

June 8, 2021

Dear Councilmembers,

The undersigned organizations respectfully write to ask you to oppose Bill No. 210442, the tax break for Philadelphia parking garage owners

The proposed tax cut would give parking lot owners \$130 million tax break, with this legislation's supporters insinuating that this tax break could lead to reduced parking rates in Center City.

Proposing to promote MORE vehicular driving in Philadelphia is bad health and environmental policy. It will increase congestion and the harmful air pollution that is responsible for so many asthma attacks and other respiratory ailments in Philadelphia. [The Philadelphia Inquirer recently reported that Center City already has the highest levels of particulate matter air pollution in the city, and that the biggest source of this pollution is cars and trucks.](#)

Moreover, [a recent study by PennEnvironment showed that air pollution levels in Philadelphia are already so high that it was unsafe to breathe one out of every four days.](#) And while City Council often states their concern for addressing climate change, promoting more driving instead of alternative forms of transportation will inevitably lead to more global warming pollution and make it harder to tackle climate change. The city's elected officials cannot have it both ways: you can either work to help address the existential crisis of our lifetime, or deliver a massive tax break to the city's politically connected special interests.

At the same time, having a \$130 million reduction in the municipal budget means not funding many of the critical priorities facing the city. This would make it more difficult to fund the transit and safe streets infrastructure that Philadelphians are more likely to use, and the recovery of our parks, schools, and other programs that are critical for our neighborhoods.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote against Bill No. 210442, reject handouts to parking lot owners that will contribute to more air and climate pollution, and instead invest these much-needed funds in the programs that benefit Philadelphians and the recovery of our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Clean Air Council
PennEnvironment
Physicians for Social Responsibility-PA
350.org Philadelphia
PennPIRG
5th Square
Philadelphia Chapter of Democratic
Socialists of America

Reclaim Philadelphia
Conservation Voters of PA
Sierra Club, Southeastern PA Group
Transit Forward Philadelphia
East Coast Greenway Alliance
Feet First Philly
Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia