

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

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November 27, 2018
Start: 12:24 p.m.
Recess: 12:34 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.
14th Fl.

B E F O R E: CARLOS MENCHACA
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Daniel Dromm
Mathieu Eugene
Mark Gjonaj
Robert F. Holden
I. Daneek Miller
Kalman Yeger

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

2 [sound check] [gavel]

3 CHAIRPERSON MENCHACA: Buenos Tardes. My
4 name is Carlos Menchaca, Chair of the New York City
5 Council's Committee on Immigration. Today, the
6 Committee will be voting on two resolutions related
7 to a proposed federal rule change concerning public
8 charge. The Trump Administration's newly proposed
9 rule would dramatically expand the standard of public
10 charge including a list of public benefits that the
11 federal government would treat as negative factors in
12 Visa and Green Card applications. Among the public
13 benefits included in the expanded rules are SNAP,
14 Housing Assistance, Medicaid and Medicare Part D. On
15 Thursday, November 15, 2018, the Committee on
16 Immigration was joined by the Speaker and the
17 Committees on Health and General Welfare to hear from
18 the Mayor Administration, the Mayor's Office of
19 Immigrant Affairs advocate and the community members
20 about the impact that this proposed change would have
21 not just on our city but on our country. As Council
22 Members of the city of New York, it is our
23 responsibility to protect the rights and welfare of
24 all our residents including the 3.1 million
25 immigrants who call this city home. Our immigrant

2 community is an essential part of the city's fabric,
3 of our history, and this—and New York City would not
4 be what it is today without its immigrant heritage.
5 At its core, this proposed rule is an assault on
6 immigrant communities including our city's own
7 immigrant very vibrant community, and part of the
8 federal government's patchwork of anti-immigrant
9 policies. So much of what we discussed at that
10 hearing really reminded me that this is an
11 opportunity for us as New Yorkers to rise up and
12 speak out. This patchwork of anti-immigrant policies
13 is not only draconian, but when we spoke to people
14 from our communities, we knew that this was also an
15 assault on the values of the city. It effectively
16 penalizes immigrants and immigrant families when they
17 are poor forcing immigrants to choose between their
18 wellbeing and being able to stay in this country
19 lawfully. The two resolutions that the committee will
20 be voting on today are Resolution 608 sponsored by
21 the Speaker, authorizing the Speaker to submit a
22 public comment on behalf of the Council to the
23 Federal Register concerning the proposed change to
24 public charge rule, and Resolution 609 sponsored by
25 the Speaker opposing the newly proposed Public Charge

2 rules, and urging the federal government not to move
3 forward with its adoption. By targeting benefits
4 that help families with food, housing and healthcare,
5 this proposed rule will deeply harm our communities.
6 According to the preliminary estimates by the Mayor's
7 Office of Immigrant Affairs, an estimated 475,000 New
8 Yorkers could be harmed by this public charge
9 proposals. This is not including the hundred
10 thousands more New Yorkers who may withdraw, and who
11 are already withdrawing or foregoing public benefits
12 due to fear and confusion—confusion surrounding the
13 proposal, and at the hearing that we had, we did see
14 and hear from members of our community who are
15 representing those members who have already withdrew—
16 withdrawn from public benefits, and are either afraid
17 to come out and connect to other benefits that they
18 are entitled to. However, this rule is not yet
19 final, and until it is, we will continue to fight it.
20 As part of the rule making process, members of the
21 public may submit comments to the federal government
22 about how this rule will impact them, their families
23 and the communities. Resolution 608 authorizes the
24 Speaker to submit a comment on behalf of the City
25 Council body. I will be submitting a comment myself.

2 I encourage the members of this committee to submit
3 their comments. My colleagues in the Council each of
4 you represent so many New Yorkers in your district
5 who are not only immigrants but are impacted directly
6 by this charge, but this public charge change. And
7 so make your voices heard and submit a comment in
8 opposition of this proposed rule. The comment period
9 ends on December 10th, and there are over 83,000
10 comments already that have been posted to the Federal
11 Registry. Let's get to 100,000 and let's ensure that
12 New York's voice is core to that 100,000 national cry
13 against this bill—against this proposal. Now, you
14 can submit a comment by going to ouramericanstory.us,
15 ouramericanstory.us where you can submit your comment
16 against this proposed change. I want to thank the
17 whole committee staff who helped prepare this vote,
18 my Counsel Arbania Hausa (sp?), Policy Analyst
19 Elizabeth Cronk; Finance Analyst Jim Lee and as well
20 as my staff Senior Advisory Cesar Vargas; Chief of
21 Staff Socheatta Meng and Communications Director
22 Anthony Chiarito, and with that, I want to open up
23 the vote for both of these resolutions.

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1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

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2 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk,
3 roll call vote Committee on Immigration, Resolutions
4 608 and 609, Chair Menchaca.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENCHACA: I vote aye.

6 CLERK: Eugene.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE? I vote aye

8 CLERK: Miller.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Aye.

10 CLERK: Holden.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: Aye.

12 CLERK: Yeger.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Aye.

14 CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the affirmative,
15 0 in the negative, and no abstentions, both items
16 have been adopted by the committee.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENCHACA: I want to thank
18 everyone, and we're going to leave the door—the door,
19 the vote open—well the door, too. Leave that door
20 open as well, and I want to thank all the members of
21 committee for being here. Any other final comments
22 before we go or before you all leave?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman
24 for your leader on this.

25

2 CHAIRPERSON MENCHACA: Okay, thank you
3 for your time. [background comment] Thank you.
4 [pause]

5 CLERK: We're going to open up the vote
6 for our final task, and we can do a committee roll
7 call.

8 CLERK: Continuation roll call, Committee
9 on Immigration, Council Member Gjonaj

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I vote aye on
11 all.

12 CLERK: The vote now currently--

13 CHAIRPERSON MENCHACA: [interposing]
14 Thank you.

15 CLERK: --stands at 6 in the affirmative,
16 0 in the negative and no abstention.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENCHACA: Thank you so much
18 and we're going to--we're going to close, but before I
19 close, I just want to say thank you to all the
20 members of this committee and the work that we do
21 together. These two resolutions will give the
22 opportunity for us to speak out as one voice and body
23 representing every New Yorker, and as we look upon
24 what's happening right now on the border, let's keep
25 those--not just the caravan and other immigrant

2 communities who are being assaulted right now with
3 tear gas by our American troops, but all the folks
4 that are going out there right now to support them as
5 well, and I want to make sure that we keep them in
6 our hearts and prayers. There's a New York sanctuary
7 caravan that's going down there right now with the
8 mission to be observant, to observe to see what's
9 happening and ensure that our-our laws are-are
10 followed. Thank you so much, and now call this
11 hearing adjourned. [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 December 17, 2018