



Office of
Immigrant Affairs
Nisha Agarwal
Commissioner

May 1, 2015

Testimony of Commissioner Nisha Agarwal,
NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

Before a hearing of the New York City Council Committee on Immigration
"Oversight - Implementation of IDNYC - New York City's Municipal Identification Program."

Thank you to Committee Chair Menchaca and the members of the Committee on Immigration, Committee Chair Levin and the members of the Committee on General Welfare, and Committee Chair Kallos and the members of the Committee on Government Operations.

It is with great pleasure that I am here to present to the committee on the IDNYC program. I would like to begin by thanking the committee and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for their tremendous support and partnership not just on the IDNYC program but on all immigration issues.

As Commissioner of the New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs I have had worked closely with my colleagues, Commissioner Banks of the Human Resources Administration and Director Tarlow of the Mayor's Office of Operations, to implement the IDNYC program. On March 31st, 2015 we delivered to the Speaker and the Council the program's first quarterly report. As laid out in this report, in the first ten weeks of operation the IDNYC card program enrolled over 1% of the City's population and made appointments for more than 350,000 New Yorkers to apply for their IDNYC. These numbers surpassed the enrollments of all other municipal ID programs throughout the country. And just one month later, I am pleased to report to you, that we have now been able to put IDNYC cards in the hands of more than 160,000 New Yorkers – or, 2% of New York City residents—and have processed more than 450,000 appointments.

Through extensive outreach and community engagement we hear wonderful stories each and every day of the various ways New Yorkers are using their IDNYC cards. From the mother who has been able to enter her child's school in Corona for the first time without being accompanied by the school safety officer, to the 17 year old from Central Brooklyn interacting safely with law enforcement, to the family receiving a free membership at the Bronx Zoo, the response to IDNYC has been inspiring across the City. The overwhelming majority of feedback the program receives has been positive and embodies the multitude of ways New Yorkers can and are using their IDNYC.

Overview: The New York City Municipal ID Program—IDNYC

Recognized identification is essential to New Yorkers being able to access basic needs, including entering city buildings and applying for services, interacting with law enforcement, opening a bank account, and receiving health services. While U.S. government issued photo identification has increasingly become necessary, the ability to access ID has remained out of reach for many people in our community—in particular the most vulnerable. Be it because of immigration status, unstable housing, gender identity or other barriers, some of our most vulnerable communities have faced the greatest obstacles to obtaining secure and broadly recognized identification.

Mayor de Blasio entered office committed to addressing this need. With the support of this Committee, the Speaker, and Council at large we passed legislation in a mere six months creating the municipal ID card. Thereafter, in consultation with the Council and advocates, the administration moved to build a program in which all New Yorkers could more readily obtain photo identification. The IDNYC program aims to serve the very communities that need ID most, but has been designed to be inclusive of and beneficial to all New Yorkers.

IDNYC launched on January 12, 2015 allowing New York City residents aged 14 or older to apply for a *free* IDNYC card. All applicants are required to provide proof of identity and residency. The 65-plus list of documents that may be used to establish identity and residency were created in concert with Council members, government agencies like the New York City Police Department (NYPD), advocates, and other key stakeholders. Special rules establish alternative ways to show residency for homeless individuals, domestic violence survivors and young adults.

To further ensure all communities have access to IDNYC, the program has robust language and disability access practices that include translation of materials in 20 plus languages, live phone interpretation language line translation in 200 plus languages, American Sign Language translation services, and ADA accessibility of all permanent enrollment centers and more. [Virtually all of our front-line staff are bi- or multi-lingual.] In collaboration with the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs the program is working to ensure that all New York City Veterans may choose to designate their service on their IDNYC card in the near future.

The program worked closely with the NYPD and HRA's Investigation, Revenue, and Enforcement Administration to implement the best anti-fraud practices and strong program integrity procedures. Additionally, Commissioner Banks issued three executive orders articulating security and confidentiality protocols designed to protect applicant information.

These protocols address data storage and access, the use of the duplicate image search anti-fraud tool, and third party requests for applicant information.

The benefits associated with the IDNYC card help New Yorkers access vital services while enhancing the card's broad appeal. The card may be used to enter City buildings and schools, is recognized by City Agencies, such as the NYPD, and may be used at over a dozen financial institutions to open banking accounts, including Amalgamated Bank, Popular Community Bank, Carver Bank, Neighborhood Trust Federal Credit Union and others. The card also serves as a key to many of the City's educational and cultural venues. IDNYC can be used across all three library systems as a single library card. IDNYC may be used to obtain a free one-year membership at 33 of the City's premiere institutions including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Bronx Museum of Art, the Museum of the Moving Image, Carnegie Hall, the Brooklyn Academy of Music and others. Additionally, all IDNYC cards are integrated with the City's official prescription drug discount card, Big Apple Rx, providing discounts at 95% of pharmacies citywide. Discounts at Food Bazaar grocery store, the NYC Parks and Recreation Centers, YMCA, moving tickets and others provide an array of benefits for New Yorkers to pick from. The diversity of these benefits and others has shown to attract a diversity of interest in the program and use by IDNYC cardholders. The city is continuing to seek meaningful additions to the program that reflect a vision of more efficient access to government services and programs, greater access to financial services, education and cultural benefits as well as health and wellness opportunities for all New Yorkers.

Outreach and Marketing

Recognizing the importance of outreach in many of the target communities the program began meeting with advocates early on and continued outreach engagement across city agencies, program partners, CBOs, unions and faith based institutions amongst others. These efforts informed the outreach strategy and scope. Since launch the outreach team has worked diligently to engage community where they live and work and to provide good and consistent information. The outreach team has conducted nearly three-hundred trainings and workshops to providers, briefings for community and one on one engagement across the all five boroughs city. In addition, IDNYC has partnered with the Speaker and Council on three Town Hall briefings to community in Manhattan, the Bronx and Queens.

The IDNYC marketing campaign and outreach efforts have been informed by extensive community engagement and data analysis. IDNYC organized multiple paid focus groups and numerous informal focus groups with New Yorkers from target communities to solicit feedback on the most compelling messages and strategies for reaching target New Yorkers. In partnership with the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit, we have conducted extensive mapping of community infrastructure, including religious institutions, community based organizations, and City agencies in communities that would most benefit from IDNYC.

Central to the outreach efforts has been a focus on language access. The City looked at U.S. census data that shows limited English proficient populations by languages spoken at home. The languages drawn from this data were used to determine outreach material languages, applications and document lists, advertising in print and radio as well as community outreach and engagement in multilingual presentations.

IDNYC has a team of Neighborhood Organizers that have engaged in significant direct outreach efforts. The teams work includes, educational trainings and workshops, community presentations, and partnerships with groups such as: Atlas DIY, the Center for Family Life, Chhaya CDC, Make the Road New York, Flatbush Development, Minkwon Center, the Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights, the Chinese American Planning Council and others. Additionally, the outreach team has engaged agency partners such as the Department of Youth and Community Development, Department of Education, the New York Police Department, Administration of Child Services, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs and others. Police engagement has been led by the IDNYC Field Director as well as School Safety Officer presentations.

IDNYC has begun the planning of pop-up enrollment centers. The pop-ups allow IDNYC enrollment to occur in communities where permanent locations may be less accessible, target populations with difficulty traveling may live, or demand is great for the card. The City has great partnership with Council in identifying the locations to be in and working with Council Member offices to realize pop-ups in their districts.

IDNYC developed a citywide marketing campaign that embodies the spirit of IDNYC—a card that symbolizes unity and inclusion for all New Yorkers. The City conducted focus groups with New Yorkers from all walks of life to determine what card features, elements and messaging resonated best. The “I AM NYC” campaign reflects the diversity of New York City residents as well as the geography of our city. The outdoor campaign includes subway and bus ads, check cashing, laundromat and hair and nail salon ads as well as a taxi cab PSA. Further, the city engaged ethnic media from the onset with roundtable briefings, Telemundo hotlines and PSAs, and radio and print ad buys. In fact, 57% of all print advertisements to date were placed in ethnic media publications such as El Diario, Chinese World Journal, Korea Times, Haiti Progress, Weekly Thikana and others. Further 100 % of all advertisements to date were on ethnic media stations such as La Mega, Univision, Radio Soleil and more.

While the program does not track or indicate immigration status in any way, we can say confidently that it has been very well received by immigrant communities. By way of example, 311 has received the largest number of non-English call requests in its history for this program. Of the call volume received for IDNYC nearly 50% of callers request Spanish language service. The tremendous response to the program and interest from New Yorkers of all walks of life to enroll in the program demonstrates the success of this engagement and work the program can do to continue and deepen awareness in target communities.

Additionally, the outreach team has focused on connecting New Yorkers with the benefits the card provides. Through events, meetings and social media the program works to highlight the myriad of ways a cardholder can. In March alone some 2000 IDNYC cardholders enrolled in cultural institution memberships across the city. Of further note is that over 20,000 applicants are now registered organ donors in New York State.

Conclusion

In closing, I have had the pleasure of spending time at each of our more than two dozen IDNYC enrollment centers and it has been inspiring to see the true collective impact this initiative is having in touching the lives of thousands of New Yorkers every single day. For far too long, hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers have been living on the margins of our communities and in the shadows of our society, the IDNYC card has embraced all of our neighbors as New Yorkers and has welcomed them into the mainstream of our civic life.

Being out at our enrollment centers has also provided me with the opportunity to witness firsthand the commitment of IDNYC program staff, who are HRA employees, delivering high quality, friendly, and multi-lingual customer service to all New York City applicants. I want to recognize the efforts of Human Resources Administration and the Mayor's Office of Operations for their tremendous contribution to program implementation, support and expansion. I would also like to thank New York City's agencies, the City Council, the community-based organizations, and others who have truly championed the program. We look forward to continuing to work closely with all of these partners and remain committed to delivering an identification card program that serves the interests and needs of all New Yorkers.



May 1, 2015

**Testimony of Steven Banks, Commissioner
The New York City Human Resources Administration**

**Before the New York City Council Committee on Immigration
Oversight Hearing: New York City Municipal ID Program**

Good morning Chairperson Menchaca, Co-sponsor Councilmember Dromm, and Councilmembers Eugene, Koo, Espinal, Jr., Levin and Kallos. Thank you for inviting us to appear before you today to participate in this oversight hearing regarding the implementation of IDNYC.

As you know – every day in all five boroughs – the City’s Human Resources Administration (HRA) is focused on carrying out the Mayor’s priority of fighting poverty and income inequity and preventing homelessness. With an annual budget of \$9.7 billion and a staff of 14,000, HRA provides assistance and services to some three million low-income children and adults, including:

- economic support and social services for families and individuals through the administration of major benefit programs (Cash Assistance, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program benefits (food stamps), Medicaid, and Child Support Services);
- homelessness prevention assistance, educational, vocational, and employment services, assistance for persons with disabilities, services for immigrants, civil legal aid, and disaster relief;
- and for the most vulnerable New Yorkers: HIV/AIDS Services, Adult Protective Services, Home Care and programs for survivors of domestic violence.

HRA was honored when we were selected to be the administering agency for the historic municipal identification card program, IDNYC. Through a collaboration with the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs and the Mayor’s Office of Operations, HRA is proud to serve as the “back office” for IDNYC. The infrastructure for this program, including the front-facing enrollment staff as well as the back-end review staff and all equipment, sits within HRA. This is why the whole of the IDNYC budget is in HRA.

As Commissioner Agarwal and Director Tarlow both described, when IDNYC was launched on January 12 of this year, demand far exceeded our expectations, and we have met this demand with a rapid and dramatic expansion of capacity. We have now put IDNYC cards into the hands of approximately 2% of New Yorkers in 12 weeks when we had hoped to enroll 1% of New Yorkers over the course of the first year. Clearly, this is a card that New Yorkers want but more importantly need.

Office of Operations Director Tarlow described the details of this expansion for you a few moments ago, and now I want to briefly discuss HRA’s role in the launch of these additional enrollment sites over the past several months. In short, nearly every part of our agency has contributed to the effort. In addition to our External Affairs division in which IDNYC senior and front-line staff are housed, our General Support Services group has provided construction, moving and labor support; our Management and Information Systems department has handled the wiring, cabling and equipment installation and setup at all IDNYC enrollment centers citywide and the offices for the IDNYC leadership team and program integrity offices; our

Office of Staff Resources has facilitated the interviewing, hiring and training of all IDNYC program employees; our Office of Legal Affairs has handled procurements and provided support and guidance regarding legal issues; and staff from across our program areas participated as volunteers assisting with site management at enrollment sites across the City. Additionally, we have even contributed locations for this effort: the Manhattan hub sites on Water Street downtown and on West 135th Street in West Harlem are both HRA facilities, and, as you just heard, on April 6, we launched a new site in Coney Island, which is co-located with an HRA SNAP/Food Stamps Center.

As capacity increased on the front end, our program integrity operation has kept pace every step of the way, all while maintaining the security of applicant information and the integrity of the program. New York City has made a tremendous commitment of resources to the IDNYC program to ensure the inclusion of robust security protocols to prevent fraudulent activity and the creation of a fraud-resistant identification card. The result is the most advanced municipal identification card in the United States, built with the best technology, secured with thoughtful privacy protections, and accessible to the widest cross-section of individuals.

The IDNYC Program Integrity Team is comprised of highly trained fraud specialists, drawn from HRA's Investigation, Revenue and Enforcement Administration (IREA), the investigative arm of the agency. The Program Integrity Team is responsible for preventing fraud in the IDNYC application process and making sure that the card is only issued to applicants who have proven their identity and residency through accepted and legitimate documentation. The specialists of the Program Integrity Team use independent data to verify applicant information, and confirm that fraudulent documents are not accepted as the basis for obtaining a card. They also resolve matches identified through duplicate image search software run on our internal system of the IDNYC applicant pool. Together with the enrollment staff, who are trained to detect and flag questionable applications, they ensure that IDNYC is a safe, secure, and trusted form of identification for all New Yorkers.

The City's ability to maintain program integrity and issue an identification card with real value to New Yorkers depends on an ongoing commitment to identifying fraud. And we know that our processes and procedures to detect fraud are doing what they are intended to do, as two instances of possible fraud were detected since the IDNYC program's launch as of March 31. Specifically, in two unrelated instances, the program's integrity review process detected an individual seeking to obtain an IDNYC card in another individual's name and identity documents. Both of these applications were found to be an instance of suspected fraud and the potential victims were alerted by letter about the improper use of their identity information. Both applications were denied.

Privacy and security of applicant data are foremost priorities for the IDNYC program. As the administering agency of the program, in partnership with MOIA and the Mayor's Office of

Operations, HRA issued rules governing the application process, and I issued Executive Orders as HRA Commissioner that:

- Established strict security and confidentiality standards for applicants' personal information;
- Created a stringent protocol for any outside requests for information;
- Placed substantial limits on the use of duplicate image search technology; and
- Provided for an agency administrative review for applications that are denied.

This series of executive orders outlines the City's commitment to strong privacy protections and procedures to ensure program integrity.

As set forth in the Preliminary FY16 Budget that was released in February, the IDNYC budget is \$13.4 million this year and \$9.7 million in FY16. In the Preliminary Budget, the projected decline in funding and staffing was based on projected future demand following the extraordinary ramping up process this year to meet the current demand. As we found this year, however, if the level of demand remains higher than projected, adjustments can be made on an expedited basis.

Following release of the Preliminary Budget, IDNYC and HRA have been working with the Administration to ensure that there are enough resources to meet the needs going forward as part of the process for developing the FY16 Executive Budget that is being finalized for release next week.

Since the announcement of this historic initiative, from the launch in January up through the present day, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Mayor's Office of Operations and HRA have worked in partnership to implement this groundbreaking program. We have responded to demand by quickly and thoughtfully ramping up operations, and we are confident that we have established a program that is both accessible and secure. Looking towards the future, we will continue to monitor, evaluate and assess ways to improve IDNYC, and we welcome the input and guidance of the Council as we move forward, and working together we can ensure that IDNYC will truly be the one card for all New Yorkers.

Thank you again for including us in this hearing and we welcome any questions you may have.



April 27, 2014

**Testimony of Mindy Tarlow, Director
Mayor's Office of Operations**

**Before the
New York City Council Committee on Immigration**

Oversight Hearing: New York City Municipal ID Program

Good Morning Chairman Menchaca and Members of the Committee, Speaker Mark Viverito, colleagues in government, and members of the public. My name is Mindy Tarlow, and I am the Director of the Mayor's Office of Operations ("Operations"). On behalf of all of us at Operations, I would like to echo Commissioner Agarwal's comments and specially thank you, Chairman Menchaca, and Councilmember Dromm as well as Speaker Mark Viverito for your partnership on the IDNYC initiative.

It was one year ago yesterday that Nisha and I sat before this very Committee to share Mayor de Blasio's initial plans for the IDNYC program and offer our feedback on the historic legislation that Chairman Menchaca and Councilmember Dromm had introduced. It has been a whirlwind 12 months where we have worked nonstop to create the IDNYC program we have today – a program that did not exist a few months ago and is now the size of a small city agency.

As we launched IDNYC with Mayor de Blasio on Monday, January 12th at the Queens Public Library and we witnessed hundreds of people lined up down Kissena Boulevard in Flushing, we knew we had addressed a glaring gap that had existed for far too long. In fact, what became apparent shortly after opening IDNYC Enrollment Centers around the five boroughs was that we needed to expand rapidly. Our initial assumptions around what capacity we would need were informed by the experiences of municipalities that launched Municipal Identity Card programs like San Francisco, Oakland, and New Haven. Based on the experiences of these cities, we anticipated 1% of the New York City population would sign up in the first year and built a program that could enroll approximately three times that amount. We have worked as hard and as fast as we can to expand the IDNYC program and meet the tremendous demand from across the City. Today, we are proud to report that we were able to quadruple the enrollment capacity of the IDNYC program in just three months.

I would like to use this hearing as an opportunity to walk you through the growth we have been able to achieve since program launch.

Added Workstations at Existing IDNYC Centers

First, we started with what we had. At every existing enrollment center where we could fit additional workstations, we installed them almost immediately. We added new workstations at the Queens Library Central Branch in Jamaica and their Flushing Branch, at the Brooklyn Public Library Grand Army Plaza Branch, the NYPL Mid-

Manhattan Library, and we doubled our presence at the Department of Finance Brooklyn Center in Downtown Brooklyn.

Extended Hours of Operation

We extended hours of operations at each and every site where we were able to. We added hours at the Bronx Library Center by Fordham Road, Neighborhood Trust Federal Credit Union in Washington Heights, and at the NYPL Mid-Manhattan Library.

Launched Major Hubs

In February, we opened a new model of enrollment centers. Moving away from smaller, boutique enrollment centers with between one and four workstations each, we began launching larger Hubs that could act as major enrollment destinations. In February, we launched major Hubs in lower Manhattan at HRA headquarters at 180 Water Street with eight workstations and at an HRA facility in West Harlem with 12 workstations. All IDNYC enrollment centers operate on the HRA network, so we could most quickly open new sites in HRA facilities where the HRA network was already in place.

In early March, we launched our largest Queens enrollment center at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Community Center in Corona with nine workstations. We also expanded our NYPL Mid-Manhattan Center and moved it upstairs to create the largest IDNYC enrollment center in the City. There are now 15 workstations operating 88 hours per week at this location. While not quite 24/7 service – the NYPL Mid-Manhattan enrollment center is open seven days a week and is open on weekdays from 8am to 11pm.

And in early April, we launched our largest Enrollment Centers in the Bronx and Brooklyn respectively. We have opened an eight workstation center at Lincoln Hospital in the heart of the South Bronx. We opened a nine workstation center at a community facility in Sunset Park. We also opened a smaller enrollment center on the border of Coney Island and Brighton Beach to further expand access to IDNYC in southern Brooklyn.

Opened Rotating Pop Up Locations

At the end of February, we launched Pop Up locations in Western Queens at LaGuardia Community College and in Sunset Park at the Center for Family Life. These Pop Ups were intended to stay in one location for a few weeks and then rotate to other locations throughout the City. With such great demand for the IDNYC program at these locations,

we decided against rotating those initial centers. LaGuardia Community College will operate through the end of the year. In Sunset Park, we folded the Pop Up site into our new much larger center.

We are in the process of rolling out a new set of rotating Pop Up locations. On Monday of this week, we opened a temporary site in Chinatown at the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center. Next week, we will launch Pop Up Centers at one of our cultural institution partners, El Museo del Barrio in East Harlem, and at St. Brigit's Church, which is a part of the Diocese of Brooklyn.

The Pop Up Enrollment Centers allow the IDNYC program to have a presence in communities across the City. We are looking forward to "Popping Up" for approximately two weeks at a time at City Council offices, community based organizations, and City agency facilities in your districts. Please do not hesitate to follow up with the IDNYC team directly about requests to have Pop Up IDNYC enrollment centers in your community.

Increased Operational Efficiencies

Finally, we have also expanded the capacity of IDNYC by improving the efficiency of site operations. We are continuing to develop and install more sophisticated software solutions that further reduce the average enrollment cycle time for an IDNYC applicant. Enrollment staff who have now been on the job for a few months have also honed their skills and become faster at accurately processing applicants.

Appointment Demand

Upon launching the program in January, we immediately realized that an appointments based system would be needed to efficiently schedule enrollments of IDNYC applicants. Despite initial hiccups, the appointments system was fully functional approximately 18 hours after launch and has worked smoothly ever since. In fact, our appointments system has successfully made appointments for more than 450,000 New Yorkers to date.

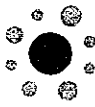
This would not have been possible without Joe Morrisroe and the 311 team. More than 250,000 calls have been placed to 311 regarding IDNYC since the launch of the program and approximately 125,000 appointments at IDNYC centers have been scheduled by 311 operators.

Prior to our creating new enrollment capacity, many New Yorkers had booked IDNYC appointments far into the future. When we were preparing to add appointment capacity at the new enrollment hubs we needed to ensure that those New Yorkers with appointments later in the year would get the opportunity for an earlier appointment. Our team made sure that all people who made appointments after June 30, had a new, earlier appointment reserved for them. We created an algorithm that scheduled new appointments for 42,639 New Yorkers on the same day of the week within an hour of their original appointment at the most convenient location available for each individual. We sent emails and deployed robocalls in English, Spanish, and Mandarin to the individuals. And importantly – we have continued to hold the original appointment for anyone who was unable to attend their newly scheduled time.

As a result of the dramatic expansion of the IDNYC program, consistently more than 95% of New Yorkers making an appointment on any given day are able to reserve an appointment within 90 days. And even better, there are appointments available on Monday of next week at multiple IDNYC centers.

Shortly after the Council passed the Municipal Identity Card legislation and the Mayor signed it into Law on the steps of Grand Army Plaza, we selected the Human Resources Administration as the program administrator of IDNYC. No agency could have hired so many people, implemented such complex operations in so many locations, and executed so well across the board as HRA has been able to do. Under Commissioner Banks' leadership, myriad divisions of HRA have been integrally involved in making IDNYC happen and I would particularly like to commend the dedicated staff of HRA for helping to deliver such a quality program with first-rate customer service for New Yorkers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.



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**Testimony on Oversight: Implementation of ID NYC
New York City's Municipal Identification Program
Submitted to
New York City Council Committee on Immigration**

**Submitted by
Fryda Guedes
Program Coordinator for Immigration and Civic Engagement
Hispanic Federation**

May 1, 2015

Chair Menchaca and Members of the Committee on Immigration:

Good morning. My name is Fryda Guedes and I am the Program Coordinator for Immigration and Civic Engagement at the Hispanic Federation (HF). Hispanic Federation is the premier Latino membership organization in the nation founded to address the many inequities confronting Latinos and the nonprofits that serve them. For 25 years, Hispanic Federation has provided grants, administered human services and coordinated advocacy for our broad network of agencies that serve more than 2 million Latinos in areas of health, education, economic empowerment, immigration and civic engagement. Thank you for inviting us here today and affording us the opportunity to express comments and suggestions on the implementation of the ID NYC program.

I would like to start off by stating that HF strongly supports this program and the following reflections and recommendations are meant to enhance the great work, thoughtfulness and attention to detail that the administration has executed in creating this rule.

Success of Program

From the beginning of the program, our city has witnessed a high demand for ID NYC. Just days after ID NYC was released to the public, enrollment sites filled to capacity with applicants. Today, more than 150,000 New Yorkers carry a municipal ID and more than 400,000 have scheduled an appointment to get their ID. ID NYC has brought hope and opportunity to many.

Those of us in this room are familiar with the official benefits offered by this program. ID NYC allows holders to enter public buildings, access services and programs offered by city agencies, be issued a summons or desk appearance instead of getting arrested, check out books at the public library, and open a bank account. For undocumented immigrants in particular, the municipal ID offers the unprecedented option of legally engaging with local resources and agencies. ID NYC empowers cardholders by recognizing their right to feel safe and welcome in public spaces.

Hispanic Federation has helped to ensure that this message reaches critical populations. At the launch of the ID NYC program, Hispanic Federation and Telemundo partnered to create a media campaign to inform the Latino community about New York City's municipal ID card program. During this initiative, HF and Telemundo produced several PSAs, news and TV segments, newspaper columns, and radio programs to educate the community about ID NYC. Through these efforts, HF's information hotline, *Linea Informativa*, received more than 4,000 calls regarding ID NYC in the span of three weeks.

Our callers were assisted by fluent Spanish speakers and walked through important details about ID NYC benefits, eligibility, and documents. Hispanic Federation also helped callers schedule appointments to apply for ID NYC. The interactions were mostly positive and callers expressed excitement about the program. One caller, who was well-aware of both the benefits and the limitations of ID NYC, told us: "me siento que tengo mis papeles." *I feel like I have my papers.*

Recommendations

Through our hotline, and through communication with other agencies, we have also learned about some of the struggles experienced by New Yorkers when applying for and using their municipal ID. We have used this to create a list of recommendations.

Expand List of Documents Serving as Proof of Identification

Many immigrants lack the specific documents required by ID NYC for proof of identity and residency. They often leave their country in a hurry or experience difficult circumstances which prevent them from carrying their birth certificates and other identifying documents in their journey to the US.

For this reason, Hispanic Federation proposes the following additions be included as acceptable proof of identification:

- Although some of the below documents are acceptable as proof of residency we ask that all of the documents below count toward one point of proof of identity (note that the NYS Dept. of Motor Vehicles assigns one point to several of these items, for the purpose of issuing NYS driver's licenses and non-driver IDs):

- Pay stub with name*
- Bank or credit union account statement*
- ATM or credit card*
- Utility bill
- Canceled check*
- Health insurance or prescription card*
- Life insurance policy*
- Check casher card with signature*
- Department for the Aging ID/Barcode Cards (photo)
- Library cards

**NYS DMV currently assigns these items one point towards proof of identity needed to obtain a NYS driver's license or NYS non-driver's ID.*

Accept Expired Documents as Proof of Identification

Immigrants may also rely on consular IDs or passports from countries that either do not maintain an active local consulate or charge high fees for document renewal as forms of identification. As of now, expired documents (other than NYC municipal IDs within 60 days of expiration or machine readable passports that expired within the last three years) are not accepted by the program. Fees and administrative hurdles should not continue to stand in the way of ID NYC applicants.

The Federation proposes that ID NYC accept government-issued IDs that have expired within 5 years of the date of the ID NYC application as proof of identity. Such expired documents should be assigned one or two points toward the three points required for proof of identity to obtain the ID NYC. Several DMVs throughout the country accept expired documents toward proof of identity to issue identification cards and driver's licenses. New York, Washington, Colorado and Georgia are examples of states that accept documents ranging from 1 to 10 years of expiration. Since other state agencies that are obligated to comply with the REAL ID Act accept forms of

expired documentation, HF recommends that HRA (which is not held to the standards of the REAL ID Act) accept expired forms of documentation under the ID NYC program.

Care of Address

The City's ID NYC website states that homeless individuals or survivors of domestic violence may provide an "in care of" address for their ID NYC. In order to utilize the "in care of" address, applicants must submit a "care-of letter" issued by a nonprofit organization or religious institution in NYC that serves homeless individuals or survivors of domestic violence. The organization must receive City funding and the ID NYC applicant must have received services from the entity for past 60 days in order to use the entity's address for mailing purposes.

Although ID NYC card holders have taken all of the aforementioned steps to use an "in care of" address on their card, the NYPD has not committed to accepting "care of" addresses as valid addresses for mailing summonses. Although an NYPD officer *may* accept a municipal ID card with a "care of" address at their own discretion, the lack of uniformity for this policy is concerning. When interacting with NYPD, a homeless individual or survivor of domestic violence may be placed under arrest as opposed to being issued a summons due to their "care of" address on their ID NYC.

Hispanic Federation encourages conversations and trainings with NYPD on this topic so that this vulnerable group of New Yorkers have the same rights and respect as all ID NYC holders.

Conclusion

Thank you for your time and attention to these important issues. It is our hope that reflecting on the achievements and limitations of this strong and inclusive program will ensure that all New Yorkers are served by ID NYC.



Testimonio de Vicente Mayorga.
Comité de Inmigración- Audiencia ID. Municipal.
5.1.15

Buenos días, gracias por la oportunidad para testificar. Un agradecimiento especial para los Concejales Menchaca y Dromm, a la portavoz Viverito por su trabajo, al Alcalde De Blasio, por el liderazgo en este asunto importante.

Mi nombre es Vicente Mayorga, soy Organizador en Se Hace Camino New York en Queens. Cuando estuve indocumentado, siempre quise obtener una identificación legal como Neoyorquino y gracias a esta Administración Municipal, se ha hecho realidad y pude obtenerlo de manera inmediata en nuestras Oficinas, así como se elevo mi autoestima como residente de esta ciudad, pude observar la felicidad de los miembros de nuestra comunidad, cuando tuvieron la oportunidad de obtenerlo, haciendo líneas a diario y saliendo con amplias sonrisas en sus rostros.

Los beneficios que ofrece actualmente, son extraordinarios, lo estoy usando, cada vez que se requiera y de la misma forma, muchas personas de nuestros vecindarios, aspiramos que hagan gestiones para que los beneficios sean ampliados, pero lo mas importante que ha ocurrido con nosotros, quienes residimos en la ciudad es, la tranquilidad y confianza poder tener una identificación por que antes no contábamos con esta oportunidad.

El ID ha sido un éxito, pero no es perfecto, nosotros estamos comprometidos a seguir trabajando para mejorarlo. Por ejemplo nos gustaría ver ampliado la lista de documentos aceptados, para hacerlo mas accesible para todos y ratificamos nuestro compromiso a seguir adelante hasta que cada ID, sea aceptado por la policía, sin importar la dirección que traiga.

Finalmente quiero dejar sentado mi profundo agradecimiento a esta administración y concejo, por su sensibilidad y compromiso con nuestras comunidades Inmigrantes y sentimos que la ciudad de New York es cada dia mas y mas como un santuario para todos. Gracias.

Testimony – Vicente Mayorga
Immigration Committee – IDNYC Hearing
5.1.15

Good morning, thanks for the opportunity to testify. A special thank you to Councilmembers Menchaca and Dromm, to the Speaker for your work, and to the Mayor de Blasio for your leadership in this important issue.

My name is Vicente Mayorga, I'm an organizer at Make the Road New York in Queens. When I was undocumented, I always wanted to obtain my legal identification as a New Yorker, and thanks to this administration, it has become a reality and I obtained it quickly at our office, I could observe the happiness of other community members, when they had the opportunity to obtain it, making lines every day and leaving with big smiles on their faces.

The benefits that this ID offers are extraordinary, and I'm using them each time I am asked for an ID, many people in our neighborhoods aspire to be able to make the benefits even greater, but the most important thing that has occurred with us, who reside in the city, is the tranquility and confidence that comes with being able to have an identification because before we did not have this opportunity.

The ID has been a success, but it'd not perfect, and we're committed to continuing to work to improve it. For example we would like to see an even larger list of acceptable documents to help make the card even more accessible and we ratify our commitment to keep working until every ID is accepted by the police without regard for the address it has.

Finally I want to let you all know my profound gratitude to this administration and council, for your sensitivity and commitment to our immigrant communities, and we feel that the City of New York is every day more and more like a sanctuary for all. Thank you.

FOR THE RECORD



TESTIMONY OF THE FORTUNE SOCIETY

Oversight – Implementation of IDNYC – New York City’s Municipal Identification Program
14th Floor Committee Room, 250 Broadway, New York, NY

Friday, May 1, 2015

Presented by

Ronald F. Day
Associate Vice President
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Oversight - Implementation of IDNYC - New York City's Municipal Identification Program.

Upon review of the IDNYC program's first quarterly report, which is required by Local Law 35 of 2014, The Fortune Society is elated by the volume of submitted applications as well as the City's efforts towards building the IDNYC program's capacity. On March 09, 2014, The Fortune Society and partners from the New York City Municipal Identification Working Group submitted a memo entitled, "Considerations for Creating a Unifying, Attractive Municipal Identification for New York City Residents," to the City Council in order to share some considerations that may guide the legislative process regarding the municipal identification program.

Administration in City Hall and City Council has carefully considered and incorporated feedback from advocates, focus groups, immigrants, other vulnerable populations, and the public hearings process. New Yorkers, such as those who are not formally housed, youth in the foster care system, low-income youth of color, the low-income aging population, those living with mental health and physical disabilities, formerly incarcerated and justice-involved individuals, those experiencing or fleeing experiences of intimate partner violence, as well as those identifying as LGBTQ, often face barriers to acquiring adequate identification, which assists in accessing services, benefits, institutions, as well as interacting with civic and governmental actors, including law enforcement.

Along with our friends and colleagues, we also recognize how some of the *aforementioned vulnerable populations are subject to more frequent stops and questioning by law enforcement*. Lack of a form of ID while stopped by police may escalate and lead to arrest, rather than the issuance of summonses or tickets for given violations. Widespread availability of the IDNYC may assist in diverting NYC residents from the city's crowded jails, particularly for low-level offenses, and alleviating overwhelming burdens on our strained courts and criminal justice system.

Development, implementation, and oversight mechanisms and processes affiliated with the IDNYC program certainly reflect the needs and concerns of diverse stakeholders and community members. Potential social and economic benefits of municipal ID programs have been well documented. Municipal IDs may improve community safety by making it easier for those without state-issued IDs to interact with local authorities; improve access to municipal services and opening bank accounts; mitigate the impact of racial profiling;¹ reduce fear of police interaction; decrease vulnerability to violence and discrimination; symbolically solidify a

¹ Evidence suggests that certain racial/ethnic groups are asked to reveal identification at higher rates than whites in situations where it is not required, for example in encounters with police, or when paying for a purchase with a check. Lack of valid ID can result in the failure of the transaction at hand, and may leave an individual feeling embarrassed and stigmatized. Municipal ID that succeeds in gaining real currency in a given locality can aid in reducing the impact of this kind of profiling.

statement of solidarity and welcome to all residents; and promote unity, civic engagement, and a sense of belonging and membership within the community. We are also acutely aware of the potential of NYC's municipal ID program to become a model for municipal ID programs in other cities. For instance, Mayor Ras Baraka has recently proposed legislation establishing a municipal identification card program in Newark, NJ. Also, we praise the City for not denoting immigration status or criminal history on the municipal ID.

Cities, such as New York City and San Francisco, have passed legislation limiting cooperation between their local police forces and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), as part of a humane and ethical response to what some legal scholars have conceptualized as the "crimmigration crisis."² Despite a gap left by a lack of immigration reform in Congress, Fortune and its diverse constituents applaud Mayor DeBlasio's efforts to sign into law two bills, which limit the city's cooperation with deportations conducted by ICE and eliminate the presence of ICE officials at city jails and numerous city facilities. Moreover, fostering a climate of trust, respect, and safety for all New Yorkers has been assisted by Ms. Mark-Viverito's insistence that the city stop honoring detention requests issued by immigration authorities without a warrant from a federal judge.

The City's steadfast efforts towards protecting cardholder's personal information and data are evident as is its leadership in protecting the rights and liberties of our most vulnerable residents. We are pleased to see certain measures to protect the privacy and security of applicant data. High levels of care, responsiveness, and sensitivity towards implementing specific mechanisms to protect the interests of those applying for and securing IDNYC cards are evident. For instance, we applaud efforts to establish procedures to address confidentiality protections for survivors of intimate partner violence. Moreover, the City has dedicated vast resources towards ensuring stringent security protocols, which prevent fraudulent activity, and creating a fraud-resistant identification card.

Despite ambitious efforts towards fostering a fair and inclusive city and a successful municipal ID program, we do echo concerns voiced by leading civil liberties advocates regarding how federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies may not have to meet a probable cause standard to obtain documents. The Fortune Society is cautious of how efforts towards increasing the integration and civic engagement of immigrant and other vulnerable communities may potentially dovetail with troubling and inhumane law enforcement actions that may involve aggressive tactics to unethically and inhumanely access data affiliated with NYC municipal IDs.

² Stumpf, Juliet P., *The Crimmigration Crisis: Immigrants, Crime, and Sovereign Power* (2006). *American University Law Review*, Vol. 56, p. 367, 2006; Lewis & Clark Law School Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2007-2. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=935547>.

The rules and executive orders, which have been issued to protect the data and insure that all information is safe and secure, detail how applicants' information will be stored, if it will be shared, the face-recognizing software in use, and the appeals process for people whose applications are denied. The law requires that the City destroy copies of records, identifying documents, and other personal information after two years, rather than store them indefinitely. As the NYCLU cautions, storage of personal information for two years does potentially render some IDNYC card holders vulnerable to the risk of prosecution, deportation, or challenging encounters with local, state, or federal police or immigration officials. The City's commitment to keeping records secure, resisting government inquisition, and releasing records only when a viable judicial warrant or subpoena is issued, is paramount. Moreover, the City must destroy the records as soon as possible, safeguard against a data breach, and carefully guard information that is printed on the IDNYC card, which is preserved for card renewal purposes.

We hope the HRA designated staff, the IDNYC executive director, and the HRA's general counsel, will remain the only designated persons able to access the applicant database. We are grateful to hear that the facial recognition software, which will be used for the purposes of preventing fraud and identity theft, will not be connected to any law enforcement databases. We applaud HRA's promise to prevent direct access of certain information to law enforcement agencies and to track all access to information. We expect HRA's Counsel will uphold its agreement to carefully review any request from law enforcement officials, including police or immigration officers, and to protect the privacy of IDNYC applicant and cardholder data *to the fullest extent permissible under law*. We also implore the city to exercise caution in sharing any applicant information for purposes of verifying the applicant's eligibility for additional city benefits, services, and care or in response to a judicial subpoena or warrant.³ Ideally, notification of cardholders or applicants when there is a request or demand for disclosure of personally identifiable information should also coincide with referrals to appropriate supportive or legal services.

Ongoing community engagement among diverse stakeholders was crucial to the IDNYC program implementation process, which has resulted in widespread awareness of, access to, and adoption of the IDNYC card. Community-based organizations and grassroots social supports were instrumental in educating various constituencies regarding the IDNYC's benefits and in assisting with the application process. The Fortune Society successfully incorporates cultural competence into reentry services and advocacy efforts, which reflect the experiences, knowledge, and realities of diverse justice-involved populations. Towards that end, governmental and public sector representatives distributing IDNYC cards and working with cardholders should receive cultural competency training around working with vulnerable populations who may face various

³ Pursuant to NYC Administrative Code Section 3-115(e)(4), applicants and cardholders' personally identifiable information will be protected to the maximum extent permissible under law.

overlapping life challenges, such as those who are justice-involved, residents without legal permission, those who are not formally housed, those experiencing intimate partner violence, or low-income transgender people or youth of color. Moreover, informal and formal community-based actors and networks should be continually involved in implementation as well as oversight of the IDNYC program.

The City's efforts to conduct outreach to potential applicants, particularly those populations in acute need of the access and inclusion associated with the municipal ID, are praiseworthy. Providing awareness, visibility, and incentive to all those eligible for the ID as well as targeting outreach efforts towards our City's most vulnerable communities are key. As the New York City Municipal Identification Working Group suggested in the March 2014 memo, we hope the card remains free to all applicants beyond the first year. At the very minimum, applicants who are low-income or receiving government assistance should receive a fee waiver, which could be supported by documentation from a social service or community-based organization. We would like to see improved marketing and outreach efforts among more vulnerable populations. In fact, last year The Fortune Society and colleagues stated that incarcerated individuals should be issued municipal identification cards *as part of discharge and release paperwork*.

We encourage sustained levels of community involvement in respect to further stages of program implementation as well as program oversight activities. Ongoing meetings and forums between the City, any agencies for which the IDNYC will have special implications, the public, and key stakeholders as well as advocates may prove beneficial. Fortune looks forward to continuing our support of this important initiative, which benefits our community as well as all of NYC. Lastly, we are thrilled to be included in citywide efforts towards creating a safer, healthier and more inclusive city.

Introduction:

Good morning. My name is Luis Feliz. I am La Fuente's Lead Organizer. La Fuente brings together immigrant workers and union members to effect change at the local, state and federal level. Our work encompasses grassroots organizing, leadership development and civic engagement. We have committees throughout the tri-state area and, in coalition with other community-based organizations, we advocated for the Municipal ID program.

Since the program's implementation, La Fuente has helped more than 600 people sign-up for the IDNYC card. On the whole, our experience with the program has been positive. The Mayor's office of Immigrant Affairs has been a responsive and engaged partner in improving the initial setbacks when the program was first rolled out. These setbacks included a long waiting times for appointments and understaffing of bilingual staff.

I am happy to report that MOIA has opened new locations and taken a proactive approach to remedying the problems that plagued the program during the early phase of its implementation. It is also worth noting that many of the challenges our members faced at enrolling sites stem from the extraordinary need immigrant communities, in particular, had for a form of identification.

New York City stands to become a beacon for other cities hoping to model the leadership and vision of our council. I hope that council understands that all eyes are on New York's implementation, and we hope to be good partners in ensuring that we model the best practices for other cities, including cities as close as Newark and Hudson County in Jersey.

Today, you'll hear from Gabriel Rubio, a member of La Fuente and NYC Artists United for a Smile.

Thank you for your time.

Buenos días. Mi nombre es Luis Feliz. Soy organizador principal de La Fuente. La Fuente reúne a los trabajadores inmigrantes y miembros de los sindicatos para lograr un cambio en el nivel local, estatal y federal. Nuestro trabajo abarca la organización de base, el desarrollo del liderazgo y la participación cívica. Tenemos comités en todo el área tri-estatal y, en coalición con otras organizaciones de base comunitaria, abogamos para el programa de Identificación Municipal.

Desde la implementación del programa, La Fuente ha ayudado a más de 600 personas a inscribirse para la tarjeta IDNYC. En general, nuestra experiencia con el programa ha sido positiva. La oficina del alcalde de Asuntos de Inmigración ha sido un socio responsable y

comprometido en la mejora de los reveses iniciales, cuando el programa se inauguró. Estos retrocesos incluyeron unos largos tiempos de espera para las citas y la falta de personal bilingual.

Estoy feliz de informar que MOIA ha abierto nuevas ubicaciones y adoptado un enfoque proactivo para remediar los problemas que plagaron el programa durante la fase inicial de su aplicación. También vale la pena señalar que muchos de los desafíos que nuestros miembros enfrentaron en los sitios de inscripción se derivan de la gran necesidad extraordinaria las comunidades de inmigrantes, en particular, para obtener forma de identificación con el respaldo de la ciudad.

Ciudad de Nueva York se puede convertir en un faro para otras ciudades con la esperanza de modelar el liderazgo y la visión de nuestro consejo. Espero que el consejo entiende que todos los ojos están puestos en la implementación de Nueva York, y esperamos ser buenos socios en asegurar que modelamos las mejores prácticas de otras ciudades, incluyendo ciudades tan cerca como Newark y Hudson County en Jersey.

Hoy en día, van escuchar de Gabriel Rubio, miembro de La Fuente y NYC Artistas Unidos por una Sonrisa.

Gracias por tu tiempo.

Member Testimony:

Good morning, My name is Gabriel Rubio. I have lived in this country for 14 years. Since immigrating from Peru, I have working various odd jobs as a waiter and busboy. For the past six years, I have performing in Times Square as an artist.

I applied for the IDNYC card in Flushing library in Queens. I received my card within 20 days. I have to tell you that my life has changed. Before receiving the ID card, I always feared that the NYPD stopped me for any reason, I would end up in jail without proper identification. In our meetings with the NYPD, we have been encouraged to obtain the IDNYC. And I must say that it feels safer to perform in Times Square having obtained one.

I want to thank the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and the council for implementing the Municipal ID program.

Thank you.



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**Testimony before the New York City Council
Committee on Immigration Regarding Oversight: Implementation of
IDNYC - New York City's Municipal Identification Program**

May 1, 2015

My name is Gina DelChiaro and I am a staff attorney on the Refugee Representation team at Human Rights First. My comments today are on behalf of my organization, which thanks the New York City Council and the members of the Committee on Immigration for the opportunity to provide input.

Human Rights First applauds the de Blasio Administration and, particularly, this Committee for implementing New York City's Municipal Identification Program ("IDNYC"). The program has helped many refugees who are applying for asylum in the United States by giving them a resource that will help them surmount obstacles to obtaining the asylum status that they are eligible for and deserve. The IDNYC not only has provided thousands of New Yorkers with services and benefits, but is helping to integrate immigrants, including those without a permanent address, into this great city.

Every month, our staff at Human Rights First interacts with large numbers of immigrants, some of whom have immigration status, some of whom have none, and many of whom are in the process of obtaining asylum. Human Rights First is a non-profit, nonpartisan international human rights organization that challenges America to live up to its ideals. We run one of the largest *pro bono* legal representation programs in the United States for asylum seekers and other immigrants in need of protection. We bring volunteer lawyers together with indigent refugees to protect their human rights by representing them in their asylum proceedings. Our approach—which combines helping asylum seekers and other immigrants gain protection and legal status, while also pressing for fair and humane national asylum and immigration laws and policies—protects those living in fear and leads to sustained, positive change in refugee protection and human rights.

While Human Rights First has offices in Washington, D.C. and Houston, our largest refugee representation team is here in New York City, where we have been serving the needs of asylum seekers and other immigrants for over thirty years. Our New York office represents immigrants who have applied, or will apply, for asylum affirmatively before one of the local asylum offices. We also represent individuals who are currently held in immigration detention centers in New Jersey, as well as those who were previously detained, but who have been released from detention while they await a hearing in immigration court. For most of our clients, asylum is only the first step toward permanent residence in the United States and eventual U.S. citizenship.

Through our work, Human Rights First is acutely aware of how a lack of identification



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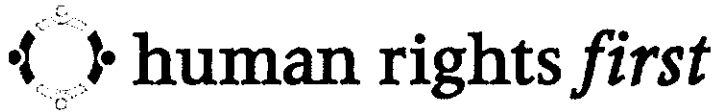
documentation impacts refugees seeking asylum in the United States. Survivors of torture and other refugees who have fled persecution in their countries face daily hardships in New York City, of which only one is the need for a valid form of identification. Many of our clients have endured severe physical and/or emotional harm, and fled to the United States with very little. Some are homeless. And many fight every day to survive while they wait for their case to be heard by an immigration judge or an asylum officer. During that wait, our clients often struggle to find basic necessities such as safe housing, food, and transportation. Although New York City generously provides many resources for immigrants, the struggle is often greatest for those without identification documents.

We have seen our clients obtain the IDNYC card, and we have seen the difference it can make in easing some of the challenges inherent in New York City life. For example, just gaining access to the building of a pro bono attorney can be impossible without an acceptable form of identification. This can create practical challenges for both the asylum seeker and the volunteer lawyer, which can delay or prevent access to justice.

We commend this Committee for the tremendous work that went into passing the legislation, including gathering feedback from the many organizations that provided testimony on this issue in 2014. For example, the City's commitment to confidentiality is crucial in allowing our clients to feel comfortable coming forward and applying for the IDNYC. Also, the acceptance of a letter from qualifying organizations that can confirm an individual's residence in New York City, even though he or she is homeless or lacks a stable address, is extremely important to many of our clients. Without the hard work of this Committee to build these solutions into the program, many individuals would not be able to apply for the IDNYC. We echo the positive feedback that has been received on the program and thank you for your fantastic work and commitment to the City's immigrants.

One group of New York City residents would benefit greatly from the IDNYC program, but they are prevented from doing so. These are refugees who fled their countries in search of safety and protection, entered the United States at the U.S.-Mexico border or other border crossing, and then were placed in immigration detention. At the time they entered the United States, many of them were traveling with their own valid identification documents, including passports, national identification cards, birth certificates, and driver's licenses, among others.

After these immigrants are apprehended by Customs and Border Protection or other U.S. immigration agents, and placed in immigration detention, a standard part of the process involves the confiscation of their identification documents. The Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") holds these documents until that individual's immigration proceedings conclude. And that may not be for years. There is currently a backlog in the immigration courts, which handles many of these proceedings. That backlog means that individuals in this circumstance are without the documents that they have long used



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to establish who they are.

Because many of these asylum seekers have no way to show that they are who they say they are, this often impedes their ability to go to their own consulate in New York and request a form of identification. And, as is often the case for asylum seekers, it is frequently inadvisable to request assistance from the very government from which the person has already been persecuted or fears persecution in the future.

This situation leaves many individuals in a sort of limbo or “catch-22,” because they need identification documents to get an identification document. Yet their identification documents were taken by the DHS and getting them returned is outside of the individual’s control.

Often, our clients possess documentation that they receive from DHS while they are in immigration detention. But, that documentation carries no weight when it comes to securing an IDNYC card because it is not accepted among the documentation on IDNYC’s point-based list. This further perpetuates the catch-22 cycle.

For example, one such document, known as the “I-94,” is issued in certain cases to immigrants who are paroled into the United States for humanitarian reasons. This document not only contains the individual’s name, date of birth, country of origin, and photo, but it also contains their fingerprint. Yet this version of the I-94 receives zero points in IDNYC’s “U.S. Federal Government issued photo ID” category. The I-94 is only one example of federally-issued documentation given to immigrants whose own valid identification documents have been confiscated by DHS. There are other examples that the Committee could consider.

I recently accompanied a client to an IDNYC enrollment center, where the I-94 was not accepted because it is not on the list of qualifying documents. The agent who handled the application was very pleasant and the process ran very smoothly that day. At the end of the procedure, however, our client walked away without being able to submit his application. “But the U.S. government gave it to me,” he said, referring to his I-94, “and it has my picture and fingerprint, and they have my passport.” I apologized and told him that we would keep trying. We talked about where he might be able to borrow \$50 to buy a New York City Parks and Recreation Center Membership ID Card, which would get him one point toward the three that he needs to prove his identity.

To increase access to the IDNYC card, we initially recommend that the Committee accept DHS documentation, such as the I-94, in addition to the other items that the City currently accepts.

Accepting DHS documentation would also ensure greater access to the many asylum seekers who are unable to secure an employment authorization card, which the IDNYC program accepts as proof of identity. Many of our clients would be eligible for work



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authorization but for a provision in the immigration law that prevents obtaining that authorization if the client appeared before an immigration judge and asked for an adjournment to seek more time to find a lawyer. Once granted, the court will set a hearing date—sometimes quite far into the future. The client that I spoke of earlier, for example, currently has an immigration hearing scheduled for 2019. Often, the asylum seeker cannot secure that much-needed work authorization until the hearing takes place.

Without that authorization, our clients are not only unable to work, they are also deprived of another valid form of identification—one that would account for all three identity points on the IDNYC document calculator. It is in situations like this that the IDNYC becomes that much more important to asylum seekers.

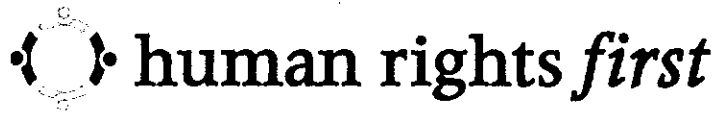
We know that the IDNYC program cannot be all things to all New Yorkers, which means that there will necessarily be groups of people who cannot qualify. The population of asylum seekers, however, have already been traumatized before arriving in our city, and would benefit greatly from the Committee's consideration of adding DHS-issued documents to the list of acceptable forms of proof of identity.

Second, we encourage the Committee to continue its support for the program and if possible, to expand the locations where New York City residents can go to submit applications. We know that the IDNYC program has been so popular that there have been periods of time since its launch when appointments have been difficult to obtain. The recently added Pop-Up Enrollment Centers, for example, are a helpful step toward meeting the demand. We support the addition of even more locations to serve specific populations, such as students aged 14 years or older, who would benefit from enrollment centers at or near certain New York City schools.

Finally, we also support the continued ability of City residents to apply for an appointment in any enrollment center, regardless of where that resident happens to live at the time the appointment is scheduled. This flexibility has made it possible for many to receive their IDNYC cards much sooner than they otherwise would if they were restricted to locations within a certain distance of their home zip code, for example.

In summary, we make three recommendations to the Committee. First, we hope that you will continue to support the IDNYC program, which has been hugely beneficial to thousands of New York City residents. Second, we recommend that the list of acceptable proof-of-identity documents be expanded to include documentation from the DHS. Finally, we support the addition of enrollment centers to the extent possible.

Human Rights First congratulates the New York City Council and this Committee on the successful implementation of the IDNYC program. It is fitting that the greatest city in the world, with such a strong commitment to providing a welcoming and safe place for immigrant families, should join the short list of leading cities that provide this resource.



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And it is equally fitting that in only a few months, New York City's program has already enrolled a larger percentage of the City's population than any of the other cities with similar programs did in an entire year. So far, my colleagues at Human Rights First have focused on using the available application appointments for our clients who desperately need them. But we will be proud to carry our own IDNYC cards very soon as well.

Thank you.

**Testimony Submitted to the New York City Council Committee
On Immigration**

**Re: Implementation of IDNYC – New York City’s Municipal
Identification Program**

Friday, May 1, 2015, 10:00am

Legal Services NYC (LSNYC) and Bronx Legal Services welcome this opportunity to submit written testimony regarding the implementation of IDNYC – New York City’s Municipal Identification program. I am Isabel Heine and I am a staff attorney in the Family and Immigration Unit of Bronx Legal Services. Legal Services NYC is the largest provider of free civil legal services for the poor in the country. We have offices in every borough and each office provides a wide range of civil legal services.

Being a longtime resident of New York City, I felt compelled to apply for the IDNYC as soon as possible. I also believed that if I navigated the system myself, I could better advise my clients of the process. Lastly, as an immigration advocate, I wanted to emphasize the position that this card is not specifically a document for the undocumented and should not be used as a marker of immigration status, or lack thereof.

I used the online appointment system during the first week it was available and made an appointment for February 4, 2015 at the Mid-Manhattan Library. I then explored the Points Calculator available on the IDNYC website to ensure I met the identity and residency criteria. I showed up for my appointment on time and presented my North Carolina Driver’s License and my current lease. I was seen within 5 minutes of arriving after my documents were verified. The process took just another 5 minutes to complete. And although forbidden from smiling while the IDNYC picture was taken, I certainly was smiling when I received it in the mail approximately 3 weeks later.

Holding an IDNYC was incredibly satisfying, but for several of my clients, the program was truly transformative. I am choosing to highlight one experience here today that is representative of what my clients experienced before and after receiving their IDNYC.

The City did a wonderful job of advertising the IDNYC program. The majority of my clients knew of the program when asked or came in seeking guidance on how to obtain a City ID. My client, a citizen of The Dominican Republic, came to the United States six years ago. She did not possess a valid form of photo identification. She had struggled for several years to open a bank account and couldn’t because she did not have proper identification. She worked as a hairdresser and would store her earnings in various places for fear of having her hard earned income stolen from the women’s shelter where she was residing.

Since my client is Spanish-speaking, as are the majority of my clients, my client was happy to find the appointment system and the document calculator available in Spanish. We determined that my client's expired Dominican passport and her Dominican birth certificate were sufficient evidence of her identity. We were pleasantly surprised to learn that a letter from her shelter was also all she needed to prove NYC residency. My client received an appointment for late February at the Bronx Department of Finance. Unfortunately, she was unable to obtain an ID because she was told that the letter from the shelter was insufficient proof of her NYC residency. She was, however, informed that she could return with proper proof that she lived in NYC by walking-in and not having to make another appointment. Therefore, I sent my client back with the letter from the shelter and a printed screen shot of the document calculator, which clearly indicated that a letter from a NYC shelter was acceptable proof of residency. My client received her IDNYC approximately four weeks later. She now has a bank account and is saving her income in the hopes of renting her own place soon. This is just one example of how having identification has made an enormous difference in the lives of my clients because they now have proper identification that can be used to access government buildings and their children's schools, something that was not possible before.

Other of my colleagues at LSNYC have also had clients who had similar experiences as my client where there were discrepancies between the information listed on the IDNYC website and what people were being told was acceptable proof. One colleague noted that her client brought a cable bill to prove residency but was told that only a gas bill was sufficient, despite other enrollment centers accepting cable bills.

We at LSNYC believe strongly in community lawyering and we attend and organize a number of outreach events. It has been a pleasure to see an IDNYC table at a number of these outreach efforts with a staff member scheduling appointments and providing guidance. This is especially important since not everyone has access to the internet to find information about NYC's ID program or has an advocate to guide them through the process.

We strongly support the IDNYC program and the strides it has made to reach as many of the city's residents as possible. It is evident that the City is intent on making the program accessible to as many people as possible.

Isabelle Heine
Staff Attorney, Family and Immigration Unit
Legal Services - Bronx



Testimony of the New York Legal Assistance Group

Before the New York City Council Committee on Immigration Regarding Oversight and Implementation of the Municipal ID Program May 1, 2015

Chair Menchaca, Councilmembers and staff, good morning and thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on the City's Municipal ID program. My name is Meeta Patel and I am a Supervising Attorney for the Immigrant Protection Unit at the New York Legal Assistance Group. NYLAG is a nonprofit law office dedicated to providing free legal services in civil law matters to low-income New Yorkers. NYLAG serves immigrants, seniors, the homebound, families facing foreclosure, renters facing eviction, low-income consumers, those in need of government assistance, children in need of special education, domestic violence victims, persons with disabilities, patients with chronic illness or disease, low-wage workers, low-income members of the LGBTQ community, Holocaust survivors, veterans, as well as others in need of free legal services.

NYLAG has worked closely with City Council and the Mayor's office of Immigrant Affairs along with a wide range of community advocates and organizers to help shape and implement New York City's Municipal ID program. This is a program that we are very proud of and which is hugely valuable to many of our clients many of whom are undocumented, homeless or have struggled to obtain government issued ID that accurately reflects their gender.

Why Is a Municipal ID Card Important to Immigrant and LGBTQ Communities?

The Municipal ID program has proved critical in encouraging immigrant integration into the fabric of New York City. Our experience as legal advocates for immigrants informs us that many of our undocumented clients harbor entrenched fears and anxieties regarding daily city routines and especially interactions with government officials of any stripe. Simply entering many buildings in New York City requires showing government issued identification, and many undocumented individuals don't wish to use their foreign identification for fear of revealing their undocumented status. Worries about interacting with government agencies and revealing immigration status have contributed to the unequal delivery of services between non-immigrants and immigrants. Many individuals abstain from accessing services to which they are entitled, such as critical emergency services like calling the police or fire departments for assistance, interacting with the schools and/or teachers of their U.S. citizen (USC) children, or accessing nutrition assistance for USC children. The Municipal ID program has given many of our immigrant clients the sense of freedom that comes with having the identification necessary to perform daily routines without anxiety and interact with municipal agencies without fear, a privilege that many documented New Yorkers take for granted.

Having access to accurate and valid government issued ID cards is a particularly pressing issue for transgender and gender non-conforming communities. Transgender people are more likely to have problems obtaining accurate and valid ID documents. Family rejection and homelessness in transgender communities is even more severe than for other communities. Over 50% of transgender people have experienced significant family rejection, and one in three transgender New Yorkers has been homeless. Not having valid ID that accurately reflect a person's self-identified gender is one of the greatest factors in causing discrimination and often leads to humiliation, harassment and violence against transgender and gender non-conforming people. Valid ID is needed to apply for work, enter most buildings in New York, travel, use a credit card, produce upon request from law enforcement, and many other daily interactions. NYLAG has collaborated with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) and Make the Road New York to offer name changes for transgender applicants and we would be thrilled to continue offering these services through clinics.

The New York City Municipal ID allows for self-attestation of gender, which prevents the burden of unattainable and often unwanted surgery and resulting sterilization, the creation of discriminatory practices for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals and the encroachment on an individual's right to privacy. Many New Yorkers that identify as LGBTQ have been able to attain New York City's Municipal ID and have benefitted from the option of not including a gender marker on the identification and from being able to self attest to gender. Anecdotally, community members have stated that workers application centers have been courteous and have respected preferred pronouns and self attested gender. Our organization was very excited to offer the HRA/ Municipal ID employees training on LGBTQ cultural competency. The training was well received and we would like to see the training repeated regularly for both new employees and existing employees who may have questions or issues come up in their work.

The fact that New York City residents who are homeless and/or are survivors of domestic violence may obtain Municipal IDs which do not include their addresses is critical to the integrity of the program. These vulnerable New Yorkers are unable or unwilling to provide a home address on their Municipal IDs due to economic insecurity or safety concerns, but like all New Yorkers, still need the benefits the Municipal ID program provides.

New York City's Municipal ID is already changing lives for residents of the five boroughs, but we believe that there are a few steps that could be taken to strengthen the program even more:

Ways to Strengthen the City's Municipal ID Program

1. Ensuring Equal Service Delivery of Program to NYC Residents who are Homeless and/or Survivors of Domestic Violence.

It is important that the NYPD affirmatively accept the Municipal ID as valid identification in any encounter. Every Municipal ID contains information similar to that of one's passport, which is considered valid documentation when engaging with the police. Additionally, the program's self-attested gender preference policy is in

line with the NYPD Patrol Guide. There is no legitimate reason that the NYPD should not accept the Municipal ID as valid identification in any encounter. On the contrary, it is entirely consistent with the NYPD's own guidelines.

2. Continued Cultural Competency Training for Program Staff

We applaud the Municipal ID Program's cultural competency training to date, including LGBTQ cultural competency. We encourage the program to regularly continue these training opportunities for their staff.

3. Reconsideration of Documentation Retention Policy & Expansion of Acceptable Proofs of Residency

We encourage the City to reconsider its policy to retain Municipal ID program supporting documentation, accessible by subpoena, for 2 years. This policy may have the unintended consequence of deterring undocumented individuals from accessing the program for fear of ICE deporting them. We also encourage the City to expand the list of acceptable proof of City residency to include not only USCIS approval notices but also documents issued by the Office of Refugee Resettlement and ICE (for example detained individuals released on their own recognizance) which contain addresses of individuals.

4. Continued Education and Acceptance

This program has proved incredibly successful and the City had to move quickly after its implementation to open more centers for residents to obtain the IDs. We hope that the City will continue its outreach to diverse communities and provide education to people about the cards in multiple languages, as well as continue to ensure that agencies and other corporations and companies accept them as valid identification. To that end, we suggest that NYC join other city governments in advocating for use of their respective Municipal IDs as valid identification for the purpose of opening bank accounts and credit union accounts.

We applaud the City Council, this Committee and Chair as well as the Mayor's office for taking this critical step toward ensuring that all New Yorker's have access to valid ID cards. We urge you to continue to push for LGBTQ cultural competency training for all staff interacting with community members, affirmative acceptance by the NYPD of municipal ID cards issued to the homeless and survivors of DV and re-evaluation of the policy to retain supporting documents of applicants. These efforts will make an already great program an even better one by recognizing the diverse needs of the people who call New York City their home. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,

Meeta Patel, Esq.
Supervising Attorney, Immigrant Protection Unit
New York Legal Assistance Group
7 Hanover Square, 18th Floor
New York, NY 10004
(212) 613-5036



TESTIMONY OF:

Sarah Vendzules – Staff Attorney, Immigration Practice

BROOKLYN DEFENDER SERVICES

Presented before

The New York City Council

Committee on Immigration's Oversight Hearing:

Implementation of IDNYC - New York City's Municipal Identification Program

May 1, 2015

My name is Sarah Vendzules and I am an immigration attorney at Brooklyn Defender Services. Brooklyn Defender Services is the largest Brooklyn-based legal services provider. I thank the New York City Council Committee on Immigration, and in particular Chair Carlos Menchaca, for this opportunity to testify on New York City's groundbreaking IDNYC program.

BDS protects the rights of Brooklyn residents who are accused of crimes, face child welfare accusations, or are in deportation proceedings. Our clients are poor and cannot otherwise afford to retain an attorney. We provide innovative, multi-disciplinary, and client-centered criminal, family and immigration defense, civil legal services, social work support and advocacy to more than 45,000 indigent Brooklyn residents every year. We believe all people – regardless of economic means – deserve respect, individualized care, and exceptional legal representation, whether accused of a crime or facing a legal obstacle to justice and opportunity.

Our Immigration Practice provides a wide array of legal services to clients. We provide advice to BDS criminal defense colleagues and their noncitizen clients in about one thousand cases every year. In addition, we provide direct legal services to immigrants through our comprehensive Immigration Practice. We secure our immigrant clients' release from immigration detention and defend them against deportation. We represent clients in complex affirmative benefits applications, such as T and U trafficking and victim visas, VAWA self-petitions, and naturalization or adjustment of status applications made complicated by the

client's criminal history. Our Immigrant Youth Project provides legal assistance to a greater number of BDS's young immigrant clients to pursue affirmative immigration benefits such as Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

The vast majority of our comprehensive Immigration Practice clients are individuals initially represented by BDS on a criminal or family court matter. As such, their immigration cases are often complicated by criminal or family court issues. These are cases that other organizations are often unable or unwilling to take on. We have therefore developed our own particular area of expertise in representing individuals who have had contacts with the criminal justice and family protective systems. Since November 2013 BDS has been serving as assigned counsel under the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project (NYIFUP)—a first-in-nation program that provides legal representation for indigent New Yorkers in detained removal proceedings. Through NYIFUP, this year we have also stepped up to represent cases on the non-detained “adults with children” docket at 26 Federal Plaza. These are mothers and fathers fleeing with their children from the horrific violence in Central America. In many cases, the children have been directly threatened with death, sexual assault, or kidnapping and forced recruitment into gangs. Their parents have taken their children and fled from certain death towards an uncertain future in the United States.

In the Immigration Practice, but also across all practice areas, BDS staff has seen overwhelming interest from clients in IDNYC. We are fielding numerous calls and inquiries from clients interested in signing up and our social workers have been actively helping people make appointments and gather the necessary documentation to apply. Many people, including me, have not been able to sign up yet because of high demand. (I have an appointment in two weeks). But we believe that IDNYC will make, and is already making, a critical difference for many of our clients.

From the perspective of our criminal practice, we have great hope that IDNYC will cut down the number of people who would otherwise receive a summons for a minor offense such as littering, taking up two seats on the subway, or smoking in a park, but who, due to lack of proof of identity and address, are instead arrested and put through the system. This alone is a huge change, as being arrested can be a life-disrupting event. For immigrant clients the stakes are even greater as being fingerprinted and run through the system creates a risk of scrutiny by ICE via data sharing through the program formerly known as “Secure Communities” (now “PEP”). IDNYC will also help clients and their families to access the courts and other government buildings, chipping away at an inexcusable barrier to their equal participation in the justice system. IDNYC also solves an issue for clients who want to complete community service and other alternative-to-incarceration programs. Now lack of ID will not be a bar to our clients having equal access to these programs.

From the perspective of our Civil Legal Services practice, IDNYC will be crucial proof of residence that will help people apply for public benefits. For example, our housing attorneys report that many rent-stabilized tenants do not have a lease as their landlord has refused to renew it. In order to receive public benefits they are often asked to show their lease to prove where they live. Their IDNYC can now be evidence that their long-time residence is really their home.

From the perspective of our Immigration Practice, we, the BDS immigration attorneys defending New Yorkers in removal proceedings (via our comprehensive Immigrant Practice and through the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project), believe that IDNYC will be an important factor in helping many of our clients have a better chance to prevail in their case and remain in the country with their families. To successfully defend against deportation it is often critical that clients be able to show that they have built community ties here in the United States and in New York City. Without an ID, there are myriad obstacles in their way. For example, it can be difficult for a parent without ID to enter her children's school and be an active participant in their education. With IDNYC, clients will be able to be more fully participating member of the community. Defending against deportation also requires extensive documentation of a client's life, work, school, and medical history. IDNYC will greatly help clients trying to collect such documents in order to prove to an immigration judge that they merit a second chance.

For New Yorkers applying for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), the doors opened by IDNYC (and the IDNYC card itself) help establish their presence in the community. Hopefully soon this will also apply to parents of US Citizen and Lawful Permanent Resident children applying for Deferred Action for Parents (DAPA). I had the pleasure of volunteering at the April 12th Immigrant Rights Day of Action organized by the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs and I am pleased to report that quite a few of the prospective DAPA applicants I met proudly displayed their brand new IDNYC cards.

In our Immigrant Youth practice we have already seen a small but very concrete change brought about by IDNYC. As you may know, Special Immigrant Juvenile status and the guardianship process allows abused, abandoned, or neglected immigrant youth to gain stability in family relationships and to be able to stay in the United States. A good number of family members of our Special Immigrant Juvenile Status clients have used their IDNYC cards to get fingerprinted in family court as part of the guardianship process. The fingerprinting requirement has, at times in the past, been an insurmountable obstacle that has prevented a deserving youth from getting the status.

For many of our clients fighting for their right to stay here in removal proceedings, including the mothers with young children who have come fleeing the violence in Central America, immigration holds on to their passport, leaving them with no ID. For this reason, we encourage IDNYC centers to accept documents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement or the Office of Refugee Resettlement to establish identity. These are government-issued documents, backed up by fingerprints and often including a photograph, that our clients can use to enter federal buildings like 26 Federal Plaza and establish their identity with the federal government. With this small change, IDNYC will be able serve a great number of extremely needy and deserving individuals it is not be currently reaching.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak with you today. We at BDS, across all our practice areas, are excited by the opportunities that IDNYC offers our clients. We thank the Mayor's Office and the City Council for their vision and hard work in making this program a reality.



ASIAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND

99 HUDSON STREET, 12th FL, NEW YORK, NY 10013-2815 212.966.5932 FAX 212.966.4303

Implementation of IDNYC – New York City's Municipal Identification Program

Song Kim

Staff Attorney, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund

Good morning. My name is Song Kim. I am a staff attorney in the Anti-Trafficking Initiative at the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund. AALDEF is a national organization that protects and promotes the civil rights of Asian Americans. I represent victims and survivors of trafficking and other crimes in their applications for immigration relief, and in civil litigation and restitution recovery as they seek to obtain economic justice.

The municipal ID ensures access to City services and grants admission to municipal buildings. But for many members of the immigrant community we serve, the municipal ID is crucial for even the most simple every day transactions that we take for granted. To illustrate, one of the members of RAISE, AALDEF's undocumented youth-led group that aims to create safe spaces in our communities while advocating for humane immigration policies, is an honor student at her college. She came to the United States in 2011 with her two younger siblings and her mother, a survivor of domestic violence. When she first arrived in New York, her family lived with a very controlling uncle, who confiscated their passports and has since become estranged to them. She is intelligent and ambitious, and was recently awarded a competitive scholarship for undocumented youth. When she walked into a bank to cash the scholarship check to help pay for her tuition, she was turned away because she did not have a valid form of identification. She immediately made an appointment to get her IDNYC card. She gathered all of the documents she had in her possession – her high school diploma and high school ID, IDs from two different CUNY schools, and a letter from one of those schools stating she is maintaining her honors program eligibility. However, when she went to her appointment to apply, she was turned away because she could not prove residency. She could not prove residency because she was a student living with an aunt with no letters or bills addressed to her in her name.

Today, I want to focus on this narrow issue – on how difficult it may be for members of the immigrant community who have been subjected to trafficking, and other controlling and exploitative situations, to gather the necessary documents.

Confiscating identity documents are one of the most common ways traffickers exert control and coerce their victims into providing labor and services against their will. To paint you a picture of what this may look like, there were students from Thailand who were promised a cultural exchange in the United States. They paid all of the necessary fees, attended the required orientations, and trusted that they would be coming to the U.S. to experience "America." Within their first few hours of arriving in Flushing, their passports, cash, and credit cards, and phones were taken from them. They were banned from having any communication with the outside world, and were forced to work under threats of deportation and arrest. They were forced to work recruiting for and soliciting money for a religious organization in the streets of New York City for many hours a day, only to come "home" to donated food that was at times moldy and inedible, and to sleeping on the floor of a church.



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Since their escape, they tried for almost two years to get their passports reissued to them, but ended up hitting many walls along the way. At first they were told by the Consulate that it was impossible to get a new passport without an actual or copy of their passport. They did not understand that the students left a trafficking situation in which their passports were taken from them. They then directed the students to obtain a police report that their passports had been stolen. However, the police would not issue a report for a stolen passport, without a full investigation confirming the allegations were true.

Many survivors of trafficking have had their identity documents taken from them. They may not be enrolled in an educational institution. Many will likely not have a stable residence upon escape. Organizations like AALDEF, which does not provide services to homeless individuals or survivors of domestic violence, will not be able to provide acceptable letters for the survivors of trafficking we serve, to prove residency. I recommend therefore, that the types of agencies and organizations permitted to provide residency letters be expanded to include nonprofit organizations that serve survivors of trafficking.

I would like to finish on a note of gratitude, as I share this quote from a client who was trafficked to the U.S. as a child in 1993. He now has a beautiful family of his own that he works very diligently to care for. He has an upcoming appointment to apply for his IDNYC card in a few weeks. He told me that even though he spent the vast majority of his life here, he has always lived in a constant state of fear.

"I never really felt like I belonged to China, but I also never felt like I belonged here. I felt like a mouse living in the shadow. But now, knowing I can get an ID, I feel like I finally have an identity. The ID will be a form of validation and identification, and I know I will feel more human with it." Thank you.

Buenos días, mi nombre es Gabriel Rubio. He vivido en este país durante 14 años. Desde emigrar de Perú, he trabajado varios trabajos como camarero y ayudante de camarero. Durante los últimos seis años, he actuando en Times Square como artista.

Solicité la tarjeta IDNYC en la biblioteca de Flushing en Queens. Recibí mi tarjeta dentro de 20 días. Tengo que decir que mi vida ha cambiado. Antes de recibir la tarjeta de identificación, siempre temí que la policía de Nueva York me detuviera por cualquier razón, iba a terminar en la cárcel sin la identificación adecuada. En nuestras reuniones con la policía de Nueva York, se nos ha incentivado obtener el IDNYC. Y debo decir que se siente más seguro para realizar mi arte en el Times Square de haber obtenido una tarjeta de IDNYC.

Quiero agradecer a la Oficina del Alcalde de Asuntos de Inmigración y el Consejo para la aplicación del programa Municipal ID



Testimony of Grace Shim
City Council Hearing - Committee on Immigration
May 1st, 2015

Good morning. My name is Grace Shim and I am the Executive Director of the MinKwon Center for Community Action, a community-based organization in Flushing, Queens. The MinKwon Center primarily serves the Korean American, Asian American and immigrant communities of New York City.

We first want to thank the City Council's support of IDNYC, and the Mayor and the Office of Immigrant Affairs for their hard work in making the program a success.

Overall we believe the implementation of the IDNYC has been successful.

We have seen phenomenal interest for the IDNYC. Our office received a tidal wave of calls from Korean-speaking New Yorkers following the launch, and to date we have fielded over 600 requests over phone and in-person from individuals wanting to apply for their IDNYC; and requests continue to come in regularly from both documented and undocumented community members actively seeking out the card.

Queens Flushing Library was a very good choice as an enrollment site, as it is well-known, often-used and very central and accessible to the residents of Flushing and Eastern Queens.

We did notice that the site, despite its strategic location, had no Korean-speaking staff or signage. This confused many and discouraged some from applying. MOIA did respond to our concerns, including hiring a full-time Korean-speaking staff and putting up signage within the library.

Moving forward, we would like to see

- enrollment centers be even more immigrant-friendly by displaying signs in languages relevant to the communities. We recently noticed that all non-English signage in the library was taken down.
- an expanded list of accepted documents relating to the proof of address. We recommend it include approval notices from the Human Resources Administration (HRA), the United States Center for Immigration Services (USCIS), and other government agencies.
- that the IDNYC continue to provide regular trainings to its staff to ensure that all New Yorkers, especially those with limited English proficiency, can have a positive experience receiving their IDNYC.
- a permanent enrollment site in Manhattan's Chinatown.

This being said, we reiterate our appreciation for the City Council and the Mayor's commitment to increase immigrant inclusion in our city. Thank you.



FOR THE RECORD

PICTURE THE HOMELESS

104 East 126th Street #1B [Storefront], New York NY 10035

Phone 646-314-6423 Fax 646-314-3735

info@picturethehomeless.org

New York City Council Committee on Immigration

Oversight Hearing: Implementation of IDNYC - New York City's Municipal Identification Program

Testimony by Red, Picture the Homeless Member

While we were proud to support the administration and the council's work on the municipal identification program, and are excited about its potential to help homeless people avoid unnecessary arrest, our testimony today will focus on the following areas in which the program needs to be improved.

- 311 gives out bad information about what kind of documents are needed in order to get the ID, and are not trained to be aware of and helpful with the particular challenges that homeless people face while trying to access the ID. They told Red that any piece of mail with his name and an address would be sufficient for obtaining the ID, which is not true.
- The process is too complicated, and presents obstacles to people whose lives are in a disrupted state due to homelessness or other traumatic life situations.
- The process takes too long. Red got his appointment only through a cancelation, and when he needed to reschedule due to the bad information he got from 311, the next available appointment was two months away. Street homeless people are often subject to arrest on a weekly or monthly arrest, and that means people will be put through the criminal justice system multiple times while they wait for their appointment and then their ID—at significant cost to taxpayers.

Testimony submitted to the New York City Council Committee on Immigration hearing on
“Oversight – Implementation of IDNYC – New York City’s Municipal Identification Program”
by the Peter Cicchino Youth Project at the Urban Justice Center

Requiring approval notices, rather than receipt notices, effectively requires some IDNYC applicants to have lawful immigration status.

Currently, an Approval Notice Issued by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services counts as two points towards proving one’s identity for an IDNYC card. Though it is great approval letters count as points for those who have them, the documentation requirement should be expanded to include all notices issued by US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).

Requiring approval notices, rather than receipt notices or other notices, excludes the thousands of immigrant New Yorkers who have filed for, but have yet to be approved for immigration status from obtaining ID NYC. This category of individuals includes some of the most vulnerable New Yorkers:

- Victims of crimes who apply for a U-Visa can have to wait years for the visa to be approved and up to 12 months to be qualified for an employment authorization.¹
- Abused, neglected and abandoned children who apply for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status may have to wait up to six months for an approved petition.²
- It takes an average of six months for USCIS to process visas for Victims of trafficking.³

This policy also excludes from obtaining ID the many immigrants who are having their applications heard by an Immigration Judge. As of March 2015, the New York Immigration Court had a backlog of 601 days, which means that the average time a case takes to decide is more than a year and a half.⁴

To genuinely ensure that all New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status have access to ID NYC, the immigration documentation accepted should mirror the New York Department of Health’s PRUCOL (“permanently residing under color of law”) policy. Under that policy, to show that one is eligible for benefits, they need only show that they are residing in New York with the “knowledge and permission or acquiescence” of immigration and whose departure from the U.S. the agency “does not contemplate enforcing.”⁵ Specifically, this policy includes individuals who have filed official applications with USCIS or EOIR and have not yet received an approval.

¹ USCIS Approves 10,000 U Visas for 6th Straight Fiscal Year, *available at* <http://www.uscis.gov/news/uscis-approves-10000-u-visas-6th-straight-fiscal-year>

² <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/processingTimesDisplay.do>

³ <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/processingTimesDisplay.do>

⁴ http://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/court_backlog/

⁵ NY Department of State 08 OHIP/INF-4

Photo ID requirements should be expanded to include ICE or ORR⁶ supervision or release documents.

When an individual is released from ICE custody, or in the case of a minor, released to a sponsor from ORR custody, they are often given a document from the agency with their name and photo. This documents serves as identification for that individual's follow-up interaction with immigration agencies while their immigration case is pending. Including these documents as acceptable forms of photo ID for the purpose of IDNYC will ensure access to IDNYC for some individuals who are currently effectively excluded.

In conclusion, in order to ensure that IDNYC is available to all residents of New York City regardless of immigration status, the range of immigration-related documents that are accepted should be increased to include official notices from all immigration-related agencies, including USCIS, ORR, ICE, and EOIR.

⁶ Office of Refugee Resettlement, the federal agency charged with detaining and releasing unaccompanied minors.
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/programs/ucs/about>

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 4/31/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Commissioner Nisha Agarwal

Address: _____

I represent: Mayor's office of Immigrant Affairs

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 5/1/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Isabel Heine - Staff Attorney, Legal Services

Address: 349 E. 149th St. - 10th Floor, Bronx

I represent: Legal Services NYC, Bronx Legal Services

Address: same

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Meeta Patel

Address: NYLAG, 7 Hanover Square, 18th Flr. NYC
10004

I represent: NYLAG

Address: (316 W. 105th St, 2B, NYC 10025)

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gabriel Rubio

Address: _____

I represent: La Fuente & NYC Artist United for a Smile

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Luis Feliz

Address: 104-16 47th Ave Corona, NY 11368

I represent: La Fuente

Address: 25 West 18th Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ronald F. Day

Address: 29-76 Northern Blvd, LIC, NY 11101

I represent: The Fortune Society

Address: same as above

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 5/1/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: VILNA V. MILLER

Address: 1921 JEROME AVE., BRONX, N.Y. 10453

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Local Law 35 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 5/1/2015

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: _____

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 5/1/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sarah Venzules - Brooklyn Defender Service

Address: 177 Livingston St. 11201

I represent: Brooklyn ~~Defender~~ Defender Services

Address: same

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Grace Shim

Address: _____

I represent: Min Kwon Center for Community Action

Address: 136-19 41st Ave 3rd Fl Flushing NY 11355

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 05-01-15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Vicente Mayorga

Address: 282-22 N. Hudson Av. 14. Ridgewood NY

I represent: Make the Road NY

Address: 42 10. Roosevelt A.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 05/1/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Frida Gueles

Address: 55 exchange place, NY, NY

I represent: Hispanic Federation

Address: 55 exchange place, NY, NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Commissioner Steve Banks

Address: _____

I represent: HRA

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 5/1/15

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dahsong Kim

Address: 89 Hudson St. Fl. 12, NY, NY 10013

I represent: Asian American Legal Defense & Education Fund

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mindy Tarlow

Address: 253 Bway 10th Fl

I represent: Operations

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms