

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WEST PHILADELPHIA CORRIDOR COLLABORATIVE
www.westphillycc.org

March 1, 2018

Dear Members, Supporters, and Stakeholders of the West Philadelphia Corridor Collaborative,

As you know, each year, we intently listen to the Mayor of Philadelphia's annual budget address to City Council. That address is perhaps the most significant annual event in the City, as the Mayor discusses his proposal for how the City will generate revenue, new taxes, and operations to serve residents. In the last address, the business community will recall that the Mayor proposed a soda tax, which today is law, and affects businesses across West Philadelphia that have seen decreased soda sales from residents that have found sugary beverages to be too expensive to purchase in City.

Today, in his address for the 2018-2019 City budget, Mayor Kenney unveiled a plan to **increase property taxes by six percent** to fund the School District, now under local control.

The effect of such a tax hike will be substantial for our property owners, especially those in gentrifying communities near University City that are already struggling to pay increased taxes. Our data states that there are already over 2,000 properties currently in danger of foreclosure due to delinquent taxes in West Philadelphia. A tax hike will most likely only increase that number. For businesses currently renting their location, the increase property taxes could lead to a hike in rents.

With this proposal, I ask two things of you. First, I urge you to have a critical conversation with your constituents and member businesses on this new proposal, to determine its effects to your businesses and associations. And second, I ask that communicate your stance (whether in support of the proposal or opposition) to the Collaborative and your Councilmanic representatives. Let your voice on this matter be heard!

As always, we stand ready to support the business associations' stance in all legislative matters,

Jabari K. Jones
President
West Philadelphia Corridor Collaborative