Kennedy faces questions on aiding Black businesses

Michael D'Oriole  Tribune Staff Writer

Philadelphia legislators and city administration Monday were criticized for helping Black- and brown-owned businesses as it proposed spending plans.

During its first legislative budget hearing, the City Council’s Black Caucus said Mayor Jim Kenney’s proposed budget for the 2022 fiscal year, which kicks off July 1, and five-year fiscal forecast, includes $15 million that is believed to be supporting Black and brown-owned businesses.

Green called for using city funds to expand Black- and brown-owned businesses rather than giving $15 million that the administra- tion has proposed.

Under questioning from Councilmember Cherelle Parker, staff member of the council’s Black Caucus acknowledged that the administration has never set measurable goals for the city’s share of Black- and brown-owned businesses, despite opposition to the proposals that the city aims to expand exist- ing programs that help the Black and brown economies, which include assisting them with supply chain issues.

While Rashid said the city welcomed new com- mitments from big busi- nesses and banks to support Black- and brown-owned businesses, it was skeptical those pledges would materialize.

It is an area of immediate need for us,” she said. The victims, seen as up-and-coming, were often without legal representation, she added.

Said Mayor Jim Kenney’s administration Monday for the program, which is written in its proposed budget for fiscal year 2022, which kicks off July 1, and five-year fiscal forecast, includes $15 million that is believed to be supporting Black and brown-owned businesses, despite opposition to the proposals that the city aims to expand existing programs that help the Black and brown economies, which include assisting them with supply chain issues.

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