

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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March 27, 2012  
Start: 9:51 a.m.  
Recess: 11:26 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
JAMES VACCA  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Gale A. Brewer  
Daniel R. Garodnick  
David G. Greenfield  
G. Oliver Koppell  
Jessica S. Lappin  
Darlene Mealy  
Ydanis A. Rodriguez  
Deborah L. Rose  
James G. Van Bramer  
Vincent M. Ignizio  
Peter A. Koo  
Eric A. Ulrich

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2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Is the tape on?  
3 I never knew these microphones came out like this.  
4 Look at this. I'm only here six years. Give me a  
5 chance to find out about these things. Okay,  
6 thank you. Thank you, everyone. Today is March  
7 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012. I am James Vacca. I am chair of the  
8 Transportation Committee of the New York City  
9 Council, and I'd like to welcome the members who  
10 are here today. Let me introduce them: Council  
11 Member Oliver Koppell, Council Member Gale Brewer,  
12 Council Member Debbie Rose, myself, Council Member  
13 Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer,  
14 Council Member Vincent Ignizio, and Councilman  
15 Peter Koo. Before we get started, I want to thank  
16 all the staff who have worked very hard on the  
17 bills before us today, and particular thanks go to  
18 attorney, Jen Wilcox [phonetic], who drafted three  
19 of the bills involved.

20 Today we're here to vote on two  
21 bills designed to improve street safety and street  
22 use for the visually impaired. The first bill,  
23 Intro 183-A, sponsored by Council Member Gale  
24 Brewer requires the Department of Transportation  
25 to install 25 accessible pedestrian signals each

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2 year. These signals beep when the walk signal is  
3 given, and are critical to low vision individuals  
4 as they navigate our streets.

5 The second bill, Intro 745-A, which  
6 I sponsored requires DOT to publish on the  
7 Internet a verbal version of street regulations  
8 pertaining to pedestrian safety, so that those who  
9 are blind or visually impaired can have a verbal  
10 version of getting around our city and how to do  
11 so.

12 We're also going to vote on Intro  
13 449, sponsored by Council Member Oliver Koppell  
14 that requires livery cabs to post signage  
15 indicating that all passengers have the right to  
16 request an accessible livery cab.

17 Today we're also here to override  
18 the mayoral veto of two parking bills. The first,  
19 Intro 546-A, sponsored by Council Member David  
20 Greenfield, which would ban the Department of  
21 Sanitation from affixing stickers to alleged  
22 alternate side parking violators is before us, and  
23 as we discussed in this Committee, the ticket is  
24 punishment enough. The stickers are excessive.  
25 So this is one where I would urge the Committee to

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override the veto of the mayor.

The second, Intro 490-A, sponsored by Council Member Jim Gennaro, would allow for a five minute grace period in the purchase of a muni meter receipt and would allow traffic enforcement agents to cancel a ticket issued within the five minute window. Muni meters are often not immediately adjacent to a parking spot, and giving drivers a five minute grace period to purchase their ticket is a matter of basic fairness. Do any members wish to be heard? Council Member Koppell?

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that many of the—in fact, all but one of the matters before us today are meritorious and I strongly support them. I might just note in passing that I wish in addition to telling people they can get an accessible livery cab, we made all of our yellow taxis accessible, but that's a fight that I'm still trying to win, but aside from that, my concern is with the 490-A, the proposal to override the mayor's veto of the bill which would allow traffic enforcement agents to cancel a ticket on the spot right on the

1 street. As you know, Mr. Chairman, we've passed  
2 other legislation prime sponsor being Council  
3 Member Garodnick, and I was a co-sponsor, which I  
4 believe the mayor has signed into law, and that  
5 indicates that if you get a ticket within five  
6 minutes either way of the time that you purchase a  
7 little muni parking receipt, and you sent that  
8 receipt in, you'll get your violation dismissed,  
9 so there's an alternative available, and that's  
10 the law right now, and it's a good alternative,  
11 and it meets the problem that you, Mr. Chairman,  
12 have identified, which is in the instance where  
13 someone is just in the process of getting a muni  
14 meter receipt, they get a ticket. I don't think  
15 that happens all that often, but if it does  
16 happen, there is a remedy. We have a remedy.  
17 It's the law, and people can take advantage of it.  
18 The problem with this proposal by Council Member  
19 Gennaro, which the mayor vetoed, is it can lead to  
20 debates and altercations on the street. I can see  
21 very easily people saying, oh, it is five minutes.  
22 It isn't five minutes. Look at my watch. Your  
23 machine is wrong. All kinds of disputes of that  
24 sort will arise between the muni meters and the  
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2 individual parkers. We already have a lot of  
3 antagonism. People don't like getting tickets  
4 from the traffic enforcement agents—used to be  
5 called meter maids, but now I think it's better to  
6 call them traffic enforcement agents, and we  
7 already have enough altercations right now because  
8 people are annoyed, they feel they shouldn't get  
9 summons by these people, and there even have been  
10 assaults, and this proposal opens it up to  
11 disputes. Also, I might say, it opens it up to  
12 possible corruption. I realize that you can sort  
13 of check because you have an electronic record,  
14 but it's hard to do that. We know that in the  
15 Bronx unfortunately we've had a ticket fixing  
16 scandal that involved a lot of police officers.  
17 This is, you know—I can easily see people trying  
18 to bribe the traffic enforcement agent to cancel  
19 the ticket. Allowing these agents to cancel  
20 tickets on the spot is a mistake. It will lead to  
21 altercations. It will lead to possible  
22 corruption. We have a solution. It's not like we  
23 don't have a solution. The solution is now the  
24 law. If you get one of these things within five  
25 minutes and you send it in, the ticket will be

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2 dismissed. IF they don't make that clear to  
3 people, they should. And if that's the problem,  
4 we should address that problem that perhaps there  
5 should be a little notice on the receipt or there  
6 should be other notification of parkers that they  
7 have this remedy, but I think it's a grave mistake  
8 for us to override the veto to solve a problem  
9 that we've already solved. Thank you, Mr.  
10 Chairman. I will vote against overriding the  
11 mayor's veto.

12 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you,  
13 Council Member Koppell. If I can clarify, and of  
14 course, with all due respect to my esteemed  
15 colleague, I disagree with him, I'm going to vote  
16 to override the mayoral veto. I do think that the  
17 legislation before us, the Councilman Gennaro bill  
18 you spoke of, will be a cause for less  
19 confrontation. I believe that many times with the  
20 new muni meters we now have installed in our city-  
21 - and 50% of our city has muni meters and the rest  
22 will be getting them online very soon—we've heard  
23 instances of senior citizens and disabled people  
24 who have the muni meter receipt who have walked  
25 down the block with the receipt and then see a

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2 traffic enforcement agent in the process of giving  
3 the ticket, so therefore, this is all electronic.  
4 This is something that a person can show the  
5 traffic agent that because they were disabled,  
6 because they were elderly, because they had young  
7 children, they have the receipt, they were in the  
8 process of putting it into the car window, so I  
9 think for the sake of clarity, this is a good  
10 piece of legislation. Also, you should know that  
11 we did review the legislation with the union  
12 representing traffic enforcement agents, and many  
13 of the concerns they had, Councilman, were similar  
14 to yours, and the changes and modifications we  
15 made in the legislation met with their approval,  
16 so I would urge my colleagues to override the  
17 mayoral veto. Any other member wishes to be  
18 heard? Yes? I wish to recognize Council Member  
19 Lappin, who is here. Council Member Gale Brewer?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I just want  
21 to thank the Chair regarding proposed Intro 183-A,  
22 which has to do with the accessible signals. The  
23 accessible pedestrian signals as the Chair  
24 indicated will give those who are visually  
25 challenged or blind the ability to cross more

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2 safely, and I think the advantage is as he has  
3 said over and over is the following, we do have  
4 thanks to the Department of Transportation some  
5 signals where there is heavy traffic because  
6 there's the Jewish - - for the Blind or Visions  
7 [phonetic] or the Lighthouse [phonetic]-these  
8 incredibly wonderful organizations, but as Ken  
9 Stewart [phonetic] testified and I think many  
10 others agree one doesn't just go those locations,  
11 one goes all over the city. One works. Many  
12 visually blind people work. Many people are just  
13 active individuals in our community, and what they  
14 really, really want is to be able to go safely to  
15 all of these different locations. Sometimes, the  
16 busiest intersections where there may not be any  
17 supportive mechanism, like Jewish Guild, is the  
18 place that people need the signals the most, so  
19 this is a really exciting bill. Other cities have  
20 already embarked on these kinds of signals, and I  
21 want to be clear to those who worry about noise,  
22 you can hardly hear them except at that location,  
23 and so they work for the pedestrian safety. Thank  
24 you very much, Mr. Chair. You have been a true  
25 hero on this issue.

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2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you,  
3 Council Member Brewer, and you are a true hero, so  
4 from one hero to another, we've got to get  
5 together for coffee one day and talk. Council  
6 Member Garodnick is here. I want to make note of  
7 that for the record. So, why don't we proceed?  
8 I'm going to ask the clerk to take a vote on  
9 proposed Intro 183-A, 449-A and 745-A, and then to  
10 take separate roll call votes on MO 746 of 2012,  
11 Intro 490-A, MO 747 2012 and Intro 546-A. The  
12 clerk, I turn it over to you. Shall we accept and  
13 file the mayor's veto message of Intro 49-A, the  
14 Chair urges a yes vote. Oh, you want to do the  
15 M's first? Okay, so why don't we take a separate  
16 vote on legislation MO 746 2012? The Chair  
17 recommends a yes vote.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK: Shall we accept  
19 and file M 746? Council Member Vacca?

20 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Votes yes.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK: Brewer?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Koppell?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: [no  
25 audible response]

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2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: The vote is to  
3 file the M and to refile the accompanying Intro.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I'm going  
5 to vote to file the M - - the mayor and repass the  
6 Intro - - .

7 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: This is the  
8 Gennaro one, for everyone's clarity. The one that  
9 the conversation was about. Start from the top,  
10 yes.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member  
12 Vacca?

13 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I vote aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Brewer?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: Koppell?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: No.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK: Lappin?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rodriguez?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: Koo?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I vote yes.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK: Garodnick?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: No.

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Rose?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Van Bramer?

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Ignizio?

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of eight in the affirmative, two in the negative and no abstentions, M 746 is accepted and filed and Intro 490-A is readopted.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: 490-A is readopted, and the mayor's veto is overridden in this case. Okay, we recommend that the Council override it. MO 747 2012 and Intro 546-A, you will now call the roll on that, and we will have a motion whether or not the Committee shall accept and file the mayor's veto message. The Chair recommends a yes vote.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member Vacca?

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Votes aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Brewer?

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Koppell?

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COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Garodnick?

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Lappin?

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Rodriguez?

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Koo?

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Rose?

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Van Bramer?

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Ignizio?

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes.

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of ten

in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no  
abstentions, M 747 is accepted and filed, and  
Introduction 546-A has been readopted.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Both Intros

have now been passed, notwithstanding the veto of  
the mayor. Now the last three, I can group those  
together. Okay? We'll now vote on proposed  
Intros 183-A, 449-A and 745-A. These deal with

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2 the disability issues raised in Councilman  
3 Koppell's bill and the issues concerning increased  
4 accessibility to the visually impaired raised in  
5 the bills proposed by myself and Council Member  
6 Brewer. The Chair recommends a yes vote.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member  
8 Vacca?

9 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Votes yes.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK: Brewer?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes.

12 COMMITTEE CLERK: Koppell?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Garodnick?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

16 COMMITTEE CLERK: Lappin?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I vote aye,  
18 and I wish the chair a very, very happy birthday,  
19 and I'll spare you my singing.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rodriguez?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: Koo?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Aye.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK: Rose?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye.

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Van Bramer?

COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Ignizio?

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes.

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of ten in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions, Introductions 183-A, 449-A and 745-A have been adopted. Members, please sign the all Committee reports. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you. I will leave the record open until 11 o'clock for additional members—

MALE VOICE: Mr. Chair, I'd like to vote. I'd like to revote aye.

[laughter]

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Without any further business, this Committee is held in recess, leaving the record open until 11am. Please sign the report—all members.

COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk, continuation of roll call in the Committee on Transportation on coupled items intros 183-A, 449-A and 745-A. Council Member Greenfield?

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Aye on  
3 all.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK: That vote now  
5 stands at 11 in the affirmative, zero in the  
6 negative and no abstentions. On Items M 746 and  
7 Introduction 490-A, Council Member Greenfield?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Aye on  
9 all.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK: That vote now  
11 stands at nine in the affirmative, two in the  
12 negative and zero abstentions. And finally, on M  
13 747 and Introduction 546-A, Council Member  
14 Greenfield?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Aye on  
16 all.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: That vote now  
18 stands at 11 in the affirmative, zero in the  
19 negative and no abstentions. Thank you.

20 [long pause]

21 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,  
22 Committee Clerk. Continuation roll call Committee  
23 on Transportation on coupled Introductions 183-A,  
24 449-A and 745-A, Council Member Mealy?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I vote aye

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on all.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Those items are now adopted by a vote of 12 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions. On M 746 and Introduction 490-A, Council Member Mealy?

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: The vote now stands at ten in the affirmative, two in the negative and zero abstentions. Finally, M 747 and Introduction 546-A, Council Member Mealy?

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: The vote now stands at 12 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions.

[long pause]

COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk. Continuation roll call Committee on Transportation on coupled items Introductions 183-A, 449-A and 745-A, Council Member Ulrich?

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: The vote now stands at 13 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions. On M 746 and Introduction 490-A, Council Member Ulrich?

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COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: The vote now stands at 11 in the affirmative, 2 in the negative and no abstentions. And finally, M 747 and Introduction 546-A, Council Member Ulrich?

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I vote aye.

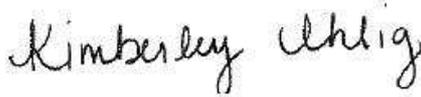
COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote now stands at 13 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Committee on Transportation is now adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Uhlig certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

Handwritten signature of Kimberley Uhlig in cursive script, written over a horizontal line.

Date

4/7/12