

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

CITY COUNCIL STATED MEETING

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May 27, 2015
Start: 1:22 p.m.
Recess: 3:34 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E:

LETITIA JAMES
Public Advocate

MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO
SPEAKER

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Maria Del Carmen Arroyo
Inez D. Barron
Fernando Cabrera
Margaret S. Chin
Andrew Cohen
Costa G. Constantinides
Robert E. Cornegy, Jr.
Elizabeth S. Crowley
Laurie A. Cumbo
Chaim M. Deutsch
Inez E. Dickens
Daniel Dromm
Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.
Mathieu Eugene
Julissa Ferreras-Copeland
Daniel R. Garodnick
Vincent J. Gentile

Vanessa L. Gibson
Daniel G. Greenfield
Vincent Ignizio
Corey D. Johnson
Ben Kallos
Andy L. King
Peter A. Koo
Karen Koslowitz
Rory I. Lancman
Brad S. Lander
Stephen T. Levin
Mark Levine
Alan N. Maisel
Steven Matteo
Darlene Mealy
Carlos Menchaca
Rosie Mendez
I. Daneek Miller
Annabel Palma
Antonio Reynoso
Donovan J. Richards
Ydanis A. Rodriguez
Deborah L. Rose
Helen K. Rosenthal
Ritchie J. Torres
Mark Treyger
Eric A. Ulrich
James Vacca
Paul A. Vallone
James G. Van Bramer
Mark S. Weprin
Jumaane D. Williams
Ruben Wills

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Vincent Giordano
Chief of Police
NYPD 108th Precinct

Captain Travagliia
Commanding Officer
NYPD 108th Precinct

Megan Kinsella
Detective
NYPD 108th Precinct

Steven Stefanakos
Detective
Emergency Services Unit
NYPD 108th Precinct

Richard Neumann
Police Officer
NYPD 108th Precinct

Patricia Glunt
Conductor
Jackson Heights Orchestra

Henry Barkhorn
Chairman of the Board
Helen Keller International

Nancy Krail [sp?]
Director of Child Sight
Helen Keller International

Abbott Bhante Kondanna
Staten Island Buddhist Vihara
Staten Island, New York

Carmen Yulin Cruz Soto
Mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico

2 [sound check, pause]

3 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: We going to get
4 going. We have three ceremonials. The first one by
5 Council Member and Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer
6 for--for Police--

7 [pause]

8 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Okay, I'm--I will
9 just hand it over to [laughs] Council Member Van
10 Bramer for police--recognizing four police officers
11 who talked a jumper down from one of our bridges.
12 Really heroic. Definitely and I'm sure not an easy
13 task. So, I would like to ask them to come up and
14 I'll hand it over to Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you
16 very much, Madam Speaker and I want to ask all the
17 officers to join us. We're thrilled to have--yep,
18 some on this side here on the left over here. Our
19 Public Advocate Letitia James is with us, and Council
20 Member Vallone and Council Member Chin as well. I'm
21 thrilled absolutely thrilled to be here to honor
22 Detective Megan Kinsella. Where's Megan Kinsella,
23 Detective Kinsella right here of the 108th Precinct.
24 She served the NYPD for 15 years. Detective Steven
25 Stephan Stefanakos from the Emergency Service Unit,

2 who is here to my left. Police Officer Richard
3 Neumann from the 108th Precinct also to my left, and
4 Detective Brian Hirsch also to my left. I also want
5 to recognize we're joined by Chief Vincent Giordano,
6 the citywide Chief of the Emergency Service Unit here
7 to my left, and Captain Travaglia our Commanding
8 Officer of the 108th Precinct. And just briefly, on
9 April 6th, there was a 911 call that a young woman
10 was on the Koscuiszko Bridge wanting to jump off and
11 end her life. And for more than two hours Detective
12 Stefanakos and Detective Kinsella remained completely
13 focused on saving her life. They spoke to her. They
14 learned that she had two young children and then
15 shared their stories, their hopes, their dreams about
16 their own families. They told her they would not
17 leave the bridge until they came with her, and that
18 she was safe. And after hours of pleading and
19 working with her, talking to her, comforting her she
20 left the bridge with them, and did not take her life.
21 And those two children have their mother today.
22 [applause] So this is just another story where the
23 NYPD both our 108th Precinct, which we're very proud
24 of in Western Queens, but the Citywide Emergency
25 Service Unit officers are every single day risking

2 their lives to literally save the lives of others.
3 And I thought, and I know the Speaker feels the same
4 way, it is so important to recognize these officers
5 for their courage and for the bravery and for their
6 compassion. Really, to stand on a bridge, risk their
7 lives and talk about their families, talk about the
8 young children who this young mother at the beginning
9 of this was willing to leave. But then ultimately
10 decided she couldn't because of these officers right
11 here. So we thank you. We applaud you. The City
12 Council, the City of New York are really grateful for
13 your service, and I know that woman's children are
14 forever grateful as well for what you did on that
15 bridge in April. Thank you so much, and with that--
16 [applause] if the clerk would read the proc.

17 CLERK: Council City of New York
18 Proclamation.

19 Whereas, New York depends upon the men
20 and women of the New York City Police Department who
21 strive to protect our community, enforce our laws and
22 keep our neighborhoods safe. Everyday whether they
23 are on or off duty, these courageous individuals are
24 willing to defend the lives of New Yorkers with their
25 own. It is a great privilege to publicly recognize

2 four of New York City's finest: Detective Megan
3 Kinsella, Detective Stephen Sefanakos, Detective
4 Brian Hirsch, and Police Officer Richard Neumann for
5 demonstrating this on April 6, 2015; and

6 Whereas, on April 6, 2015, a call to 911
7 reported a woman preparing to jump 150 feet from the
8 Koscuisko Bridge to the Newtown Creek far below.
9 The officers raced to the scene and quickly spotted
10 the suicidal woman perched on an electrical conduit
11 pipe along the outside edge of the bridge balancing
12 uneasily with the support of an electrical wire
13 above; and

14 Whereas, for more than two hours
15 Detective Stefanakos and Detective Kinsella remained
16 completely focused on saving the distraught woman
17 from a fatal decision. Detective Stefanakos kept
18 urging her to allow them to lead her to safety while
19 establishing a rapport with the woman. Detective
20 Kinsella repeatedly told the woman that they would
21 not leave her until she was safely off the ledge.
22 The officers took turns--took turns speaking with the
23 woman who at one point, bent her knees, let go of the
24 wire and appeared to let go of hope. But the
25 officers remained committed to leading this woman to

2 safety. In this conversation with the woman,
3 Detective Stefanakos learned she has two children who
4 depended on her. The officers, too, shared personal
5 information about their own challenges and triumphs
6 within the families. Finally, they managed to break
7 through to the woman, and when the critical
8 opportunity arrived, officers quickly pulled her to
9 safety; and

10 Whereas, Detective Megan Kinsella has
11 served the NYPD for 15 years including the last nine
12 as the 108th Precinct's Domestic Violence Officer.
13 Detective Stephan Stefanakos, a Queens native, has
14 been with the NYPD for 24 years and a member of its
15 Emergency Service Unit for the last 20 years; and

16 Whereas, Police Officer Richard Neumann
17 has been with the 108th Precinct since 2004 shortly
18 after joining the NYPD. Detective Brian Hirsch is an
19 18-year veteran with the NYPD in part of its
20 Emergency Services Unit for the last 11 years; and

21 Whereas, thanks the professionalism,
22 compassion and courage of Detective Kinsella and
23 Detective Stefanakos, and the support of Police
24 Officer Neumann and Detective Hirsch who assisted in

2 the rescue, this woman's life was saved, and their
3 two children still have their loving mother today.

4 Now, therefore, be it known that the
5 Council of the City of New York proudly honors
6 Detective Megan Kinsella, Detective Steven
7 Stefanakos, Detective Brian Hirsch, and Police
8 Officer Richard Neumann for their life saving rescue
9 on April 6, 2015. Melissa Mark-Viverito, Speaker for
10 the Entire Council, Jimmy Van Bramer, Majority
11 Leader, Council Member 26th District Queens.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: All right.
13 [applause] Chief Giordano. Chief, would you say a
14 few words on behalf of--

15 CHIEF GIORDANO: I'd just like to thank
16 the Speaker and thank Council--Councilman and the
17 entire Council for recognizing the officers. They
18 did a great job and they saved a life, and it's just
19 important, you know, the fact that you're recognizing
20 them. Everyday the officers in NYPD go out there day
21 in and day out as do other first responders, and they
22 do a phenomenal job, you know, risking their lives
23 and serving men and women of New York City. They
24 like to make sure that everybody is safe and
25 everybody is secure. It's just with all--everything

2 that we run into, all the bad people that we get,
3 it's just so refreshing to know that you officers are
4 recognized and the City Council takes the time to do
5 this, and recognize the efforts and the great job
6 that these officers did. So again, on behalf of
7 Emergency Services of New York and the officers of
8 108, we--we really want to thank you and God bless
9 you. Thank you. [applause]

10 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you. Thank
11 you all. Again, you not only saved that woman that
12 day, you saved the family, and it really is just
13 heart breaking to hearing the state anguish that
14 woman must have been in to--to take that measure.
15 But thankfully you were al there to--to back her up,
16 and get her down. And hopefully, she's getting all
17 the support she needs to keep her family whole and
18 intact. Thank you again very much. Congratulations.
19 [applause]

20 [background comments, pause]

21 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Okay, Council
22 Member Dromm is going to be recognizing Pat Glunt who
23 is the conductor of the Jackson Heights Orchestra.

24 [applause/cheers]

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: That's right. If
3 you can believe it, Madam Speaker, Jackson Heights
4 has its own--own orchestra.

5 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [off mic] All
6 right.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Leave it to
8 Jackson Height, but Patricia Glunt has been a good
9 friend of mine somebody who is an outstanding
10 distinguished educator who taught--started teaching
11 in middle schools. Was a music teacher for many,
12 many years, became a director of music in the
13 district in which she taught in, and then further on
14 down the road in her career became the Interim Acting
15 Director for all of music education in the New York
16 City Department of Education. And if this wasn't
17 enough of a distinguished career, Pat then upon her I
18 guess retirement. Right after she retired, decided
19 to start the Jackson Heights Orchestra, and we are
20 very fortunate. It's an offshoot of the Jackson
21 Heights Beautification Group, and they are extremely
22 professional. People from all over come to hear
23 them, and they also visit other areas of the city as
24 well and bring the music of Bach and Beethoven and
25 others to other parts of the city. And I recently

2 saw on New York One News that she was honored as New
3 Yorker of the Week, and I she cannot go without a
4 citation and a proclamation from the City Council as
5 well to acknowledge the spirit and creativeness and
6 her dedication to music education, and through
7 providing everybody in our community with music. So,
8 to Patricia Glunt I say congratulations and thank
9 you, and I'm going to ask the City Clerk to read the
10 proclamation. And she's here with her partner Ellen
11 as well. Let's give Ellen a round of applause.

12 [applause] Come on up, Ellen.

13 CLERK: Council City of New York

14 Proclamation.

15 Whereas, the Council of the City of New
16 York is proud to honor Patricia A. Glunt for her
17 years of enduring contributions to New York City
18 public schools and the community; and

19 Whereas, a Sacramento, California native,
20 Pat Glunt attended the Conservatory of Music at the
21 University of the Pacific in Stockton, California and
22 graduated with a Bachelor of Music Degree in Violin
23 Performance and Theory Composition. She continued
24 her violin and composition studies the Sibelius
25 Academy in Helsinki, Finland where she also studied

2 conducting. Ms. Glunt pursued her interests in the
3 latter at the Conductors Institute at the University
4 of South Carolina. Ms. Glunt later received her
5 Master of Science Degree and Professional Diploma in
6 Supervision and Administration from Queens College.
7 After completing her studies, Ms. Glunt played first
8 violin the Tampere Finland Orchestra for three years,
9 and taught violin to students, classroom teachers,
10 and parents at the Rudolf Steiner School; and

11 Whereas, in 1985, shortly after moving to
12 New York City, Ms. Glunt launched her highly
13 accomplished career in education. She taught at IS
14 25 and IST 37 in District 25 for 12 years and also
15 served as a teacher and Center Director in the Queens
16 Borough wide--Borough wide program from 1988 to 1995.
17 In 1998, after years of distinguished service to
18 middle school students in Queens, Ms. Glunt began
19 teaching at Long Island City High School where she
20 was commissioned to develop the string program.
21 Three years later, she became Assistant Principal for
22 Music, Art, Business Technology and Culinary Arts.
23 In 2005, Ms. Glunt began her five-year tenure as
24 supervisor for all five New York City middle-school
25 instrumental borough wide programs. That same year,

2 she served as Interim Acting Director of Music for
3 the New York City Department of Education for six
4 months while retaining her position at Long Island
5 City High School with reduced responsibilities. She
6 returned full time to Long Island City High School
7 where she remained until her retirement in 2010; and

8 Whereas, Ms. Glunt has left her mark on
9 several of our education--of our nation's education
10 and art institutions some of which have honored her
11 stellar work in the field of music and education.
12 Ms. Glunt is Past President and a Board Member of the
13 Music Educators Association of New York City. She is
14 also a board member with the Quintet of the Americas,
15 and member at large of the New York-American String
16 Teachers Association; and

17 Whereas, Ms. Glunt remains actively
18 involved in New York City's classical music scene and
19 in the world of education. In addition to serving as
20 an adjunct professor at NYU and Hunter College, she
21 continues to work with the Office of Arts and Special
22 Projects. In 2012, she found the acclaimed Jackson
23 Heights Orchestra where she serves as artistic
24 director and conductor. The orchestra has become a
25 staple of the neighborhood's artistic community. Her

2 work with the orchestra was recognized in June 2014
3 by Queens Borough President Melinda Katz and Council
4 Member Daniel Dromm. In March 2015, Time Warner
5 Cable's New York One recognized Ms. Glunt's
6 contributions to the Jackson Heights community
7 specifically to the orchestra by naming her New
8 Yorker of the week.

9 Now, therefore, be it known that the
10 Council of the City of New York gratefully honors
11 Patricia A. Glunt for her many outstanding--many
12 years of outstanding achievements in music education.
13 Melissa Mark-Viverito Speaker for the entire Council,
14 Daniel Dromm, Council Member, 25th District Queens.

15 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: All right.
16 [applause, cheers] So congratulations. Incredible
17 the amount of work that you've done, and really to
18 start an orchestra in a borough is an incredible
19 fete. So congratulations on that. It's a great
20 contribution to the City of New York and to the
21 borough. And so, I'm glad that we are able to
22 recognize you with this proclamation today. And you
23 may want to say a few words.

24 PATRICIA GLUNT: [off mic] I do. If
25 you'll hold that, I'll take that.

2 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Yes.

3 [background comments]

4 PATRICIA GLUNT: Speaker Melissa-Mark

5 Viverito, Public Advocate Letitia James, Council

6 Member Dromm, members of the Council and friends.

7 Wow. Thank you very much for this tribute for the

8 work that I have done with the Jackson Heights

9 Orchestra and within the Jackson Heights Community.

10 I am deeply touched by this recognition. I would

11 like to thank a few people. Edwin Wesley, who I

12 first approached with this idea about starting the--

13 the Jackson Heights Orchestra totally embraced this.

14 And he was President of the Jackson Heights

15 Beautification Group at that point, and very

16 supportive. Thank you Danny Dromm, who is also

17 extremely excited and supportive of the idea of a

18 Jackson Heights Orchestra. His staff, members of the

19 orchestra, the Jackson Heights Community are donors

20 and, of course, my partner and spouse Ellen Cantrall

21 [sp?]. This is where I get touched. Their constant

22 support from day one has made this all possible.

23 Within three years, the orchestra has grown from nine

24 core members to 35. The ages range from 18 to 87

25 years old, and they come from all boroughs including

2 Long Island. Our audiences come from the Tri-State
3 area and Long Island also. The restaurants are
4 filled when Jackson is--when--when the orchestra is
5 playing in town let me tell you. So we performed
6 this year not only in Jackson Heights, but in
7 Mineola, Astoria and Bayside and we have a mission to
8 showcase our local talent. Without--with a couple of
9 closing comments I do want to thank everybody for
10 this recognition. I will say that none of this would
11 have happened if our communities throughout our
12 nation, throughout our city did not have strong music
13 and arts programs to support an ensemble like this.
14 It did not just happen one day. It started in
15 kindergarten. It started in first grade with
16 children learning to play an instrument, and having a
17 sequence of arts throughout their career. And being
18 truly, a truly educated member of society. And being
19 a music educator and a strong advocate, I would like
20 to say that no child is truly educated unless they
21 have a complete arts education. [applause] So
22 having said that, I would like to thank everybody
23 here for this tribute, and for recognizing what the
24 beautiful--the orchestra has done in Jackson Heights.

2 And I'm so very proud and humbled, and I think you
3 all very much. Thank you. [applause]

4 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you again.
5 [background comments] All right, we have one more
6 ceremonial. Thank you, congrats. We have one more
7 ceremonial, Council Member Mendez in recognition of
8 the 100th Anniversary of Helen Keller International.
9 Those that are being a part of this ceremonial, if
10 they could step up, please. [cheers, applause]

11 [pause]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you, Madam
13 Speaker and thank you for joining me today in
14 celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Helen Keller
15 International. Helen Keller was an individual that
16 did not let her disabilities define her, and gave
17 others these realizations that they, too, could do a
18 lot of things and not let disability be a defining
19 factors. But Helen Keller was much more than that.
20 She was a suffragist and a pacifist. She was what we
21 call in these chambers a progressive, and she was a
22 shero. And so Helen Keller International is
23 continuing that legacy and on the 100th Anniversary,
24 I'm so proud to have you here in the Chambers, and

2 I'll give it back to the--to--I'll give it back to my
3 speaker who will--

4 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: All right, we're
5 going to begin. Congrats to all. We're going to
6 hear the proclamation, and then a few words from
7 those that are being honored, and the Clerk can read
8 the proclamation.

9 CLERK: Council City of New York
10 Proclamation.

11 Whereas, the Council of the City of New
12 York is proud to honor Helen Keller International for
13 a century of extraordinary service to people around
14 the world; and

15 Whereas, most people know of Helen Keller
16 through the film *The Miracle Worker*, which
17 illustrated how with the support of a dedicated
18 teacher and celebrant she overcame deafness--both
19 deafness and blindness to become the world famous
20 symbol of hope and courage in the face of
21 overwhelming odds that she is today. Yet, Helen
22 Keller is much more than a symbol. She was a woman
23 of luminous intelligence, high ambition and great
24 accomplishment who devoted her life to helping
25 others. In addition to being an influential advocate

2 for people with disabilities, this Alabama native was
3 a suffragist, a pacifist, a passionate champion for
4 numerous causes and eventually a resident of Forest
5 Hills, Queens. When she passed away in 1968, she
6 left a legacy that Helen Keller International has
7 continued to carry on in her name and memory ever
8 since; and

9 Whereas, founded by Helen Keller in 1915,
10 Helen Keller International is one of the world's
11 premier international not-for-profit organizations
12 dedicated to preventing blindness and reducing
13 malnutrition. Headquartered in New York City, Helen
14 Keller International currently has more than 180
15 programs in 21 African and Asian countries. It also
16 runs Child Sight, an eye health program in the United
17 States, which reaches tens of thousands of under-
18 served youth with free vision screenings and
19 prescription eye glasses for students living in
20 poverty in New York, California, Connecticut, New
21 Jersey and Ohio; and

22 Whereas, at this milestone, we reflect
23 not only upon the longevity of Helen Keller
24 International, but it's profound and positive impact.
25 The results of its efforts are both dramatic and wide

2 ranging and perpetuate the indomitable spirit of
3 Helen Keller whose words continue to frame its values
4 and to guide the organization today. The welfare of
5 each is bound up in the welfare of all.

6 Now, therefore, be it known that the
7 Council of the City of New York proudly honors Helen
8 Keller International in celebration of its 100th
9 Anniversary and its extraordinary service to people
10 around the world. Melissa Mark-Viverito, Speaker for
11 the Entire Council. Rosie Mendez, Council Member,
12 2nd District, Manhattan. [applause]

13 HENRY BARKHORN: Madam Speaker, Council
14 Woman Mendez. I just want to say-- I'm Henry
15 Barkhorn, the Chairman of the Board of Helen Keller
16 International, and I just want to say how honored we
17 are to be recognized by this Chamber today. And to
18 say a few words about the--our activities in New York
19 City in recent years, I'd like ask Nancy Krail [sp?],
20 our Director of Child Sight.

21 NANCY TRAIL: Hi, again. I'm Nancy Krail
22 and again thank you for honoring us today, and I just
23 want to tell you a little bit about the work we are
24 doing right here in New York City. As we mentioned,
25 we've been providing vision screening and eyeglasses

2 to students in New York for 20 years. And we're in
3 all five boroughs, and we've traveled just about
4 every train, every subway, every taxi, every ferry
5 there is to provide these services. In fact, this
6 year alone we've linked to over 126 schools to
7 provide services. And over the years, since--in 20
8 years in New York City we've screened over 688,000
9 students. And, just to give you a frame of
10 reference, that's the population of South Dakota.
11 And, of those students, we've found over 95,000 have
12 needed a pair of glasses. And again, just to give
13 you a frame of reference, if we took every child that
14 we gave a pair of glasses to, we could fill Yankee
15 Stadium and City Field and the need continues. And
16 so, we're just so thrilled to be able to be here
17 today to give it--have it be recognized, have our
18 organization recognized and to give a voice to the
19 students that need a simple educational tool, which
20 is a pair of glasses. Thank you. [applause]

21 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you so
22 much. Thank you so much for your service, and this
23 proclamation is definitely well deserved. So thank
24 you very much. Congratulations.

25 [pause]

2 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: And with that, we
3 end ceremonials.

4 [pause]

5 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Could I have your
6 attention, please? Can I please have your attention.
7 Quite, please. Quiet, please. At this time, please
8 place all cell phones and electronic devices to
9 vibrate. Will all non-Council employees, non-Council
10 employees please leave the main floor of the
11 Chambers. Thank you.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the
13 Chambers. All rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

14 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: All rise.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Please remove all
16 hats.

17 [Pledge of Allegiance]

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Please be seated.

19 Roll Call.

20 [background comments]

21 CLERK: Arroyo.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Here.

23 CLERK: Barron.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Present.

25 CLERK: Cabrera.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Here.

3 CLERK: Chin.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Here.

5 CLERK: Cohen.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Here.

7 CLERK: Constantinides.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: [off mic]

9 Here.

10 CLERK: Cornegy.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Presente.

12 CLERK: Crowley.

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]

14 [shushing for quiet]

15 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet on the floor.

16 CLERK: Cumbo. Deutsch.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yes.

18 CLERK: Dickens. Dromm.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: [off mic] Here.

20 CLERK: Espinal.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Here.

22 CLERK: Ferreras-Copeland. Garodnick.

23 Gentile.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: Here.

25 CLERK: Gibson. Greenfield.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Here.

3 CLERK: Johnson.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Here.

5 CLERK: Kallos. King.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: [off mic] Present.

7 CLERK: Koo.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Present.

9 CLERK: Koslowitz.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: [off mic]

11 Here.

12 CLERK: Lancman.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: [off mic] Here.

14 CLERK: Lander. Levin.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [off mic] Here.

16 CLERK: Levine.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: [off mic] Here.

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]

19 [Shushing for quiet]

20 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Keep it down, please.

21 Keep it down.

22 CLERK: Maisel. Matteo. Mealy.

23 Menchaca. Mendez.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Here.

25 CLERK: Miller.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: [off mic] Here.

3 CLERK: Menchaca.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Presente.

5 CLERK: Palma. Reynoso.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Here.

7 CLERK: Richards.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Present.

9 CLERK: Rodriguez.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic]

11 Here.

12 CLERK: Rose.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [off mic] Here.

14 CLERK: Rosenthal.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Here.

16 CLERK: Torres. Treyger.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Here.

18 CLERK: Ulrich. Maisel.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Here.

20 CLERK: Vacca. Vallone.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Here.

22 CLERK: Weprin. Williams.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: [off mic] Here.

24 CLERK: Wills.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Here.

2 CLERK: Gibson.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: [off mic] Here.

4 [pause]

5 CLERK: Matteo.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Here.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [laughs] Lander.

8 CLERK: Eugene.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Here.

10 CLERK: Lander.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Here.

12 CLERK: Ignizio. Van Bramer.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Here.

14 CLERK: Speaker Mark-Viverito.

15 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [off mic] Here.

16 [banging noise]

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All quiet in the
18 Chambers. Please rise for the invocation delivered
19 by Abbott Bhante Kondanna, Staten Island Buddhist
20 Vihara at 115 John Street in Staten Island, New York.
21 Quiet in the Chambers.

22 ABBOTT BHANTE KONDANNA: Good afternoon.

23 [Speaking foreign language] Oh, the Blessed One, the
24 Exalted One, the fully enlightened one, peaceful and
25 calm, and wise and skillful. Not proud and demanding

2 in nature. Let them not do the slightest thing that
3 the wise would later reprove, wishing in gladness and
4 in safety. May all beings be at peace, whatever
5 living being there may be, whether they are weak or
6 strong omitting none, the great or the mighty,
7 medium, short or small, the seen and the unseen.
8 Those living near and far away. Those born and to be
9 born. May all beings be at peace. Let none deceive
10 another or despise any being in any state. Let none
11 show anger or ill will, wish harm upon another. Even
12 as a mother protects with her life her child, her
13 only child so with a boundless heart should one
14 cherish all living beings radiating kindness over the
15 entire world. Spreading upward to the skies, and
16 downward to the depths, outwards and unbound, free
17 from hatred and ill will. May everyone in the City
18 Council thus be well, happy, peaceful and secure.
19 May all those who are working hard to improve quality
20 of life of everyone in this great city, in this
21 nation be well, happy and peaceful and secure.

22 May all beings including all those who
23 experienced terrible effects of earthquake and who
24 are still suffering in Nepal be well, happy, peaceful
25 and secure. May we all and all beings be free from

2 suffering, be free from fear, be free from grief.
3 May we all and all beings attain peace and happiness.
4 Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu. As several weeks ago, a
5 terrible earthquake took place in Nepal where many
6 Buddhists live. Eight thousand plus people died.
7 Out of those, 200 some were Monks and nuns. Many
8 became homeless. So, we Buddhists are grateful, too,
9 for support received from many people from various
10 countries including the U.S.A. Earthquakes, floods,
11 fire, and hurricanes are familiar things in the
12 world. They come and go. Can we stop them? No, we
13 cannot do anything against nature. We have to
14 understand the nature. Nature elements are so
15 powerful. We cannot be distrustful to the nature.
16 If we become too greedy we cause harm to them--
17 nature. Nature will harm us. Therefore, we have to
18 be mindful what we do. Let's do anything harmful to
19 any being. All beings happy and secure. [sings]
20 Thank you.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Please be seated.
22 Council Member Debbie Rose.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Colleagues, it is
24 an honor for me to motion to spread the Invocation in
25 full upon the record. Today, I am grateful for the

2 words of wisdom and inspiration that we have heard
3 from Abbott Bhante Kondow--Kondia. He is the head
4 Monk at the Stent Island Buddhist Vihara.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
6 [shushing for quiet]

7 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet please.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: He completed his
9 Monastic training in Sri Lanka, and holds a B.A. in
10 Buddhist philosophy from the University of Kelaniya,
11 Sri Lanka. In 1985, he came to the United States to
12 provide his skills and services at the New York
13 Buddhist Vihara, and has also completed a B.S. in
14 Social Work at CUNY. In 1997, he obtained his MSW
15 from Fordham University. I don't know if my
16 colleagues know, but Staten Island has the largest
17 Sri Lankan population outside of Sri Lanka. And
18 Abbott Kondanna has been an integral part of New
19 York's extremely diverse and close-knit Buddhist
20 community. [banging noise] As former president of
21 the Buddhist Council of New York, he worked to
22 enhance the spiritual foundation of all New Yorkers.
23 He's been very inclusive, and he's been an integral
24 part of supporting Staten Island's growing Sri Lankan
25 community, and especially after 2004 the Tsunami in

2 Thailand. And, unfortunately, he is currently
3 working diligently with community groups to help
4 provide relief for post-earthquake Nepal. It is
5 indeed an honor. Thank you.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Adoption of
7 Minutes. Council Member Dromm.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you. I make
9 a motion that the minutes of the Stated Meeting of
10 April 28, 2015 be adopted as printed.

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
12 Messages and Papers from the Mayor.

13 CLERK: None.

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Communication
15 from city, county and borough offices.

16 CLERK: M 293, Banking Commission.

17 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Finance.

18 [pause]

19 CLERK: Petitions and Communications.
20 Preconsidered M 294, Stanley Richards, candidate for
21 appointment.

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Rules, Privileges
23 and Elections.

24 CLERK: Preconsidered M 295, Patricia
25 Machir, candidate for recommendation.

2 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Rules, Privileges
3 and Elections.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Land Use Call-
5 Ups.

6 CLERK: None.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the
8 Chambers, please. Now, we'll hear from the Speaker
9 Melissa Mark-Viverito.

10 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you, Madam
11 Public Advocate, and good afternoon to my colleagues.
12 [Speaking Spanish] Today, the Council will be voting
13 on a package of three bills that will improve
14 pedestrian, cyclists and motor safety on trucking
15 routes and ensure that large privately owned and city
16 operated garbage trucks are equipped with safety
17 devices that can prevent fatalities and collisions.
18 The first bill requires a study by the Department of
19 Transportation on Truck Route Compliance. The City
20 restricts the use of large trucks to certain streets,
21 but each year thousands of trucks are cited for
22 illegally straying from these designated routes.
23 This has raised safety and traffic concerns
24 especially in highly residential areas. DOT's study
25 will look at locations where truckers are often cited

2 for operating off designated routes as well as
3 locations identified by Council Members and Community
4 Boards as having a history of problems.

5 The second bill we'll vote on today
6 requires the department to study the safety of
7 pedestrians and cyclists along truck routes. The
8 department will be required to look into the impact
9 of tolling policy on truck route usage, serious
10 collisions that have occurred in the past five years;
11 and review their own strategies and make
12 recommendations for increasing pedestrian and cyclist
13 safety.

14 These two bill sponsored by Council
15 Members Vallone and Chin respectively, and if they
16 could each say a few words on the bills. Council
17 Member Vallone.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: I want to thank
19 you, Madam Speaker. As the Speaker said and with
20 Chair Rodriguez at DOT--

21 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [interposing] I'm
22 sorry, if I could--I--I'd ask my colleagues--we have
23 a very long agenda today. There's a lot that we want
24 to get done. There's going to be a lot of speaking
25 to these issues, and the longer that we have to keep

2 shushing people, the longer we're going to be here.
3 So if people--if people could please try to restrain
4 from that. Thank you. Refrain from that. Thank
5 you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you, Madam
7 Chair and also thank you to Madam Advocate for
8 marching in all the parades this weekend, especially
9 our district, and happy birthday, Margaret Chin.
10 It's nice to turn 19 again. So, on this bill, many
11 of us, if not all of us, have been plagued by
12 commercial trucks on residential streets. And this
13 is a pure quality of life issue that we are so
14 frustrated with. When the DOT and the NYPD look at
15 each other and say there's nothing we can do. So
16 what we have here is a bill that we are looking at
17 everyone's vote on today to say enough is enough.
18 And require a study, but beyond the study to put--
19 requiring safety measures to be put in place and
20 that's the most important part for all of us so we
21 have some teeth to this. To be brought in my
22 community boards, civic leaders and our offices. So
23 we're involving our entire district in this process.
24 So everyone is happy to target the most abused
25 residential streets that are--are frequented and too

2 often by our commercial trucks. So this is going to
3 be finally looked at, dealt with and changed. So a
4 big thank you to Chair Rodriguez, Kelly Taylor for
5 transportation, Laura Popa, Lyle Frank, and my Chief
6 of Staff Jonathan Szott, and my Policy and
7 Legislative Direct Ahmed Nazaar. Thank you very
8 much, Madam Speaker for allowing this to come forward
9 today.

10 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Council Member
11 Chin.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Madam
13 Speaker. First, I'd like to start by thank you co-
14 prime sponsor on Intro 641-A, Council Member Ydanis
15 Rodriguez and Jimmy Van Bramer. I'd also like to
16 thank especially Chair--Council Member Rodriguez for
17 his leadership as Transportation Committee Chair for
18 all his hard work to advance critical Vision Zero
19 legislation. I believe this comprehensive study of
20 pedestrian and cyclist safety along truck routes will
21 become a powerful new tool in our city's Vision Zero
22 effort. There are more than 1,000 miles of truck
23 routes in our city. And we already know that while
24 trucks makes up less than four percent of all the
25 vehicles on our streets, they account for collisions

2 that cause more than 30% of cyclist fatalities and
3 more than 10% of pedestrian fatalities.

4 The last time DOT conducted and released
5 a study specifically regarding truck routes was
6 around eight years ago. And we know that it's time
7 to take another look, an even more comprehensive look
8 at safety along these routes. This new study
9 required to be released by DOT no later than June
10 30th, 2016, will also review the impact of our
11 tolling policy on the use of truck routes and their
12 overall affect on street safety. Perhaps most
13 importantly, DOT will also be required to use all of
14 the information from this study to recommend new
15 policies to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety
16 along truck routes. In terms of our tolling policy
17 and truck route destination, I believe these new
18 strategies will help us make the kinds of smart fixes
19 and broad reform that will help us prevent future
20 crashes and save lives. I also want to thank my
21 staff Yume Kitasei for her work on this legislation
22 as well as Kelly Taylor and the Transportation
23 Committee staff, and I ask my colleagues to vote in
24 favor. Thank you.

2 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [coughs] Thank
3 you, colleagues. The final bill in this package
4 would require all large trucks used by city agencies
5 and private waste hauling vehicles to be equipped
6 with side guards. Side guards are devices that fit
7 onto the side of trucks, preventing pedestrians and
8 cyclists from falling into the exposed space between
9 a vehicle's axles. While side guards have been
10 under-utilized in most American cities, they are
11 required in Japan and many European countries. And
12 after the United Kingdom mandated side guard use,
13 fatalities for cyclists and collisions with trucks
14 dropped over 60%.

15 Last year when we passed the Vision Zero
16 legislative package, we made it clear that we were
17 only taking the first step in an ongoing process to
18 make safe--streets safer for all New Yorkers. Today,
19 we're taking another step forward with these bills.
20 Trucks are an integral part of our economy, and their
21 drivers are critical partners in making Vision Zero
22 successful. These bills take a comprehensive
23 approach to making this sector even more safer by
24 improving not just our citywide planning and policy,
25 but the vehicles themselves. On all of our

2 legislative matters, I first want to thank Matt
3 Gewolb and Laura Popa. On these bills in particular
4 Aysha Schomburg, Joan Povolny, Jan Atwell, Terzah
5 Nasser, Lyle Frank and Matt Gewolb. And with that,
6 I'll ask Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez to say a few
7 words.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
9 Speaker for the great leadership that you have shown
10 not only on bills related to--related to Vision Zero,
11 but on many issues affecting transportation. Today
12 with those three bills, the Committee on
13 Transportation is--is hearing the--our 22 bills that
14 we have passed, 17 of them related to Vision Zero.
15 This particular bill I had the opportunity to have my
16 colleague, Council Member Johnson of a co-sponsor of
17 this bill. And again, I--I think that on all those
18 three bills that we are passing on transportation,
19 the message that we are sending city is that we need
20 to be there for our pedestrians and for our cyclists.
21 They side guard bill is a bill that will reduce--that
22 will improve the safety for our pedestrians and
23 cyclists to more than 50% when someone is hit by--by
24 the truck. The other two bills will allow us to--to
25 bring the data, the information that we provide as a

2 better understanding on how trucks are moved in our
3 street. And, therefore, to be able to use those
4 information to work on legislation and initiatives
5 that make transportation in our streets safer and
6 more efficient. Thank you, Speaker.

7 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you,
8 Council Member, and I want to also commend Corey
9 Johnson for his leadership on this bill as well, and
10 he'll be speaking about another bill that he's
11 sponsoring today. We are going to be voting on
12 legislation that brings transparency to the health
13 services being provided in city jails. The bill that
14 we will be voting on today requires the Department of
15 Health and Mental Hygiene to provide quarterly
16 reports that include all physical and mental health
17 data provided to them by any healthcare provider
18 currently approving--I'm sorry--providing services in
19 any city jail. If the healthcare provider in
20 question does not provide data, the department will
21 still be required to issue quarterly reports on
22 patient safety, preventable hospitalization and
23 preventable medical care errors. The Council has
24 been at the forefront of our city ongoing discussion
25 about incarceration rates and deplorable conditions

2 in city jails. This bill will help the city with our
3 ongoing efforts to reform our jails, and end inhumane
4 treatment of inmates. I want to invite Council
5 Member Corey Johnson, who sponsored both, the side
6 guard legislation and this transparency bill to say a
7 few words. On the staff side, I would just like to
8 thank David Seitzer, Crystal Pond, Terzah Nasser, and
9 Matt Gewolb. And with that, Council Member Johnson.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam
11 Speaker. Good afternoon. Today, the Council is
12 addressing an urgent issue, the healthcare that is
13 provided to our city's incarcerated. The people
14 coming into our city's jails are overwhelmingly poor
15 and are overwhelmingly sick, and they are desperately
16 in need of quality health services. Inmates enter
17 this system with high rates of HIV, Hepatitis C,
18 Asthma, hypertension and substance abuse. All at
19 rates significantly higher than the general
20 population. It is of utmost importance that we
21 address these issues confidently, and
22 comprehensively. The allegations that have mounted
23 over the years, and as we've seen recently in the
24 news, suggest that the city's contractor Corizon is
25 failing to provide comprehensive and safe services to

2 people under their care. These reports suggest that
3 treatment provided to inmates may have been a factor
4 in at least 15 deaths over the last five years. And
5 that these deaths may have been preventable. In all
6 of these cases, quality or timeliness of healthcare
7 was an issue. The first step in addressing these
8 problems is getting a better picture of the adequacy
9 of the services being provided. Introduction No.
10 440-A would improve transparency by identifying the
11 metrics by which we should evaluate this system.

12 We need to hold Corizon and the City
13 agencies that oversee them responsible reformants in
14 key areas like wait times, sick times, access to
15 medication, follow-up visits, and preventable
16 hospitalizations. This reporting lays the groundwork
17 for a broader conversation about accountability.
18 With this legislation, quarterly reports will be
19 required from the Department of Health and Mental
20 Hygiene that would give us insight into the medical
21 services provided in jails such as Rikers Island.
22 This bill would ultimately decrease the preventable
23 death of inmates, increase patient safety, and reduce
24 the risk of errors in our jails' medical systems.
25 And today, I ask for your support in ensuring the

2 continued protection of wellness of inmates across
3 New York. I want to thank the Department of Health
4 and Mental Hygiene Commissioner, Dr. Mary Bassett,
5 for her work on this issue, and that her department
6 has done on this. I also want to thank my
7 Legislative Director, Louis Cholden-Brown; the former
8 Committee Counsel Dan Hafetz, who is no longer with
9 us; our current Committee Counsel David Seitzer who's
10 been amazing. Crystal Pond, the Policy Analyst;
11 Crilhien Francisco, the Finance Analyst and Terzah
12 Nasser for preparing this legislation today.

13 And Madam Speaker, I just quickly want to
14 say a word about side guards. Side guards save
15 lives. They save lives. This has been done in
16 Boston, in the U.K., in Japan and all over Europe,
17 and we are going to require that every truck,
18 Sanitation that the city owns or private haulers be
19 required to have side guards so that lives are saved.
20 We know it works. We know it will happen, and I want
21 to thank Kelly Taylor and Terzah Nasser and Louis
22 Cholden-Brown for their work on this. Thank you for
23 the opportunity to speak, Madam Speaker.

24 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you.

25 Additionally, we have a bill requiring the Department

2 of Education to provide an annual report regarding
3 student demographics and the department's efforts to
4 encourage diversity within schools such as strategic
5 site selection of new schools and special programs
6 and considering the demographics of neighborhoods
7 when drawing attendance zones. The bill will also
8 require the Department of Education to report certain
9 information pertaining to admissions criteria for
10 each school. This bill will allow the Council and
11 the public to see demographic data in addition to
12 race and ethnicity regarding students who receive
13 special education services; are English language
14 learners; receive free or reduced priced lunch;
15 reside in temporary housing or are attending school
16 outside of their community. Though New York City
17 schools overall are diverse, there have been concerns
18 raised that individual schools and districts are not
19 diverse. Diverse schools have been shown to benefit
20 all students. This bill will allow us to better
21 understand the issue and find the best ways to
22 encourage greater diversity. On the staff side I
23 want to thank Aysha Schomburg, Joan Povolny, Jan
24 Atwell [sic], Terzah Nasser, Lyle Frank and Matt

2 Gewold, and I'd like to ask Council Member Brad
3 Lander, the lead sponsor to say a few words.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you, Madam
5 Speaker for your support. I want to ask my
6 colleagues to support the School Diversity
7 Accountability Act, which is both Intro 511-A,
8 requiring an annual report on diversity or
9 unfortunately the lack thereof in the New York City
10 schools with extensive school-by-school data down to
11 the grade level. As well as the department's
12 specific efforts and initiatives to strengthen
13 diversity. And its packaged with Resolution 453,
14 introduced by Council Member Torres, calling on the
15 New York City Department of Education to establish
16 diversity as a priority in admission zoning and other
17 decision making.

18 As we learned in a ten-hour hearing,
19 Chaired by Council Member Dromm in December--thank
20 you council member--New York City's remarkable
21 diversity is one of our greatest strengths. But we
22 are failing woefully to bring that diversity into our
23 schools. Sixty years after the Supreme Court ruled
24 that separate but equal is inherently unequal in
25 *Brown v. Board*, it is shameful to have a school

2 system that is among the most segregated in the
3 country. Unfortunately, last year the U.S.--UCLA
4 Civil Rights Project released *New York's Extreme*
5 *School Segregation: Inequality in Action and a*
6 *Damaged Future*, which found that our schools are
7 amongst the most segregated in the country. A few
8 quick stats. In more than half of our city's more
9 1,600 public schools, Black and Latino students make
10 up 90% or more of the student population. Meanwhile,
11 half of the city's White students are concentrated in
12 just 7% of our schools, and half of the city's Asian
13 students are concentrated in just 6% of schools.
14 There is deep segregation by income as well as by
15 race. And, unfortunately even as residential has
16 gotten modestly better, school segregation has not.
17 Intro 511 will require the Department of Education to
18 submit an annual report to the City Council and post
19 on its website. The first one will be due at the end
20 of this year cover K to 12 and then we'll give them
21 one more year to get the Pre-K data up, and include
22 Pre-K as well. Grade level, race or ethnicity,
23 gender for students who are English language
24 learners, their primary home language as well as
25 breaking up the categories the speak--the Speaker

2 mentioned such as special ed service, free and
3 reduced lunch, and some are data to test performance
4 and test levels as well.

5 The law will also require DOE for the
6 first time to report on the admissions processes used
7 by each school or special program. And require DOE
8 to report on any efforts during the preceding school
9 year to encourage a diverse student body in schools
10 and special programs, which will help advocates who
11 are pioneering good strategies in some of our schools
12 and districts. And I want to call out the leadership
13 of Districts 1, 3, 13 and 15 and of Appleseed New
14 York, who have been pioneering different school based
15 and district based strategies like controlled choice,
16 like non-zoned elementary schools, like educational
17 option high schools that really are making a
18 difference and can do more if we track and hold
19 ourselves accountable. I also want to thank Aysha
20 Schomburg, Jan Atwell, Jan Povolny, Lyle Frank,
21 Terzah Nasser and Matt Gewolb, as well as my
22 Legislative Director Ben Smith, and from the
23 Administration Reggie Thomas. Thanks very much to
24 all of you

2 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [interposing]

3 Thank--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: --for your
5 support.

6 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you,
7 Council Member. Today, we're also voting to
8 approving a rezoning on Vanderbilt Avenue. Thanks to
9 the leadership of Council Member Dan Garodnick this
10 new- We're fully aware of the banging upstairs.
11 We're trying to take care of that. It's pretty
12 annoying. Today, we're also voting to approve the
13 rezoning of Vanderbilt Avenue. Thanks to the
14 leadership of Council Member Dan Garodnick, this new
15 agreement secures a \$220 million investment from SL
16 Green to make needed public transit and public space
17 improvements in and around Grand Central Station.
18 This allows us to upgrade and improve public transit.
19 With an infusion of money, it doesn't cost the
20 taxpayer a dime. This has been a lot of work into
21 this. Council Member Garodnick, it's a proud day,
22 and he'll say a few words and then followed by Chair
23 of our Land Use Council Member Greenfield. Council
24 Member Garodnick.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank you very
3 much, Madam Speaker and for the chance to speak about
4 the Vanderbilt Corridor Rezoning, the Special Permit
5 Application for One Vanderbilt. As you all may
6 recall, toward the end of his administration, former
7 Mayor Bloomberg proposed an extensive rezoning of
8 East Midtown. While I shared his concerns about the
9 quality and age of office buildings in the area, the
10 Mayor's proposal left too many unresolved questions
11 of air rights, pricing, public realm improvements and
12 infrastructure deliverables. This was particularly
13 troubling in the context of so much as-of-right
14 zoning. As a result, I ultimately to oppose that
15 plan and Mayor Bloomberg withdrew it. Last year with
16 my support, Mayor de Blasio and City Planning
17 Commission Chair Weisbrod announced a different two-
18 pronged approach to the zoning challenges of East
19 Midtown. The first prong, the first phase before us
20 today is a rezoning of Vanderbilt Avenue between 42nd
21 and 47th Streets, in which applicants can apply for a
22 special permit to build up to 30 FAR in exchange for
23 public improvements, or via the purchase of air
24 rights from a neighboring landmark.

2 The second phase covering the rest of
3 East Midtown will follow. It is no secret that
4 Grand Central and the Vanderbilt Avenue Corridor in
5 particular are in need of significant improvements.
6 Grand Central is a mess. It is one of the busiest
7 transit hubs in the world, and it has gotten crowded
8 well beyond its capacity. It badly needs upgrades to
9 its infrastructure and pedestrian circulation system.
10 Sidewalks in the area are far too narrow and crowded,
11 and Vanderbilt Avenue, a street directly adjacent to
12 one of the most iconic buildings in New York City
13 looks and feels like a back alley. This is hardly a
14 local issue for my Council District. It affects
15 everyone of our constituents no matter where they
16 live. This rezoning will bring some badly needed
17 change to the area. My concerns from last term,
18 which included the fact that so much certainly was
19 afforded to the development community with few
20 guarantees to the public do not exist here. That's
21 because the city and the public maintain the full
22 discretion to approve or deny each application
23 through a special permit.

24 Any applicant along the corridor will
25 have the burden of convincing the public that the

2 proposed infrastructure improvements are worthy of
3 the additional development rights. But, we in turn
4 will demand that any improvements to area
5 infrastructure are done and delivered to the public
6 in advance of the occupancy of the building. The
7 first applicant at One Vanderbilt has proposed
8 considerable infrastructure improvements ranging from
9 subway entrances to platform changes to new public
10 areas and access points to Grand Central initially
11 valued at \$210 million in exchange for the density
12 bonuses necessary to build a 1.6 million square foot
13 and 67-story commercial building. In addition to
14 those improvements, the Council has negotiated in
15 this process some additional significant changes to
16 One Vanderbilt to further enhance the benefit to the
17 public. The additional improvements bring SL Green's
18 total public investment to at least \$220 million. It
19 is worth noting that these improvements come out to
20 about \$400 per square foot of additional density,
21 which means the public is getting far more per square
22 foot than they would have under the Bloomberg plan.

23 Additionally, the public will see these
24 improvements up front. If there are cost overruns or
25 unforeseen circumstances, the developer is still on

2 the hook to complete the project before moving into
3 their building. It will, even with this project
4 alone, create over 5,000 construction jobs, 190
5 permanent union jobs, and created \$50 million in
6 annual tax revenues for the city. I want to commend
7 the Chair of the Multi-Board Task Force Lola
8 Finkelstein and the other members of both Community
9 Board 5 and 6, and Borough President Gale Brewer for
10 her thoughts and recommendations throughout this
11 process. I want to recognize and thank Chairs Weprin
12 and Greenfield, and the Speaker for their support
13 throughout this process. Today, we have a much
14 better rezoning and project to their support, their
15 work, and their thoughtful suggestions. And I want
16 to urge my colleagues to join me today in voting to
17 approve this first part of the East Midtown Rezoning.
18 Thank you.

19 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you.
20 Council Member Greenfield.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank you,
22 Madam Speaker and thank you very much Council Member
23 Dan Garodnick and congratulations on really
24 outstanding negotiations on behalf of your
25 constituents. And the importance really of what

2 we're doing today technically we're modifying the
3 Vanderbilt Corridor Text Amendment and approving One
4 Vanderbilt is that in New York City we're--we're
5 blessed to have a few central business districts.
6 But, the Central Business District of Midtown
7 Manhattan is an iconic central business district that
8 really over the last few years has been losing its
9 competitive edge with the inability to bring up new
10 buildings and to really compete with other global
11 cities. And so, what we're doing here today is much
12 more important than simply a rezoning in one
13 neighborhood. It really will have a positive impact
14 on the entire city. I do want to point out something
15 that Council Member Garodnick pointed out, and I want
16 to also recognize Borough President Gale Brewer for
17 her stewardship as well. And that is that if you
18 look at the trend of what's been happening here in
19 the City Council every major and minor land use deal
20 has been improved as a result of this Council. And
21 that really is to the credit the Speaker who has
22 empowered the Land Use Committee to really get things
23 done on behalf of individual council members.

24 So, whether you go back to the Domino
25 development where we added extra affordable housing

2 units or Astoria Cove where we upped the percentage
3 of affordability and made that there were good union
4 jobs. Or, even right now where we have massive
5 improvements in infrastructure and that really is
6 thanks to the leadership of the Council. And the
7 really outstanding cooperation that we have with City
8 Planning under their Chair, Commissioner Carl
9 Weisbrod who we are very grateful for his work. I
10 just really want to thank the Land Use staff. They
11 put thousands of hours into this especially Raju Mann
12 and Anne McCaughey for the outstanding work that they
13 did. I think we should all be proud of what we're
14 accomplishing today. We took a project that was
15 going to get railroaded through the old
16 administration, we slowed it down. We got community
17 input. It's a better project, more improvements, and
18 we've set a great precedent for the future. I really
19 want to once again congratulate Council Member
20 Garodnick for his leadership. And this is really a
21 great project to be proud of not just for his
22 district, but for the entire City of New York. Thank
23 you.

24 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you,
25 Council Member. Finally, the Council will be voting

2 on a bill that creates a City New City Office of
3 Civil Justice. Mandating the creation of this office
4 was something I promised during my State of the City
5 Address in February, and I'm proud to be a co-prime
6 sponsor of the bill with Council Member Levine. All
7 across our city there are New Yorkers struggling with
8 the court system who find themselves in desperate
9 need of legal counsel they simply can't afford.
10 These are individuals and families facing threats of
11 eviction, intimidation by debt collectors and denial
12 of government benefit they are entitled to. They are
13 fighting to protect their homes and financial
14 security, and sadly, they're often fighting this
15 alone. The research on this matter is conclusive.
16 Limited access to an attorney means limited access to
17 justice. And the people most likely to face these
18 legal battles without a lawyer's help are among the
19 most vulnerable: Domestic violence survivors,
20 seniors, and people with disabilities. Allowing this
21 to continue isn't just dysfunctional. It isn't just
22 poor public policy, and it isn't immoral and wrong.
23 It's--it's--I'm sorry, it's just--it isn't just poor
24 public policy, it's immoral and it's wrong. That's
25 why we are voting to mandate the creation of an

2 office dedicated to working to ensure that low-income
3 New Yorkers have access to legal representation. The
4 Office of Civil Justice will be led by a Civil
5 Justice Coordinator, and as I said in my State of the
6 City, this will be the People's Law Firm. This Civil
7 Justice Coordinator will help city agencies
8 collaborate with non-profits, pro bono programs and
9 other providers as well as advise the Mayor on
10 implementation of civil legal services, and make
11 relevant budget recommendations. The task we've
12 given this new office is simple, but essential: To
13 work toward ensuring adequate legal representation
14 for all low-income New Yorkers. On the staff side, I
15 really do a special thank your Rob Calandra, Matt
16 Gewolb, Joshua Hanshaft and Ed Atkin and ask our
17 Council Member Mark Levine to say a few words.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you, Madam
19 Speaker. Thank you for being so passionate and
20 determined on this issue. I also want to thank Chair
21 Lancman for moving this through his committee so
22 expeditiously. And I want to thank my colleague
23 Vanessa Gibson who's been an incredible champion on
24 civil justice especially in the Housing Court arena.
25 I'm just so proud of the City Council, which is

2 focused like a laser on the injustice that is
3 occurring in the civil courts in New York City where
4 tens of thousands of New Yorkers every year are
5 facing eviction without an attorney. They're facing
6 deportation without an attorney. Foreclosure of
7 their home without an attorney, and we have stepped
8 up to the plate to do something about this, to
9 address the terrible human toll that this injustice
10 has taken. We have more than double the funding
11 going to civil justice representation in the last
12 budget, and I think we're more than doubling it
13 again. A huge achievement that will ease our
14 homeless crisis and ease our affordable housing
15 crisis. And today, we're taking another big step
16 forward with a critical piece of the infrastructure
17 by creating for the first time an Office of Civil
18 Justice in this city that will coordinate and
19 consolidate all of the civil justice programs that
20 we're currently supporting. That will monitor all of
21 the contracts we have with our wonderful providers
22 who are doing this work in the courts everyday. That
23 will report back to this body every year with updates
24 on the scope and impact of civil justice
25 representation, and analysis of the unmet need. And

2 which will critically prepare a five-year plan on the
3 city can get to full representation in housing court
4 and other arenas. Truly, truly important legislation
5 that I'm proud to have co-sponsored with the Speaker.
6 I want to thank the staff who worked so hard to make
7 this possible over a period of months, including
8 Laura Popa, Rob Newman, Matt Gewolb, Josh Hanshaft,
9 Rob Calandra, Amy Slattery, and my fabulous Chief of
10 Staff Ira Keef who labored tirelessly and brilliantly
11 to make this possible. And I want to thank the
12 incredible coalition of community groups that's come
13 together to make this possible. Some of whom are
14 here with us today, including CASA, Bronx Defenders
15 Community Board 12 in Manhattan and so many others.
16 Thank you all, and thank you again, Madam Speaker.

17 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Thank you,
18 Council Member for your support on this issue.
19 Finally, I want to just say a couple of I guess it
20 was Council Member Margaret Chin's birthday
21 yesterday, if I'm not mistaken. So, happy birthday
22 Margaret. [cheers, applause] And also our good
23 friend and former colleague, Lew Fidler is
24 celebrating his birthday today, but we're also really
25 happy to learn that he's also celebrating a

2 successful kidney transplant. I know we were
3 waiting-- [cheers, applause] He was waiting for a
4 while so it's great to hear that he is in good
5 spirits and doing well. So, obviously wishing him a
6 happy birthday and a complete recovery. And lastly,
7 Council Member Mendez has put a dear colleague letter
8 on top of everyone's desk. I would really encourage
9 all of my colleagues that can attend and join us
10 tomorrow--the following Friday that we are doing to
11 support the local businesses that were impacted as a
12 result of the explosion that happened recently. Very
13 unfortunate. Having gone through a similar
14 experience in my district, unfortunately, we know the
15 impact that this has not only for residents who may
16 be permanently or temporarily displaced. But also
17 the businesses that suffer revenue and suffer loss of
18 support. So, with that, I do hope that colleagues
19 will join us tomorrow. It's going to be a crawl
20 several businesses. I'm sorry. Friday. Sorry, I'm
21 little--Friday. We are visiting several locations,
22 and anyone else that wants to join. This is about
23 supporting the community. So any of the press that
24 wants to join us, feel free. So with that, I
25 conclude remarks--communication from the Speaker.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

3 Discussion of General Orders, Council Member Vacca
4 for a vote.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I ask permission
6 to vote aye on all--

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
8 Yes.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: --calendar items.
10 Thank you.

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
12 Report of Spec--Council Member Ferreras.

13 CHAIRPERSON FERRERAS-COPELAND: I vote
14 aye. Thank you.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Report of Special
16 Committees.

17 CLERK: None.

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Oh, Council
19 Member Darlene Mealy.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I vote aye on all.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
22 Report of Special Committees.

23 CLERK: None.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Reports of
25 Standing Committees.

2 CLERK: Report of the Committee on Courts
3 and Legal Services, Intro 736-A, Office of Civil
4 Justice.

5 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and
6 coupled on General Orders.

7 CLERK: Report of the Committee on
8 Education, Intro 511-A, Report on Student
9 Demographics.

10 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and
11 coupled on General Orders.

12 CLERK: Report of the Committee on
13 Finance, Intro 764, Lower East Side BID.

14 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
15 General Orders.

16 CLERK: Report of the Committee on
17 Health, Intro 440-A, Health Services in Correctional
18 Facilities.

19 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and
20 coupled on General Orders.

21 CLERK: Report of the Committee on Land
22 Use, LU 223, Zoning Amendment.

23 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Approved and
24 modifications and referred to the City Planning
25 Commission pursuant to Rule 11.70(b) of the Rules of

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2 the Council and Section 197-d of the New York City
3 Charter.

4 CLERK: LU--excuse me--LU 224 and Reso
5 712, Maritime Lease.

6 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
7 General Orders.

8 CLERK: LU 225 and Reso 713 through LU
9 228 and Reso 716, Real Property Tax Exemptions.

10 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
11 General Orders.

12 CLERK: Report of the Committee on Rules,
13 Privileges and Elections, M 289 and Reso 717,
14 approving the appointment of Karen Redlener, Board of
15 Health.

16 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
17 General Orders.

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
19 [shushing for quiet]

20 CLERK: M 290 and Reso 718, approving the
21 appointment of Dr. Ramanathan Raju, Board of Health

22 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
23 General Orders.

24 CLERK: M 291 and Reso 719, approving the
25 appointment of Rose M. Gil, Board of Health.

2 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
3 General Orders.

4 CLERK: M 292 and Reso 720, approving the
5 appointment of William Aguado, Taxi and Limousine
6 Commission.

7 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
8 General Orders.

9 CLERK: Preconsidered M 294--

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
11 [shushing for quiet]

12 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Keep it down, please.
13 Keep it down.

14 CLERK: --and Reso 721 approving the
15 recommendation of Stanley Richards, Board of
16 Correction.

17 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Stanley is here,
18 Stanley Richards. [cheers, applause] I want to say
19 I--I am very proud that under this Council this is
20 the first time the City Council is approving someone
21 who was formerly incarcerated to be on the Board of
22 Corrections. And I think that that is a really
23 [cheers, applause] is a really proud accomplishment
24 and someone who has dedicated his career, his
25 professional career to really making and improving

2 the lives of others. So congratulations to Stanley,
3 and I know you've heard it a lot these past couple of
4 days, but we're very proud at this moment. And
5 thank you for your partnership on making sure that we
6 approve the Board of Corrections--I mean improve the
7 Department of Corrections, and all the work that lies
8 ahead. Thank you very much. So with that, coupled
9 on general orders. [applause]

10 CLERK: Preconsidered M 295 and Reso 722
11 approving the recommendation of Patricia Machi, Youth
12 Board.

13 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
14 General Orders.

15 CLERK: Report of the Committee on
16 Transportation, Intro 198-A, Side Guards.

17 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and
18 coupled on general orders.

19 CLERK: Intro 315-A, Truck Route
20 Compliance Study.

21 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and
22 coupled on General Orders.

23 CLERK: Intro 641-A, Pedestrian and
24 Cyclist Safety Study.

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2 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Amended and
3 coupled on General Orders.

4 CLERK: On the General Order Calendar, LU
5 197 and Reso 723 through LU 201 and Reso 727 on page
6 11, Vanderbilt Avenue Corridor.

7 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
8 General Orders.

9 CLERK: LU 209 and Reso 728 and LU 210
10 and Reso 729, Zoning Permits.

11 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
12 General Orders.

13 CLERK: LU 211 and Reso 730, Zoning
14 Amendment.

15 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
16 General Orders.

17 CLERK: Resolution appoint various
18 persons commissioner of deeds.

19 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Coupled on
20 General Orders, and at this time, I ask for a full
21 roll call on all items coupled on the General Order
22 Calendar.

23 CLERK: Arroyo.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: [off mic] Aye.

25 CLERK: Barron.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Permission to
3 explain my vote.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

5 [pause]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you, Madam
7 Public Advocate. I want to give congratulations to
8 Stanley Richards on his nomination. I want to
9 express condolences for the--those who passed. But
10 in regards to the bill and the resolution on
11 addressing the diversity or lack thereof in the city-
12 -in the city school systems, I'm very pleased that it
13 is up for a vote. And that my colleagues' bill will
14 be voted on. I'm very disappointed that Reso 442 was
15 removed because it, too, addresses the inequity that
16 exists in our schools in terms of specialized high
17 school. But, it was a Reso and we do know that it is
18 at the State. S o we hope that it will see the light
19 of day there and be successful. I vote aye on all.

20 CLERK: Cabrera.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Aye.

22 CLERK: Chin.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye on all.

24 CLERK: Cohen.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Aye.

2 CLERK: Constantinides.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Aye on
4 all.

5 CLERK: Cornegy.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: I vote aye.

7 CLERK: Crowley.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CROWLEY: Aye.

9 CLERK: Cumbo.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Aye.

11 CLERK: Deutsch.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Aye on all.

13 CLERK: Dickens.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DICKENS: [off mic] Aye on
15 all.

16 CLERK: Dromm.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Permission to
18 explain my vote.

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you very

21 much Madam Public Advocate, but I also want to thank

22 Speaker Mark-Viverito, and take this opportunity to

23 highlight the historic nature of today's Council vote

24 on Stanley Richards for the Board of Corrections.

25 I'm very proud to have raised Stanley's name for

2 consideration. I first met Stanley through his work
3 at the Fortune Society where my friend Robert was
4 receiving services. As someone with more than two
5 decades experience helping to guide one of the
6 country's leading re-entry programs and the personal
7 experience of incarceration, Stanley will bring a
8 fresh perspective to the Board. The appointment of
9 an individual who has been directly impacted by the
10 Board of Correction's policies is long overdue. For
11 my friend Robert and all of the other individuals--
12 individuals yet to pass through the gates of Rikers,
13 and our others--other jails, the appointment of
14 Stanley to the Board represents a promise of justice.
15 That their voices will finally be heard and taken
16 serious. I believe Stanley shares my views that
17 preparation for re-entry into society begins when
18 individuals--

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
20 [shushing for quiet]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: --first enter the
22 criminal justice system.

23 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet down, please.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Our jails should
25 be places where individuals can fight their cases and

2 prepare their lives on the outside all without the
3 threat of violence. This is the only way these
4 individuals can move forward and our society can
5 become safer. I ask that my colleagues seize this
6 moment to effect lasting change in our criminal
7 justice system by voting to approve Stanley Richards.
8 But I also want to take this opportunity to thank
9 Chair Lander, Brad Lander for his work on this, and
10 also Chuck Davis for everything he did to prepare for
11 this appointment. Thank you very much, and
12 congratulations to Stanley Richards. [applause]

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Please refrain.

14 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet down.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Please keep it
16 down and refrain from applause. If you approve,
17 just--thank you.

18 CLERK: Espinal.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: I vote aye.

20 CLERK: Eugene.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

22 CLERK: Garodnick.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Permission to
24 explain my vote?

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank you. I
3 just wanted to take a moment to congratulate Council
4 Member Menchaca on the deal that he reached and let
5 between the Council and EDC to approve a Master Lease
6 at the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal. This is an
7 area with enormous potential for economic activity,
8 and job creation. And its significance extends far
9 beyond Sunset Park, but I am confident that Council
10 Member Menchaca achieved a deal that will both bring
11 jobs to Sunset Park and will give the community a
12 real voice in future planning in the neighborhood. I
13 do want to say it was an absolute pleasure for me to
14 work with Council Member Menchaca on this project,
15 and I know how lucky his constituents are to have him
16 fighting on their behalf. And I also wanted to thank
17 EDC President Kyle Kimball for his collaboration, and
18 we wish him the best of luck in whatever comes next.
19 So Council Member Menchaca congratulations, and I
20 happily vote yes on this and all other items.

21 CLERK: Gentile.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GENTILE: I vote aye.

23 CLERK: Gibson.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Permission to
25 explain my vote.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you, Madam
4 Public Advocate and I certainly want to applaud the
5 leadership of our Speaker and Council Member Mark
6 Levine. I want to speak in support of Intro 736-A to
7 create an Office of Civil Justice, understanding that
8 this is a great move, a great of progress in the
9 coordination of all civil legal services in the city.
10 And looking at the efficacy and coordinating
11 recommendation on improvements in our civil legal
12 service industry. I recognize that this is a very
13 important step, and also want to applaud all of the
14 advocates and colleagues for really standing firm on
15 looking at right to counsel, and making sure that we
16 can provide legal representation in eviction
17 proceedings. I represent Bronx County--Bronx Housing
18 Court, which has faced thousands of evictions across
19 this city that are very preventable. And so, I'm
20 really glad that we're looking at this Civil Justice
21 Coordinator that can really look at civil legal
22 services. I want to thank all of the phenomenal
23 advocacy groups that have really stood with us in the
24 trenches, helped to educate us on ways in which we
25 can improve the lives of so many residents that

2 deserve and need sufficient and quality housing this
3 city. I want to thank Bronx CASA, Legal Aid, Legal
4 Services, Urban Justice, Housing Court Answers,
5 Tenants Alliance, New York Law Center and Bronx
6 Defenders for all of their work. And again, thank
7 you, Madam Speaker for your leadership. You talked
8 about it in February and here we are voting on it,
9 and I'm very proud of this day. And thank you to our
10 colleague, Council Member Mark Levine for your
11 leadership. It's a pleasure working with you across
12 the river, Upper Manhattan and the Bronx United. I
13 really appreciate the opportunity, and I will vote
14 aye on all. And I congratulate all of my colleagues
15 on all the other bills, as well as our nominees.
16 Congratulations to your Board of Corrections, and TLC
17 and the Department of Health. Thank you and I vote
18 aye on all.

19 CLERK: Greenfield.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: May I explain
21 my vote?

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank you,
24 Madam Public Advocate. I, too, would like to
25 congratulate my colleagues, especially Council Member

2 Johnson who lately just seems like he's passing the
3 lion's share of legislation here in the City Council,
4 two pieces today. Well done. Council Member Lander
5 for the great work that he's been doing on a very
6 important issue. Council Member Mark Levine and the
7 Speaker for a tremendous, tremendous leadership with
8 the creation of this new--

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
10 [shushing for quiet]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: --office,
12 Council Members Vallone and Chin, and as well, to
13 congratulate Council Member Menchaca on a--on a great
14 deal for her constituents. In Sunset Park some
15 really terrific tangible benefits for his
16 constituency. I also want to--I want to congratulate
17 Council Member Deutsch, who negotiated a terrific
18 resolution for a controversial project in his
19 district, and Council Member Arroyo as well. And
20 finally, I want to congratulate Council Member
21 Garodnick as well mostly just to recognize that SL
22 Green, the developer in this particular case at One
23 Vanderbilt really did work hand-in-hand with the
24 Administration and the Council to try to achieve
25 goals that were good for all involved. And I

2 certainly want to recognize them as well. And then,
3 finally, I want to congratulate all of the nominees
4 today, but especially to the--the Board of Health.
5 As you'll recall, the last time we had votes for
6 members of the Board of Health, I actually voted
7 against members because of issues that we had with
8 the Board of Health. It was creating rulemaking that
9 I believe then and believe now infringed on religious
10 liberties in New York. And I have assurances from
11 the new nominees based on questioning yesterday in
12 the Rules Committee and our able chair Brad Lander
13 that these nominees will, in fact, take into
14 consideration religious and other cultural
15 considerations before engaging in rulemaking that
16 impacts minority groups in the City of New York. And
17 I'm grate for that and, therefore, I'm proud to vote
18 aye on their nominations and on all nominations as
19 well on all items on today's agenda, Madam Public
20 Advocate.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

22 CLERK: Johnson.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: Permission to
24 explain my vote.

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: I just want to
3 echo Council Member Dromm's I think very, very
4 eloquent words about the nomination before us of
5 Stanley Richards. This is extraordinarily important
6 given Stanley's experience, given the work that the
7 Fortune Society has done and continues to do in New
8 York city. And all of the attention we've seen cast
9 upon the really difficult circumstances and violence
10 at Rikers Island. We need someone who can put
11 themselves in the shoes of the people that they're
12 there to represent. And I know that Stanley is going
13 to do that on behalf of people that may not have a
14 voice, and who have been marginalized for too long.
15 So, I am very proud that the Council put forward his
16 name. I want to thank the Speaker for doing that. I
17 want to thank Council Member Dromm for his advocacy,
18 and I also want to say that Dr. Raju, Dr. Gil and
19 Karen Redlener are all outstanding nominees to the
20 Board of Health. I proudly vote aye on all.

21 CLERK: Kallos.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Permission not to
23 explain my vote. I vote aye. [laughter]

24 CLERK: King.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: [off mic] Aye on
3 all.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

5 CLERK: Koo.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

7 CLERK: Koslowitz.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: [off mic] Aye.

9 CLERK: Lancman.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LANCMAN: [off mic] Aye on
11 all.

12 CLERK: Lander.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Sorry. Request
14 permission to explain my vote. [laughs]

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Okay. [laughs]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Oh, all right.
17 Whoo, she's got to stop him from doing that. I'll
18 just briefly in my capacity as Chair of the Rules
19 Committee want to add my voice to all the nominees
20 that we heard yesterday. Certainly, Stanley Richards
21 was very moving in his--the ways in which redemption
22 and opportunity and the real moment of change are
23 facing us in the Council. And so, I want to thank
24 Council Member Dromm for putting that nomination

2 forward, and the Speaker for--for making it. But I
3 will also add that Dr. Ramanathan Raju--

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
5 [shushing for quiet]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: --Rose Gil and
7 Karen Redlener for the Board of Health were deeply
8 thoughtful on issues of social determinative health,
9 and things that our Board of Health needs to be doing
10 to make sure inequalities in our city don't keep
11 seeping into the health of our people. And what they
12 are going to do to try to make a difference there.
13 While, William Aguado is being nominated by the Bronx
14 Delegation to the Taxi and Limousine Commission
15 brings a deep understanding of Bronx communities, and
16 Patricia Machi, the Council's nominee to the Youth
17 Board, a real passion for small non-profit
18 organizations, something that this Council knows is
19 needed. So, thanks to all who attended and are
20 supporting them. Congratulations to all my
21 colleagues and especially to Council Member Garodnick
22 and Menchaca for finding ways to work through tough
23 issues and achieve really good resolutions for their
24 community and for the future of the city. I vote aye
25 on all.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

3 CLERK: Levin.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye on all.

5 CLERK: Levine.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Aye on all.

7 CLERK: Maisel.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: [off mic] Aye on

9 all. [sic]

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Laughs.

11 CLERK: Matteo.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [off mic] Aye on

13 all. [sic]

14 CLERK: Menchaca.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Permission to

16 explain my vote.

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you.

19 Thank you so much. I also want to extend my
20 congratulations to Mr. Stanley Richards. I know we
21 had a quick conversation before--

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]

23 [shushing for quiet]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: --the Stated,
25 and I look forward to working with him, and all the

2 other nominations. I also want to say thank you to
3 all the pieces--or all the members and the pieces of
4 legislation today. I'm proud to be all three of the
5 transportation--

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
7 [shushing for quiet]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: --bills.

9 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet down, please.
10 Quiet down.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: But, I want to
12 focus a little bit on the Land Use Item 224 that you
13 are all voting on right now concerning the Maritime
14 Lease Between EDC and SBS for that 72 acres of
15 Southern--South Brooklyn Marine Terminal in Sunset
16 Park. After months, and if you all remember, we
17 began this in November of last year. We have been
18 engaging with our city agencies, our community
19 organizations and local residents. We are now at a
20 place, and we have a framework where we more
21 equitably balance the needs of our community with the
22 needs of our city to activate this very, very
23 important city asset on the waterfront in the
24 manufacturing districts. And so, I am thankful to my
25 colleagues, and most especially to our Speaker

2 Melissa Mark-Viverito for standing by my side every
3 step of the way to advocate for this comprehensive--

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
5 [shushing for quiet]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: --community
7 development on this precious, precious--

8 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Quiet,
9 please.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: --on this
11 precious, precious piece of property. Ramon, thank
12 you so much. You were there every step of the way.
13 The Land Use Division, Raju and Brian and Ann, thank
14 you for your countless hours on this. Council Member
15 Peter Koo and Greenfield. Thank you for the land use
16 work. And then also Dan Garodnick--Council Member
17 Dan Garodnick and his staff. Genevieve, especially
18 you've provided that kind of capacity that I think
19 has shown so much. Every time anyone goes to you,
20 you--you brought--you bring your game, your A game
21 and you were with me every step of the way. I could--
22 -I could never say thank you enough. And all at the
23 same time you're bringing you're bringing your own
24 chapter to conclusion on Vanderbilt. And so
25 congratulations to you. Finally, in my--

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
3 [shushing for quiet]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: --final seconds,
5 Vladimir Martinez and Lee Wellington--Lee Wellington,
6 if I can quick finish is going on maternity leave.
7 And so she'll be transitioning out, and so I wish her
8 the best. She's been providing so much capacity for
9 me, and I thank her with all my heart. And welcome
10 David Estrada my new Chief of Staff. Thank you so
11 much.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Congratulations.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you.

14 CLERK: Mendez.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I vote aye on
16 all.

17 CLERK: Miller.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Aye on all.

19 CLERK: Palma. Reynoso.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Aye.

21 CLERK: Richards.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Aye on all.

23 CLERK: Rodriguez.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

25 CLERK: Rose.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye.

3 CLERK: Rosenthal.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: [off mic]

5 Permission to explain my vote. [sic]

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I vote aye on
8 all. I just want to give a particular shout out to
9 Council Member Menchaca for standing his ground and
10 really looking out for his residents. You know, he
11 has now set a precedent for the rest of us that in
12 situations like this when EDC comes in and is making
13 change to someone district that now there's an
14 opportunity to talk about resident--a significant
15 important resident input. And Carlos worked
16 tirelessly on that, and it's going to make a
17 difference for all of us as EDC comes into our
18 districts. So I really want to congratulate him on
19 that. I also want to congratulate Council Member
20 Levine for--and the Speaker for starting and Office
21 of Civil--what am I thinking? Like I'm blanking.
22 I'm blanking out. A Civil Justice Coordinator. You
23 know, with the amount of evictions and harassments
24 that our tenants have to deal with this is going to

2 be a see change for them. So, congratulations to you
3 both, and aye on all.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Torres.

5 CLERK: Torres.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Aye on all.

7 CLERK: Treyger.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: With
9 congratulations to all my colleagues, I vote aye on
10 all.

11 CLERK: Ulrich.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Aye--aye on all.

13 CLERK: Vallone.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Congratulations
15 to my colleagues and especially to Dan Garodnick.
16 Your vision is helping the entire city. Aye on all.

17 CLERK: Weprin. Williams.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Excused to
19 explain my vote?

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. I
22 also want to congratulate all of my colleagues. I do
23 want to say particular congratulations to Carlos
24 Menchaca, who I think took a lot of undue heat during
25 this process, but I believe has made this institution

2 stronger for all of us. So thank you for that, and I
3 did want to give a special shout out and
4 congratulations to Stanley Richards. Again, I'm very
5 proud that I'm part of the body that has done this.
6 Unfortunately, for the first time, but definitely
7 hope not the last. As I mentioned during the
8 hearing, too often we put these programs together
9 without talking to the affected people. We do that
10 in youth programs a lot. We put together youth
11 programs without talking to the young people, and
12 when it comes to criminal justice reforms, we do not
13 talk to the people who have been affected. So, I'm
14 proud that we have done that here. Not only spoken
15 to them, but appointing them to the board. In
16 addition of this whole discussion across the country
17 that black lives matter in police reforms. There are
18 many institutions that we have to bring into that
19 discussion, and I believe we're doing some of that
20 here. I would like to abstain on LU No. or Land Use
21 Nos. 2000--Land Use Nos. 209 and 210 and aye on all
22 the rest.

23 CLERK: Ignizio.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes.

25 CLERK: Van Bramer.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Permission to
3 briefly explain my vote.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: I just want
6 to congratulate all, and I want to say that I'm proud
7 to represent the Fortune Society that great
8 institution the calls Long Island City home.
9 Congratulations to Stanley Richards, and a point of
10 personal privilege. I know the Speaker is going to
11 introduce a very special guest in the front of the
12 room in a moment, but in the balcony is another
13 special guest David Rothenberg is standing up there.
14 Because of Stanley Richards and the Fortune Society,
15 also there are six openly gay and lesbian members of
16 the City Council. I'm proud to be one of them, and
17 in 1985, David Rothenberg became the first openly gay
18 man to run for City Council in the City of New York.
19 He's up there in the balcony now, and I just want to
20 say thank you David for everything you've done. And
21 the six of us I know walk in your shadow. So thank
22 you, David Rothenberg, and he's up in the balcony
23 right now. [applause]

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Continuing.

25 CLERK: Speaker Mark-Viverito.

2 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: I'll be voting
3 aye on all. I do want to thank--

4 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Keep it
5 down, please.

6 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: --Rory Lancman
7 for his work in helping us shepherd this Office of
8 Civil Justice Coordinator. A very proud day for this
9 Council and I vote aye on all.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you. All
11 items on today's General Order Calendar were adopted
12 by a vote of 49 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative
13 and 0 abstentions with the exception of Land Use 209
14 and Land Use 210 with the accompanying Resolutions,
15 which was adopted by a vote of 48 in the affirmative,
16 0 in the negative and 1 abstention. Now, to the
17 Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for a very special
18 introduction.

19 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Yes, and an
20 extension of my remarks I'd like to ask all my
21 colleagues here we have with us today the Mayor of
22 San Juan, Puerto Rico, Carmen Yulin Cruz Soto who is
23 with us. [applause] He is visiting New York City
24 this week with some of our staff Ynez Carmen [sp?]

2 Maxino Colona [sp?] and Julina Contaro [sp?] here. S
3 he's here to speak at the--

4 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Keep it
5 down, please.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the
7 Chambers, please.

8 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: If you could
9 please--if you could please give me a second, I'd
10 appreciate it. Thank you. The Mayor of San Juan is
11 here to speak at the Ideas City's Conference, which
12 is being hosted by the new museum and already to--and
13 to continue to strengthen the ties that already
14 exist--the deep ties that exist between New York and
15 San Juan. I first met the Mayor when she was
16 actually running for office against an incumbent, and
17 wanted to learn about participatory budgeting. Which
18 is now being implemented in San Juan as well. So,
19 what we're doing here has had an impact abroad as
20 well and other parts of this nation. Since then,
21 I've had the privilege to speak at her inauguration.
22 She's become a very good friend. She's bold and a
23 visionary leader, and always a pleasure when we can
24 visit each other in our respective cities. And learn
25 about what is happening and figure out ways that we

2 can continue that connection, and that bond. So,
3 it's always very special for me to be back on my
4 island in Puerto Rico where I was born and raised.
5 And spending time with someone who understands and
6 care so deeply about the island's largest city. One
7 of the things I'll say it's really funny, she loves
8 coming to New York, and eating at Gray's Papaya. And
9 that is one of her first stops whenever she comes to
10 New York City. But Puerto Rico--Puerto, New York
11 will always have strong ties, and when I speak on
12 behalf of the Council, Madam Mayor, we are honored to
13 have you here. And would ask maybe if you want to
14 just say a few words.

15 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Keep it
16 down, please. Keep it down.

17 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Can we ask if
18 colleagues would pay attention? We do have a
19 dignitary visiting our city, and it would be nice if
20 we could pay attention for a minute. I'd appreciate
21 it. Thank you.

22 CARMEN YULIN CRUZ SOTO: Thank you very
23 much Speaker Mark-Viverito and Magnolia's Bakery.
24 That's a must also. I am the granddaughter of a
25 sugar cane plantation worker, a man that eared 50

2 cents a week for cutting sugar cane from when the sun
3 came out until it went down. So I am deeply honored
4 and humbled to be before you today, especially in a
5 city that means so much to us. I was telling Mayor
6 de Blasio yesterday that he truly the Mayor of the
7 largest place where Puerto Ricans live, which is New
8 York. I am the second mayor. Every week thousands
9 of people come and go between San Juan and New York,
10 and with each of them thousands of dreams, thousands
11 of hopes. But, also the ability to adapt to change
12 and to become part of something that is quite
13 different. I was a member of the House of
14 Representatives of Puerto Rico four years before
15 becoming Mayor of San Juan, and I know what it is to
16 be discarded. When people say that person is never
17 going to get to where they think they're going to
18 get. But, summoning together all of those voices
19 that people don't tend to listen to, but that are
20 strong voices, the LGBT community, the women, the
21 teachers, the unions, the students. Those that
22 society has left behind.

23 We worked together a coalition and took
24 officer not to be empowers, but to use power for the
25 good of the people. So when I am in a place like

2 this, I always remember that after all, I am just the
3 granddaughter of a sugar cane plantation worker that
4 one day dared to hope, dared to teach somebody else
5 how to read and write and there to understand that we
6 are nothing if we are not together. Because Speaker
7 Melissa Mark-Viverito was kind enough to show us in
8 San Juan what participatory budgeting is, we are now
9 doing that in San Juan. And we are being asked to go
10 to Panama City to help them implement participatory
11 budgeting there. And we have been asked to go to
12 Chihuahua, Mexico and talk about participatory
13 budgeting, and start them on the road to that. So
14 you see something that started in New York City that
15 touched the hearts of people in San Juan that has
16 turned--changed completely the dialogue and
17 conversation not about being from one party or
18 another, but about being people. And looking for the
19 betterment of people, has been able to touch other
20 lives. So I think Melissa Mark-Viverito for her
21 friendship, for being beacon of understanding that
22 things can be done a different way, that people are
23 listening. And that when we truly work together, it
24 is more than a mantra. We really can do things that
25 will end up doing what women Carmen Arroyo have done

2 before us, and women like Melissa and I hope to do
3 some day. Thank you very, very much for this very
4 honor that you bestow upon me today. [applause]

5 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: And Yulin's ties
6 to New York are even deeper since I married her here
7 with her husband in my district. So the ties
8 continue and I really want to thank her for her
9 leadership. We're going to be doing some wonderful
10 work together--

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
12 [shushing for quiet]

13 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet, please.

14 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: --and it's great
15 to have her here with us today. With that, Madam
16 Public Advocate, back to you.

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you. We're
18 still in session. We welcomed the Madam Mayor to the
19 City of New York and now we will turn to Resolutions
20 beginning with Resolution 282. Introduction and
21 Reading of Bills. Madam Speaker, Introduction and
22 Reading of Bills.

23 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Yes, all bills
24 are referred to committees as indicated on the
25 agenda.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And now
3 Resolutions. The first Resolution beginning with 282
4 and 426, Council Member Rosenthal.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so
6 much. I rise today to--to ask my colleagues to vote
7 in the affirmative for these two resolutions, which
8 would extend the SCRIE and DRIE benefits to
9 homeowners, and would also end the sunset provision
10 for raising the income level to \$50,000 for SCRIE and
11 DRIE recipients. It's so important at this time more
12 than ever that we preserve the housing for our most
13 vulnerable, and these resolutions ask the state to do
14 just that. I want to thank Council Members Cohen and
15 Williams and Chin for their support in shepherding
16 these resolutions through. And helping to look out
17 for those who really need our city's safety net.
18 Thank you.

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And now
20 Resolution 410-A, Council Member Williams.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. I
22 ask my colleagues to please vote on this legislation,
23 which calls on the state to adopt legislation A.627
24 sponsored by Assemblyman Brian Kavanagh, which
25 increase the income threshold eligibility for the

2 Disabled Homeowners Exemption DHE. I'm very proud to
3 work with my colleagues to pass this resolution. I
4 want to also thank Council Member Cohen for
5 shepherding through as well as Chin and Rosenthal who
6 are working on similar issues. We know that millions
7 of New Yorkers pay more than half of their income in
8 rent. And expanding the eligibility would encourage
9 and ensure that more New Yorkers who have
10 disabilities are protected against rent increases--

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
12 [shushing for quiet]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: --that would
14 force them to make some terrible choices. I'm hoping
15 when we're talking with SCRIE and DRIE we've done
16 some great things, although there are some issues
17 that we have to fix. We want to make sure that
18 Disabled Homeowners Exemption also is held to par. So
19 thanks to the Council's Mental Health Committee Kate
20 Debold, Matt Gewold and Laura Popa and Nick Smith,
21 and Kimberly Williams.

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
23 Seeing no other speakers on any of the resolutions,
24 we are now going to vote on Resolution No. 282-A, a
25 resolution calling upon the New York State

2 Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign Senate
3 4748 and A.--Assembly 5565.A, legislation increasing
4 the income threshold for the Senior Citizens
5 Homeowners Exemption program. All those in favor say
6 aye.

7 COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All those
9 opposed? Any abstentions? They ayes have it.

10 Resolution 410-A, resolution calling upon
11 the New York State Legislature to pass and the
12 Governor to sign S4748 and A 5565A, legislation
13 increasing the income threshold for the Disabled
14 Homeowners Exemption Program. All those in favor say
15 aye.

16 COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All of those
18 opposed? Any abstentions? The ayes have it.

19 Resolution 426-A, an amended resolution calling upon
20 the New York State Legislature to pass and the
21 Governor to sign S4740-A and A 5565A, legislation
22 eliminating the sunset provisions related to income
23 threshold increases for the Senior Citizen Rent
24 Increase Exemption and Disability Rent Increase Rent
25 Exemption Programs. All those in favor, say aye.

2 COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

3 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All those
4 opposed? Any abstention? The ayes have it.

5 Resolution 453-A, a resolution calling upon the New
6 York City Department of Education to--

7 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Quite,
8 please.

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the
10 Chambers. We're still in session.

11 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Keep it
12 down.

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: --resolution
14 calling upon the New York City Department of
15 Education to officially recognize the importance and
16 benefits of school diversity and to set it as a
17 priority when making decisions regarding admissions
18 policies and practices, creations of new schools,
19 school rezoning and other pertinent decisions. And
20 commit to having a strategy in each district for
21 overcoming impediments to school diversity. All
22 those in favor say aye.

23 COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Any opposed? Any
25 abstentions? The ayes have it. And lastly,

2 Resolution 572-A, a resolution calling on the New
3 York State Legislature to introduce and pass and the
4 Governor to sign legislation, which would provide a
5 \$100 tax credit to each taxpayer who adopts a dog or
6 a cat [cheers, laughter] from a shelter. And that
7 was Council Member Johnson. Council Member Johnson,
8 are you in favor?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JOHNSON: [off mic] Yes.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: All those in
11 favor say aye.

12 COUNCIL MEMBERS: [in unison] Aye.

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Any abstentions?
14 And the ayes have it. General Discussion beginning
15 with Council Member Cornegy.

16 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Quiet please.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGY: Thank you, Madam
18 Public Advocate. Imagine you're a 75-year-old senior
19 living in an apartment you love in Crow Heights or
20 Washington Heights or Jamaica for the last 30 years.
21 At each lease renewal, your rent has gone up but your
22 income hasn't, not for a long time. The neighborhood
23 is changing around you and your check isn't
24 stretching to cover rent and your other bills every
25 month. And then you learn about SCRIE. With the

2 rent you're paying and your income and your age, it
3 looks like you qualify. So you pull together the
4 paperwork and wait for the relief or the safety net
5 provides--that the safety net provides to catch you.
6 But, instead you get a complicated response from the
7 Department of Finance saying the rent you're paying
8 isn't your legal rent at all. It's preferential
9 rent, and the legal rent according to your lease is
10 maybe \$5,500 or \$1,000 higher. So, the safety net
11 you had planned for that this Council has fought to
12 improve for you does not exist. This is the state of
13 the law today.

14 Until our partners in Albany address
15 preferential rents as a critical affordable housing
16 issue, seniors and disabled New Yorkers in
17 gentrifying neighborhoods will be sus--will be
18 subject to huge, completely lawful increases when
19 their leases come up for renewal. But today, I'm
20 introducing a bill to act as a stopgap measure.
21 Intro 798 would empower tenants who are rejected for
22 SCRIE and DRIE to research their legal rents as
23 registered with DHCR instead of relying solely on
24 their landlord's representation. This may be a
25 number they've never focused on because it wasn't

2 consequential to them. The Department of Finance
3 would also be required to inform these vulnerable New
4 Yorkers of their legal rights. For example, not to
5 be harassed, to renew their leases and pass them on
6 in the family, and to have all eviction proceedings
7 go through court. I hope you--I hope you will join
8 me in signing onto this measure to address a clear
9 and present danger for low-income New Yorkers today.
10 They wouldn't have applied for SCRIE and DRIE if they
11 didn't need help. Let's give them all the help they
12 need. Thank you.

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
14 Council Member Williams. We're still in sessions.
15 Quite in the Chamber.

16 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: Keep it down, please.
17 Keep it down.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. My
19 colleagues, this week, this Memorial Day Weekend we
20 had some terrible shootings across this city. This
21 week compared to last week we've merged up about 60%.
22 But year to date, it's too high, but still a little
23 lower. We've merged up about 15%, shootings up about
24 10%. Obviously, this is not something that we can
25 condone or ignore, and unfortunately, the vast

2 majority of the shootings are Black and Latino males,
3 Black and Latino males. I still believe that this is
4 crisis that we must address, and we cannot and should
5 not address with the police alone. While I believe
6 that they are a critical partner here, they cannot be
7 their only partner. I'm proud of this Council and
8 the Mayor who expanded several of the initiatives
9 that we have. I hope that some of that gets expanded
10 more as well as increasing the job opportunities for
11 the young people in these communities. But also I
12 want to make sure that the conversation continues on
13 how we address the problem of crime in these
14 communities and dealing with the structural issues
15 that are generational for these communities. Not as
16 an excuse for personal responsibility, but as an
17 understanding that there are problems that we have to
18 fix. Until we do that, the ebbs and flows of the
19 violence is going to continue, and we should not want
20 to live in a city or a space where the only way we
21 can feel safe is that there is a police officer on
22 every corner. And I also thank the officers who risk
23 their life everyday in dealing with some of these
24 issues. And I hope we continue the conversation in a
25 way that's productive and effective. I would also

2 like to ask my colleagues to sign onto Resolution
3 711, calling on the U.S. Congress to pass and the
4 President to sign Compassionate Access Research
5 Expansion and Respect States Act. That will change
6 the way that marijuana is viewed at a federal level
7 and reclassify marijuana as a Schedule II drug. The
8 government would open up the possibility of further
9 scientific testing on the effects of marijuana in a
10 range of elements. Thank you.

11 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
12 Garodnick.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank you.
14 I'm pleased to introduce a bill today. It is Intro
15 799, a long with Council Member Rosenthal, Chairs
16 Ferreras and Cornegy of Finance and Small Business,
17 and all of our Manhattan colleagues that would end
18 the commercial rent tax on small and medium size
19 businesses. As we all know, rents are rising very
20 fast. Not just residential rents. This includes
21 rent on commercial space. Our favor mom and pop
22 stores are being squeezed out as rent rise
23 astronomically high.

24 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Keep it
25 down.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Wherever we
3 walk in the city, storefronts are quickly filling up
4 with chain drug stores, and banks. This is not the
5 New York City we all know and love. Manhattan
6 businesses south of 96th Street have to pay a tax on
7 the rent that they owe. For small and medium size
8 businesses, this tax can be crippling. A small store
9 paying \$360,000 in rent per year owes \$14,000 in
10 taxes to New York City. That's half of an entire
11 month's rent. We want to give them some relief, and
12 to eliminate that tax for businesses paying less than
13 \$500,000 per year on rent. And to ensure that the
14 bill is revenue neutral, we have proposed balancing
15 it with a very small increase on the largest
16 corporations that pay over \$3 million a year for
17 rent. Mom and Pop stores are getting squeezed out.
18 They are the ones that are struggling most from the
19 pressure that this rent tax is creating. I urge our
20 colleagues to support this bill, and to take some
21 concrete steps to stand up for small businesses.
22 Again, it is Intro 799, and I encourage you to sign
23 up. Thank you.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
25 Council Member Gibson.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you, Madam
3 Public Advocate. I ask all of my colleagues to sign
4 onto Resolution 706 that I'm proud to introduce this
5 afternoon with my good friend and former and current
6 colleague Council Member Espinal. Which would ensure
7 that all PA systems in our public schools are
8 operational and installed in all of our classrooms.
9 Recognizing that PA systems play a valuable tool in
10 communicating to our teachers, educators and students
11 throughout out city. And I also want to thank all of
12 my colleagues for standing with us on the steps of
13 City Hall just yesterday in our collective call in
14 supporting school crossing guards in our city. And
15 recognizing that we have not enough school crossing
16 guards, but we also want to annualize their health
17 benefits, raise the hourly wage to \$15 an hour.
18 Improve the recruitment and retention efforts, and
19 raise the cap on their weekly hours from 25 to 30. I
20 appreciate all of the work in working collectively
21 with DC 37, Local 372 and many of our school crossing
22 guards, and recognizing they are the lifeblood of
23 public safety in our communities that keep our
24 children safe. I want to thank Council Member Brad
25 Lander for joining me and leading the press

2 conference. Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
3 and all of our colleagues for standing with us.
4 There is work ahead and I thank you for your work in
5 recognizing the value that school crossing guards
6 play in our city. And I also want to thank all of my
7 colleagues for reaching out. As Council Member
8 Williams described, it was unfortunately a horrific
9 weekend for some. In my community we yesterday
10 celebrated the seventh birthday of Lloyd Christopher
11 Morgan, who unfortunately was gunned down in the
12 midst of gun violence in Morrisania in my community
13 three years ago when he was just four years old.
14 Yesterday, his killers were sentenced, but we also
15 celebrated his birthday. So I ask you to keep his
16 mother and father in your thoughts and prayers, and
17 thank you again, Madam Public Advocate.

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

19 Council Member Kallos.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I rise today to
21 introduce Introduction 800 with Council Member
22 Rosenthal that would limit synthetic pesticides in
23 favor of bio-pesticides derived from natural
24 materials. According to the Environmental Protection
25 Agency, bio pesticides tend to be less toxic, faster

2 to decade and more targeted. Yet, one of the most
3 common herbicides used by the Parks Department is
4 Roundup, a confidential--a controversial synthetic
5 pesticide that has been shown by the World Health
6 Organization to be a health risk to children and
7 create resistant weeds. I hope you will join me in
8 supporting legislation that would limit synthetic
9 pesticides like this one. I also want to thank first
10 graders and kindergarteners at Public School 290 and
11 their teacher Paula Rogagen [sp?] for advocating so
12 strongly on this issue. And New Yorkers for Parks
13 for their support. I hope you will join us in
14 signing onto Introduction 800.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
16 Levine.

17 [pause]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you, Madam
19 Public Advocate. I want to call my colleagues'
20 attention to Reso 709, which I'm pleased to be co-
21 sponsoring with Speaker Mark-Viverito. Which calls
22 on the United States Congress to pass and the
23 President to sign HR-1013, also known as the Regulate
24 Marijuana Like Alcohol Act. Colleagues, you know
25 that the toll of prohibition on marijuana has been

2 tremendous. It's led to the incarceration of
3 hundreds of thousands of non-violent offenders
4 throughout the United States. It's a law, which has
5 been applied unequally in which people of color who
6 do not consumer marijuana than Whites are farm more
7 likely to be arrested for it. That's true here in
8 New York City as elsewhere in the country. And the
9 prohibitionists said a vast international network of
10 illegal drug traffickers. This for a drug, which is
11 less lethal and less addictive than alcohol or
12 tobacco. And so, the purpose of the federal
13 legislation is to begin to treat marijuana like
14 alcohol. We see states around the country who are
15 moving in this direction in a very patchwork
16 inconsistent way. We don't need 50 different Federal
17 Drug Administrations. We need one unified national
18 law that will start to deal with this substance
19 rationally and fairly. That would tax it to bring
20 revenue, and would regulate it in a way that
21 preventive consumption by minors while ending the
22 terrible toll that prohibition has caused in this
23 country. Again, this is Intro 709. Thank you.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
25 Barron.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you, Madam
3 Public Advocate. I just want to talk briefly about
4 the admission selection criteria for the Specialized
5 High School, and then move on to talk about the
6 situation in Cleveland, Ohio. Many of us like to
7 wear various labels and talk about how we want to be
8 seen in a certain light. But when the statistics
9 show that of all the major cities, New York City is
10 the only city that relies on one single high stakes
11 test to determine whether or not a student is
12 admitted to the Specialized High School. I think we
13 need to wonder whether or not we are in a group that
14 is, in fact, addressing all of the criteria, and the
15 type of position that allows multiple criteria to be
16 used to determine whether or not students are
17 admitted. New York City is the only school that--the
18 only city that does not do that. The American
19 Psychological Association, the American Education
20 Resource Association, and the National Council of
21 Education--of measures of education all say that
22 there should not be a single test that determines
23 whether or not a student is admitted. Eighty-five
24 percent of the specialized students come from only
25 15% of the middle schools. So we have a problem. We

2 don't have a middle school education system that is
3 in any equitable way sending students to that. And
4 what's allowed--what's happening is that students who
5 have the means to take the prep courses are flooding
6 the system. And Black and Latino students, although
7 they are 70%--although they are 85% of the--of the
8 school system, 70% of the school system, only 11% of
9 the population in the Specialized High Schools.

10 And finally, I would call our attention
11 the ongoing matter of police misconduct. It's a
12 national crisis. The latest incidents that has been
13 brought to our attention is the officer--one of
14 several--who fired 137 shots at two people who were
15 unarmed in their car. It's an issue that needs to be
16 addressed, and my solution is not any additional
17 police, but programs that come to the community and
18 rely on community based organizations to interact
19 with the community. Thank you.

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
21 Council Member Espinal.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Thank you, Madam
23 Public Advocate. I would just like to talk again
24 about Reso 706, which I am introducing with my
25 amazing colleague Vanessa Gibson. It involves the

2 P.A. systems in our schools. You know, they are a
3 vital component, and are used by principals and
4 administrators to provide important safety and
5 security information to both teachers and students
6 during emergency or crisis. Recently in my district
7 there have been numerous lockdowns, and there have
8 been situations where teachers had to walk out of the
9 classrooms to leave the students unattended, unlock
10 their doors to notify other teachers of a gunman
11 around-- in or around building. It is clear that
12 having fully operational P.A. systems is a necessity
13 to ensure the safety of our children and their
14 teachers during their time in school. Parents need
15 to know that the school their children attend is a
16 safe environment for them. I'm not sure how endemic
17 this problem is citywide, or if it's just an issue
18 happening in my district. But even the prospect of
19 just one school not having a fully working P.A.
20 system is alarming to me. So I urge all my
21 colleagues to please sign onto Reso 706. Thank you.

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
23 Cumbo.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

25 [coughs] Stability and a high quality education are

2 crucial to the intellectual and social development of
3 our children. In communities across the City of New
4 York thousands of working families will be displaced
5 if we allow the closure of several daycare centers.
6 Early Learn Day Care providers have cultivated
7 longstanding roots, jobs for so many in the
8 community, the trust and support of the community to
9 meet the needs of the family served each and every
10 day. The Administration for Children's Services must
11 act swiftly to protect the seats of our youngest
12 students who deserve a fair opportunity to learn and
13 excel.

14 I was very alarmed to hear about the RFP
15 process, which did not include any transparency. We
16 will not know who the panelists were. We will not
17 understand how they were evaluated, and we will not
18 understand the rating score that the winners were
19 actually given. This is a situation where we don't
20 understand the diversity of those very individuals
21 that are making decisions on behalf of entire
22 communities. As a result of this process, daycare
23 providers that have been in existence for 10, 20, 30
24 and 40 years, who have built institutions in our
25 communities that house the cultural experiences of

2 our communities will be entirely wiped out because of
3 one proposal. In this case graded by three
4 individuals whom we will never know. And so, I join-
5 -I invite all of my members to join me on the steps
6 of City Hall at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday to stand with
7 our daycare providers, parents and children in urging
8 the Administration for Children's Services to keep
9 our daycare centers open. We have to invest in our
10 young people at the earliest stages to make sure that
11 they have all of the resources, all of the
12 accommodations and educational opportunities that
13 children all across the city deserve. And I hope
14 that my colleagues will join me in this effort.
15 Thank you.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
17 Council Member Mendez.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you, Madam
19 Public Advocate. I want to remind my colleagues that
20 on Tuesday night we are holding the LGBT Pride Event
21 here in Chambers. So I want to invite everyone to
22 come. I also want to encourage once again please
23 read my letter. Please come and join us, me and the
24 Speaker on Follow Us on Friday on Second Avenue, and
25 we will also be holding a moment of silence for the

2 two young men who lost their lives there. And also,
3 there is a BLA Caucus Meeting after we finished our
4 business here today. Thank you very much.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.
6 Council Member King.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Just
8 congratulations everyone for passing legislation
9 today. Thank you.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Council Member
11 Lander.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you, Madam
13 Public Advocate. First, I want to actually join with
14 everyone Council Member Barron, and I indicated that
15 I continue to support her resolution to change the
16 Specialized High School Assessment Test. I think the
17 things that she said about it, and the things we
18 heard in the latter half of that 10-hour hearing that
19 Chair Dromm convened showed the need to address, or
20 the need to address the issue of diversity in the
21 Specialized High Schools. It was quite clear at that
22 hearing that that is not a consensus position amongst
23 members of the body. And our resolutions tend to
24 express things where there's an overwhelming
25 consensus. So, I, you know, understand and I think

2 it makes sense not to be voting on it today. But
3 personally, I continue to support that position. I
4 hope that it will continue to be advocated and
5 supported in Albany.

6 But perhaps from the sublime to the
7 ridiculous, I wanted to call my colleagues' note to
8 Resolution 708, a resolution calling on the State
9 Legislature, particularly the Assembly to pass and
10 the Governor to sign A.5956 and S4327, legislation
11 that will allow pet dogs in outdoor seating areas of
12 food service establishments not required--

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
14 [shushing for quiet]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: --but allowed.
16 At the Gate, a great bar on 5th Avenue in Brooklyn
17 that previously allowed dog lovers to have a drink in
18 their outdoor patio, and bring the dog along. The
19 Board of Health, the State Board of Health cracked
20 down and stopped allowing dogs and dog owners to have
21 a drink in peace outdoor on the patio of the Gate.
22 An establishment that doesn't even serve food. And
23 this new State legislation, which has passed the
24 Senate, but not yet passed the Assembly, but it's
25 lead sponsored by Linda Rosenthal. And I hope we'll

2 pass soon and the Governor will sign, would allow dog
3 lovers and their dogs to reunite and sit outdoor on
4 the patio at the Gate and share a drink. As well as
5 make that option available to other food service
6 establishments and bars in all of your districts.
7 And if you share that goal, please sign on as a co-
8 sponsor of Resolution 708. Thank you, Madam Public
9 Advocate.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: We love Park
11 Slope. Council Member Greenfield to close.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank you,
13 Madam Public Advocate. I'm actually curious, Council
14 Member Lander whether the--the dogs were having
15 drinks. Is it based on dog years being 21? How do
16 they show their ID? I'm really fascinated.
17 [laughter]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: They have to have
19 the NYCID available for our pets. [laughs]

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: There's no
21 debate. Council Member Greenfield.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: All right, I-
23 -I just really just wanted to thank 20 of my
24 colleagues who joined us today for a school safety
25 rally. Forty-six of my colleagues are co-sponsoring

2 Intro 65 that would provide security for non-public
3 schools and public schools. I want to thank our
4 great Public Advocate for being our citywide elected
5 leader to support this legislation. I want to thank
6 the Controller, and three out of the five borough
7 presidents as well. And I want to also once again
8 congratulate Margaret Chin. I want to congratulate
9 Lew Fidler on his birthday, on the new kidney.
10 Interesting side note, Lew Fidler is getting his
11 kidney from a recipient. His name Michael Tobin.
12 He's a political consultant. He gave Lew Fidler--Lew
13 Fidler gave him his first job and, as you know, Lew
14 always collects, and he is collect [laughter] many
15 years later--

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing] No,
17 boo.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD:--many years
19 later. I'm teasing. I want to--I want to wish--I
20 want to wish Michael Tobin--

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
22 Your time is up. [laughter]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: --a speedy
24 recovery, a speedy recovery and thank him for his
25 generosity in giving Lew a kidney, and really a new

2 lease on life. We love you Michael. We love you
3 Lew. We wish you all a speedy, speedy recovery and
4 Brad and I are going to take our dogs out for some
5 drinks now.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And lastly, I'd
7 like to invite my colleagues to sing onto Intro No.
8 801, a bill that requires residential landlords to
9 provide accommodations and planning for elevator
10 service outages. Which, I am co-sponsoring with
11 Council Members Treyger and Rosenthal. My interest
12 in legislating this issue was sparked in part by
13 litigation that my office has been involved with,
14 challenging a landlord who was using elevator outages
15 as a way of forcing out rent regulated tenants.
16 Quite simply, landlords must be held responsible to
17 have a plan in place in case of elevator outages.
18 And to make reasonable accommodations for those who
19 cannot rely on stairs. I thank Council Members
20 Treyger and Rosenthal for their partnership on this
21 issue, and look forward to working with this. And to
22 close, we now will hear from our Speaker. Quiet in
23 the Chambers.

24 SERGEANT-A-ARMS: [interposing] Quite
25 down, please.

2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Quiet in the
3 Chambers, please.

4 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: [interposing]
5 Thank you, Madam Public Advocate--

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
7 The Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.

8 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Two quick things
9 in closing. One, I want to personally congratulate
10 Council Member Menchaca for the land use deal, and I
11 apologize that it was an oversight that we did not
12 include your comments during the Speaker's time. It
13 was definitely merited. So congratulations on that.
14 [applause, cheers] Yes. And lastly, those
15 colleagues that were at the SOMOS Conference this
16 past November and that actually did take the tour
17 with me to el Cano Martin Pena, I wanted on behalf of
18 the Mayor to thank everyone for your support. She
19 represents el Cano Martin Pena, and it is an issue
20 that is very dear to her heart. And our support and
21 advocacy Stateside here in the Mainland is very
22 important to that cause. So thank you for being a
23 part of that as well. And so, it's about 3:30 and
24 we're going to be adjourned.

25 [gavel]

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I just want to
3 let people know the BLA Caucus will be meeting in the
4 Committee Room. Not downstairs. In the Committee
5 Room.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date June 1, 2015