

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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May 23, 2108  
Start: 10:23 a.m.  
Recess: 10:41 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: FERNANDO CABRERA  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Ben Kallos  
Alan N. Maisel  
Phil Perkins  
Keith Powers  
Ydanis A. Rodriguez  
Kalman Yeger

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

2 [sound check] [background comments,  
3 pause] [gavel]

4 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Good morning and  
5 welcome to this hearing of the committee of  
6 Government Operations. Today, we'll be holding a  
7 second hearing on the vote of Proposed Intro No. 14-A  
8 sponsored by Council Member Borelli in relation to  
9 the broadcasting of mandatory debates. This bill was  
10 previously heard in April of this year, and a version  
11 of this bill was heard last session in December of  
12 2017. The Campaign Finance Act requires certain  
13 mandatory citywide debates to be held, and these  
14 debates are broadcast on television, radio and the  
15 Internet. However, the main broadcast sponsor may  
16 sometimes be a channel that is not available to all  
17 the residents of the city. It is our goal to make  
18 our democracy and, therefore, our debate as  
19 accessible to the people in New York City as  
20 possible. Therefore, proposed No. 14-A requires  
21 mandatory citywide debates to be simultaneously  
22 broadcast on the city television station with the  
23 largest public audience. Since introduction, the  
24 bill has been amended to require that debate  
25 broadcast be provided to the city television station

2 at no cost and that the city television station not  
3 be a sponsor of the debate. The bill has also been  
4 amended to clarify that while the city television  
5 stations to make its best efforts to broadcast the  
6 debates simultaneously, such broadcast may be subject  
7 to technological limitations as well as the  
8 limitations of federal law and the rules of the  
9 Federal Communications Commission. I thank the  
10 council—the co-sponsor of this legislation, I will  
11 urge my colleagues in the committed to support. I'd  
12 like to thank Council Member Borelli for introducing  
13 this legislation, the members of this committee for  
14 their hard work, and our committee staff Council Brad  
15 Reed, Policy Analyst Elizabeth Cronk, Finance Analyst  
16 Zachary Harris, and Clara McLeveign (sp?) my  
17 legislative Director. I'm going to ask the clerk to  
18 call the roll.

19 CLERK: Committee on Governmental  
20 Operations, Committee Clerk Matthew DeStefano, roll  
21 call vote on proposed Intro 14-A. Chair Cabrera.

22 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Aye.

23 CLERK: Maisel.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

25 CLERK: Powers.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Aye.

3 CLERK: Yeger.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Mr. Chairman, may  
5 I be excused to explain my vote?

6 CLERK: Absolutely.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you, Mr.  
8 Chairman. I sponsored this—I co-sponsored this bill  
9 with my colleagues and Councilman Borelli who  
10 authorized this with the thought that this would  
11 increase the viewership of something that's very  
12 important to democracy. We have these debates that  
13 are mandatory for those who accept campaign finance  
14 dollars, and as part of the covenant with the city of  
15 New York, and with the taxpayers, if you request the  
16 taxpayers money in order to run your campaign, you  
17 have to re-to debate, and we've seen in the past  
18 particularly in the '90s that candidates would take  
19 the money from the CFB and not wish to debate their  
20 opponents, it was wise of the Council then to mandate  
21 debates, and this is a wiser version of the bill  
22 because it will increase the viewership. It will  
23 allow more people to have access to it. I proudly  
24 vote aye. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Thank so much.

2 CLERK: By a vote of 4 in the  
3 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,  
4 the item has been adopted.

5 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay, we'll keep  
6 the roll open until-35 minutes. Thank you so much.  
7 [background comments, pause]

8 CLERK: Committee on Governmental  
9 Operations, continuation of roll call Proposed Intro  
10 14-A. Council Member Kallos.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Aye.

12 CLERK: Okay, the final vote 5 in the  
13 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions for  
14 approval.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I hereby adjourn  
16 this meeting of the Committee on Governmental  
17 Operations. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date June 16, 2018