# City of Philadelphia

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

## Meeting Agenda

**Friday, November 13, 2026**

**1:00 PM**

**Room 400, City Hall**

## Committee on Transportation and Public Utilities

**260897** Resolution Authorizing the Committee on Transportation and Public Utilities to hold hearings examining Philadelphia Gas Works' residential shutoffs for nonpayment and measures to prevent households from losing essential utility service.

***Attachments:*** Signature26089700.pdf

# City of Philadelphia

Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 260897)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing the Committee on Transportation and Public Utilities to hold hearings examining Philadelphia Gas Works' residential shutoffs for nonpayment and measures to prevent households from losing essential utility service.

WHEREAS, Access to affordable gas service is essential to the health and safety of Philadelphia residents, particularly households that rely on natural gas to heat their homes; and

WHEREAS, According to records obtained by The Philadelphia Tribune, Philadelphia Gas Works ("PGW") disconnected 29,388 residential customers for nonpayment from April through August 2026, compared with 21,176 during the same period in 2025, an increase of nearly 39 percent; and

WHEREAS, The number of residential shutoffs recorded through August 2026 nearly matched the 29,810 shutoffs recorded during the entire April-through-November period in 2025, raising serious concerns about the growing number of households losing service; and

WHEREAS, PGW residential customers carried approximately $161.7 million in unpaid gas bills in May 2026, compared with $146.9 million in May 2025, reflecting an increase of approximately 10 percent; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's Cost of Living Task Force has identified utility costs as an often-overlooked component of the City's affordability crisis, with households struggling to pay energy bills while meeting other essential expenses; and

WHEREAS, These burdens fall unevenly across Philadelphia, and the City's Energy Poverty Alleviation Strategy found that the median energy burden for Black households was 53 percent higher than for non-Hispanic white households; and

WHEREAS, Application and recertification requirements can prevent eligible households from receiving assistance, while language barriers and lack of awareness further limit participation; and

WHEREAS, PGW and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services have established data-sharing efforts to simplify enrollment and recertification, but some eligible customers must still sign and return an enrollment letter to receive assistance; and

WHEREAS, The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides critical support for households facing the loss of heat, but emergency assistance alone cannot resolve the underlying conditions that cause unaffordable utility debt; and

WHEREAS, Records reported by The Philadelphia Tribune show no residential nonpayment shutoffs from December 2025 through March 2026, followed by 8,417 disconnections in April, demonstrating the need to examine how households can be better protected when winter restrictions end; and

WHEREAS, The lack of available neighborhood-level data on residential shutoffs and arrearages limits the ability of policymakers to identify concentrated harms and direct assistance where it is most needed; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia's ongoing cost-of-living crisis has left many households unable to absorb rising utility bills, forcing residents to choose between maintaining gas service and paying for other necessities, and underscoring the need to prevent shutoffs that deepen financial hardship; and

WHEREAS, Public hearings would allow Council to examine the effectiveness of PGW's collection practices and consider alternatives to termination, while accounting for the utility's financial obligations; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the Committee on Transportation and Public Utilities is hereby authorized to hold hearings examining Philadelphia Gas Works' residential shutoffs for nonpayment and measures to prevent households from losing essential utility service.

CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twenty-second day of October, 2026.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Jones

Sponsored by: Council President Johnson, Councilmembers Jones, Phillips, Gilmore Richardson, Gauthier, Thomas, Landau, Lozada, Young, Brooks, Harrity, O'Rourke, Driscoll, O'Neill, Squilla, Bass and Ahmad