

TESTIMONY OF FIRE COMMISSIONER ADAM K. THIEL

Q1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR TESTIMONY?

A1. The purpose of my testimony is to request the approval of the recovery of public fire protection costs through retail water rates and charges. Mr. Colton disagrees with this approach.

Q2. DO YOU AGREE WITH MR. COLTON'S DETERMINATION THAT THE RECOVERY OF FIRE PROTECTION COSTS IS IN DIRECT CONTRAVENTION OF THE PHILADELPHIA CODE?

A2. No. Mr. Colton's interpretation of the Philadelphia Code Section 13-101(4)(b) is incorrect. The subsection states that the "cost of supplying water to City facilities *and* fire systems" should be excluded from rates and charges. Mr. Colton fails to recognize that the subsection refers to City facilities and City fire systems, not public fire systems.

Q3. DO YOU AGREE WITH MR. COLTON'S INFERENCE THAT RECOVERY OF PUBLIC FIRE PROTECTION COSTS THROUGH WATER CHARGES IS NOT AN INDUSTRY ACCEPTED PRACTICE?

A3. No. Mr. Colton makes no declarative statement in his testimony, but by highlighting the Departments' discovery responses, he insinuates that recovering public fire protection costs through water charges is a novel approach. See Public Advocate Statement 3: Colton Direct page 92, lines 18-20. However, the American Water Works Association notes that the "contemporary approach develops fire protection costs that can be passed on directly to customers..." See *Principles of Water Rates, Fees, and Charges Manual of Water Supply Practices MI*, American Water Works Association, 2017, page 158. In

addition, Mr. Colton does not appear to recognize the detailed discussion of this issue, including examples of other utilities which recover public fire protection costs from their customers through rates and charges as provided in PWD Statement 9A (Schedule BV-E5: WP-2).

Q4. DO YOU AGREE WITH MR. COLTON'S COST CAUSATION CONCERNS REGARDING THE RECOVERY OF PUBLIC FIRE PROTECTION COSTS THROUGH WATER CHARGES?

A.4 No. Mr. Colton states that the “costs are simply not causally linked to the provision of water/sewer service to PWD’s customers.” See Public Advocate Statement 3: Colton Direct page 95, lines 3-5. However, the availability of public fire protection services benefits all rate payers. The American Water Works Association finds that “the standby capacity to provide the needed water [for fire protection] is clearly intended for the use of the utility’s retail users.” See *Principles of Water Rates, Fees, and Charges Manual of Water Supply Practices MI*, American Water Works Association, 2017, page 161.

Q5. DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR TESTIMONY?

A5. Yes, it does.



FIRE COMMISSIONER ADAM K. THIEL

Philadelphia Fire Department

On May 16, 2016, Mayor James Kenney appointed Adam Thiel to serve as the 20th Fire Commissioner for the City of Philadelphia. Commissioner Thiel is responsible for leading the Philadelphia Fire Department's 2,800-plus uniformed and civilian members in every facet of protecting our Nation's 5th-largest city from fires and emergencies arising from all hazards.

In February 2014, he was appointed to serve as a Deputy Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security for the Commonwealth of Virginia. In that role, he helped provide strategic direction, policy advice, management oversight, and operational coordination for eleven agencies with an overall budget of more than \$3.1B and 30,000 employees. Deputy Secretary Thiel was directly responsible for the Departments of: Emergency Management, Fire Programs (including the State Fire Marshal's Office), Military Affairs (Virginia National Guard), and State Police, along with the state's Homeland Security and Resilience portfolio.

Adam has also served as the Governor's deputy Homeland Security Advisor (dHSA), deputy Chief Resilience Officer (dCRO), Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC), and FirstNet State Single Point of Contact (SPOC). He facilitated the *Secure Commonwealth Panel* and *Rail Safety/Security Task Force*, co-led the state's *National Disaster Resilience Competition* (NDRC) project team to a \$120.5M Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant award, and collaborated with a myriad of agencies in managing all aspects of Virginia's homeland security enterprise.

He was the fire chief for the City of Alexandria, Virginia from 2007-2014 and chaired the *Northern Virginia Emergency Response System (NVERS) Steering Committee*. Commissioner Thiel's 26 years' experience spans five states (MD, NC, VA, AZ, and PA) as a chief fire officer, incident commander, company officer, fire and emergency services instructor, hazardous materials team leader, paramedic, technical rescuer, structural/wildland firefighter, swiftwater rescuer, and rescue SCUBA diver; he has directly participated in planning, response, and recovery efforts for multiple Presidentially-declared disasters and National Special Security Events (NSSEs), including the 9/11 tragedy, hurricanes, tropical storms, floods, an earthquake, major blizzards, international sporting competitions, and political events.

In addition to public service, Adam has co-founded two successful consulting practices advising clients on the merits of crisis management, leadership, training development, risk analysis, and business strategy. He is a widely published author, and internationally sought after speaker.

Commissioner Thiel completed doctoral coursework in Public Administration and Public Policy at Arizona State University (ABD) and George Mason University, respectively; earned his M.P.A. degree from George Mason University; received his B.S. in Fire Science from the University of Maryland University College; and earned his B.A. in History from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Additionally, he has completed the *Virginia Executive Institute*, Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government *Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government*, and the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security *Executive Leaders Program*.

Adam is a Certified Emergency Manager® (CEM), Fellow of the Institution of Fire Engineers (FIFireE), and holds several National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)-standard professional qualifications. He currently serves on multiple boards and committees, including: the NFPA Technical Committee on Emergency Service Organization Risk Management; Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Fire Council and Firefighter Safety Research Institute; George Washington University's Center for Cyber and Homeland Security Board; the American Red Cross Eastern Pennsylvania Region Board; and the Philadelphia Police Athletic League Board. He is a former chair of the National Fire Academy Board of Visitors and also served on the NFPA Fire Service Section Board. Adam is a 2017 Leadership Philadelphia Fellow and a 2018 USA Eisenhower Fellow.

Fire Commissioner Thiel is an Ironman® triathlon finisher, Crossfit® athlete, bicyclist (road and mountain), kayaker, martial arts practitioner, and aspiring gardener. Most importantly, he is the father of two energetic and accomplished teenagers.