



September 14, 2020

The School District of Philadelphia
Board of Education
Education Center, Suite 101
440 N. Broad St. Philadelphia, PA 19130

Dear Chairwoman Wilkerson and Members of the School Board,

My name is Ben Connors, and I am the President & CEO of the General Building Contractors Association (GBCA), which has a membership of over 300 union commercial, industrial, and institutional general contractors, subcontractors, material suppliers, and construction service firms throughout the Greater Philadelphia region. I am writing to you to urge your support in extending the Keystone Opportunity Zone that will energize the former PES refinery as an economic engine for future generations of Philadelphians.

Our members stand ready to work with HRP Philly, our partners in organized labor, government, and all of the stakeholders to ensure that this transformative project delivers for our City. In a time of tremendous economic uncertainty, Philadelphia desperately needs more good paying jobs – and this project is a once in a generation opportunity to deliver the type of jobs our residents deserve.

This project represents a moment to upgrade infrastructure that will allow us to compete in our ever-changing global economic landscape. Not only will this project create a state-of-the-art logistics hub, the economic impact will help propel Philadelphia into a new age of growth with thousands of permanent and construction jobs for our residents.

We firmly believe that providing opportunities for stable careers in the construction building trades are critical component to Philadelphia reversing the economic decline which now makes us the poorest top-10 city in America. HRP Philly has committed to really aggressive diversity and inclusion goals that will benefit the growing number of MBE & WBE construction firms in our city. We can achieve these goals with the support of the City, School District, Unions and Business Community. We strongly urge you to support HRP Philly's request for extending the KOZ so we can get to work creating thousands of career and business opportunities for all Philadelphians.

Sincerely,

Benjamin J. Connors, Esq., CAE
President & CEO
General Building Contractors Association

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