 other states, and we provide services to 13,000 young people and their families a year. Most of our young people in our programs are young men of color. We provide an array of services in some of the nation's toughest cities, including

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anti-violence and juvenile justice programs. We know our model has worked to reduce youth gun violence among the youth we serve, and we believe if properly scaled, YAP, and specifically the Philadelphia Youth Advocate Program here in Philadelphia, could significantly reduce gun violence in Philadelphia.

Across the country and right here in Philadelphia, YAP has safely engaged young people affected by and involved in gun violence. I'd like to share some of the information with you about our Chicago program, which you have heard referred to several times during the course of this testimony as being a model for programs that have been effective in impacting gang violence. One of them we ran in the 2008-2009 school year in Chicago. Thirty-six public school students were murdered, most by gun violence that year. The school system commissioned a study that looked at all of the students ranked as

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ultra high or high risk. The top 250 people were 20 times more likely to be victims or perpetrators of gun violence. These are the people who suffered violence, who lost a loved one, who lived in the neighborhood, who lived in the communities, who had the criteria that were described by the people that have testified. They saw the people who committed violent acts against them at schools, supermarkets, recreation centers. They lived in the same community. We identified them and we provided them with extra support, counseling and wrap-around services.

Chicago public schools contracted with YAP to engage 250 people over the course of three years. The Chicago Youth Advocate Program worked with 650 ultra high risk and high risk young people, actively, safely, and highlighting -- I'm sorry, folks. It's been a long day. We achieved safety and educational outcomes that were

highlighted in multiple publications, including the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, and there's a best seller book that's written on youth in schools on how children succeed.

So the point is, we have experience in working with victims of gun violence. We have outcomes. Ninety-four percent of the kids we worked with in Chicago were kept safe, despite predictions that they would be victims or perpetrators of violence. There was a 49 percent decrease in major school infractions that otherwise would have led to suspension or expulsion. Thirty-two percent of the youth who were chronically truant returned to school and were re-enrolled. Eighty-seven percent of the high school seniors in our program graduated, with 41 percent of them going on to college. Three hundred youth were employed in subsidized work programs.

So we have a model. There are models out there that work. We would

like to work with the programs in Philadelphia. We'd like to bring some of our folks from Chicago to Philadelphia to meet with providers, to talk to this Council about what we can do.

The intervention included the wrap-around process, which you've heard described here by a number of providers, providing an array of services that are linked, that are joined, that are continuous. We take a non-violence, non-threatening approach to our work. We ensure that families have choice and involvement in the process so that we're offering a program that has inclusion and is just not prescriptive, and that's why we've been able to have better success. We have safety plans. We look at triggers and responses. We build a program where we can track and follow the behaviors of people. All wrap-around.

So let's get to the bottom of this. This state spent $326 a day to cage a child in a facility that brought

no relief, that had no aspect in terms of improving or decreasing delinquency or making the community any more safer. The nation spends $5.7 billion a year incarcerating kids.

I've heard a lot of recommendations that have been made about things that could we do to fund the kind of programs that you have listened to, including ours, that you have listened to that work, that are needed for the last few hours, but in order to sustain them and make them work, we need to redirect all of those dollars that we are spending to house kids in facilities that do not serve them, do not help them, to return that money to the communities so we can build better schools, we can have better housing, we can have community-based schools, we can create jobs and provide food and healthy services to families who need it.

So I'm here today representing my organization. You have my full

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testimony on record. We support your bill to create the Commission to look at youth gun violence because it's essential, and we also advocate for redirecting resources that are spent on housing kids to have them come home and be served in their communities.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

REVEREND DR. JOHNSON: Good afternoon. Thank you so much, Councilman Kenyatta Johnson, of course, Councilman Jones, the Chair, and all of the Councilpersons who are here, especially OIC Board member, Councilman Taubenberger. My name is Kevin Johnson. I am the President and CEO of Philadelphia OIC, which stands for Opportunities Industrialization Center, and also the lead pastor of Dare to Imagine Church. I am honored to be here today and want to thank you, Councilman Johnson, for convening this hearing and particularly to address this major issue of youth gun violence.

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As I have sat here today listening to the testimonies, I was reminded of being in middle school, junior high school, when I had gone home one day -- because my grandfather was a hunter and I hunted with him, and because I was dealing with the issue at the school with some young men who were going to jump me, I had gone home, grabbed a snub-nosed 38 pistol and put it in my backpack and made my way back to my middle school. If it were not for the grace of God, I could have been on the other side. And so I am here because we do need to do something about youth gun violence and to begin to address these critical issues.

At Philadelphia OIC, our focus is on workforce development. At the crux of this problem of joblessness and high poverty rate of 26 percent, we know that this is a result of major issues in our community. The statistics impact the most vulnerable members of our community,

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particularly our youth. Of this number, 37 percent of children in Philadelphia live in high-poverty communities, which is the highest level among the ten largest cities in America, according to The Pew Charitable Trust.

Children that live in high-poverty communities are often challenged with issues in the home, which leads to high truancy and dropout rates. Nearly one of every ten students drops out of school each year in Philadelphia. Dropouts are faced with low income potential and lack opportunities to further themselves and their families.

As President and CEO of Philadelphia OIC, we are dedicated to the elimination of poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy in Philadelphia. We provide workforce development trainings and digital literacy to people that dwell in the most vulnerable zip codes in this city.

As I stated, our budget when

you compare it to the others -- and I'm talking about my fellow friends at Congreso, Esperanza, or even as you look at JEVS. Our budget does not even compare to be 10 percent. Their budgets are $30 and $40 million. JEVS is around $80 million. OIC's budget is around $1.7 million, but yet we have been charged with doing the hardest work, and that is helping people get jobs.

Our culinary arts program is doing extremely well. We prepare men and women to go into a hospitality program going to culinary arts, front desk management, as well as in housekeeping. Those individuals who come through that program, they're able to get jobs, able to become taxpayers, and they're able to contribute to society. We want to expand that program to move into other areas of Philadelphia. OIC used to be in West Philadelphia on 52nd Street. It's our plan to expand beyond just North Philadelphia and really to make our

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services available to all individuals.

Additionally, we just launched a coding boot camp, thanks to the Lenfest Foundation as well as to Comcast, who both gave us a total of about $200,000. Even while I have been sitting here, we have some other contacts that we are going to explore even further, and in the coming months, if all goes well as we think that it will, OIC will be able to acquire a college where we will be able to offer training but also schooling, Associate degrees, for individuals so that they can further themselves.

The reason that is important is because Harold Epps, our current Director of Commerce, recently gave a presentation to the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, which I'm privileged to sit on, and talked about how there is an educational gap as well as a poverty gap. The more education you have, Associate's degree or higher, then therefore the poverty rate in that particular city will

actually be lower.

In Philadelphia, because our educational attainment rate is very low, therefore, our poverty rate is very high. But when you compare us to cities like San Jose, San Diego and other big cities that are similar to Philadelphia, you'll begin to see a higher educational attainment rate, which therefore leads to a lower poverty rate.

Philadelphia OIC is positioned now more than ever to fulfill the dreams not only of Dr. Leon Sullivan, but also to the field of dreams of our children. And so today the questions really are how many bodies must we bury before we take aggressive action to impede the progression of gun violence? When will the bloodshed in our communities awaken to say enough is enough? For the first time in 60 years, gun violence kills at the same rate as a car accident in the United States. It's now time. It is past time to eradicate gun violence in

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our communities, and the best way to do it is through education as well as through workforce development, and Philadelphia OIC is prepared to work with you and City Council to begin to make that a reality.

Thank you so much.

MR. DEVINE: My name is Eber Devine. I'm the Vice President and founder of Philadelphia Interfaith Coalition, Committee person in the 47th Ward, 9th Division, one of the most dangerous wards in the City.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: What part of the City is that? North Philly?

MR. DEVINE: North Philadelphia, west of Temple University a couple blocks, west of Temple University, pretty much in that area where generally a shooting every other day, robberies, et cetera.

But I just want to start. This discussion cannot begin without giving thanks and praise to the Almighty God for

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allowing us to convene here today. I would like to thank you, Councilman, for your leadership on this issue. You've been at the forefront of this issue for quite some years. We've been knowing each other for quite a long time. And I would like to thank all of the Councilmembers for their diligence on this issue.

We have to have this conversation in a holistic manner. We have to address the physical, mental, and spiritual components of the issue. As leadership figures, whether it's the clergy, whether it's the political apparatus, whether it's the business community, the academic community, what we need to do is create synergy and create an environment where there's not a competitive type of territorial component to coming up with a solution. We're all in the same boat together. So we need to come up with a solution that's conducive to keeping the boat afloat for all of us.

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So just to digress a little bit, I was in the barber shop yesterday and there were some young people between the age of 17 and 23. So I engaged them. Every chance I get, you know, I talk to young people and try to get their perspective on what's going on. And one of the things that was said to me was that why aren't we ever at the table when these discussions are being had? Why aren't we included, you know, in these topics about solutions and these types of things? Because, you know, they actually have opinions and they have observations, and they're actually the ones who are experiencing these things in the criminal justice system.

So one of the young people said to me, he said, you know, When you guys talk to us, I feel like you're talking down to us, you know. You guys, you know -- like, okay, they know I went back to school, got a degree and, you know, businessman and in the community and

people see us. They don't see the other side when we were on the streets, you know, and we had our experiences. They don't look at us as being relevant or really having their perspective at heart. And I think it's very difficult to communicate with people when they don't feel like you respect them, you know, that we have empathy and concern for their well-being.

So, I mean, I've heard a lot of eloquent reports here. I heard a lot of articulate, very numbing statistics, and we can do that verbatim. I mean, there's plenty of statistics. I got a bunch of them here that, you know, are ongoing, but as a solution, we need to synergize. We need -- your bill is the perfect bill, because what we need to do is bring all of these entities together that we've heard here today, create a coalition, and be directly responsible to the people, to the citizens of Philadelphia. We need to have measurables. You know, we need to

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have deliverables. Like the lady that spoke here about her son, like this is a right-now issue, you know. If your house is burning down, right, you don't have time to analyze the cause of the fire, you know, while your house is burning. You need to get out of that situation, and then you can analyze, you know. But right now the City is burning. Philadelphia is burning. You know, and the summertime is coming, Kenyatta. The summertime is coming, and it's only projected to get worse. We got to stop the paralysis through analysis. We have to get to action. And if not us, who? If we don't take the time -- if we don't do this now, it's not going to happen. We have to take charge and come together. The clergy, I know the clergy. I sat with you. I've talked to Councilman Domb, who is a member of the Philadelphia Interfaith Coalition. He's on the ground with us. We need to come together, sit at the table, and come up with real

actionable solutions today.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

Brother Imam Suetwidien.

IMAM MUHAMMAD: Yes. Thank you, Councilman. Good afternoon, everyone.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good afternoon.

IMAM MUHAMMAD: The only thing -- I just wanted to take just a minute and one of the things that I want to say -- I might get better in this chair.

One of the things that I want to say, first of all, that my name is Imam Suetwidien Muhammad. I am the General President of the Muslim League of Voters of the Delaware Valley and also the resident Imam of Masjid Muhammad of Philadelphia. So I know the whole process of the hearings and the budget and so forth, but first of all, I'd like to say I'm not here to ask for no money, because all of the programs that we do at

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the mosque are free. Plus there's no long line of people standing in line trying to give no Muslims no money anyway. So the whole stuff we do is free.

So we're not here to ask for any money, but what I do want to just suggest, that we sat here for a long time this morning and this afternoon, and I would suggest that probably the next time that they had hearings, that they let these grassroots groups go first.

(Applause.)

IMAM MUHAMMAD: We sat through a lot of mumbo-jumbo. We sat through a lot of stuff. A couple Councilpeople up there called it -- almost cursed saying what it was, and that probably was what it was. But I think that they should let these grassroots groups go first, because by the time they get up here to the table, there's no money left anyway, you know. There is no money.

I listened to the guy from the

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DA's Office. You know, he asked for more money. And one of the things, I've been calling the DA's Office for a whole year and all you get is an answering machine over there. I was just wondering, what he going to buy? More answering machines? I don't know.

So, you know, I did a commercial. Like so we're not here to ask for no money, but I do want to just -- a commercial that we have running now that's making a call to our communities, and I just want to just have the time to play it for a second for everybody. It's only a 60-second commercial.

(Commercial played.)

IMAM MUHAMMAD: So really that's the message that we're putting out to our young people. You know, sitting here in City Hall really to me is almost like a joke. The last Administration, they spent $65 million on an ice skating rink outside this building instead of

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giving that money to the schools. They spent all those other millions of dollars putting those lights on the north side of Broad Street that don't even light up. You know, all this stuff is like a joke or something. You know, we have one percent of the construction contracts. There's big skyscrapers going up on every corner in this city. You got one black guy out there waving a flag, you know. So until we begin to really change that, you know, our young people don't believe in this whole system, don't believe in this whole thing. Just like you said, the brothers asking why they not at the table. Really because it's systematically done and the people don't want them at the table. What's happening in our community, people benefit off of it. You close the schools and you build prisons, you know. So that's by a systematic design.

In our community the stores are owned by a particular group of people,

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you know. There's no black-owned stores or anything like that in our own neighborhoods and our own communities. And so our children feel as though that, you know, the system has failed them. The parents have failed them, the government has failed them, the schools have failed them, the mosques have failed them, the preachers have failed them. You know, so they don't have anything to lose, you know.

In revelation, one of the things is, because I'm a preacher, and it says that in the last days and times, the earth will throw up all of its burdens and that it will reveal all of the secrets that man has hidden in it and man will have the nerve -- at that time, the earth will convulse and earthquake and tornadoes and hurricanes and fires with no matches, and man will have the nerve to step back and say, what is the matter with them. And that's what our children doing now. They filling up the burdens

that we laid on them and they're hurricaning, they're earthquaking, they're tornadoing, they're acting out, and we have the nerve to step back and say, what is the matter with them. Well, what is the matter with them is that we failed them, and until we begin to change the condition -- because the promise is that our condition will never change until we do something about it ourselves, and I think that's where we are now. There's three ways that you change the condition or that you change the wrong.

The first is just the hate in your heart, don't do nothing about it. Everybody sick, everybody having heart attack.

The second way is to have meetings about it, like this, meet in a little room, meet down in the basement, meet in somebody backyard, meet on the corner.

But the third way, which is the strongest way, is to change it with our

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hands. It's time that we begin to do something about our condition, that we begin to change it.

I heard a lot of things here now with people talking about after people already got shot, after when they in the hospital already and all this kind of stuff. What are we going to do before they get shot? What are we going to do before they get their hands on a gun?

You had the federal government and the guy testified here and talked about what Obama was doing. The President hasn't done anything. As a matter of fact, he has called out to every other group in this country except for the young black man, and nobody is saying nothing to the black guys out there, to the young people on the corner, you know, in our communities. Nobody is addressing it. Nobody is saying anything. And I don't really hear no real solutions about what we're going to do. You tell me you want to take them

here, we going to teach them this, we going to teach them that, we going to give them a $9 job, $5 an hour and all kind of stuff. It's not going to work. It's not going to work. And we have people coming on these construction sites. You look at the back of the tags. They from Jersey. They from New York. They making $40 an hour. They in the unions. And our young kids are standing on the corner, sleeping in cars, going to the corner store in the morning, getting a white T-shirt thinking they dressed for the day. Until we change that condition, until we do something about it, we could sit here all day and people will come here all day and you got a hundred different groups in here trying to divide up a hundred thousand dollars. Where is the money at? Where is the money? Until you really put the money out there and start changing the condition for these young people in our community and so forth, they're going to continue to get

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killed.

I want to just leave you with this. That's what you looking at, the new urban terrorist. That's what you looking at. You know, automatic weapons. Before you had to turn on TV and you had to see it in Beirut, you had to see it in Lebanon. Now it's right in the streets of the inner cities of America. And my leader told me, what used to be far away will soon be at your doorstep. We're going to be faced with the same thing that we see that's going on all around the place. We're going to be faced with the same thing.

You know, you said there's no gun manufacturer down on Point Breeze. There's not one in North Philadelphia. You know, so if somebody is bringing in the guns, somebody is bringing everything else and they putting them right in the hands of our children, you know. So these children are being raised by women. You had three generations of women here,

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that young sister, her son got killed. She said all of them were single mothers. Her mother, her, and her sister, you know. That's what we dealing with. That's what we faced with, and that's where the problem lies.

So we got to begin to really try to address it, try to do something about it, you know. And we here just to say that we trying to make a difference, we trying to support it. We not asking for no money, because we know -- I don't think you have no more. Sounds like it's all gone already. So we here just to try to make a difference and try to change things.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I appreciate that. I just want to clarify one part, just for the record. The budget process is a part of the comprehensive approach, but I think the other part as to why this type of venue is being convened is to, at the same time, bring the people out that are

actually doing the work all on the same page to see how we can be supportive of one another. And even from the academia standpoint where people talk about statistics and numbers, it's a place for it. But even when you talk about the various groups who are out there actually doing the work, separate from them needing resources, hopefully through this dialogue and people get a chance to network with one another, they can actually work amongst themselves separate from the support that we're willing to provide as elected officials.

So for me, my big picture in convening this is separate from making this the number one priority, because it's not a number one priority right now. Right now we'll have these type of meetings or hearings, then we'll get sidetracked with other things that's taking place in the City, but people are still being murdered on a day-to-day basis. And so I think the testimony --

not I think. The testimony that was provided from everybody provides us at least some additional insight on how we can move forward and really put some teeth in being effective in making sure we save our youth, because at the end of the day, that's really what's at stake right now, trying to find ways to get these young men and young ladies from not even supporting the gun violence that's taking place in our neighborhoods, but also picking up the guns in the first place.

And so hopefully this will be a start for a long-term and effective strategy and a plan to actually get down to the bottom of why we keep killing each other.

And I think on the construction side -- and I've been talking to some folks from the building trades -- we've been having some, you know, quite frank conversations on what is this going to look like moving forward. Because you do

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make a good point. We're building on every corner here in the City of Philadelphia. You see cranes up. And so there's no reason why there shouldn't be a conversation on how that development is taking place. Everyone is benefiting from the development that's taking place. And when you talk about revitalizing all these park and recreation facilities, there has to be a conversation regarding how can young people participate in that conversation.

Those are some of very, very pointed comments that were made as well that I just wanted to follow up and acknowledge that we are on the right direction in addressing.

IMAM MUHAMMAD: But I think it need to be more than just a conversation. We've been having a conversation for a long time, and I'm not going to tell you what they say on the street about the three black mayors that we had in this city.

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COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Well, I'll do this --

IMAM MUHAMMAD: I will keep that.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I will do this. I can't speak to those three guys, you know, with all due respect, but nevertheless, for me I can speak for the track record that I run on. I can't speak for no other elected official. I have a strong track record from when I started before I was elected on the same path --

IMAM MUHAMMAD: I followed it.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: -- that goes beyond just -- but I do understand the level of, to be quite frank, feedback that folks are saying and needs to be done. So hopefully this is a part of that process, to begin looking at how do we shift and make this the number one priority here in the City. At least that's my agenda as to why I'm convening and having folks here. And for me, this

isn't an election year. You know, this is me being passionate about something I believe in, but I do understand the dialogue that is going on out there as well.

Councilwoman Blackwell.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Thank you. I want to thank the Imam and all who were here and all who have been patient all day. I left these hearings this morning and had three different meetings, and each of them were about people who have problems, people who have mortgage problems. My last meeting was with a bank. The meeting in the middle was with Gerry Sweeney, who he and Drexel have a $3.9 billion project in my district.

So I said that to say that we thank you for your testimony. We know it is true. We know that these are times that we have to be very careful about, be engaged in, and realize that we're there. I certainly agree with all that you have

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said. I thank you for coming, and I know that life has to change. Thank you, Imam.

IMAM MUHAMMAD: Thank you very much, Councilwoman. God bless you all. Okay. And we support the bill and we support you all, but, again, we want to get some noise down here in City Hall to make some things happen and let's go out there and save our children.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

IMAM MUHAMMAD: Save the young brothers out there and let's continue to make a call to them, because I think that lady that came in here with the son that got murdered, she called us all to the table and put us to the test, and she crying out, saying I got to live right there, they two blocks from me. What the DA's Office going to do about it? What they going to do about it? What they going to do, get an answering machine?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I understand that.

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IMAM MUHAMMAD: So, you know --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You know what I'm hoping -- and I probably could talk about this off line, but hopefully even separate from the DA's Office, getting involved with that type of situation. And I'm going to call a spade a spade, because we're doing this in South Philly right now and we just stopped some things from happening as a result last week.

Separate from the DA's Office, though -- and I don't know where that young lady lives, but maybe some key people that live in that neighborhood that's probably somebody with a level of credibility can maybe go and do an intervention on the street level. Now, we're talking like real, you know, intervention/prevention talk where -- this just happened two weeks ago in our area. There were some people that knew some of the young guys that were going back and forth shooting at one another.

So what they decided to do was, you know what, to the best of their ability, let me bring some of these young men together, let them talk, get off their chest what the issues were, and I think at least for right now we've been able to curtail some of the violence that was going to take place after a young man who had just got shot.

But I don't know that young lady's area, so I hope there's another part of that conversation separate from the DA's Office. And that's why we kind of wanted to have this hearing, to really figure out what are some of the best practices, because some of them is just the intervention, making sure -- I see Terry back there. When he was working for CeaseFire -- I'm not from North Philly. He's from North Philly, so he probably has more of at stake and probably more effective than Kenyatta Johnson going out, because he knows the players and saying, Listen, why y'all

guys shooting at one another? What can we do to resolve it? Because right now I think what the young lady was expressing, you have somebody that's arrested, she still lives in the neighborhood and lost her son, and we don't know what's going to happen moving forward. So how can we prevent that next incident, rather it's her -- and I'm being careful with my words, but the reality is, you know, this is just normal what happens. When there's a victim and they have friends and family members, depending on how they feel, there can also be a retaliation, and when it's hyped up by social media, that Facebook, that Instagram, that just incites what's going on. How do you get to the bottom of that before it happens?

I'm not saying I have all the answers to it, but I know on the grassroots level, at some point in time maybe somebody needs to pull her to the side to find out who the players are to kind of figure out, because usually

somebody knows somebody and we kind of relate it or some capacity kind of say, you know what, here's how we can get to the bottom of this before it goes to the next level.

IMAM MUHAMMAD: We did that already.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: With that young lady?

IMAM MUHAMMAD: Yeah, we did that.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good. Thank you.

IMAM MUHAMMAD: We born and raised down South Philly. So maybe you need to call South Philly back to the table.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I know that's right.

MR. DEVINE: Thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

So here's what I want to do. So we have Khayla. I want to ask Tyrique

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Glasgow and the District Attorney's Office to please come on up. We have Evan from the Youth Commission and Kenyatta Bey from the Point Breeze Youth Development Basketball League, and then we're going to have Bishop Darrell Robinson. And Khayla just came back from -- people say we don't have the youth at the table. So Khayla is an outstanding young lady who represents the South Philadelphia Stakeholders. She just came back from Cuba, a youth advocate of the -- what is it, community courts?

(Witnesses approached witness table.)

MS. COLEMAN-SMITH: Philadelphia Community Youth Court.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Say it again.

MS. COLEMAN-SMITH: Philadelphia Community Youth Court.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Philadelphia Community Youth Courts, who

just received the invitation to come here the other day, which I do appreciate. You got back in the country on Sunday?

MS. COLEMAN-SMITH: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And we appreciate you for stepping up to the plate and being here today.

Evan represents the Philadelphia Youth Commission Public Safety Committee. We have the District Attorney's Office Focused Deterrence program with Tyrique Glasgow, and I work with the Point Breeze Youth Development Basketball League for, what, the past ten years, Kenyatta Bey, founded by CEO and founder Mr. Dawud Bey. I thank all of y'all for being here.

Ms. Smith.

MS. COLEMAN-SMITH: My name is Khayla Coleman-Smith. Before I give my testimony, I would like to say that this is about the youth. While I'm sure you choose your list of people to testify based on job position, Ph.D.'s and

political standing, I feel that what I have to say is just as important. When it's my turn to speak, I am most often speaking to half an empty room. I respectfully request that those people in positions to actually help the youth and those who have listened, to stay to listen to me or put the youth who are speaking at the top of your list. After all, the youth perspective is more important.

Regretfully, I stand before you today on the matter of youth gun violence in Philadelphia. I am a 16-year-old product of an inner city South Philadelphia, the Philadelphia public school system. I attend Philadelphia High School for Girls. I am in the 11th grade, and I aspire, with Godspeed, to be a juvenile justice attorney.

Yet the violence in the community -- the City of Brotherly Love is predicted that most youth who look like me will not only fail at my

educational goals, most will end up dead or incarcerated within a few years. Even violence committed by young girls is at an all-time high.

While violence is being posted all over social media and in the news like the plague, we do have some youth out here who are doing positive things who dare to stand up and make a difference. And while I am not a product of the streets, bullets have no name. When the sound of gunshots ring out is the norm, it is a matter of concern. When I fear for the safety of my brothers and sisters and my family, it is a matter of concern.

At a time when I should be enjoying my childhood, I am at risk going to and from school at Broad and Olney on public transportation and, even worse, in my own neighborhood, and I am very concerned.

In an effort to better understand why youth who look like me

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commit acts of violence, especially against others who also look like me, the South Philadelphia Anti-Violence Task Force, under the guidance of Councilman Kenyatta Johnson and South Philadelphia Junior Stakeholders, implemented Philly Youth Speak Up, a traveling youth anti-violence forum. It was designed to encourage conversations among youth across South Philadelphia on the issues of violence as sources and consequences.

Throughout the process, we discovered that violence was in fact a learned behavior as a result of several factors, including environment, household situations, and parenting. Peer pressure, fear, and lack of resources also add to this ongoing epidemic.

Most youth and young adults lack adequate education to become employed, so they turn to the streets for material things and even survival. To some, going to prison is a birth right, and many lack the fear of consequence.

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As a founding member of Philadelphia Community Youth Court, South Philadelphia Junior Stakeholders, and South Philadelphia Youth Anti-Violence Task Force, I have charged myself with the task of changing thinking to changing behaviors of my peers and the youth of Philadelphia as a whole. I am in turn asking for more support from you, parents, elected officials, and the entire community of Philadelphia, to help us in the violence and the school-to-prison pipeline. You can help us by investing more time, attention, and funds into our education. Equip us with the tools we need to further our education and help us become employable and productive. Stop closing our schools and taking away much-needed programs. Give us something more productive to do. Stop closing our PAL centers, libraries, and rec centers. Give us an alternative to being on the streets and in unhealthy situations.

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Once they closed the PAL centers in my neighborhood, I can state as fact that most of the males in my immediate community my age that look like me were incarcerated, including one mother who lost three of her boys to incarceration or death, when they would have normally been taking full advantage of the PAL center and activities at Barrett. We fought long and hard to keep our center, but no one cared enough about the youth in my community.

Provide us with jobs and training opportunities, mentor and mediations, communication skills and problem resolution, tools for coping and tools for success. Support restorative programs and interventions and make our youth and young adults a priority. Of all the programs you have in place now, how many include the youth perspective?

Provide mandatory parenting classes so parents can be parents. While the youth in our community need to put

the guns down, the adults need to step up and set a better example.

Teenagers who look like me are not able to bring drugs and guns into the community that also add to violence. It starts with an adult, somehow, somewhere, with the resources to do so. I charge you with making a better effort to put an end to that.

Those of you who have the power to distribute funding need to make me and others who look like me as well as youth across the City of Philadelphia, regardless of where we live, ethnic or social backgrounds, income or race, a priority and put the funding where they are most needed. Thus we can begin to take progressive steps to combat the sources of violence.

If you want to know why youth do certain things, just ask them. I think the youth perspective is most important. And, again, I say to you, bullets have no name. While you may or

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may not be a product of inner city streets, nor do you look like me, or maybe you do, being in the wrong place at the wrong time, a stray bullet can affect you too.

While prayer is a taboo in schools and public forums these days in fear of offending someone, I say vigilance and prayer is definitely needed. I can only pray that you will put forth a sincere and wholehearted effort and join us in this fight to stop the violence.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

(Applause.)

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Evan.

MR. RIDDICK: Thank you, Councilman Johnson. Again, my name is Evan Riddick. I would first like to say I thank you all for inviting me here as well as others to express their concerns and opinions, but just to share the same sentiment, I would also like to express

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that when speaking of topics that regard youth, that we be at the forefront.

I sit on the Philadelphia Youth Commission. I also sit on the Police Advisory Commission, and one of the things that we should do and that we had to fill out to become a commissioner is say why should youth be civically engaged, why should youth lead and help guide one another. Because the youth perspective is always changing. With all respect to Councilman Kenyatta Johnson and your peers, you know, you have -- things that you did were way back then.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Whoa.

MR. RIDDICK: But not --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You trying to call us old now?

MR. RIDDICK: No, I'm not trying at call you old, but things change.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I'm talking about trap music and things like that.

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MR. RIDDICK: Things change as time goes on and so does the youth perspective. So with that, I urge you to try to employ the youth voice and vision in all of your endeavors.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes, sir.

MR. RIDDICK: So just a little overview of the Youth Commission.

The Youth Commission represents Philadelphia's youth in public hearings and gives testimony that reflects youth perspective. We work with City officials, non-profit organizations, as well as other entities to develop strategies to improve the lives of Philadelphia's youth.

At the Youth Commission, we are committed to increased social and political engagement of Philadelphia's youth through our efforts in advising your decision-making and the Mayor's, as well as possible statewide initiatives and also helping to train and empower the next generation of the City's leaders,

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again, going back to that stigma that the perspective is always changing and it has to be incorporated in every single thing that you do.

So to the reason why we are here, and you all have heard the statistics, you've heard the facts. Homicide is the second leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24, and over 80 percent of those deaths, as you know, Councilman Johnson, are by firearms. To note even more, firearm injuries are the cause of death of 18 children and young adults per day in the United States.

Now, we all know those are national numbers, but I'll just put that into a bit of perspective for you for Philadelphia. The last Administration had the Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative. As you all know, that came out in 2013. That had numbers that said youth violence in general really isn't down over the past five years. We

have youth involved in murders, 36 percent; youth involved in shootings, 48 percent; and also the victims of those shootings, also 48 percent. So the numbers really haven't changed that much, and I would like to urge City Council and the Mayor's Office to reevaluate that study that was done in 2013 and to assess it and see where you go from there.

So far too long we hear stories of kids and young adults that are gunned down by either retaliation or caught in the crossfire when coming home from school, coming home from work, playing in a playground or slain before heading off to college. You know, each of us in this room, we have either heard stories or we've unfortunately seen it firsthand, and it would be a disservice to the City of Philadelphia if I were to say that that had no effect on me. That's incorrect. If it didn't have an effect on me, I wouldn't be here. If it didn't have an effect on the community, we

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wouldn't be here, and you wouldn't be here.

So we in the City pride ourselves on love. So we have to come to realize that we are all connected in one way or another. We must protect one another. Our communities must form closer and stronger bonds, you know. I'm not that old. I'm only 23 years of age. I look a lot older. But apparently everyone always says that. We need to go back to what our communities were, you know. If a young boy 10 years old, if my neighbor's son is shot, that might as well be my son, because I wouldn't want the pain of losing a son, of losing a child, a family member to senseless violence.

We must build bonds that are stronger than the one that brought us here today of the blood that has been spilled over the years in Philadelphia. Someone said earlier the City is burning. If I misquoted, I'm sorry, but he's

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right. We have to -- although we are related by blood, all of us, we're not directly related. We are indirectly related. We are all part of this interconnected community, a diverse community, where we have to understand our actions affect one another. We're all not as individual as we would like to think, because we are connected in this way.

So this is a city, in my opinion, that needs progress. This is a city that truly needs healing. And I would like to ask Council to include the Youth Commission in all your endeavors, including this one, and obviously we support the measures to create this Commission -- this Committee.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Evan.

Before we do Point Breeze Youth Development Basketball League, let me get the District Attorney's Office so the two of you can go together.

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Now -- and I will state this for the record. We probably should have had Caroline and Tyrique speak when Mr. Mosee spoke early on, because y'all both represent the District Attorney's Office, but nevertheless, thank you for your patience as well. And your program is probably amongst the top programs that's being discussed as we talk about the issue of youth gun violence here in the City of Philadelphia being a model, in line with the CeaseFire program, but how do we begin to look at expanding or building upon the success. And I know you have been promoted, which is great, even though I preferred you at the helm, because you know all the intel in South Philadelphia and who the players are as it relates to the issue of youth gun violence in general. But the District Attorney told me that the promotion still is a good thing because you have purview of all of it under your jurisdiction. And so thank you for being here and

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having Tyrique Glasgow, who is on the ground, addressing issues as well. So y'all two can start when ready.

MS. McGLYNN: Thank you very much, Councilman Johnson and all Councilmembers for inviting us. I think it's actually appropriate that we discuss Focused Deterrence separate and apart --

COURT STENOGRAPH: Can I have your name, please.

MS. McGLYNN: I'm sorry. Thank you. Caroline McGlynn from the District Attorney's Office.

I think it actually is appropriate that we're at this time of the day with some of the people who have been doing the work on the streets, who have been in the communities doing the outreach, because Focused Deterrence is sort of the epitome of community-based prosecution and trying to be non-traditional prosecutors, try to stop things before they start so that we have less work prosecuting and more work

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solving crimes and making sure that those who really should be held accountable are, but those who need help and don't want to be criminal cannot be criminals, because I think that's what this all boils down to, is how to stop the person who might pick up a gun from doing it.

One of the most riveting statistics, since we've all been mentioning them, is in 2014 over a quarter of the homicides in Philadelphia were due to single shots to the head, which means to me that over a quarter of the homicides are assassinations. These aren't just people shooting guns into crowds of people anymore. There's real specific laser-like precision and decisions being made to kill that are absolutely an epidemic. And with Focused Deterrence, the multi-agency, collaborative, and thoughtful approach that I think is a best practice in Philadelphia and in other cities that has demonstrated results with reducing crime

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is a really good way for South Philadelphia, for example, to have combatted this problem.

In 2013, the year after we began Focused Deterrence, there was a 66 percent reduction in gang or group-related homicides. That's staggering. That's bigger than any other reduction in any part of the City at the time. And I know South Philadelphia is sort of notorious for having groups and neighborhood structures that are conducive to Focused Deterrence, but I think there are other hotspots and sections of the City that would also benefit from this.

There's been a lot of talk about expanding Focused Deterrence. I think it's something to talk about, but I think it's totally and completely resource driven. When we started Focused Deterrence in South Philadelphia, we took a year preparing to do it, because that's what it takes. You can't just go in

willy-nilly and make decisions and do things quickly. You have to know who the players are, who needs help, the community groups that are willing to help, the law enforcement partnerships that are willing to help and sit at the table and be dedicated. And it takes 24/7 dedication for all the people involved to do it, and that's all resources.

So I think other areas of the City can see the same kind of benefits from this type of strategy. And I always call it a strategy, not a program because it is a strategy. It's not just a program that comes and goes and that is funded for a year and then is no longer. It's a long-term strategy to reduce gun violence, which is I think what this entire Commission is about.

So obviously the District Attorney totally supports the Commission. We're very much dedicated to not just responding by being involved in

prosecuting crimes as they come into our office, but also in trying to stop them before they start. And Tyrique is here, also Reuben Jones from the Mayor's Office, who has been part of the team. And a very early example is a homicide that occurred, Reuben and our other outreach coordinator at the time went to his brother's house and said, Don't do it. I know you want to retaliate right now. Don't do it. And if there were seven Tyriques and seven Reubens, imagine what we could do even in South Philadelphia and other sections of the City, and it's all the will of Council and the will of the City to actually put in the funds to stop this sort of thing and to put in the funds to let the people who really want to do the good work do it.

So, Tyrique, why don't you just talk a couple minutes about some of the things that you've done as part of those strategies.

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MR. GLASGOW: Tyrique Glasgow, Community Outreach Coordinator for Focused Deterrence in the District Attorney's Office.

To follow up on some of the things that Caroline was saying, there's three parts to the Focused Deterrence, and it's law enforcement, it's the social service, it's the outreach. Me and Reuben Jones wear the social services and community outreach component of it. And when I started about a year ago, one of the things that was at the table was helping, how can we help, how can we reduce, how can we stop some of the things, and one of the things that me and Reuben when we was at the table was the stereotype. And just coming from the streets, the community don't understand the Police Department or don't respect it. The District Attorney's Office is just, you know, lock them up, throw them away. But it's changed the view on how we look, because the same way that the

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community don't understand the District Attorney and the Police Department, the Police Department and the community doesn't understand the people in there. So our thing is to bring them together. We started programs and events to help raise some of those gaps.

One of the things that we started was the Stop the Violence Tournament down on 7th Street where we took a gang where they committed to saying that for one month, they wasn't going to commit any crimes, because they wanted to play basketball. So that's our thing. You can't just go into the community and say, Stop shooting, stop doing those things. It has to be a give and take, a carrot and a thing. So if you stayed out of trouble, what do you want to do?

I want to play ball. I want to get jobs. I want to do those things. And that's what happened. They committed to no violence for those days, and it

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worked out. For 30 days there was no arrests, no incidents down in that area, and it worked.

When we came back to the table, it was no big deal. It was basketball. We seen that the strategy actually helped the guys who were doing it. And everybody that's doing the hearings notice that you have to give the kids something to do instead of just saying don't go in the corner, don't shoot, don't do those things. And inside the basketball tournaments, there were score keepers, there were clock people, there were people who were community groups that came out and actually had the chance to interact with the District Attorney's Office, the Police Department. And it's just like changing the stereotype of what's going on because they wear a suit. It's like the Councilwoman was saying. There's real dudes out there that can get the job done. Like, yeah, we're in, but it comes from the community. All the

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events and stuff that's going on, that's community based, and it gives them an opportunity to talk about some of the issues that's going on.

And everything that we started with Focused Deterrence was Community Advisory Board. The Community Advisory Board were members of grassroot organizations around South Philadelphia who ideas and programs that they already had implemented in South Philly said how can we give them more resources or things to help those going on. Inside our Community Advisory Board meeting, on the agenda is "community voice" where the community gets to come and address the issue that's going on that they need done before it gets to the Police Department, before it gets to the District Attorney Office, because we know what's going on.

About two months ago, we had our Advisory Board meeting and a mother came, just like there was a mother here, and explained my son ain't doing right,

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and it worked out. Like the resources that was there that was provided for our Community Advisory Board through Focused Deterrence helped get that young man some resources, some help and got him actually back into school, because he was out of school. He wasn't attending. He had some issues going on.

MS. McGLYNN: If I can just add one other thing. I think the most important part of Focused Deterrence as a strategy is that a message is very strongly put out there early about changes of the rules, where if you do right and if you want social services and an off-ramp to some of the criminal activities you've been participating in, you're at the top of every list. If you need job training, if you need to get your GED, if you need drug treatment, if you need anger management, you go to the top of every list because you've been identified as someone who is really the most at risk to kill or be killed. It's

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like an extension of the identification of YVRP probationers.

And then there's also the, But if you or a member of your group that you associate with commit a shooting, all of you will be held responsible, and I think that message got out fast. I mean, we did a call-in here in City Hall where we had members of all sorts of different gangs and groups in South Philly and we said to them, The rules are changed. Starting today if you or a member of your group pulls a trigger of a gun, you will all face the consequences, and that negative peer pressure and that message went out like wildfire. And, sure, shootings still happened. They always do, because unfortunately that's the reality, but they were dramatically reduced, because everyone was like, Don't you shoot or I'll get in trouble. We need to figure this out another way. And it was very, very successful.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So before

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I turn it over to Point Breeze Youth Development Basketball League, Councilman Green.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Just very quick. I just wanted to commend you and the work you've done with Focused Deterrence and the District Attorney for that type of really creative, more preventative type of work. Being a former prosecutor who was in the DA's Office, I was also in the Attorney General's Office, and when I first heard about Focused Deterrence, I thought it was a very unique way of looking at how do we deal with public safety and trying to be preventative.

My question is, what is your current budget for Focused Deterrence and what has been the budget over the past few years that it's been in existence?

MS. McGLYNN: Well, I can tell you for the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, the budget has been zero, and what we've had to do is take

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existing resources and reallocate them. That's been extraordinarily difficult. I mean, I will tell you as the Chief of South Division at the time when we implemented Focused Deterrence, I worked literally 24/7, and it's because I believed in the program, but that's something that's not sustainable. All the DAs who worked in South Division were doing extensive sentencing memoranda. They were doing bail hearings. They were going above and beyond on each of the cases when we had to do an enforcement, meaning a shooting had happened. That is, frankly, very difficult to sustain, because you need people, you need hours, you need people to do the work.

So we did it. We made it happen. We worked very grassroots with the Mayor's Office, and City Council did give a budget of, I think it was, $150,000 over the first year or two for a social worker and for outreach to be done. But as far as the District

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Attorney's Office specifically, we had no budget, and I can tell you if there was any plan to expand it in any way or even make it even more robust in South Philly, it's all resource driven. It's been very difficult.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: I know I'm talking to other people in other parts of the City and there's been the idea of wanting to expand Focused Deterrence. If you were able to put together a range of what the amount would cost -- and I'm assuming that you've used probably federal and state grants to pay for some of the DA's perspective, but if you were able to put some range on the dollar amount, what would that be?

MS. McGLYNN: I know early on we received a grant through PCCD for $250,000, and it's barely scratched the surface. I mean, just to give an example of some money that came in from a different source.

I can't put a number on it

right now. I know the DA is working very hard on putting together our budget proposal, and this is an element of it, and also with my new job being sort of a citywide crime strategy person -- that's what my new role is at the District Attorney's Office -- we're looking for the funding to try to figure out what each bureau and each division could benefit from strategy-wise, and I know that he'll be coming up with a number when he comes in May to testify. But I can tell you that it is very resource intensive. It requires hiring lawyers, analysts, investigators, and all of that makes it successful and the hard work of people.

So it's all people and resource driven, but I can't give you a number off the top of my head.

COUNCILMAN GREEN: Well, if you could take it back to the office. I know it's a partnership not only of the District Attorney's Office but also the

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Police Department, because I know that you had that district and the captain of the district at the time was spending a lot of resources using social media to actually do research in reference to some of the people involved in the community, and that helped to spur the opportunity for Focused Deterrence. And in order to be able to have a similar type of program in other parts of the City, you have to have that same level of engagement from the Police Department, especially at the captain level, to do that social media and other forms of research.

So I will just say if there's a way of coming up with some type of range or what the cost would be both from the DA's Office as well as from the Police Department, we could start thinking about ideas in reference to maybe some type of dedicated funding stream or just other funding to, considering you have now a citywide approach with your new position, to kind of roll that out over time.

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MS. McGLYNN: Absolutely. And I think that's part of the plan at the DA for the budget hearings because of my new position, to figure out what the strategy is for each section of the City and what that will cost. So thank you. And also as Tyrique said, for community outreach, coordinators and other people as well. Definitely.

Thank you very much.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Well, it's on the agenda of the current Administration, because I know it was mentioned as part of one of his ideas. When I mean the "Administration," I mean the Mayor. So you may want to follow up on what he talked about while he was on the trail prior to him getting into office and is that still the same agenda now that he's in, which I'm quite sure that he will do his due diligence to follow up, but it's at least worth a conversation as a follow-up as a part of this process.

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Evan, can you switch with Kenyatta, please.

MR. KENYATTA BEY: Good afternoon. I would like to thank Councilman Kenyatta Johnson and all of the Councilmembers for inviting us to come and testify or give our explanation on ideas about what it is that we can do to stem the tide of youth gun violence in our communities. And at this current moment, we're in the Point Breeze area. We've been up and running for 21 years, and we've had some of our participants go off to college and play professional in the NBA and some of them overseas.

It's just a matter of being out there and knowing what the community needs and providing a safe haven for our young people to come and have a good time and enjoy themselves and having something for them to look forward to. We take pride in having a structured environment, structured activities with adult supervision, because all of our young

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people, they may seem like they not familiar or respect people who expect high expectations of young people, but they all love and respect you when you tell them that they have to do things a certain way and it's either that way or you're not going to be able to participate.

We have 710 participants every summer. We out there every summer. As far as the basketball is concerned, we're out there every summer from 5:00 in the afternoon to 9:00 in the evening. Bilal Qayyum mentioned that we may want to try to get the extended time to utilize the recreation centers to keep our people busy. As you alluded to earlier, that your grandmother used to tell you that the idle mind is the devil's workshop, and I was told that same thing by my mother.

So we take pride in being there for the young people and providing a safe haven and giving them an opportunity to

display their talents.

We have a very short staff, very limited budget. Councilman Kenyatta Johnson has been gracious enough to allow us -- to allot us an Activity Fund grant through his office and things of that nature, but it doesn't really scratch the surface for the things that we need. And that's just one aspect of -- one of the aspects of some of the things that we do. We also do counseling for our young people. We also do life skills and conflict resolution.

We have our founder here, Dawud Bey, my brother, and he'll be able to explain or talk more about the conflict resolution aspect. We also have two of our young people, who one of them is a participant in our program for some years and the other is a young person who -- I coach at Audenried High School. I'm also the head basketball coach at Audenried High School. So I was asked to come and testify and was told that some of the

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young people would get an opportunity to have a few words. So I'm going to keep it brief. I'm going to ask my brother, the founder of Point Breeze Youth Development, to explain some of the things we do in regards to the conflict resolution piece.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

MR. DAWUD BEY: Good afternoon.

COUNCILMAN JONES: And thank everybody for their patience, because I know this is such an important issue, everybody wanted to have a say about it, and for those who stuck around to the end of it, that shows your commitment to the struggle. So I appreciate you.

MR. DAWUD BEY: Thank you, Councilman.

My name is Dawud Bey. I'm the founder of Point Breeze Youth Development, founded the program maybe like 21 years ago. One of the reasons why I founded this program was, one, it gave me a little bit of self-satisfaction

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in regards to trying to correct some of the wrongs that I had did in the community, because at once I believe I was part of the problem, and I wanted to figure out a way how I could become part of the solution.

One of the things that we decided to do was to start a restorative justice program, which means to restore order, where we bring the perpetrator, the victim, and the community together to bring about real resolution. In doing so, I think it gave us an opportunity to basically take these issues and face these issues head on and go directly to the source of the problem. When I say "source of the problem," it's like the shooters, the guys that's actually out there every day shooting they gun or busting they gun, as they will say. You know, we took an initiative to just go and approach these guys. Because being in South Philadelphia, it's a small area. You basically know who is who and what's

what. You may not know guys' names and stuff like that when you hear they names, but as soon as you walk up to these guys and you look these guys in the face, you see these guys, you know, I know your father, you look just like such-and-such. So that automatically give you a connection with these guys, because at the end of the day, it's about really building a real relationship and a trust factor with these individuals.

And actually I just heard about y'all organization, and no pun or not taking a shot at any one individual organization. On the streets is really about building a certain amount of credibility and a certain amount of trust from people, and when they hear the DA Office or when they hear certain organizations, these young guys are not going to really participate in situations whereas they feel as though that they got -- they dealing with, you know, like we talked about earlier, this

no-snitching culture. You understand? So a lot of times it doesn't allow you to build a certain line of trust with these young individuals, and I believe it's important that we get with other young or older brothers that's in the community that have some relationships and has some influences to basically do what Kenyatta was speaking about today, because that's what we do. We basically go directly to the source of the problem and we talk directly to these guys and let them know from more than one different type of standpoint. Because when they hear about you, they may think you cool, they may think you got some type of other so-called street credibility that they respect, that gives you an opportunity to have a wider window to reach these individuals. And I just think it's important that we galvanize all of our resources and relationships among City Council, amongst the Mayor's Office, among even the Police Department and

everybody should be involved. But it has to be a situation whereas they know who is who and what's what in the community.

I believe I spoke to -- in fact, I'm sure I spoke to Commissioner Ross the other day on Power 99, and Bilal Qayyum was also a participant. Meek Mills called up and was involved with that as well. And I believe I just met the young gentleman today named Terry and I was able to put the name with the face today with me and Terry.

But these are the type of things -- what we is offering is basically to have a better relationship amongst each other. There have to be a better connection, because there's a disconnect between our elected officials, between our education department, between the prison systems and everything. And the children -- a lot of these guys when you talk to them -- believe it or not, I was in the room with three kids -- it was 15 kids, but three of the kids was in

college. One was a military vet. You understand? One we had to wait until 7 o'clock to conduct the meeting because he was actually coming from a job interview. So these guys is really, you know, trapped in a situation, you know, whereas it's not like these guys are total ignorant individuals who can't read and can't write and don't have no initiative to try to do nothing. It's just a matter of them -- like the guy told me, he said, Dawud, no one never even came to talk to me like you talking to me right now. Like a lot of our adults, a lot of our brothers are afraid to speak to these guys.

A friend of mine who is really close to me, he said, you know -- he kind of was being pessimistic and saying, Dawud, these guys don't know us.

Well, who cares if they know us or not. Like introduce yourself. Get to know these guys. And I think that's very important, is that we use individuals

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such as myself -- and I'm not waving my baton, but at the end of the day, I come from the streets. You understand? I breathe and sweat the smell of the concrete from South Philadelphia. So I know who is who. I know what's what. I know the mindset that they have.

And I believe it's important that we do receive more resources, because I hear the young lady just speaking just now, she might have mentioned -- she said it was zero budget, but then she said it was something like 250,000 here, 150,000 there, and in our ten years -- and that didn't scratch the surface to help her what she needed to do, but in our ten years, I don't believe we received $300,000 from nobody. In fact, I came when I first founded this organization -- and I know, Kenyatta, you've been very resourceful with what you have. You understand? But it don't equal up to $300,000 in ten years.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Not at

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all.

MS. DAWUD BEY: You understand? So we've been involved with this for 21 years, and at the end of the day, I actually took my own money, because I came to Councilman-at-large at the time, who is the Mayor now, Jim Kenney, and I presented him a proposal, and he taught my something. He said to me, he said, Dawud, he said, go back to your community and get me five signatures from five local organizations. Because what he was teaching me, he was telling me he didn't want to put the cart before the horse. And as I was thinking it wasn't enough programs, enough people involved in the community, one of the things he was showing me also was that once you get involved, you really get a chance to see all the people that's really been doing things that you thinking about doing, that you thinking that haven't been done. You really see there's a lot of people that's really been involved in the

community, because if you not a part of the solution or part of the involvement, then you don't think enough is being done, because you're not involved. But at the end of the day, he also taught me that as you try to do well, he said, you will see there's people that really don't want to see you do well. You understand? Because I really couldn't get five signatures. He said, I'm going to give you $75,000, Dawud. Just get me five signatures from five other organizations in your community and I'll give you the $75,000.

One of the things he wanted to do also was to respect his constituents, and he didn't want to put the cart before the horse, meaning he didn't want to give me funding without getting the other approval from the other organizations within the community, which at the time I didn't know how important that is, but I understand now.

But within that, I also learned

that we need to work together more. We need all these organizations -- and I was incarcerated for ten years, and I own that and I'm not ducking that reality. You understand? But since I came home over the last year, last 12 months or whatever, all I hear is everybody bashing each other's organizations. You understand? It's like, Oh, man, he's trying to hustle, he's trying to do that, he's trying to do this, and my thing is like, look -- and I think it's the responsibility on all of our parts to defend each other. You understand? We have to defend each other. Like all these programs is necessary, and we probably need more ideas and more initiatives, but at the end of the day, we got to really look at how we can go directly to the source of the problem and approach these killers. You understand? Approach these killers, approach these guys and let them know from the standpoint that, one, this is our

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community and, number two, we not afraid of you. Number three, there's no resolution without enforcement, you know.

So we have to have a position that speaks directly to these guys to let them know that we just not going to tolerate it no more, you know. And a lot of people, they jump down the back of us men, but these young girls is all the way, as they say, out of pocket. These young girls don't have no class. They don't know how to talk. They don't know how to walk. They don't know how to eat. You understand? And I think our women in this community need to get more -- because nobody spoke really besides, Kenyatta, you mentioned it briefly in regards to getting and dealing with these young girls out here. Because a lot of these guys, a lot of us, we always -- what did we used to get dressed for? To impress the girls. Why did we buy cars? To impress the girls.

So the women have a whole lot

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of influence, a whole lot more influence than we really realize. And, one, the women is the first teacher. You understand? And with the women being the first teacher, a lot of this mentality that we have, we got to take some responsibility as women as well. You understand? Because a lot of women are not really teaching these young girls or these young boys what their responsibility is to this society, and it causes us a lot of problems and it causes us to spend all this kind of money for jails and everything like that, because they say paradise lies at the foot of the woman. So that mean you have a strong responsibility. And I wish Ms. Pendleton, I think her name was, I wish she was here when I mention this, because I really wanted her to know that she has my support.

But as women, Women in Charge and all of y'all -- Mothers in Charge, go get with them young girls out there. You

understand? Go get with them young girls and get with them with regards to etiquette and how to conduct themselves, because these boys basically, you know, feed off of the energy of the women. Even with the women, the young girls saying, Aww, you a snitch. You know what I'm saying? This, that and the third. That's also part of the problem, you know, with dealing with these women and stuff.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I just want to interject. Mothers in Charge, they do have a young ladies program that they do, and they also go into the female prisons as well. But even beyond them, because they're just one organization, we do need more of an influence of young ladies stepping up and being -- I don't know how we use the word "mentoring" with women, but nevertheless, taking the younger ladies under the wing to try to get them to look at, because oftentimes some of the shootings that do take place

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in the neighborhood beefs, a lot of times the females are the source of it. You disrespected my girl. You tried to talk to her. And unless the young ladies take the lead and not condone -- like you know how you used to go see somebody and you got your tool with you and she know you in the house with it, and as opposed to her saying, That's not cool, why you bringing that into my house, or hold this for me and put this in your locker while we in school, you hold this for me, as opposed to the young lady not condoning it, saying, You know what, no -- and we will follow the lead, because you nice and you batting your eyes, it's like, All right, she said it ain't cool, let me fall back and kind of chill. That is a critical part.

And then I think what goes under the radar -- and I'm sure that we're going to talk about this in our Criminal Justice Committee. If you look at the number one increase in terms of

juveniles is women. When you talk about the Youth Study Center, right, and Muncy, that increase is in juvenile young ladies for some apparent reason going through the system in terms of the pipeline.

And so I'm going to turn it back over to Chairman Jones.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I just want to thank you, first of all, for -- a couple of things. I didn't fall off a turnip truck in this seat. I actually lived a life before I got here. I used to be Turtle from Berks Street, but that was in the last century. I do not speak that language anymore. I don't relate as well. Real, no real, but the struggles -- I had a dad, I had a mom that would walk up to a crowd of us on the corner and put hands on me. And I would respect that and fall back and go -- so when I talked to that family that testified today, they said that there were young people raising themselves and that mom had gotten into

the drug thing and now I had a baby that was coming of age into manhood. There's no instruction manual for that mentoring that you speak of to the woman or to the young guys, because dad is either -- there are entire blocks in my district that do not have an able-bodied man on the block between the ages of, let's say, 18, 19 and 35, an entire block. When we do the cleanups, it's the women out there. When we do the basketball, this, that or the other for young men, it is the women and mothers.

So there is an equal amount of responsibility that -- these kids didn't birth themselves. They're not from Mars. They didn't hatch under the Easter bunny. They came from us. We have that responsibility.

So I want to thank you for what you're doing, and I want to empower you to do more. So what Kenyatta talked about with this committee is, this is -- people have said this to us over the

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years, but we are going to pay particular attention as the budget process goes through from every department to say, What are you doing about this. That will be a repetitive question, with a prioritization on what you're talking about. That's the difference.

President Clarke empowered us to say, all right, take what we need from the public, from what your testimony is. It's being recorded. So that we can then start to apply it to, well, if your department gets this amount of money and does this amount of good, how can we help you along with that. And so it is a new emphasis. And Councilwoman Blackwell has been here. She's been hearing this a very long time, but there's going to be nine votes to support her in this effort that are prioritizing saving our babies from themselves sometimes, but also from the system.

So I want you to know that we're hearing. I think Councilman

Taubenberger, who is from the Far Northeast, was one of the most impassioned persons that heard it today, but that's one of nine votes that we're going to have that has been sensitized by what you're saying. And I got -- I have to applaud again -- I said it in the beginning. I'm going to say it near the end. This man from the time he walked in the doors made this a priority, and it's beginning to catch on in your second term. People are starting to listen. So I thank you.

MR. DAWUD BEY: One other thing and just in regards to what you said in regards to just understanding the culture and the new wave of how these younger guys act and think and stuff like that. One of the things that -- like right now -- remember you used to see girls playing hopscotch in the streets, us playing tops in the streets, football, you know, with the Nerf football in the streets? You don't see that no more.

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What you see in the streets primarily right now are dirt bikes. And one of our young kids from 24th Street -- 27th Street was killed about a dirt bike.

But the point I'm making in regards to the dirt bike life, I think that we should find a way to be a little bit more tolerant with that sport, with that activity.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Just to let you know, we recently -- we've had hearings on this particular topic. I think it's figuring out some liability issues in terms of the land and how it would actually look.

COUNCILMAN JONES: We actually have a tour coming up next week.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So let me back up. So Councilman Curtis Jones, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, he held hearings on it, and they just -- you just had a tour, because I couldn't make it.

They just had a tour of a

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particular site. I think he actually rode a dirt bike as well, but go visit some areas to kind of see what it looks like. So I think that's something we definitely need to keep on top of the agenda right now.

COUNCILMAN JONES: As Chair, I'm going to give our stenographer, who has been in this room since 10 o'clock, a 15-minute break so that she can take care of lunch maybe.

MR. DAWUD BEY: And I'd like to thank everybody. I have to go pay my property taxes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So if we could stick around a minute, because she can't type another thing. She has to take a break. Thank you.

MR. DAWUD BEY: Thank you.

(Short recess.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: We're going to reconvene our public hearing and begin the testimony of the next panel. Would you come up, bring the mic close to you.

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Thank you for your patience, and say your name and then start your testimony.

MR. HARRIS: Good afternoon.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Good afternoon.

MR. HARRIS: Good afternoon. My name is Joseph Harris. I'm a junior student at Universal Audenried Charter High School. I'm also the founder of Team MAD. That's Team Make a Difference. That's my own black youth foundation I'm starting.

Solutions for the problems for the gun violence, I feel like the youth need more exposure. Last year when I was a sophomore at my school, I didn't realize how good of a writer that I was until I had a senior creative writing class and I was top of my class. So I found out what my talent was. And I didn't see anything besides Philadelphia until last year in my Upward Bound Program when we went to New York City. So it opened my eyes. I feel like we

need something to reach for more. There should be more programs that teach young men character traits, morals so that they could become respectable young men.

I feel like certain kids, they don't really necessarily care about school no more unless it's -- like after the basketball season over. Like certain people, they feel that way. Like I said, there needs to be something to reach for. And there should be more exposure for the programs.

I'm a team member of Young Chances Foundation run by Mr. Tyrique Glasgow. I found out about that after having a conversation with him when they scouted me when he came to my school. I've been networking with lawyers and all of that stuff. So the exposure is key. I want to be a defense attorney some day. I didn't know that I wanted to be a defense attorney until talking with a prosecutor. So I feel like exposure is key.

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There should be more people going out into the streets and not necessarily -- like you guys, you could come out and don't need to have a suit and tie on. Just come out there with some jeans and a shirt on and just chill and talk with the community and stuff like that. They don't -- I feel like some kids feel intimidated by the suit and tie sometimes, because they feel like they want to get there, but they don't know how they're going to get there and they feel stressed about it. So I feel like people should come out to the community more.

Police should come out to the community more. It shouldn't be PAL centers being closed. It shouldn't be local recreation centers being closed. I saw that down 25th and Snyder there's a recreation center being rebuilt. I think that's good. And I'm not from South Philly. I'm from North Philly, but I go to school down there and I see stuff

that's happening. I want to change my community and the whole Philadelphia community as a whole. So I feel like that's what I want to do.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So let me ask you a couple questions, if you don't mind answering. But for this program, what would you be doing?

MR. HARRIS: Say that again.

COUNCILMAN JONES: But for your involvement in this program that you're in, what would you be doing?

MR. HARRIS: Can you elaborate?

COUNCILMAN JONES: So if you didn't have this program --

MR. HARRIS: Oh, I understand.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I need a translator for young people.

MR. HARRIS: I understand what you saying now.

It's difficult. Some people be in harder situations. People be out in street that -- you know, you never know. I even do a radio show from 6:00 to 8:00

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on Friday nights. You never know what can happen during that time. I don't know what I'd be doing if I wasn't in community activities or playing basketball. I'm not sure.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So you mentioned that young people need more exposure, that you didn't know how well you could write until you got into a writers program or workshop.

MR. HARRIS: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So when you say "exposure," more kids could benefit, more youth could benefit from those kinds of things to find out what they can do well.

MR. HARRIS: Yes. Also I feel -- all right. With all due respect, just for like future reference, I feel like if there's going to be a schedule for like younger kids to be here or teenagers to be here, it should be around the start, because I've been here with Kenyatta Bey since 10 o'clock this

morning. It's about 4:30, 5 o'clock. I've seen the room full and I've seen it empty. You know, it's kind of disappointing, but it's not discouraging. I feel like my voice should be heard on a platform. I'm glad to have this opportunity.

And also I feel like we should invest in our youth, because why talk about the future and not -- why talk about the future and not have the future here with us to talk about it? We can't change the future without the future. I feel like that's key.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So to your point, two things. Number one, you have my word that next time we do a hearing like this or whether it's budget, you can go first, young people, meaning you. That's number one. I heard what you said.

Number two, this is not the first time we talked to young people. This man when he first came in the door

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brought a group of about 24 young people into the Caucus Room next door, and quite frankly, what I heard frightened me. I'm not -- when I say "frightened," I don't want you to think I'm soft. I'm not.

MR. HARRIS: I understand what you saying.

COUNCILMAN JONES: But it opened my eyes to a level of realness. Yeah, realness.

MR. HARRIS: And it's hurtful.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Yeah, it was hurtful. I mean, when a young man looks in my face and tells me, "I don't think I got a future," that scares me. And when a young person says, "If I die, I don't care," that scares me. "If I have to take a life, oh, well." And I'm looking at this person, human being, somebody that's got to take all of our places to do these jobs that we do, it frightened me to hear the realness of where their reality was.

So you are important, and I

want you to know that we'll put you first. But go ahead, you were saying?

MR. HARRIS: I feel like to the point that you're making, that's part of having something to reach for. If they feel like I don't care if I die today, I don't care if I take a life, that's like -- they feel like what am I living for? So give them a reason -- give them motivation.

Visiting out of town, that's exposure and that's motivation. Seeing Manhattan, seeing how beautiful it is, that's motivation to better myself and make life better for me, my mother, and my sisters. So I feel like that's key. I feel like -- go ahead, make your point.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Duly noted. When I was a track coach, I did that before I wound up doing this, and that was some of the best years of my life. I met with, worked with kids, young people, that had never been out of ten square blocks of where they were born, ten

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square blocks, never been downtown. So when we started taking them to travel -- some of them actually were pretty talented -- we wind up going to places like New Orleans for the AAU track championship. And, you know, back then I didn't have money like Councilman Johnson, so I had to rent a van and we drove to New Orleans. We crossed a couple of rivers. On our way back, they had the little -- those metals couldn't have cost more than $10 a piece, 10 on their chest, first place, second place, gold, and one of the young ladies that lived in North Philadelphia, in Nicetown, we were coming back by the Schuylkill River and she said, "Hmm, that reminds me of the Mississippi we crossed." I almost had an accident, because here's somebody who had never been outside of their neighborhoods doing geography, talking about room service that they had, first time in their life. It was only pizza, but it came to their door. You know,

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they ordered it on the phone. It was an exposure to them.

I ran into that young lady and she's a nurse practitioner with a child. Now, she didn't do the traditional go to Harvard, but to me, that is a success, that she's giving back to her child. She has found a family. She is doing those little victories that mean so much in our community.

So you're right about the exposure thing. I agree with you. We got to get our young people out to see other places so that they know that there's something to dream for. And you're right, and I'm going to take note of that.

MR. HARRIS: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

MR. STARKS: I speak -- my name is Terry Starks. I've been here since 10 o'clock too, humbly.

I'm not here to bash anybody, first and foremost. I speak for -- and

everybody know I will with no problem. My thing is for the City of Philadelphia how do we stop the problem of death right now and the troubled outbursts, because we assess the ground.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Terry, just real quick, right, I'm going to call you a neighborhood activist/not celebrity, but I do want the public to note for the record that you were -- what was it, CNN?

MR. STARKS: I was on the Oprah Winfrey Network for the work I did for some organizations that was just here taking credit for the work.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes. So I just wanted to acknowledge that for the record, because I know you were interviewed by -- what's the young lady's name?

MR. STARKS: I had Lisa Ling with me for 13 days in the City of Philadelphia.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: About your

work and growing up in North Philadelphia and how you dedicated your life to address the issue of youth gun violence. I did want to say that for the record, and it's duly noted your passion and your commitment to be on the ground, in the streets addressing this issue.

So go ahead, proceed with your testimony.

MR. STARKS: Well, on the streets on the front line, I have a bullet that lies in my heart and on my spine, first and foremost. And we fight this fight for, humbly, the community -- we fight for the community and the safety of the community.

I think the real reason that the City is failing right now is that it need to be investigation, like some type of accountants that follow the money, because clearly the money is not being trickled down into the people that's actually doing the work. And I hear programs come up and speak about a best

practice, but my program was in New Orleans with Mayor Nutter and it's also on HBO, that they going around the country showing my facility, and I just think that it speaks volumes. Because right now while I'm speaking here, I got at least 500 youth in my center right now, and we was able to -- I teach my kids sustainability. I teach my kids money smarts. I teach my kids economics. I teach my kids politics. I teach my kids all of the necessary tools that they need for us to be able to sustain ourselves without even being funded, and this is the 8th year of it, and we operating on the corporate level with some of the best. And for us to be a best practice program that been deprived in the City of Philadelphia, I just speak humbly for the five kids that we lost in the last four months and 11 kids that we lost to homicide in the last six months.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: What's the name of your program?

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MR. STARKS: Express Yourself Urban Crisis Response Center.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Where is it located?

MR. STARKS: 16th and Lehigh. I had a casket in the middle of our Council President's ward, you know. And I would love for our Council President to really take us a little bit more serious in the City of Philadelphia, because I shouldn't have had to run for Deputy Mayor of the City of Philadelphia against Jim Kenney. I should have been able to get the resources that I needed to actually stabilize a community. And if you do a demographics of our community on the worsest corner in Philadelphia, we haven't had a shooting or a drug sold in the City of Philadelphia. And this summer it's going to be thousands of kids down there, because now we done created a dance team that got every kid excited before school come up to get to our center. So we created a safe haven, and

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I think that in the City of Philadelphia it need to be guys like me and -- I'm quite sure you looked and seen the generals that I had in here this morning that's ready to go to work for y'all down South Philly, you know. But in North Philly, we kind of like got it stabilized, but we never received funding. We thought that we were going to get help when we got all this accolade, but we didn't.

But I think that it needs to be somebody that monitors the funding. Once you monitor the funding and it should be -- if you really do this work like you say you do this work, then you shouldn't be worried about a paycheck. You should be worried about the actual program actually working. So to hear programs that's actually being funded that's still calling me to bring my kids to the events, that says something is wrong in the City of Philadelphia.

So I'm not here to keep

fighting against everybody. All I'm saying is how do we work together, because I would love for the Council, the City Council, the City of Philadelphia to get behind us, because come April the 2nd, we going to be doing a playground tour. We going to be having the FOI with us. There's going to be a couple of -- we're going to be servicing areas, and by the time -- I'm very good at what I do, and by the time we get out of each area, they going to have a leader in that area, they going to have monthly meetings established, and then we're going to have them come into the PAVC meeting and actually update on the outcomes of that community.

So I just think that while we on the ground level, I don't think people really -- like right now there's no people in here. I done dealt with 12 homicides in the last week in the City of Philadelphia, and for the people to not be here, that's actually -- you know,

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it's like a slap in the face to the people that's actually out there on a day-to-day basis.

So I think that -- I think everybody should take everybody's level of respect. It should be a level of respect for the people that's actually doing the work, doing the daily work. And I think that with Council, it will be best served for y'all to create -- because we came up with -- while we serving these areas, I think that it will be great that the Council can host it. We can do a youth dance battle for peace, and I guarantee you any kid -- and one of these organizations can do the data and get in touch with the teachers and get in touch with the parents and see the drastic difference of the student that was the troubled student, because he trying to get to that dance battle on Saturday.

Now, I could have walked in here with 500 kids, but I came humbly for

myself, because right now this is how you get the kids across the City to know each other, through dance, and I would love for the Council to be able to host it. And while we mobilizing communities, we can be setting up the kids that's getting in trouble to be dance groups and actually battle each other and let the Council be the judge. And what happens is, the kids will start seeing a significant -- because it's something for them to do. In order to save these babies, in order to save these communities right now, you have to reach these babies at a level they can understand, and one thing about this that I learned in doing this work is that you give a little, you get a little, and right now the bottom line is not getting nothing, because when it all get trickled down to us, they want to give us a stipend and a slap on the chin.

So I just speak humbly for the bottom level. It should be a separate

resource from the Mayor's Office, from the Council. The Commissioner watched me for eight years. That's why he spoke on it. Because he's afraid that this city is going to fail if they don't fund the ground level. They need to start thinking about it in a different way. Start thinking about bottom up instead of the top down, because it's not being trickled down the way it's supposed to.

In order to get a person off the streets that's carrying a gun, give them a small business. We teach them -- I opened up 150 clothing lines in the heart of North Philly in poverty-stricken communities, and the worsest corner hasn't been a shooting. It's been business going on.

So what the youth actually -- I would like to be on the entrepreneurship side of whatever is going to be, because we want to measure the entrepreneurship side versus the side that's getting funded for these programs, and I

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guarantee you we will beat them by a mile. You know why? Because we creating jobs. We ain't in here talking about how are we going to have job reform. We create jobs every day. So I would like it to be somebody -- like whether one of the Councilmen be like the top part of it to judge it. But the more people we create these jobs for, the less violence that's going to happen in these communities. So not only do I speak for the children, then I got to wear another hat as far as a community activist going through the City.

So we going to need full support when we get out here in these playgrounds, because we've been going out by ourselves and paying out our own pockets. We can't even get a food program for our children in North Central.

So I don't think that it's Council fault. I just think that it's a lack of -- the people that's coming down

here speaking for us don't never get to speak for us. They only speaking for themselves, and by the time it get back to us, it's, No, they said they couldn't do it. So it makes us want to come down and rally against y'all when clearly it's somebody in the middle of the change, and we just want to get around that. I don't know if they got my name on some type of list or something, but the work speak for itself, and it's going to continue to speak, because this summer we're going to show the City that with no help in eight years -- and I serviced over 2,500 murders for the City of Philadelphia. In that time we just want to find a way to get everybody on the same page, and I think that with this new funding coming in and this new Administration, y'all should carefully examine these programs that's getting funded, because it's not being trickled down the way y'all think. After the money hit, some other people, next thing you know they come up and, you

know, they shake your hand and the program failed because it didn't get the resources. I shouldn't have been fired on the scene of an 11-year-old that got shot in the neck because there was no resources and snapping on the boss for not having the resources when we had a $3 million budget. So that should tell y'all something.

I just pray to God that we find a way to try to examine these programs, because everybody can come up and talk about what they doing and how they doing it, but when I get on a crime scene, I don't see none of them people. You understand what I'm saying? So we should have a better connection with who we giving this money to and find out where is it going at, because it's clearly not going into the program.

Thank you. My name Terry Starks.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thanks, Terry.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your testimony.

We're going to get through this. Next person, please pull the mic to you.

MS. LOVE: Hello, Council. My name is Chantay Love and I'm the Co-Founder and Program Director of EMIR Healing Center, which stands for Every Murder is Real, and we're a community-based victim center that work with families and communities impacted by homicide.

When I got the phone call to come to this hearing -- and I'm always supporting the work that you Councilpeople do, most of it, but this particular piece, this particular piece was very valuable. And as I sat around the room and I looked at some of the colleagues, a lot of things have occurred, is that I realize that EMIR Healing Center helped put a lot of these programs and pieces together and worked

for years to bring some of the things that was supposed to be community based. And, that is, you looking at this funding is that you're looking at the intervention, prevention, and healing, that we were trauma-informed since 1999. We looked at war soldiers and created pieces of a model and started infiltrating communities.

I have been tasked -- Bilal has asked, Chantay, I need your help with something. We've done crisis response in the community and in the schools. So I've been tasked to take this whole group of people, community people, that is already on the ground and can we intertwine them. Can we put them and strategize how that work happens.

I'm saying that to say is this: We look at different levels, evidence based and looking at academia. The rubber has got to meet the road. It's got to meet the road, and that we got to look at our communities through different

lenses, is that it's not one view and it's not the only view, but it's several views and it's several subcultures and cultures, and empowering them to be successful.

But the root of it is the poverty. We are not -- the poverty is the root of why I have to grow. You see, when you walk in our office, 417 families, homicide families, walked through our office last year, dads, uncles, moms, siblings, because we enforce that they come together, subsectors of family members.

Out of that, we looked at all the pieces and put a comprehensive thing together. Been doing it for years and loaning it to different people and community agencies so that they can look at that.

But now looking at your trauma-informed approach and given the lingo of the community so that they could talk it, walk it, speak it, so they can

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recognize it and so that they can attach different resources so they can get some help. See, this gun thing has to happen, but we have to do it differently. You say we going to do it from the bottom up. I say we're going to do it inclusive and we're going to look at all the things, and we should all be at the table. Because just last week my nephew calls me his first -- he was the one that went to reform school, shipped him to college, 60 days out of reform school, got to a college that was willing to say, look, he has what it takes. He gives me a phone call and say, Auntie, I know you painting, so I got some young guys that text me, they want to help you paint the new facility. For them coming to paint, a conversation led to that they were homeless, that they were living on their own, and that they really was short on money for cash. And within a few weeks, the one, after I finished talking to him, has gotten accepted at a community

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college away from Philadelphia that should be shipping off in August.

And so I'm talking about looking at the community base and how we do things and how we connect resources and bringing your best and infusing that and also giving us a better shot at it, because we have a problem. We're -- public health issue, chaos. We are the collateral damage of what went wrong, but we also the ones that know how to fix it right. And when Brother Terry was talking, I said, You know I got to help put some things together.

Most of these that was in here has sat at the table around me to help put pieces together. And so I felt the need to come to say we're here for you and that we're supporting this bill, but we also all want to be at the table to look at it so that it could be powerful. Because we don't have enough time to mess up, not another second, because it's too detrimental.

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Ms. Felicia who was here sat in her -- I sat in her house to things that -- some things that I have to do, and because we are one of the only VOCA funding community-based agencies for homicides, connecting them laws and policies and procedures, we're the first one since its existence and we fought for almost ten years to get at that table, because it's those policies that stop the resources for victims like her. And we were the first ones that just now changed the whole scheme of how we going to look at victims. We're going to look at victims and not look at the act, not look at what happens, not say, Your child was part of their demise, and get this awful letter that says, Unfortunately, we no longer can -- we cannot assist you, and leave them hanging. We can assist them regardless of the circumstances, and so we're the ones that helped change that, that looked at the policy and looked at the law so that it can get some help to

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these families.

And so I'm saying that to say is that we're on board and we're in support of this bill, but we also want to be at the table so that we can bring the best of the best.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you.

Just before the next person testifies, so, again, Councilman Johnson, Councilwoman Blackwell, other members of this Committee have been at this a while, but we're just discovering the disconnect and we're just discovering the disproportionate amount of funding from a state level that goes to other counties, that doesn't go to Philadelphia, where a majority of some of the criminal acts are happening. So we're looking at this and scratching our heads. But now we are motivated by what you've said to start to hold them accountable for those allocations.

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Now, I'm not going to tell you the spigot is open and we're going to do everything for everybody, but we're paying attention, and as we appropriate $3.9 billion, we're going to do so judiciously and ask the question, Well, how does what you do impact what's going on at the neighborhood level. And I've heard not just the Pendleton testimony, but I heard -- one of the most difficult things I have to do is try to do bereavement and, at a time of their worst day, talk about resources that are available. That's the hardest part of my job. And so we need you, in a partnership with you to do that.

I'm not standing on -- I've marched my share. I've worn out shoes. We want to do this smarter. We want to do this through the power of the budget, and those are the things we're looking at. So that's why this process -- and I thank the sponsor of this resolution for bringing it to our attention.

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MS. LOVE: My last point that I wanted to bring is about the juvenile system. And so looking at them and having it close up front, I recognize so many of our young African American males and urban are sent away to reform school. That budget is coming from City Council to help fund that. If we are going to do a reform school, why must it not be closer where the people here work there. We're funding whole counties off of one school when we could be funding it here. And we know the data says that they're not going to do better away because they're not attached to the community, they're five or six hours away and families can't get to them and can't be changed.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Councilwoman Blackwell was working on that. I kind of beg to differ on it a little bit, because my turning point was for me to have the opportunity to kind of go away. So for me to go away to college

was my escapism for me, because where I grew up on 18th and Dickinson -- and the reason why I couldn't pick Temple versus Mansfield was because I needed a change of environment to change my behavior, and at the same time, everybody around me was being murdered. But also I think -- and it's different for different people, so I'm not debating it, but I think another part that we have to recognize, that the street life is very, very attractive, very attractive. Now, when I say that, I'm not talking about the kid that's in between, the kid may be thinking about, you know, living a life of crime and violence. I'm talking about the environment in which we grow up and how for some it's attractive. It's the bright lights, the fast cars, this day and age the dirt bikes, the lack of responsibility that goes along with hustling, because there's another part of this conversation, because you hustle, you kind of don't have to have

responsibility and you can have a little bit of money, get the latest sneaker, the latest outfit, right, and hang on the corner all day and kind of enjoy that particular lifestyle, because you haven't seen anything past what your block is. And so when people offer you something that's positive -- I often have a chance to talk to young people about the glamour and glitz of what's attractive about this, that whole street life mentality, and I often tell moms, You got to hug your sons, right? Because you can lose them to the streets based upon what's attractive about living that type of lifestyle.

So I think for some, you know, for me at least, it was an opportunity to go away, but even when I went away and came back home, I was still stuck on wanting to be on the corner of 18th and Dickinson, because that's all I kind of -- I kind of already was comfortable with the people I grew up with in day

care to graduating with from high school. So we had a private bond stronger than probably some of the other individuals I interacted with, because we kind of grew up and had that whole street mentality. You know, I won't have a problem protecting you and supporting you as long as you have my back.

But no problem. The Councilwoman says she's already working on it, because I think the Youth Study Center is in her district.

COUNCILWOMAN BLACKWELL: Exactly.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: She's definitely on top of making sure that -- I think what I agree with you on is, we have to do -- we need to pay attention to the organizations that we fund and their connection to the neighborhoods. You take the CUAs, for example. The CUA system pretty much is a system that has privatized DHS and it has taken away power from mom and pop organizations

that's already doing the work, the people that already are doing the work that's connected to the young people and the families already. Now they're trying to do the work. But the funding is going through this umbrella organization that may not have the same connection. And they hire somebody that don't live in the neighborhood to come and organize the neighborhood as opposed to hiring Kim Smith or Terry who already live in the neighborhood, who is already doing the work, or subcontracting with the groups in the neighborhood. And I think that's how it's supposed to be, but that's not what we're looking at right now.

So I do understand exactly what you're talking about in terms of supporting financially the reform schools that don't have no connection to the neighborhood. And so --

MS. LOVE: Well, I thank you and respect you for that.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes.

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Bishop Robinson.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you for your testimony.

Bishop Robinson.

BISHOP ROBINSON: Good evening. It was good morning. Now it's good evening to Councilman Johnson, Councilman Jones, and Councilwoman Blackwell. Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

I want to first say that I'm glad that I have been here since 10 o'clock. I'm glad for a number of reasons. One, I've been able to observe and listen and to gain an understanding of the disconnect. I'm from the Yesha Ministries Worship Center right in South Philadelphia, 23rd and Snyder.

The latter part of this meeting to me with these that have come in, those that may be going out now, have been -- it has been more rewarding in terms of hearing from the perspective of those that are on the ground working. It has been more rewarding to me than, of

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course -- I'm not saying that I didn't get anything from the other professionals and people that came forth, but I kind of gained an understanding from listening to the community and those that are working in the community speak.

I also want to say that in reference to the resolution, I think it's awesome, and thank you so much for having the wherewithal to bring it to the table, because we do need this discussion. You know, I know some are tired of discussing, but we won't go any further unless we discuss it.

So I think that we have to, in terms of problem-solving, we have to look at the gun violence from the position of culture and what's going on in the neighborhood. I think there's a great need for education, and when I say "education," the first -- when we say we need more education, the first thing people think about is, well, you know, yeah, those people in the hood need

education. I think the people in the professional areas of the City need education, because they cannot effectively deal with a problem that has been borne out of darkness unless they really understand the language and the culture in which these problems exist. And to be very honest with you, I don't think they understand.

Last week I called a meeting. The week before last there was a shootout in the bottom, down the bottom, and my nephew was involved in that shootout, and they let off about 50 rounds. Miraculously, no one was shot and no innocent bystanders were shot. And so I said, Well, this -- you know, I said to the kids that were involved, I said, Well, this is -- you know, God gave you a chance here for peace. So we on Thursday passed -- we took them to a restaurant on South Street, told them to leave their guns, both sides, and we took them to Ms. Tootsie's and we took them upstairs

in the red room and we sat them around in a circle and we talked to them, because we believe in dialoguing with the community, and we fed them, and something strange happened. They ordered -- first, No, we don't want anything.

I said, No. Relax. Relax. Order. You know, they were putting on their thing, you know. So they went on to order. Some ordered some shrimp and this. When the food came, all the childishness and the childhood came out of them, all the, Look at this, and they start eating. And then we start having -- because I wanted them to eat before we had dialogue.

They made peace, bottom line. And I began to think about it, and as I talked with them, I began to think about the fact that who brings these kids together? Do they ever get a chance to communicate?

I was listening to the brother that left, Dawud, and the young brother

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Terry that was talking. The people that are on the ground at the ground level need to be supported, period. The fact of the matter is, we need people from the hood that have the wherewithal to bring -- because I went to some of the young brothers in the hood. I didn't go to the main perpetrators. I went to the people in the hood that they listened to, and they brought them to a mutual place, and they after a while became relaxed enough to realize the beef was over a pool game. Somebody took somebody's game and it erupted into a shootout and this and that and the other thing.

We have to -- City Council represents the entire City. We have to mobilize a plan where we go in each part of the City and pick the leaders out of the hood themselves, each part, and then convene -- bring all those leaders together and get a lesson, an educational lesson, on what's actually going on.

You know, a couple years ago we

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brought those 24 youth to the Council. Remember that? We brought them, and the reason I brought them is because I want them to have a voice. What true advocacy is is giving a voice to the voiceless, giving them an opportunity to state, but at the same time, once they're educating us, we can then, because they're at the table, begin to educate them. It's a two-way street.

I would like to -- and I'm going to be done, because I don't want to talk too long. I heard so many good things. I would like to help in putting together a comprehensive plan that would get the people on the ground together, because a lot of the people that are working over here and over there, they don't even know each other still. There's some that do, some that don't. But imagine coming together and getting all the best in class activities, bring them all together. This young brother Terry has a great program. Dawud has a

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great program. I would like to say that we have a great program. We have a house of healing. Right now we have over 53 men on Point Breeze that we do recovery with that live in the facility that we own. For me it's about bringing all of these resources together, having a dialogue, and etching a plan out that mobilizes, especially around these gun shootings, because the people in the neighborhood know, we get to the right people. But imagine getting to those people to say, Listen, you need to work for the City.

Now, I don't know -- I know it's some work to do. You need to work for us. You need to help us to help our young people. Trust me, they do not trust the system. In fact, they believe that the system is rotten, and the system hasn't given them a whole lot to think otherwise.

The DA's Office, the Police Department, those that are doing -- I

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think they're doing the best to do what they can do for now, whatever that is, but the trust is not there on the street level. So we've got to build that. And my position is rather than be adversarial, rather than come in a bashing mentality, we've got to approach them in peace, bring them to the table and orchestrate this plan.

The last thing I want to say is this, Councilman: They have the mentality that they're not really engaging in violence. They think they're engaging in survival. That's a mentality that has to be dealt with. The mentality it just rumble. And so we have to find a way, and I think through collaboration we can do it.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you so much for your testimony.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you, Bishop.

What I want to do also -- because I don't want to reinvent the

wheel. I know I'm doing some peace around faith-based communities that you came to the meeting of, and I know in terms of the grassroots organizations -- and Terry probably can speak to this better than I can. I know Bilal Qayyum just convened, what is it, maybe 40, 50 organizations y'all been meeting? How many?

MR. STARKS: Thirty-four.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thirty-four non-profit groups -- I'm not even going to say non-profits. Groups that are on the ground. So I'm going to connect you two just so we can all be connecting this and approaching it strategically from different aspects, and then maybe part of whatever -- and I think y'all are coming to South Philadelphia next or some time soon.

MR. STARKS: Yeah, next week.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: And we may even look at your location. I'll talk to Bilal. I don't know where he's going to

be coming at, but I know there's a group of a coalition that he's established and have been meeting over the past year of non-profit groups, social service agencies that are boots on the ground looking at how to come at this issue of youth gun violence, and maybe when they do come to South Philly, we put on our approach in terms of how we want to be supportive.

BISHOP ROBINSON: I would certainly say that our facilities are open. We have a -- we just renovated our hall, which, you know, we can do 1,100 people theatre style. I would certainly offer it to any community group to do anything surrounding community activities for free. You know I do that. So for me, it's about -- and I would love to come and be a part of that, as well as -- because at the end of the day, the community groups meeting has to happen, but it has to happen with the City.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: You're

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right about that.

Ms. Kim Smith.

MS. SMITH: Greetings. My name is Kim Smith. I am the coordinator for South Philadelphia Junior Stakeholders group. I am also the community service liaison for Philadelphia Community Youth Court. And my vision is that you can take all the Ph.D.'s, you can take all the community leaders, you can take the faith-based leaders, and you can even take me, but we're not going to be able to make a dent in what the youth is doing until you bring the youth to the table.

Our organizations basically give the youth a voice, and we listen to the youth perspective. We ask them what they think, where this is coming from, and through that, we start a dialogue and a conversation. And just like Bishop Robinson said, you have to meet those children or the youth where they are as young as kindergarten. We have to start doing interventions.

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These children are very smart. They're very resourceful, and while we have numerous resources out here in the community, we're having a hard time advertising those resources.

DHS SCOP has a directory with over a thousand resources in the City, but most inner city children are not aware of those resources, and my idea was to have a public service announcement letting them know what's out here. And then we do have these groups out here, but it's not appealing to the average child. Most of the stuff may be considered nerdy or corny. So we have to do things where we get the children's attention. We have to make it appealing.

We need better media and public examples, our public figures. Meek Mills was in here. My baby 5 years old -- I have a 5-year-old adopted daughter. You turn on any music, she starts dancing. But then she'll do everything that the video is doing. Hey, where you get that

from? We don't do that at home.

So instead of showing these videos shooting guns and being all cool, we need to talk about reading books and getting an education and making the best you that you can be. So if we can get the public figures, if we can have a conversation with the kids or we can have public service announcements about what's right out here instead of about what's wrong, looking at the cup as half full instead of half empty, we can start getting to these youth. And I always try to look at the positive aspect in everything, and that's what I try to encourage my children to do. Instead of talking about the negative things that are out here, let's turn it around and talk about the positive, how we're going to do this.

Well, what do you want to do? Do you want to dance? Do you want to play basketball?

There's education in everything

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that we put in front of our children. We just have to take advantage of that moment.

And if you constantly telling someone what they're doing is wrong, they're going to think that that's the only thing they can do. If we build our children up and give them positive reinforcement, they're going to believe that. You tell a whole -- regardless of what's going on at home, if I'm constantly telling my preschool children that they're great, they're going to go home and tell their parents that they're great. So anything that your parents tell you -- they might be a little confused at first, but they're going to have that positive reinforcement that I'm great. We need to start advertising the greatness that we have in our community.

Also, social media, I tried to do this with Youth Court before, but we didn't have enough masses. If we do a commercial media blackout of anything

that's negative, even just for one day, at least one person is going to think, Hey, I didn't post no negative stuff or I didn't see this or I saw something spiritual or I saw something healing on here, they're going to think about that. If you get to one child or you change one thinking to change that one behavior, that one person can change the next behavior or that one person can change the next behavior.

My daughter spoke earlier, and she didn't really want to stay and wait, but she said only because it's Councilman Johnson will I stay here and testify. And when she was in Cuba, I didn't hear from her, and I was really worried. I didn't hear from her until Saturday -- no; Sunday morning. I say, Oh, you got to go testify on Monday.

She said, You always got me doing stuff.

And I said, Well, it's for Councilman Johnson.

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She said, Okay. Because I put her in the right circles doing the right things, trying to teach her the positive things. And I have a whole group of kids that like to do positive things even though it's corny. So now I got other kids doing corny things and other kids doing corny things, and you have to let them know that corny is okay. So we start doing public service announcements, stop putting all the stuff on social media and on the TV, get on the -- kids watch TV 50 percent of their day, even though they shouldn't. If we get on there and start overwhelming the masses with something positive, I think it will have a great effect. And bringing everyone together is all fine and well, but until you get the youth perspective and bring the youth to the table, nothing is going to work. Because we need to hear what they're thinking, why they're committing these crimes.

They was committing a crime

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over a pool game. They don't even realize that slavery still exists, because the 13th Amendment of the Constitution says that anybody can be involuntarily enslaved if they commit a crime and be convicted of that crime. Now we taught that to the children. Most kids were like -- even though they know they were going to be incarcerated, there's a difference from being incarcerated and enslaved. I don't want to be enslaved. We need to get to our children in a way that's appealing to them.

And with that being said, I thank you for this opportunity.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you so much for your testimony.

Just one point on that, Councilman Johnson.

You raised a very important point. Everybody did, but yours is equally important. We spend so much time focused on the negative of our young

people, and when we boil it down, it might be 5 percent in every hundred. That's five kids in every hundred that actually winds up getting in trouble, but they impact 80 to 90 percent of the community by those activities.

We have to figure out how to publicize those kids that go through our communities, our districts every day, go through school, do the right thing, wind up in the right place and wind up successes. Maybe they're not Obama, but they're the postman that delivers the mail, the policeman or fireman or whoever that is a positive influence on their community and they don't get the same level of publicity, same level of attention, and sometimes even the same level of resources.

A guy came up to me and said, What do I got to do? I got to rob somebody in order to get a job? And that stunned me. We really have to give some balance to kids that -- young people that

actually do the right thing as well.

MS. SMITH: Even the youth that are out here committing the acts of violence and doing bad things, there are no bad children, it's just children making bad decisions. But even those children have gifts and hidden talents. It's up to us to discover that talent or to bring that talent out of that individual. And most of them don't have that family support system at home, and it's up to the community. We need to go back to a community raising a child. It takes a village, and until we get back to that mentality and until we get back to stop being offended by someone's religion and stop, you know, always trying to find the negative in things, we are never going to move ahead. So, again, we need to look for the positive in everything and in everybody, and I think we can begin to make milestones.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Thank you

very much.

Yes, sir.

MR. BROWN: Good afternoon.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Good afternoon.

MR. BROWN: I'm Robert Brown and I'm the Executive Director of the Philadelphia Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Network.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: How are you doing?

MR. BROWN: Hey, how are you doing?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Pretty good.

MR. BROWN: And I brought with me today the Program Director for our Youth Violence Reduction Partnership program.

I'm kind of glad I stayed here this time, because I heard my brother Terry, I heard Bilal, and I heard the testimony of a lot of grassroots organizations, as well as some

individuals, and they may not know something that I am more than aware of, that our contracting -- how we do contracts in Philadelphia, how we do grants in Philadelphia is rigged against poor organizations, particularly black organizations, who do not have large sums of cash flow or who do not have a line of credit, sizable lines of credit. Because when you go past the fiscal year, which is July 1, and you go into September, October, three, four months into the fiscal year and your contract isn't conformed, the game is rigged against you as a grassroots organization. You can't get in the game because you do not have the cash to play. You cannot pay to play the game. You have to be a large organization with multiple funding streams or somehow or another you're blessed with cash flow, a line of credit. They don't have that. They don't have that.

So to say, Oh, you can be in

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the game, given our contracting system and given our grant system, that's not being honest. No organization without sizable funds can survive three, four months into a fiscal year, and many times you don't even get a letter of intent until two weeks into the fiscal year. You're lucky if you get it a little bit before the fiscal year. So they are really blocked out of being paid to play. And I had to get that off my chest, because I kept hearing that. I kept hearing them talking about, you know, being able to play, but the way our -- unless that changes, they will never be able to play and get paid for playing. Never. Not the way the system is currently set up.

Having said that, I heard a whole bunch of other issues I would like to address, but let me say a little bit about PAAN. Hopefully you know us. We've been around 25, 26 years, and we grew out of the Crisis Intervention

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Network when it closed down. So we still kind of follow that model as a partner within the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership.

Are you getting ready to ask a question?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Yes. And I'm going to let you finish your testimony, because I never understood why PAAN wasn't integrated into actually the violence reduction program with the City at --

MR. BROWN: We are part of it.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: At one time y'all were.

MR. BROWN: We still are.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Well, you're not funded to the level of -- like y'all used to have troops on the ground until Mr. Mills. And after Mr. Mills is my good friend Mr. Coates. And then at some point in time in there, either y'all funding was, what, reduced or --

MR. BROWN: Well, we lost our

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truancy program, and this year we also lost the GIFT program. I'm not going to even -- I don't know why we lost our truancy program. Our evaluations were almost a hundred percent, a hundred percent, but the two black -- ourselves and ODAAT, which were the only black programs in truancy, were cut. And we were told we had no right to appeal. We could not even ask questions about, Well, let's see the scores. We were denied the right to appeal. As far as I'm concerned, we were denied the right, you know, to be treated fairly, because at least -- I never seen a situation where you couldn't say, Let me see my scores vis-a-vis the scores of others. Also, I never heard of a situation where you couldn't tell me who judged me, who made up the panel that reviewed my application, which I thought was a pretty solid application based on what we learned.

But I'm not here to talk about

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that. That's done. And the thing about it, the schools that we were working with in truancy were shocked that we were excluded, and the organization that took our place -- so I know it wasn't because of performance, because that organization took almost our entire staff, including our leadership for truancy.

But like I said, that's the past. That's the way things get done in some places. But I want to talk about what we are now doing at PAAN. I also want to say before I talk about that that most of our staff have gone through the life experiences of the young people they are working with, our youth partners. They were saved by Brother Coates, Brother Mills and for working in PAAN. And so they dedicated their life giving back what they were given to people who were in their positions when Brother Mills and Brother Coates touched them.

In fact, I don't really come from Philadelphia, so I was really

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absolutely surprised at the number of leaders in the City who came through the PAAN organization, including the existing Managing Director of our Youth Violence Reduction Partnership.

But having said that, our people, when they leave our office, they don't go home outside of the work. They go home and continue doing the work. Most of them are engaged in activities outside of PAAN about community empowerment, community enhancement. So our people are 24/7, I like to say, because they may leave our office, but when they go home, they don't go away from the work we do as an organization. And they know the people in their neighborhoods. They know the kids in the neighborhoods. And as you know, we work with young folk who are most likely to kill or be killed by age 25. And so as far as our youth partners are concerned, we have lost more than we have in the past. I think, what, five, six --

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UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Six in the last eight days.

MR. BROWN: Our youth partners?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Six in the last eight days. To me that's phenomenal, because I've been here a year and a half, and during that whole year and a half, we never had that kind of account.

But let me tell you about some of the things that we're doing now. We have -- the Youth Reduction -- Youth Violence Reduction Partnership has exactly four priority areas: employment and training, what we call education, positive support programming, and health. Now, one of the things we've learned is, we're not interested in giving our poor folk jobs. Jobs are easy to come by, because -- you know, particularly if you're a returning citizen. McDonald's will take you. There are some businesses that will take you because, one, they don't want to pay you more than minimum

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wage. They don't want you to work so many hours that you're going to get benefits. You're definitely not going to get benefits. You're definitely not going to get a pension, and they're high turnover jobs.

So we say we don't want jobs. We want to really get careers for our folks so they can have a future. So jobs our kids create for themselves, you know, but careers is something that needs support. So we went into partnership with HACE to begin looking at the unions, because if you want a real job, get a union card. But we know the unions are kind of tricky, but so far, last week we had 15 allow our young folk go and register, paid for by HACE, to get registered to get -- to take the exam for carpentry. We are now working with, I think, three or four other unions - electrical, plumbing -- what is the other one?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: General

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building maintenance.

MR. BROWN: General building and maintenance.

We're really going to keep the feet of the unions to the fire, because we know they can be tricky. They love being tricky. We have the bodies in terms of the persons who are on parole and who are on probation, and they know there's a lot of money surrounding those bodies that they would like to tap into, for obvious reasons. But we also know they play the game, sell us short and sell the people who they really want to work with long. That is, give us short projects, but hire people for the longer projects, folk who are of interest to them. We don't want that to happen to our guys. We want our guys to have a future, because there are jobs that are one year to three years. We want our guys and our young ladies to get those jobs, not the six-month to three-month projects.

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So we have a lot of work to do, and we're going to probably be calling on Council and our brothers in the coalition to give us support so that we can hold the unions accountable once our folk get in.

HACE is paying our folk right now -- what is it, $10?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: $10 an hour.

MR. BROWN: $10 an hour. We pay them $10 an hour, but when they finish and become apprentices, they'll be getting at least twice that much, plus benefits, plus a union card, plus pension. That is what we want. We call that -- those are not jobs. Those are careers. And careers lead to a future, and that's what we want to find our young folk.

In the area of -- right now we have young folk working -- how many young folk do we have working at --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

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Fourteen.

MR. BROWN: We have 14 young folk working at a meat packing plant, more than minimum wage salary, 11.25 an hour, be getting benefits and also retirement.

And what is the name of the company?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hatfield Meat Company.

MR. BROWN: Hatfield Meat Company.

We have three of our young folk working for HACE. We have three of our young folk who have been employed by Mural Arts. And we need to know this: Of all of the young folk participating in Mural Arts -- and I don't think I'm exaggerating -- all of them come from us. But we don't just refer them to Mural Arts. We buy them clothes when they need clothes to do the work at Mural Arts. We buy them clothes if they have to go to interviews. We give them tokens so they

can get to Mural Arts, get to where they have to be in order to retain their employment or get their employment. But in addition to that, we continue to counsel them. We don't just refer them and leave them. We refer them, assist them so they can succeed. Because we recognize one thing, that if our young folk can take advantage of the opportunities we create, they can create opportunities for the young brothers and sisters who are coming alongside of them or behind them by being the best that they can be within those opportunities. So we teach that, because we understand that you have to have that mindset. Like the folk who are helping them who came into PAAN, found life at PAAN and the shame that life -- giving that life back to them. So they have to have the same mentality as those individuals.

Another thing I want to say, that we have 57 young people -- applications for 27 slots for PowerCorps.

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The vast majority of the young folk working for PowerCorps came from PAAN. We just didn't drop them off at PowerCorps. We support them at PowerCorps by giving them whatever they need to succeed in PowerCorps. So this whole notion of referring and leaving, you think your job is done, no. Your job is done when your young people succeed where you have placed them.

We have -- in terms of education, we are working out a relationship -- we're still in the process of negotiating a relationship with Aspira so we can open up at PAAN a cyber charter school site based on their curriculum. Why is that important? Because, one, we can pay them while there, but we also can watch them and counsel them and tutor them while there, making sure that they're on the computer doing what they're supposed to do. Aspira gives them the computers, the laptops, that they will be using free.

Aspira is going to set up the site, and all we have to do is pay for the equipment. The labor is going to be free. So we're excited about the possibilities of that. That's on the education front.

We're also working with community training that operates for us, and each one of these things have stipends that we pay our guys and young ladies to participate in. They operate what we call our Fatherhood Mentoring Program on the Parenting Tip program. And the beautiful thing about community mentoring is that they also certify -- train our young folk to be certified as forklifters and flaggers and some other areas that could lead into careers instead of just mere jobs.

We also are in partnership with Strive that does our career and life skills development. And so we are creating interesting relationships and partnerships. For two of our cohorts, we

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were in relationship with MIC, Mothers in Charge, to do Training for a Change.

We have really tried to develop ways of supporting our brothers and sisters who cannot -- who are left out of the game because they don't have the money to be in the game because of our contracting and practices.

We have worked with the Strawberry Mansion Faith-Based Coalition and supported it financially with what little money we have to do that extra. Whenever we meet individuals who have proven track records of success in dealing with our young folk, we try to support them, not exploit them, like they say other people tend to do. We give them cash.

One of the things we recognize -- people talk about what causes crime, what causes violence. I have learned that when young folk feel they don't have any power, when they feel they don't have a voice, they get that

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power through violence. They get that voice through talking about violent and misogynistic and other kinds of crazy stuff. What we have tried to do is flip the coin.

We found this wonderful brother, Keith of the block, Keith Ruffin, to come in and work with our young folk so that they can turn that around. They make PSAs. They make movies. And we show them at the Pearl Theatre, who we have a relationship with. And the Pearl shows the PSAs that our young folk make before every movie, major movie that they show. They allow us to use their place to also show the one movie that we did, which was called Black Crown, which is based on our police diversionary program.

So we have learned creative ways to help our brothers and sisters who have been blocked out of the game. I'm not going to speculate why our contracting system is the way it is, but

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whenever we have crumbs, we'd like to share those crumbs, and we only wish that our brothers and sisters who have real money can do the same thing so that the crumbs that all of us have can become at least a half a loaf of bread, if not a whole loaf.

But, you know, we are dedicated to dealing with what we call the issues. One of the things -- I keep hearing people talk -- and I'm going to shut up after this.

I strongly believe in the power of balance and restorative justice and the creation of balance and restorative justice centers and communities that can serve as the hub where people can, in communities, can come together and really plan effective strategies for violence prevention, community development and enhancement, who could really serve as a center of mediation and conflict resolution and avoiding conflict. If you do not have a center that is recognized

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in your community as the place to come for support and for help, the place to come for a voice, what are we working with? You have to have a place, and you have to have a philosophy informing how that place is operated. And I don't believe there is a better model than balancing restorative justice or restorative practices. And we're in a relationship with the International Institute for Restorative Practices.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Are you referring to community courts similar to --

MR. BROWN: Community courts is part of it. We get a lot of our referrals from the Youth Aid Panels. I believe that model can be improved on. If you have a place --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Here's what we're going to do. You have so much information, I'd like to offer Councilman Johnson's time and my time to come to you. He mentioned what you used to be.

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You talked about your cuts. We need to walk through and see what you are now.

MR. BROWN: That would be great.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So that we can -- and here's why: Because if you are what you have been, which I know you have been, and if you are still --

MR. BROWN: We're better.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Then I need to kick the tires.

MR. BROWN: Because we're no longer just -- I say we're better because now the model has kind of flipped. You just don't have crisis intervention anymore. What you now have is -- I don't like using the term you have to have care management. In other words, you have to document what you're doing.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Which you should.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Which we're going to do. Here's what -- and I've not

made this offer to other folk. I mean, so much still that you have -- and I listen really good -- the total package. So now if that is so, then I want you to see my guy right here before you leave and schedule that between our offices, because what I need to know is -- not that other programs that aren't, but we have to find a way to take what we have, redistribute some of the funding so that we have more impact. But it's not just enough for me to say to a young person, Put down a gun, let me teach you how to dance. I'm going to teach you how to dance, but I'm going to teach you how to start a business, because I heard you say that too. I'm going to teach you how to do the prerequisite things that it takes to -- like write a business plan. And if we're going to show these young people pathways, different ones, out of their condition they find themselves in, we have to have multiple strategies. But we have to have things that by -- what you

said to me that was the most appealing -- and I've been -- I haven't just done this in Philly. I've been around to where they say they have the best practices, best models, one of which is not far from here in Pittsburgh. They have a day reporting center where they take those high-risk youth from different communities, bring them to a center, and they case manage them. No, we don't -- we aren't going to ask you whether you went to school, because we know you went, because we took you, mentored you through. You're going to your after-school program, now you're going to your job. And what you find yourself as an agency doing is what parents should have done or should do or cannot do. And that's okay, but it's far better that you get them in the second tier because maybe mom, dad couldn't do it, it's better you get them than the correctional institutions get them later on, because that's the next step. When we fail them

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in the home, we should not fail them in the community. But if all else fails, what happens is they wind up being the wards of the state in the correctional institution for things that we should have got right at the house, at the first stop.

So I'm intrigued about what you still do. I want to get a better sense of it. I'm a visual learner. You could send me all the memos you want, but if I see what you're doing, I get it. So I'd like to offer my time and --

MR. BROWN: And to prepare you for that visit --

COUNCILMAN JONES: Say that again.

MR. BROWN: To prepare you for that visit, I really encourage you to go to our website.

COUNCILMAN JONES: No; my staff don't let me go anywhere unprepared.

MR. BROWN: Go to our website and you see what we are doing, and you

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also can kind of see the future of what we want to do.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: But it would also be helpful for you prior to us coming to provide numbers, here's how we're effective, Councilman. I had --

MR. BROWN: We do that on --

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Hear me out.

I had no idea that you were collaborating with half of the organizations that was here today. That wasn't apparently clear to me. But I do know the history of your program and I know that y'all are addressing a variety of different issues comprehensively. But I'm going to be up front with you. What's always been appealing to me about the PAAN program, it was born out of Crisis Intervention, right, and some of those founders who found Crisis Intervention are people who have mentored and helped me become the young man who I am today. And the comprehensive approach

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is a good approach, but I like the intervention component, because when these conflicts happen, before they arrive to the shootings, at least when I was growing up, before I got elected, it was PAAN who was out with their walkie-talkies outside the school going after the guys before they start doing the shooting.

I like comprehensive approaches. I think that's great. I want to also make sure on the ground level, though, I'm a big advocate of the intervention component, because we want to stop the shootings.

Listen, the jobs, the trainings, all that are things that need to be addressed, right, but right now my number one focus is don't shoot in the first place. If I can make sure that somebody is down at the hospital when the victim is shot or a person is murdered and the guys are organizing and plotting to go back and do the retaliation, that's

what I want to stop first and foremost. If we can make sure that in the school what guys are plotting to go shoot at somebody else after school -- and I remember PAAN would show up with walkie-talkies on, jump out five cars deep and kind of put a presence out there to say, Wait a minute, hold up. It's something official about this approach that's a little different than everything else.

I'm all for the comprehensive approach and I think it takes a variety of different approaches and there's no one silver bullet, but my main priority is when you go to retaliate, how can we engage in the intervention and before that conflict. Because there's always a conflict that's going on, you know. Before it escalates to the shooting, how can we figure it out.

So we want to be helpful. Because I've always been a big fan, and I'll be up front with you. It always

begs the question, where's PAAN for me. Because I grew up under PAAN doing all the intervention on the streets activity, and then once -- I think the Administration changed, for whatever reason. You know, different Administrations have different priorities, to be quite frank with you, and what may be the program of one Administration may not be a program of the next Administration, and then the budget is shifted. But we have to be consistent moving forward, and I just want to thank you for taking your time.

MR. BROWN: It's my pleasure.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: So we want to be supportive of your efforts as well.

MR. BROWN: Because we only work with -- we work in five of the police districts for YVRP, and we work with only the people they refer to us.

COUNCILMAN JONES: So you're in five districts?

MR. BROWN: Five police

districts, yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Are you in the 19th?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

COUNCILMAN JONES: All right.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: In wrapping up -- we've been here since 10 o'clock and, young lady, you're still here. Good job.

MS. GARCIA: So -- I'm sorry. Is it my turn?

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: Sure. Go ahead. State your name for the record, please.

MS. GARCIA: My name is Aleida Garcia, and I'm the mother of Alejandro Rojas-Garcia. He was murdered January 24th, 2015. And I thought it was very important to stay, even though I was the last one, because I'd like to tell you my story so that you can make a judgment for yourself.

The last time I saw my son Alejandro was on Martin Luther King Day,

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which was January 19th, 2015. He was a Temple University student with honors. He had just graduated from CCP with honors. He was actually appointed by the student body to give the award to Judge Alito a couple of months before he was murdered.

He was at my house all day, working on a project about violence in the media, and because I'm a teacher and he wanted my help, so we hung out all day. And I'm very grateful for that day that we were able to share together.

Up until -- so as of that day, we were very happy. Everyone was doing well. My daughter is a school psychologist at Aspira. I have those two children. And on January 24th at 8:00 a.m., I was at work. It was a Saturday morning, but I was working a second job teaching a class downtown at ITT Tech of computers.

The detectives came and they -- you know, I saw them, and as they came

towards me, I imagined did I owe a parking ticket or was there an accident, but when they told me that my son was dead, I fell to the ground. And if you can just imagine the worst possible thing that could ever happen, it did.

And so I just wanted to say that it's very important to prevent gun violence. I have a daughter. My son left behind two children. He has sisters and brothers and family members. His father and I have been very active in the community since the '70s. His father is Wilfredo Rojas, who is a retired executive from the Prisons, and I was in the Philadelphia School District. I worked at DHS. So we were very active in the community for a very long time, and obviously, you know, there was a very close bond in the family.

But I just wanted to tell you some of the things that happens to the family in the aftermath of homicide.

After the detectives left, I

sat on my sofa in total shock. There was no trauma team. There was no one to hold my hand. They did drive me home, and they were very courteous to me, and I'm very grateful for them for all the wonderful work that they've done in terms of being able to within, I think, a little more than 30 days find a suspect in the case and he was arrested and awaiting trial. We will not see that trial for at least another year.

So we were -- you know, at that point we started to call family members and figure out what was the next move. My son's body was at the coroner's office. Luckily -- again, there was no trauma team. I had a very good friend who is a retired police officer and another very good friend who is a minister, and they came and held my hand through it. There was no immediate counseling for me. I was actually taken by my minister friend up to Enon Baptist Church to see someone there. And then

the Anti-Violence Partnership was also very helpful.

One of the people that was here earlier today, who has no funding whatsoever and is always out in the community, Ros Pichardo for Operation Save Our City, took her time to come to my home and sit on my sofa and hold my hand, arranged a vigil, totally without any kind of funding.

After that, you know, we had to figure out where the money was coming from for the burial costs. I don't know if you guessed, but I'm Latina. I'm actually Cuban. My son's father is Puerto Rican. So one of the -- in our community -- I live in South Philadelphia. So a group in -- Baldi Funeral Home was the one that did the funeral, but Guckin Mansion up in North Philadelphia near Allegheny does a lot of these kinds of homicide cases, and they often put the money out themselves to wait for victims compensation. They

also -- because it takes six months to a year. They also do the paperwork without any funding, where some non-profits up in the -- just in the Latino community just received a contract, and I called them immediately and told them that the community needed to participate in policy-making around that contract.

So luckily, we were able to get the funds within the family to do that, but I also know that there are many families that do not have the funds to bury their loved ones, and some people have to bury their loved ones in a foam box or they have to cremate them when they don't really want to do that or they have to get a donated burial plot and never have a stone. So there's so many things that happen where victims are re-victimized.

A lot of people blame victims. Well, you shouldn't have been there. Why were you there? What were you doing? When actually no one has the right to

take anyone's life.

When my son -- since the moment that I found out that my son died, 24 hours a day this is all I do. This is all I think about. I lost my job because I couldn't -- I was unable to continue. I went on disability, and then my job was not held for me. So for the last year, all day every day all I do is work on this, talk to families, go out there. And I have been able to assess a couple of things I'd like to share with you.

One thing I think that has been mentioned before, it's very important, there is no systematic approach to working with families of homicide victims. It's kind of like throwing a dice. Maybe you get seen, maybe you don't. And although you are spending money on a lot of the agencies working with homicide victims, there's no systematic approach, and no one really knows who's working with whom at any particular time.

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There's no real accountability as to what they're doing. I had the good fortune to have met Officer Sherry McDaniels from the Homicide Unit, who is now retired. Officer Acevedo is there. She came to my home. She sat on my sofa. She took all the information and did all the paperwork for me for the crime victims compensation. I didn't have to worry about that. I do like the fact that the Police Department had that within their hands to do.

Throughout the year, I've met a lot of other families, and we've been actually talking about the different issues that we have, and one of the biggest issues that the families of homicide have is that 47 percent of the cases in Philadelphia are unsolved. So when a murder -- it is on the Philadelphia Police website. Only 53 percent are solved. The two detectives working on our case were very good with us. We were able to meet with them at

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the Roundhouse. They met with us. We e-mailed them every day. We were very active with them. I'm not really sure how many people know when this happens to them what kind of relationship, what kind of activity and coordination they can have with the Homicide Unit. I think that is key in resolving more homicides in Philadelphia, is that the community, especially the families of the homicide victim, have full access to the Homicide Unit, and that the Homicide Unit receive all of the funding that it needs to do their job. Because, quite frankly, I'm not really sure that that's happening, and I can't speak on that because I don't work there, but from my vision as somebody who was affected by it, it seems that they could use more support.

So another thing I'd like to mention is that because we were activists for a long time before this happened, we were able to quickly get ourselves together. I had a radio program at the

time. It was called Latin Legacy. I played Cuban music, and it turned into Loving Legacy where I had homicide victims, family members of victims of homicide would come on the program and tell their story. CeaseFire would come on. Mothers in Charge would come on. I just made it an open format on G-town Radio. We now have a program on WTTM 1680 AM in Spanish. I also have a similar program in Spanish in South Philadelphia at the Philatinosradio.com.

My whole thing was to have a voice. And even though I was made into a co-victim by no choice of my own, I personally refused to be a victim, and I want to seek empowerment and hope that other people can not just provide social services but help people find their voice and become empowered.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Well, the Chair recognizes Councilman Johnson.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: First and foremost, I want to thank you for your

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courage for being here and dedicating and keeping your son's legacy alive by addressing this issue. I know your husband. I know Mr. Wilfredo Rojas. He worked on State Road, one of the most compassionate and hard-working individuals I've ever met when it come to addressing the issues regarding those who have maybe interacted with our criminal justice facility. I do a lot of work regarding reentry, and he served in that position on State Road. Matter of fact, he was just appointed to another position I just saw the other day. Yeah.

And it's oftentimes when -- we're public servants. We give of ourselves so much, and when you talk about yourself being an activist, you give of yourself so much, and when you find yourself on the other side, then, you know, there's a lot of questions, you know. And also the level of support that you have given out, you will expect to be given to yourself as an activist, as

somebody who is always on the front line being a public servant.

And so we just want to say -- and I know I'm speaking on behalf of the Chairman as well. However we could be supportive of you, and what you just mentioned will definitely be duly noted as it relates to support services for victims of homicides as we move forward throughout this process. And I want to be clear, that this is a long-term process. You know, people have a right to come and give us their opinion, because as public servants, it's our job to get it right. And I always tell people, rather I'm having a roundtable last month or a year ago and then we're reconvening again another year ago or we're having community meetings, marches, rallies, for me I believe it's all needed, because we can never live in a city where it's just quiet. We're focused on pre-K, which is a great thing because it goes also toward addressing

the issue of youth gun violence.

But for me every day that we have a murder or a shooting in the City of Philadelphia, we must continue to be aggressive in trying to find ways to not only reduce it but eliminate it. And there's a variety of different reasons why we have the issues of youth gun violence that we see in the City. There's no one silver bullet to solve it and there's quite certainly not one particular reason as to why we have all these issues, but I do commend all of you for coming out and providing your insight, and we're going to continue to stay on top of this as we move forward and trying to find ways to get to the bottom of this issue.

So I just want to thank you and turn it over to the Chairman as we wrap this hearing up.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Is there anyone else to testify here?

MR. STARKS: No.

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COUNCILMAN JONES: That's it?

MR. STARKS: Hold on. Let me just mention one quick thing. I'm sorry.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Say your name for the record.

MR. STARKS: My name is Terry Starks again. And I know Councilman Jones and Councilman Kenyatta pretty well. Let's try to get our old head, you know, to come on and help us down in North Central, man. That's all we have.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I got you. I heard what you said.

COUNCILMAN JOHNSON: I understand what you're saying.

COUNCILMAN JONES: I want to just say to you thank you also for your testimony. You went to a school or are a part of a club I wish no one had membership to.

MS. GARCIA: Amen.

COUNCILMAN JONES: But the education that you received that you're sharing with us, invaluable, priceless.

And hopefully that information falls upon not just our ears but the ears of the Administration and those people who are in charge of resources that can make a difference. That is our intention. That is at the beginning of the budget process, so that as we go through each of these departments, we're going to hold you to a standard and we're going to say, We like you, but what are you doing and how are you impacting. That will be driven by productivity and evidence-based things.

So we're going to look at what we need to do. We're going to get it right a lot of the times. We're going to get it wrong some of the times, and I expect you to come back and say, Councilman Jones, Councilman Johnson, your intentions were good, but here's how you missed the piece.

And, Terry, I know you are eminently qualified for that. But I rely on that feedback. So we ain't perfect.

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So we're going to keep trying until we get it right.

MR. STARKS: We're going to get it right. It's coming together. You see how many generals up here this morning, the guys you definitely need down in South Philly. They ready to go to work for y'all. So that's what we do.

MS. GARCIA: If I may, I wrote a proposal outlining all of the things I discussed in detail, and I did send it to the Mayor, the Managing City Director, and every single Councilperson, but I will resend it, but maybe this time you might be able to pick it up in your e-mail. I will resend it.

Thank you.

COUNCILMAN JONES: Thank you again.

Is there anyone else here to testify?

(No response.)

COUNCILMAN JONES: Seeing none, we hereby conclude this public hearing on

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Resolution No. 160081 and we will recess it to the call of the Chair so that if we need to do a little something else, bring people back, we will do that.

This concludes our hearings for today.

(Committee on Public Safety concluded at 6:30 p.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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