

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

1

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

----- X

January 30, 2024
Start: 12:09 p.m.
Recess: 12:41 p.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Yusef Salaam, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Joann Ariola
Diana Ayala
Tiffany Cabán
Carmen N. De La Rosa
Robert F. Holden
Rita C. Joseph
Christopher Marte
Chi A. Ossé
Carlina Rivera
Althea V. Stevens
Kalman Yeger

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Shaun Abreu
Vickie Paladino
Alexa Avilés
Sandy Nurse
Jennifer Gutiérrez
Pierina Ana Sanchez
Crystal Hudson

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING: (continued)

Inna Vernikov

Nantasha M. Williams

Eric Dinowitz

Gale A. Brewer

Selvena N. Brooks-Powers

Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Sound check for the
3 Committee on Public Safety. Today's date is January
4 30, 2024, being recorded by Danny Huang in the
5 Committee Room.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good afternoon,
7 everybody, and welcome to the Committee on Public
8 Safety.

9 At this time, we ask if you could please
10 phones on vibrate or silent mode.

11 Thank you.

12 Chair, we are ready to begin.

13 CHAIRPERSON SALAAM: Good morning. I'm
14 Council Member Yusef Salaam, Chair of the Council's
15 Committee on Public Safety.

16 I'd like to welcome everyone to today's
17 Committee vote to override the Mayor's veto of
18 Introduction 586-A and file the Mayor's Veto Message.

19 I want to recognize my Colleagues who are
20 here, Council Member Avilés, Council Member Nurse,
21 Council Member Gutiérrez, Council Member De La Rosa,
22 Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, Council Member
23 Tiffany Cabán, Deputy Speaker Diana Ayala, Council
24 Member Rivera, Council Member Stevens, Council Member
25 Chi Ossé, Council Member Mercedes Narcisse, Council

2 Member Sanchez, Council Member Marte, Council Member
3 Hudson, Council Member Paladino, Council Member
4 Holden, Council Member Ariola, Council Member Abreu.

5 Overriding the Mayor's veto of
6 Introduction 586-A reaffirms this Council's honoring
7 of the public trust, committed to promoting police
8 transparency and ensuring that there is
9 accountability for how the NYPD engages with our
10 communities. Introduction 586-A is a commonsense bill
11 that can be easily implemented by the NYPD using
12 technology and aligns with the Department's existing
13 practices of documenting and reporting police
14 encounters. The bill will yield data that is
15 essential to determining whether police encounters
16 are conducted equitably and properly throughout the
17 City. When accurate data is available, we as
18 policymakers are equipped with the information
19 necessary to craft and implement policy solutions to
20 address any problems with existing practices that
21 might be revealed.

22 A prior law passed by this Council
23 required the NYPD to begin documenting on its use of
24 stop, question, and frisk, reporting that ultimately
25 revealed hundreds of thousands of people, the

2 overwhelming majority of whom were black or Latino
3 men, were being stopped each year, often without
4 legal basis. This data along with an informed and
5 engaged public was a catalyst in the efforts to
6 reduce the number of unconstitutional stops in our
7 city. Unfortunately, the number of stop and frisk
8 encounters has been rising in recent years, and the
9 under-reporting of all police stops has been cited by
10 the federal monitor assigned to oversee reforms
11 required by the landmark Floyd court decision. This
12 bill fills a critical gap by requiring the NYPD to
13 report on all investigative encounters such that the
14 Council and the public gain a complete picture of how
15 police interact with the community they serve.

16 Contrary to some public claims, police
17 officers will not be required to document casual
18 conversation such as saying hello or providing
19 directions. The NYPD's own training manual makes
20 clear that casual conversations do not constitute an
21 investigative encounter, and the text of this bill
22 explicitly makes them exempt from any need for
23 documentation. I think it's good to note that last
24 statement again, that the text of this bill makes

2 them explicitly exempt from any need for
3 documentation.

4 The NYPD will maintain significant
5 flexibility in how they choose to implement this
6 bill, and we believe the Department has an obligation
7 to adopt procedures that ease any administrative
8 burden on police officers, particularly through the
9 use of existing technologies.

10 I want to thank Public Advocate Jumaane
11 Williams and my Council Colleagues for sponsoring and
12 supporting this bill. I also want to thank the
13 community of advocates who fought tirelessly to make
14 this bill possible.

15 With that, I urge my Colleagues to vote
16 yes to override the veto.

17 Right now, I want to invite the Public
18 Advocate, if he will, to make a statement.

19 I also want to recognize Council Member
20 Vernikov who's online remotely.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Thank you so
22 much, Mr. Chair. That sounds awesome to say. That
23 sounds very awesome. Peace and blessing, love and
24 light to everyone.

2 I want to thank everyone for being here.
3 I have to say it is quite frustrating to be here,
4 sorry that we have to be here, but I want to thank
5 the Speaker, Mr. Chair, and our co-sponsor, Council
6 Member Alexa Avilés, and in particular the families
7 who are here and the advocates for helping us get
8 here. Despite all of the misinformation that has been
9 spread about this, this is simply a reporting bill. I
10 don't say that to understate the tremendous
11 importance of getting the information. Reporting data
12 is how we helped curb the abuses of stop, question,
13 and frisk. This is a continuation of that work and
14 the remedial process that was put in.

15 I just want to give an example, and I
16 hope the media will pick this up. Mr. Chair, you
17 appear to be a black male between the ages of 30 and
18 55, it's a Level 1 stop from a 9-1-1 call, it did not
19 raise to another level stop. I believe that took less
20 than 10 seconds, and I assume maybe even less once we
21 have an app and a dropdown menu that works so this
22 can happen seamlessly. That's all we're asking so we
23 can have a baseline of what is going on when our
24 police encounters or stops or however we want to call
25 them.

2 We have been trying to have a
3 conversation with this Administration for two years
4 about how best to implement it. I have not heard them
5 publicly say that we can have that conversation until
6 yesterday. So much this misinformation, so much of
7 this trying to rip the City apart on the reporting
8 bill could have been prevented if they would have had
9 the conversation they now want to have after this did
10 its duty by passing a bill and doing its duty about
11 to override it.

12 This is really essential work. This is
13 not about preventing police work. This is police
14 work. We took the Patrol Guide and used a construct
15 that was already there and, using the work to get the
16 information for other stops that already exist, so
17 I'm hoping that the conversations will be fruitful,
18 but I just have to remind how much we tried
19 diligently to have that conversation. Saying you
20 don't want any Level 1 stops is not a compromise. It
21 is a gutting of the bill. Having a conversation about
22 how we can do this as seamlessly and efficiently as
23 possible is a conversation that we have been trying
24 to have for many years so I'm happy that my
25 Colleagues will be overriding this. Hopefully, the

2 true information about this bill will be getting out
3 to the public and we stop using fear to ask folks to
4 override their intelligence and, to police officers,
5 please understand this about public safety. We have
6 you in our minds as well and look forward to having
7 the conversation.

8 Just lastly, I want to thank, as I
9 mentioned, all of the Colleagues here, Nick Smith,
10 Elizabeth Guzman, Jeffrey Severe (phonetic),
11 (INAUDIBLE), Gwen Saffron (phonetic), and a big
12 shoutout to Veronica (INAUDIBLE) and Rosie Mendez
13 (phonetic) who really took this on the back for the
14 past two years. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON SALAAM: Thank you, Public
16 Advocate.

17 I will ask the Clerk to call the roll on
18 the following questions.

19 First, shall we accept and file the
20 Mayor's Veto Message?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Before we call the
22 vote, does anyone have any remarks that they'd like
23 to make for this Committee?

24 This will be in addition to an
25 opportunity to explain your vote so, if there's any

2 remarks you'd like to make, we're gonna set a timer
3 for two minutes and you could go ahead.

4 We'll start with Committee Members first,
5 Council Member Holden.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Yeah, I'd like to
7 take issue with what the Public Advocate said. I
8 don't question his motives. I understand that's what
9 he feels will work, but, as somebody that's been
10 involved with police, not only in ride-alongs in the
11 past and this past Saturday, I see police work. I
12 also listen to the scanner when I'm home by my
13 computer. I'll just check what's going on in my
14 neighborhood. Now let's say I have three police cars
15 out on a particular night. They're holding, holding
16 at least five jobs, that's five 9-1-1 calls. Now
17 you're asking them to do additional reports. If
18 anybody knows, if anybody ever followed a police
19 officer around, you know they have mountains of
20 paperwork now so if what the Public Advocate said was
21 well, this is only a few seconds. By the way, there
22 could be up to 11 questions with your Level 1
23 reporting, and the Level 1 is not a stop by the way.
24 It's an encounter. That means the civilian does not
25 have to talk to the police officer, they could just

2 walk away, and they're allowed to do that. Let's say
3 an accident, with the police officers that we were
4 with on Saturday night on the ride-along, if they had
5 let's say a female was being assaulted, they have to
6 now ask people, witnesses, there who might have seen
7 it so let's say 10 witnesses they pull aside, 10 of
8 them or let's say 10 out of the 11 witnesses they
9 pull aside said they didn't see anything. They still
10 have to report with this bill. They still have to
11 fill out a form. If anybody knows about critical
12 response time, seconds matter when a life is
13 involved, and we're going to now ask those police
14 officers to make a report based on those 11
15 encounters, of which really 10 of them we just found
16 out that they didn't see anything so that's why I
17 think this bill is counterproductive. That's why all
18 the police are against this because they know their
19 job. I don't know if the Public Advocate understands,
20 but there is a lot of paperwork and, if you were at
21 the ride-along, you saw all the paperwork. Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL CAMPAGNA: Thank you,
23 Council Member. Council Member Ossé.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: Thank you so much. I
25 obviously vote aye on this bill. It's a commonsense

2 bill. It's a basic bill. The fact that we have been
3 making such a fuss over this piece of legislation
4 compared to so many other pieces of legislation that
5 would truly hold the NYPD accountable is ridiculous
6 and also plays into what I perceive to be political
7 theater that the Mayor is placing on each and every
8 single one of us here today. I think it's something
9 that he's doing to try to distract us from this
10 budget that he's trying to push through. There are
11 multiple cuts that we're seeing across our City
12 agencies. This bill is at best going to be something
13 that the NYPD does every other day if we're able to
14 even hold them accountable on collecting the data
15 that they're going to be collecting. This is a NYPD
16 force that has a larger headcount than some
17 militaries across the world. We're asking them to
18 collect data, right. Don't get distracted by what the
19 Mayor is trying to do. He's trying to take our focus
20 off of his budget that's going to hurt New Yorkers
21 more than a reporting bill that we're trying to get
22 passed, not once, but twice. Thank you.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council
24 Member.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: My vote today, I
3 want to emphasize the unity. My vote will reflect the
4 core value that we are one city, united and not
5 divided. This act is a step towards ensuring that
6 every resident regardless of where they live or what
7 they look like can trust that their rights are being
8 respected and protected. I have respect for my police
9 officers. I'm very close. I hold immense respect for
10 them. I want to work close with my police officers,
11 and the division, the word that I'm hearing is
12 heartbreaking so the commitment that we are here, we
13 committed to, is transparency. I will give you an
14 example as a nurse. As a nurse, I recall vividly that
15 when I had to do paperwork, when we had to change the
16 technology, we did not know, but when we changed the
17 technology, it became much easier, and, if I'm doing
18 the right thing, I don't have the concern about
19 putting it because we want to make sure that the
20 great police officers that are doing their work, that
21 is not intertwined with those that don't want to do
22 the work. Giving a report according to all the
23 statistics we're seeing, we're seeing that folks are
24 being suffered in the community. There is no trust
25 between police officers and community anymore so if

2 we can make one step toward transparency, I think
3 it's the time to do it now. Before, I abstained
4 because there are so many questions coming to me, and
5 I did not want to make a mistake. I'm saying like
6 maybe there's something I did not see in the bill,
7 but when I review it and ask questions and go over
8 and over, and I say if I have to make one step
9 towards transparency to make sure the great police
10 officers that are doing their work can be outstanding
11 as they are and those that don't want to do the work,
12 then we can see it, so it is about trusting, building
13 trust between officers and communities. As far as the
14 Mayor, like the Public Advocate mentioned, we can
15 talk. We can have the understanding of what we're
16 doing because the City of New York is a great city,
17 and we can still hold people accountable if they're
18 doing something wrong, and right now, I'm so happy to
19 be part of the team, the Criminal Justice team, to
20 make sure that we have the transparency that we need
21 in our community.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council
23 Member.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Next, we'll hear from
3 Council Member Paladino.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: This has been a
5 bone of contention in this city now for way too long.
6 Our cops have been under attack by a body of people
7 here that I really believe do not understand the full
8 extent of what you guys are trying to do. What you
9 guys are trying to do here is instead of defunding,
10 you're dismantling our police. You're tying them up
11 with senseless and unnecessary paperwork when they
12 have a body camera on 98 percent of the time that
13 records every interaction that they have normally.
14 It's got nothing to do with transparency in my
15 opinion and in the opinion of many people who live in
16 New York City. Public safety is the number one issue
17 here in this city, and yet our police are
18 underfunded, understaffed, and overworked, and yet we
19 want to tie them up some more. No. Absolutely not.
20 The veto stays, and yet you people seem to think, the
21 people in this Body seem to think, don't, don't,
22 don't. Did you hear what I said? I said don't, and
23 I'm going to tell you right now. No, I have my time.
24 I'm going to take my time. That's enough. That is
25 enough. You know, everybody seems to think here that

2 what everybody else has to say is very important, but
3 what we have to say here doesn't seem to matter when
4 it does, and if you truly represented your
5 communities as you say you do, your communities need
6 policing, your communities need help more than
7 anybody. They are crying out for help, and you, as
8 their elected officials, are denying them that help
9 by standing on this self-righteous podium that you've
10 put yourselves on. That is enough. You find it funny?
11 You find me funny? I find you hysterical, okay, yes,
12 I find you hysterical.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Council Member, you're
14 out of order.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: You said you
16 find me funny.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You're out of order.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: Because you
19 can't take the truth.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Both parties are out
21 of order.

22 Council Member Avilés.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Colleagues,
24 public, familia, despite what you have heard from the
25 Mayor and his allies, this legislation has been years

2 in the making driven by legal experts, by advocates,
3 by family members, by law enforcement, and by people
4 whose rights have been violated and have spent time
5 in the back of a police car under very different
6 circumstances than some of you have experienced this
7 weekend, but y'all don't know nothing about that.

8 We would not be here without the tenacity
9 of advocates and families affected by police
10 violence. For your unbridled determination to seek
11 accountability, I thank you. To the Speaker and
12 Council leadership and Colleagues, I thank you for
13 your diligence and never losing sight of doing what
14 is right instead of what is easy. To my co-sponsor,
15 Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, who has been
16 relentlessly and unnecessarily attacked and yet has
17 maintained grace and continued to lead with reason
18 and compassion, a rare leader indeed. I thank you.

19 Accountability and transparency are
20 essential in all aspects of City government, and the
21 NYPD should not be treated any differently. This veto
22 will be for every person who has had an unlawful
23 encounter that took away some of their dignity. For
24 every young person that has made them feel like a
25 suspect instead of a scholar. You know nothing about

2 that. Getting stopped by police is not normal. We
3 should not have to give our children the talk. You
4 would know nothing about that. For every person who
5 has experienced violence and harm and for those who
6 have lost loved ones, this will not erase any of
7 that, but it is a small step in the right direction.
8 You should be asking yourself how do we stop unlawful
9 policing, illegal policing, how do we use our
10 resources better, how do we stop racial
11 discrimination. That is the question you should be
12 asking. Thank you.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council
14 Member.

15 Next, we'll turn back to the Chair before
16 moving on to the vote.

17 Chair, you may go ahead.

18 CHAIRPERSON SALAAM: Thank you. I just
19 want to remind my Colleagues to direct their remarks
20 to the Chair.

21 I will ask the Clerk to call the roll on
22 the following questions.

23 First, shall we accept and file the
24 Mayor's Veto Message.

2 Second, shall Introduction 586-A pass the
3 objection of the Mayor notwithstanding.

4 Will the Clerk please call the roll?

5 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
6 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
7 vote Committee on Public Safety. Committee Members,
8 the items are coupled. Chair Salaam.

9 CHAIRPERSON SALAAM: I am voting to
10 override. You know, it's interesting, as a Chair and
11 as a person with my lived experience, I don't want to
12 bring that into this particular conversation, but I
13 just literally got a message that popped up on my
14 screen that talked about the 25th anniversary since
15 the murder of Amadou Diallo so I am in favor of the
16 override, and I vote aye.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
18 you. Ayala.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I vote aye.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Holden.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: No.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Rivera.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I vote aye.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Yeger.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: No.

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Cabán.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Permission to
4 explain my vote.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You may go ahead.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÁN: Thank you. First of
7 all, I just want to thank the Public Advocate, the
8 sponsor of the bill, Council Member Avilés, Chair,
9 all of our Colleagues but first and foremost the
10 advocates and the families who have been most
11 directly impacted by this. I am a Queens kid who grew
12 up with an older Puerto Rican brother, and I know the
13 effects on a day-to-day basis for my family and my
14 neighbors, and I just want to say for folks who have
15 made it a recreational activity to listen to police
16 scanners or go on a four-hour ride-along, that I was
17 professionally part of the criminal legal system for
18 years, I was a public defender who cross-examined
19 police officers every single day in court. It was my
20 job and my duty to know the inside and out of the
21 patrol guide, to know every single piece of paperwork
22 and documentation generated by a police officer for
23 any investigative action and so I am here to tell
24 you, as someone who works professionally within that
25 system, this is not a burden. This is doing the right

2 thing, and if we are going to solve the issues of
3 racist, biased policing outcomes, then we must have
4 the data to do so. We need the information. We will
5 all be safer and healthier for it. You know what,
6 particularly, and the reason why we should be doing
7 is because black men, brown men will be safer and
8 healthier for it so I am so proud to be part of this
9 Body today, and I vote aye on all.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: De La
11 Rosa.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: A moment to
13 explain my vote.

14 Here with us today we have Sammy Feliz
15 who is the brother of Allan Feliz who was my
16 constituent and lost his life over a Level 1 stop.
17 For those of you who think that it is impossible to
18 lose your life over a Level 1 stop, I ask you to
19 speak to Sammy. He knows about that pain. Allan's
20 son, whose mother I went to high school with, will
21 never know his father, and so as the Council Member
22 for Washington Heights where we have been at the
23 crosshairs on targeted policing and broken windows, I
24 proudly vote aye because their blood will not be on
25 my hands.

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Joseph.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: I vote aye, and,
4 as the mother of four black boys, this is a big day
5 for us and all the students that I taught in the New
6 York City public schools. I vote aye on all.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Marte.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MARTE: I vote aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ossé.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: I vote aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Stevens.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: A moment to
13 explain my vote.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You may go ahead.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: There's two
16 things that I just want to make clear. Officers are
17 already tracking this information so we have to stop
18 pretending like they're not doing it. It is
19 happening, it is already taking place, and so they
20 can do it either during the interaction or after so
21 let's stop saying that it's going to overburden them
22 because it's not, and we also have technology.

23 The next thing we need to also make sure
24 that we're understanding, if an officer is doing an
25 investigation and they're asking for basic

2 information, wouldn't we want them to track that
3 anyway? How do they go back if they need to go back
4 and get more clarifying information? So saying that
5 we don't want our communities safer is ridiculous.
6 This is actually about making our communities safer.
7 I worked with kids for 20 years who would often talk
8 about how they would be stopped, checked, all these
9 things for walking down the street. People who are
10 the closest to this problem actually have the answers
11 so maybe let's listen to them and not what we think
12 we know because we live it every single day. With
13 that, I vote aye to keep everyone safe, every black
14 and brown man across the city, not just some. Thank
15 you.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ariola.

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

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You can go ahead.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: I just want to say
21 that I am a mother also of three white boys, and I've
22 had that talk with them as well to make sure that
23 they have their paperwork in order, to make sure that
24 when a police officer approaches them they roll down
25 their window, take their hood off, and make sure that

2 they treat that officer with respect so it is not
3 just for certain communities because it happens in
4 all communities, and we all have those talks. What
5 this is is another reporting bill, a reporting bill
6 that is again redundant like many of our reporting
7 bills because there's already cameras that are work
8 by police officers that we just saw this weekend
9 depict what actually happened when our own Public
10 Safety Chair was pulled over. That is recorded
11 already. What we're doing with this bill is causing
12 more paperwork, bogging down police officers, keeping
13 them off our streets, slowing down our response
14 times, and being in a position to have people killed
15 and/or injured because of that loss of response time.
16 For that, I vote no.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: With a
18 vote of nine in the affirmative, three in the
19 negative, and no abstentions, M-13 Mayor's Veto
20 Message has been accepted and filed with the
21 Committee, and Proposed Introduction 586-A has been
22 readopted by the Committee.

23 Chair Salaam, that is a full Committee.

24 CHAIRPERSON SALAAM: This hearing is now
25 adjourned. Thank you. [GAVEL]

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 January 31, 2024