

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEES ON VETERAN AFFAIRS & SMALL BUSINESS

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May 10, 2011
Start: 1:20 pm
Recess: 4:17 pm

HELD AT: Committee Room - 14th Floor
250 Broadway

B E F O R E:
MATHIEU EUGENE
DIANA REYNA
Co-Chairpersons

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Fernando Cabrera
Margaret Chin
Daniel Dromm
Lewis A. Fidler
David G. Greenfield
Letitia James
Peter Koo

A P P E A R A N C E S

Terrance C. Holliday
Commissioner
Mayor's Office of Veteran's Affairs

Joey Kara Koch
Special Counsel to the Mayor
Office of the Mayor

Philip Weinberg
Executive Director
New York City Workforce Investment Board

Teresa Coaxum
Region II Advocate
Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy

Alex Saavedra
Vice President for Direct Service Programs
Seedco - Workforce One

Lionelle Hamanaka
Representative
Military Families Speak Out

Dan Rossi
Representative
Disabled Veterans

Armando Crescenzi
Representative
Veterans First

Bernard Maurice Wright, Jr.
Representative
Urban Justice

Glendon Witt
Representative
Veterans Across America

A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Barbara Morris
Widow of deceased disabled veteran
John Morris

Chris Mustello
Representative
Committee for Disabled Veteran Vendors

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Good afternoon and welcome to this joint meeting of the Committee on Veteran Affairs and the Committee on Small Businesses, my name is Mathieu Eugene and I chair the Committee on Veteran Affairs. We will be introducing our colleagues very soon, but let me say that the Committee on Veteran Affairs is here today to conduct an oversight hearing on the integration of veterans into the workforce in the small businesses community. Over 225,000 veterans live in New York City, and this figure is expected to rise as thousands return from the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. This population of veterans experiences several problems with finding and retaining jobs. On April 20th, '11, the nationwide unemployment rate stood at 9%. However, for veterans serving in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the 2010 unemployment rate was 11.5% overall, 13.1% for those 25 to 34 years old, and 20.9% for those 18 to 24 years old. [inaudible] and small business are attracting many veterans. The Federal Small Business Administration estimates that one in several veterans is self-employed or own a small business. There are a number of

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2 Federal and state programs that assist veterans to
3 set up and maintain small businesses. This
4 program provides loans for a variety of purposes,
5 from obtaining working capital to purchasing
6 machinery. There are also public-private
7 partnerships that provide training and mentoring
8 programs. Today we will hear testimony about
9 these programs and what opportunities are
10 available to veterans, entrepreneurs and those
11 seeking employment. At this hearing, the
12 Committee on Veterans will also vote on Resolution
13 422, which calls on the U.S. Veterans
14 Administration to renovate the existing St. Albans
15 facility to include a full-service facility, a
16 women's extended-care facility, and a treatment
17 facility and domiciliary for the homeless. Before
18 I turn things over, let me call on my colleague,
19 Diana Reyna. Before I turn to my colleague, Diana
20 Reyna, who is the Chairman on the Committee on
21 Small Businesses, I want to take a moment to thank
22 all of the veterans with us at the hearing today.
23 I thank you for your service to our country, for
24 the sacrifices you have made to defend our freedom
25 and way of life. You deserve the greatest level

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2 of praise and admiration and respect, and as the
3 Chair of the Veterans Committee, I will continue
4 to work together with my colleagues to insure
5 veterans receive the most support we can provide
6 them. Now let me call Council Member Diana Reyna.
7 But before, I don't know, Council Member, you are
8 co-Chair, can we go to the vote first, or do you
9 want to ... thank you. So we're going to try to
10 vote on the Resolution 427, and after that we will
11 continue with the hearing.

12 MR. MARTIN: Lee Martin, Committee
13 Clerk, roll call.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Now let me
15 call on Council Member Diana, if you please?

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: We usually make
17 sure that we leave our colleagues to the end, but
18 just in case they have to go and proceed with
19 other matters during their day, I want to just
20 recognize we've been joined our colleagues,
21 Council Member Cabrera, Council Member Koo,
22 Council Member Fidler, Council Member Dromm,
23 Council Member Chin. And I want to take this
24 opportunity to thank our co-Chair of this joint
25 hearing, Council Member Mathieu Eugene, who has

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2 been a fabulous advocate and staunch advocate on
3 the issues and matters that pertain to veterans
4 throughout the City of New York, his great staff
5 on the Committee, Brian and Barbara, who are
6 joining my Committee staff, Matt and Faith. We
7 have had this great venture to be able to
8 highlight some of the obstacles, challenges and
9 some of the solutions that we know we can work
10 together to provide alleviation and reintegration
11 into society, welcoming our troops home. My name
12 is Diana Reyna, and I am the Council Member
13 representing the 34th district in Williamsburg,
14 Bushwick and Brooklyn, and Ridgewood Queens, as
15 well as serving on this great Committee as Chair
16 of the Small Business Committee. It oversees and
17 advocates for 220,000 small businesses throughout
18 the five boroughs. I'd like to thank our Speaker,
19 joined with Council Member Mathieu Eugene, who
20 were in cooperation this morning, joined by
21 Council Member Albert Vann in a press conference
22 announcing what is a new program that was launched
23 in February called VETERANS, Veterans Employment
24 Transition, Education, Reintegration and Network
25 Services. It is a mouthful, but it stands for our

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2 greatest effort, veterans. I want to thank all of
3 the veterans who are ... have joined us, both for
4 the actual press conference this morning, as well
5 as this particular hearing. Veterans are
6 outstanding entrepreneurs, and expanding
7 employment opportunities for some of our nation's
8 most highly-trained and motivated men and women
9 who have served our country is an honor. We have
10 launched this new program connecting veterans to
11 the job market, preparing them for the job search,
12 and helping place them into the workforce, with
13 the great collaboration of the Department of Small
14 Business Services, as well as Seedco, the
15 organization that has spearheaded the actual
16 effort in serving veteran populations. New York
17 City's five boroughs are home to over 225,000
18 veterans. In the greater metropolitan area, there
19 are well over one million veteran residents.
20 Veterans represent a disproportionate share of
21 America's jobless and after protecting our
22 freedoms abroad and domestic, we must encourage
23 their professional growth at home. For example,
24 while the overall unemployment rate is currently
25 9%, the unemployment rate among young male

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2 veterans is more than double rate, at
3 approximately 20%. While the number of veterans
4 living in New York City is significant and
5 growing, unfortunately many veterans experience
6 difficulty finding adequate economic opportunity
7 and employment upon their return home. My
8 colleagues and I are committed to setting goals
9 for New York City to award contracting
10 opportunities to veteran-owned small businesses
11 across our five boroughs and starting to encourage
12 start-ups amongst veterans, as far as small
13 businesses are concerned. We are focused on
14 knocking down barriers in the path of men and
15 women hoping to take a chance to follow a dream
16 and start a business. I'd like to thank everyone
17 for joining us here this afternoon, God bless our
18 country, and the brave men and women who served to
19 protect us. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very
21 much, Council Member Reyna. Can we please call
22 the speakers for the first panel? Commissioner
23 Terrance Holliday, would you please? And Joey
24 Koch.

25 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I'd like to

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2 call up Phil Weinberg from the Department of Small
3 Business Services to join this panel as well,
4 thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Are we
6 good? Good afternoon, Chair Reyna, Chair Eugene,
7 and members of the Small Business and Veterans
8 Committees. My name is Terrance Holliday, and I
9 am the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of
10 Veteran's Affairs, MOVA. I'm here today to
11 testify on the reintegration of veterans into the
12 workforce and small business community in New York
13 City. I'm today joined by Phil Weinberg from the
14 Department of Small Business Services, and Ms.
15 Joey Koch, Special Counsel to the Mayor. The
16 Mayor's Office of Veteran's Affairs, MOVA, was
17 established by Local Law 53 in 1987, and advises
18 the Mayor on issues and initiatives impacting the
19 veteran and military community. MOVA works
20 closely with the U.S. Department of Veteran's
21 Affairs, the New York State Division of Veteran's
22 Affairs, city agencies, veterans organizations,
23 area military commanders and other stakeholders,
24 to assist active, guard and reserve service
25 members, veterans, their dependents and survivors.

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2 To insure coordination among city services for the
3 veterans community, on January 17th, 2008, Mayor
4 Bloomberg signed Executive Order 110, requiring
5 each city agency to assist veterans, active duty
6 and reservists, to access city programs, as well
7 as work with MOVA to enhance services for the
8 veteran constituency that they serve. Since my
9 appointment as Commissioner of MOVA in January,
10 MOVA has been creative in using all forms of
11 communication to promote the agency. I've
12 strengthened our relationship with previous MOVA
13 partners, such as America Works, the Dole Fund,
14 the Jericho Project and other city agencies.
15 Additionally, I fostered new relationships with
16 organizations such as Veterans on Wall Street,
17 Veterans Court, the New York Mets, Service for the
18 Underserved, and the Robin Hood Foundation. The
19 Dole Fund's Veterans Program is becoming a
20 national model for provision of comprehensive
21 community-based services for homeless veterans.
22 Each day it serves 138 former servicemen at its
23 immaculately-maintained facility in East
24 Williamsburg, New York, tailoring a comprehensive
25 array of programs to maximize each man's ability

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2 to live with independence and dignity. Since its
3 opening in April of 2009, in cooperation with the
4 U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs and the New
5 York City Department of Homeless Services, this
6 program has serviced 508 men, placing 133 in jobs
7 and 225 in housing. A staff of experienced social
8 service and workforce development professionals
9 comprised of veterans and non-veterans, many of
10 whom have experienced homelessness and
11 incarceration, guide them men through program,
12 providing case management, training, career
13 development and graduate resources, as well as
14 serving as advocates for these men. Approximately
15 half of the veterans enroll in Ready, Willing And
16 Able, which through meaningful paid transitional
17 work opportunities, training and social services,
18 empowers the men to become employed and productive
19 members of mainstream society. It is a holistic
20 combination of paid on-the-job training, work
21 experience and classroom instruction, teaches hard
22 skills and prepares the veterans for
23 certifications in sectors including the culinary
24 arts, integrated pest management, energy-efficient
25 building maintenance, security, commercial driving

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2 and office services. MOVA regularly attends
3 meetings and events, responds and assists many of
4 our constituents via correspondence from the
5 newyorkcity.gov website, 311, mail, direct calls
6 and staff emails. In March, 2011, MOVA
7 implemented a new constituent-tracking database
8 which has improved our ability to track and follow
9 up on constituent issues. It also enhances our
10 ability to provide more detailed reporting and
11 analysis. As of this date, MOVA's website has
12 over 35,000 visitors, and traffic to our site
13 continues to increase monthly. MOVA has joined
14 the social media revolution with an exciting and
15 informative Facebook page, on which jobs are
16 posted. We have announced employment fairs and
17 other pertinent events on that website. One of
18 MOVA's priorities is to help veterans re-enter the
19 workforce. In support of this mission, on March
20 of 2008, MOVA partnered with America Works to
21 assist veterans with job placement. Through this
22 partnership, roughly 559 veterans have been
23 employed at fulltime positions. America Works is
24 a paid-for-performance company, receiving
25 compensation only when the client remains employed

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2 at intervals of 30, 90 and 180 days. America
3 Works tracks the progress of their clients and
4 provides follow-up counseling when required.

5 While our partnership with America Works has been
6 successful, it is apparent that employment
7 opportunity alone will not address veterans'
8 specific needs. It is with this thought that on
9 April 21st, MOVA collaborated with the Human
10 Resources Administration, America Works, Jericho
11 Project, Services for the Underserved and CUNY to
12 host a successful employment and housing
13 opportunity at Veterans Memorial Hall. During
14 this even, 32 veterans were assessed for
15 employment, housing and food stamps. Within a
16 week of the event, two of the veterans had been
17 employed, and the rest are receiving counseling,
18 to improve resumes, interviewing skills and
19 appearance. MOVA staff has been following up with
20 these veterans and will have contacted all of the
21 participating veterans within 30 days of this
22 event, to insure the success and quality of
23 engagement for service recipients. On June 9th,
24 2011, MOVA will host the next event in this series
25 on employment and social services. The focus will

1
2 be expanded, based upon lessons learned from April
3 21st. the participating service providers that
4 have been provided are, America Works, Services
5 for the Underserved, Standard Parking, Workforce
6 One - which, by the way, has acknowledged that
7 they are going to participate, they told me that
8 today - HRA Foodstamps, CUNY, Department of Small
9 Business Services, Department of Veteran's
10 Affairs, Center for Economic Opportunity, and the
11 Social Security Administration. America Works has
12 agreed to participate, and will also seek
13 employers for on-the-site hiring. On June the 23rd
14 of 2011, one of MOVA's partners, Veterans on Wall
15 Street, or VOWS, will be hosting a full-day
16 employment fair at the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space
17 Museum to raise the profile of veterans' civilian
18 employment transitioning issues. This even is
19 being organized by members of the New York City
20 financial community, including Citicorp, Deutsche
21 Bank and Goldman Sachs. MOVA will support this
22 worthwhile venture by reaching out to both the
23 military and veteran communities as planners seek
24 to service 2,500 to 3,000 veteran applicants.
25 Additionally, the New York City Department of

1
2 Small Business Services offers specialized job
3 training and placement programs for all of New
4 Yorkers through their Workforce One career centers
5 located throughout the five boroughs, I believe
6 there are nine of them. In 2010, Workforce One
7 career centers served approximately 4,000 veterans
8 and successfully matched 800 with employment.

9 This program provides for any veteran and their
10 spouse to have priority service at any of the
11 Workforce One career centers, and again I said
12 nine, I believe that's the correct number, and the
13 two sector career centers, health care and
14 transportation. These veterans and their spouses
15 will be fast-tracked for appointments and
16 assessments for both training and job placement.

17 The New York State Department of Labor administers
18 Federal employment programs, including overseeing
19 a local veterans' employment representative to
20 serve veterans at most Workforce One career
21 centers. As a result of the 2009-2010 Federal
22 stimulus funds, SBS has contracted with Goodwill
23 for a veterans' employment program that has placed
24 115 veterans in jobs. MOVA also works with the
25 Manhattan Educational Opportunities Center, MEOC,

1 at the borough of Manhattan Community College.
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3 These organizations recently received a \$3 million
4 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to prepare
5 all unemployed and under-employed New Yorkers for
6 employment in four high-growth health care jobs,
7 certified nursing assistant, medical assistant
8 specialist, electronic health records specialist,
9 and health information technology. These jobs are
10 projected to experience the greatest growth
11 through 2016, according to the New York State
12 Department of Labor. This program also provides
13 for priority referrals of veterans and their
14 spouses. As a result of this grant, it is
15 projected that 650 veterans and their spouses will
16 be placed in these high-demand jobs. MOVA also
17 makes referrals to MEOC on a regular basis. In
18 addition to these programs that I just noted, MOVA
19 regularly refers clients to other Federal, State
20 and city agencies that provide employment
21 assistance to all New Yorkers, regardless of the
22 veteran's discharge status. Reintegration for the
23 veteran family must begin long before a service
24 member bids his or her family farewell on the
25 tarmac or on the dock. It should start during the

1 pre-deployment phase, and coupled with the
2 established Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program,
3 this program is designed to provide deploying
4 service members and families with a robust support
5 network of information and services available from
6 counties, state, Federal and private outreach
7 organizations upon their return home. The family
8 support centers of the various military
9 organizations sponsor the Yellow Ribbon programs.
10 Employment and workplace return are significant
11 issues addressed at these events. The Yellow
12 Ribbon events are held at 30 and 60 day intervals
13 subsequent to a unit's return to home station.
14 Members are required to attend, and are encouraged
15 to bring their families. These events are held at
16 non-military family-friendly venues, generally a
17 hotel. In support of this program, I will
18 represent MOVA at the New York National Guard 60-
19 day Yellow Ribbon event in Tarrytown on May 12th,
20 2011, for the 442 Military Police Company,
21 headquartered at the Jamaica Armory.
22 Approximately 100 New York City residents and
23 their families will attend. Additional Yellow
24 Ribbon events have been scheduled in this area as
25

1 follows: Saturday, June the 11th, U.S. Naval
2 Reserve in Amityville, New York, we expect to
3 capture 100 New York City residents; Saturday,
4 June the 11th at the U.S. Naval Operations Center
5 at SUNY Maritime, we expect to capture 400 New
6 York City residents, these are all service members
7 getting ready to deploy overseas at a location
8 that they know about and I can't tell you. Okay,
9 additionally, additionally, this past Saturday, I
10 met with 250 reservists at the U.S. Naval
11 Operations Support Center located at SUNY Maritime
12 College to discuss MOVA and the New York City
13 benefits available to New York City service
14 members. My meeting with the commander, Captain
15 Samuel Tate and his staff, and his senior non-
16 commissioned officers was outstanding. Not only
17 was I able to share information regarding housing
18 and jobs, I urged these leaders to reach out to
19 their lower-ranking enlisted members with
20 dependents. These military members may be
21 entitled to USDA food stamps and other benefits.
22 MOVA can work with the U.S. Navy Operations
23 Support Center New York City leadership to
24 expedite benefit applications. It's important to
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1
2 note that addressing the issues associated with
3 reintegration, such as potential unemployment,
4 should begin when a member receives a deployment
5 notification. The earlier the member begins to
6 think about deployment and re-deployment, the
7 smoother the transition from military to civilian
8 life will be for that individual, the family and
9 the society to which he or she returns. With the
10 approval of the local command authority, updates
11 of available benefits can be provided as part of
12 the ancillary training or non-combat training that
13 they get, okay, received and coordinated by the
14 unit. Captain Tate, Colonel Michael Gould of Ft.
15 Hamilton garrison and I will be meeting
16 periodically to discuss these issues. We agreed,
17 colonel to colonel to captain, a cup of coffee and
18 that's what we're talking about. And in closing,
19 while I serve as MOVA's Commissioner, I'm a
20 retired colonel, I've left home, I've returned
21 homes in times of uncertainty a few times in my 38
22 years of service in the United States Air Force
23 Reserve. While experiences differ, I do
24 understand many of the difficulties and anxieties
25 experienced by many returning service members and

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2 their families today. I'm very confident that New
3 York City is committed to facilitating the
4 smoothest return to civilian life for the veterans
5 and their families. I thank you again for the
6 opportunity to testify, and I'm very happy to take
7 your questions.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Could we go to
9 the next speaker before we start asking questions?

10 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Certainly.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: But let me
12 acknowledge that we have been joined by Council
13 Member Letitia James, and also Council Member Koo.
14 You have a question? Okay, can we go to the next
15 one?

16 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Can we get
17 to the questions then, sir?

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Excuse me?

19 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: We're all
20 here for the questions, I don't think he had a
21 presentation.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Oh, all right.
23 Okay.

24 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: All right,
25 I'm sorry.

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CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Very good.
I'm sorry about that. Commissioner, let me first
and foremost thank you for your testimony, and
also I had the opportunity to meet with you
several times, and I saw that you have the
dedication to do everything possible to serve our
veterans. And I saw you at many meetings and many
events, and I commend you for that.

COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Thank you,
sir.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And I think
that this is a good opportunity for me to work
together with you and to provide our veterans with
the best that they deserve, because they put their
lives in danger for us, they defend our liberty
and our way of life, we all know that. No matter
what we are doing, we won't be doing enough to pay
them back for their service.

COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Thank you,
sir.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: But let me ask
you one question. I know that you mentioned many
services, and many things that you have been doing
to try to help the veterans get jobs and also to

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2 provide services to them. But this morning, we
3 were there together at the press conference, one
4 of the young veterans, he said that when he got
5 back, he didn't know about the services available,
6 if my memory is correct. But most of the time we
7 have services in the city and the state and the
8 Federal, but the people they don't know where the
9 services are. They don't know how to get access
10 to those services. What do you have in plan and
11 place to work together with the City of New York,
12 the New York City Council and also with the non-
13 profit organizations and the Small Business
14 Department Services, to insure that the veterans
15 get access to jobs, they get the proper training,
16 you know, so they get back on their feet?

17 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Sir, a lot
18 of that, I think you chalk some of that up to
19 youth with our people in the service. When you
20 first get in there as a basic trainee and you're
21 there in your 20's, you don't think about
22 retirement, you don't think about leaving. You
23 always think that you can get a job. So a lot of
24 it is communication. We have a very active
25 website, and we're getting better and better, our

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2 Facebook site, please stop by, mova.gov,
3 newyorkcity.gov, Mayor's Office of Veteran's
4 Affairs, look for us. We are advertising a lot of
5 things. What we are ... it has been my experience
6 that when you're reaching out to these younger
7 troops, you've got to tell them, you've got to
8 tell them the things that they need to know. What
9 I want to do is to reach out to these units,
10 particularly the ones in our area, to reach out to
11 these units, to make certain that once or twice a
12 year that MOVA has a place on the commander's
13 calendar as he presents these things that they
14 need to know about. And some of them are those
15 benefits, the benefits in terms of them coming
16 back. Now, one of the things that I've actually
17 reached out to the garrison at Ft. Hamilton, and
18 the Navy command, they've got a thousand people, a
19 thousand reservists, and figure, let's say, 700 or
20 800 of them are probably New York City residents.
21 I asked them, let's find out, let's find out how
22 many of their personnel would qualify for food
23 stamps, and how many have actually applied, all
24 right? And they're doing that as we speak, all
25 right. And I need for them to get back to us, and

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2 what probably happens is that you have people,
3 they're sort of proud, they don't want to say that
4 they're getting food stamps. Okay, I had a young
5 man run up to me in the hallway at SUNY Maritime
6 to tell me he had recently redeployed, and he's
7 unemployed. But I don't think his co-workers knew
8 about that, because again, this is a reserve
9 thing, you know, they're transit workers, they're
10 policemen, they work, you know, in local stores.
11 They come back, they don't have those jobs, and
12 everybody thinks that their life continues,
13 because they only meet two days out of the month,
14 but they've still just come back from Afghanistan,
15 or they've done whatever. So we want to get the
16 word out to them, okay, that the VA is there.
17 There are only 20% of all veterans are connected
18 to the VA, all right, so we need to get them
19 connected to the VA, we need to get them aware of
20 all of these programs that are out there. But one
21 of the things that I wanted to do was to find out
22 if it would be advantageous to connect a
23 particular unit that is redeploying with Workforce
24 One or America Works. Perhaps we could send them
25 out to the base to meet these people. And again,

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2 my charter is for New York City residents, or
3 people coming back to reside in New York City. So
4 I think we have to try a number of combinations to
5 see where we are. I can remember that when I was
6 20 years old, I didn't think I'd be like an old
7 guy up here talking about veterans right now.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Just one more
9 question. We know that veterans, you know, that
10 they are brothers.

11 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: That went
13 through the same challenges and know the
14 experience of veterans. And we believe that they
15 may be, or they should be, in the better position
16 to help each other. Do you have any plan to work
17 also with the different veteran's organizations
18 and associations? Because I met with many of
19 them, they are very dedicated to help themselves.
20 Do you have any plan to work with them, or if you
21 have been working with any group yet, yes?
22 Especially, you know, in terms of helping the
23 veterans get jobs.

24 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: So we're
25 starting to think outside the box with a lot of

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2 these things, all right? Every time I go out and
3 I meet with veteran's groups and since I've been
4 here in January, I've met with a lot of vets, one
5 of the things that I continue to talk about is
6 mentoring. We have to have vets mentoring each
7 other. And they've been very helpful with that.
8 And I'm going to continue to reach out, I've
9 particularly been directing folks to the veteran's
10 courts in Kings and Kings County, and in Queens
11 County there was a concept that I experienced that
12 came out of City Hall, the Mentoring Forward
13 program, where we got some rather successful
14 veterans or people that could talk. They weren't
15 veterans, but they were like people who succeeded
16 in life, and they were out there, and we were
17 talking to kids on their way, young men and women
18 on their way to college, we want to do the same
19 thing with vets, where we want to find, reach out
20 and grab some senior people, some senior people in
21 the military to talk to our folks in the military,
22 some other folks to talk to vets, not necessarily,
23 in my opinion, not necessarily to sort of
24 encourage them to go and do higher, but to explain
25 to them how I got into medical school, how I got

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2 to run my own business, you know, how do you dress
3 for success. And the Mentoring Forward program is
4 sort of like, it's like about a fifteen minute,
5 ten to fifteen minutes and you meet different
6 people, you walk out with other ideas. So it's
7 little things like that, so a combination of the
8 mentoring thing, where you'll have someone there
9 that you can pick up and call at all hours, and
10 then something of a special nature of this thing.
11 We're just ... we're starting to talk about a lot of
12 these things, which you yourself saw at the
13 veteran summit, you know, we're just exchanging
14 ideas and stuff like that.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you,
16 Commissioner. Let me call on co-Chair Reyna.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you so
18 much, co-Chair, I just wanted to thank
19 Commissioner Colonel Holliday for your testimony.

20 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: It's a pleasure
22 to have you before us, at least my very first
23 time. I wanted to just take an opportunity to
24 just understand, I'm very familiar with the Dole
25 Fund, the site that you had referenced in your

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2 testimony was a contentious homeless shelter that
3 was placed in my district eons ago, nine years ago
4 to be exact. And we were not happy in our
5 community. And since then we've tried to work
6 with the Dole Fund in understanding, because, you
7 know, this is probably one of a dozen sites that
8 we have, as far as homeless shelters, in one
9 community board. And trying to make sure that
10 we're providing permanent jobs in the industrial
11 park, because this is in the middle of an
12 industrial park. And I don't know if whether or
13 not the Dole Fund in their efforts in providing
14 services to the homeless identified homeless
15 veterans, or was it the reverse, veterans being
16 referred to as veterans to their agency, and
17 through their services were able to receive
18 specialized services?

19 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: It's my
20 understanding that the program at Porter Avenue
21 was created for veterans. They have a resident
22 program for veterans, and I refer to them as men-
23 only, because they only have men there. They also
24 have another program for female vets, but it's not
25 a resident program. So the program itself was

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2 something that they created. I can get more
3 information for you on that. Since the first time
4 that I testified, that I testified, we had some
5 questions about the Dole Fund, I found out a lot
6 more about them, and in fact I attended their
7 graduation, which was, quite frankly, very
8 inspirational. It was about sometime around the
9 end of March or early April or something. It was
10 fantastic. They brought back a number of
11 graduates from their first program, and I think
12 that was 25 years ago, and they're doing quite
13 well. And it was good to see ... these are the guys
14 walking around in the blue suits.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Yes, I'm very
16 familiar with them.

17 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Yeah.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: They walk our
19 streets of our business improvement districts.

20 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Yeah. And
21 I was very impressed with what I saw, I was very
22 impressed with the program, I was very impressed
23 with the dedication. If there's an issue that's
24 out there, you know, I can speak to- -

25 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing]

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2 No, I'm trying to understand, as far as the 200-
3 bed facility at Porter Avenue.

4 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Right.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Was not
6 intended to serve veterans, it was a homeless
7 shelter for 200 beds.

8 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Right.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Male-only
10 facility.

11 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Right.

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Residential.
13 And so, you know, hearing that this is serving
14 veterans and a proportionate amount of what you
15 referred to as 133 in jobs- -

16 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY:

17 [Interposing] Uh huh.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: 138 former
19 servicemen.

20 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Right.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And so I just
22 wanted to understand the procedure as far as
23 veterans being captured in service at the Porter
24 Avenue facility, you know, is it because they're
25 veterans or is it because they're homeless?

1
2 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: No, they're
3 veterans, and I'll have to get more information
4 for you, but they have to be interviewed to be
5 brought into the program. They've had people who
6 have gotten into the program, they don't realize
7 how good the program is, they drop out, they try
8 to get back in and they can't. So it's not that
9 they're being selective, but there are rules that
10 they have, there are things that they have to do
11 with those folks, and if ... apparently if the
12 individual does not show signs of wanting to
13 succeed, I don't think that they even get into the
14 program. But it is a veterans program. I'll get
15 more for you and get back to you.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I appreciate
17 the clarification. You know, it was never
18 intended to be a veterans-only.

19 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And it's news
21 to me that it's serving primarily veterans, which
22 is wonderful, but important to know.

23 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Okay.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And I as the
25 representative of that area should know.

1
2 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Right.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I also just
4 wanted to understand, we were trying to get some
5 clarity on the number of unemployed veterans in
6 the City of New York, not just by borough, but by
7 zip code. Do you have that information?

8 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: No, I ... to
9 be honest with you, I don't think I do. But
10 perhaps we can find out, and I can get back to you
11 on that. I know we can ... we sort of get some
12 numbers, I do have some numbers out there by
13 borough, but I wouldn't know by zip.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And I don't
15 know if, Phil, I know that ... Mr. Weinberg, sorry.
16 I know that you've joined us as far as the
17 Department of Small Business Services is
18 concerned, and I wanted to understand, what is the
19 role that Small Business Services plays in the
20 life of a veteran coming home, after they have
21 been deployed, or prior to being deployed, as the
22 Commissioner has duly noted, you know, the re-
23 integration into society back doesn't begin when
24 they return, but rather the line of communication
25 when they're being deployed. And so I want to

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2 understand, as far as the role of the Department
3 of Small Business Services, getting that
4 information to the right hands at the right time.

5 MR. WEINBERG: Well, thank you for
6 the question, and thank you for the opportunity to
7 join you, and thank you for shining a light on a
8 topic that's very important to us at the Workforce
9 Investment Board and the Department of Small
10 Business Services. The notion of creating
11 opportunities and prioritizing services for our
12 veterans is something that our Workforce One
13 Career Center System and our Workforce Board takes
14 so seriously that in fact as the Commissioner
15 alluded, we have a policy in place that creates a
16 priority of service for veterans that come in. so
17 the role that SBS plays, our network of nine
18 Workforce One Career Centers across the city
19 served over 4,000 veterans in 2010, and of those
20 placed nearly 800 into employment in 2010.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And Mr.
22 Weinberg, could you just remain there and focus on
23 how do you prioritize? Is the online service or
24 an application at the Workforce One centers,
25 regardless where they're going into, whatever

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2 borough, identifying them as a veteran because
3 there's a check-off box?

4 MR. WEINBERG: So there's a couple
5 of opportunities for us. One is, during the
6 intake process we do identify veterans and spouses
7 of veterans through a check-off. And when in fact
8 we do identify a veteran or a spouse of a veteran,
9 we make sure that we are prioritizing the
10 investments that we have available. So, for
11 example, the training vouchers available for the
12 Workforce Investment Act, we trained nearly 200
13 veterans at a higher proportion than we trained
14 our general population. we also work very closely
15 with our community-based organizations and I think
16 that Chairman Eugene's question about how are we
17 getting the word out, as the Committee may know,
18 we, through our Workforce One Career Centers
19 placed over 31,000 New Yorkers into jobs last
20 year, over 5,000 of them were through our
21 community partners, non-profit organizations,
22 public libraries, community college systems
23 throughout the city. And so we're very fortunate
24 to have a number of partners who work very closely
25 with the veterans community. Well, I think the

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2 Committee will hear later from Seedco, who is a
3 strong partner in the initiative that was
4 announced earlier today. When we had additional
5 funds available through the stimulus, the American
6 Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we worked with
7 Goodwill Industries to put 115 New Yorkers to
8 work, veteran New Yorkers to work in the health
9 care fields. So we are working very closely with
10 those that come into our system, and with our
11 community-based organizations to get the word out,
12 and make sure that veterans are aware of the
13 resources that we have available. If this
14 Committee and our partners at MOVA, if there are
15 other organizations that we ought to be reaching
16 out to, to make sure we get the word out to more
17 veterans of the resources we have available, we'd
18 be very eager to do that.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I don't want
20 you thinking I wasn't listening, I just have a
21 point of clarification. You mentioned that the
22 ARRA money has helped to fund the veterans
23 program, the program that was announced earlier
24 this morning.

25 MR. WEINBERG: No- -

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CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing]
I'm sorry, I apologize, I was trying to get
clarity behind me.

MR. WEINBERG: If I could clarify.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Yes.

MR. WEINBERG: With our stimulus
funds, we funded a program that's now ended, in
partnership with Goodwill Industries, to target
veterans. And through the course of that
initiative, put 115 veterans to work in the health
care industry. The partnership announced this
morning, of course, is a terrific partnership with
Seedco, the Workforce One system, City Council,
and those are funded through the Workforce
Investment Act, and not through stimulus funds.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And what is the
work retention, as far as the 115 placements by
Goodwill from the ARRA funding?

MR. WEINBERG: I don't have those
figures available. I'd be happy to follow back up
with- -

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing]
And when you follow up, if you can just give us
six months, one year?

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2 MR. WEINBERG: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And two year
4 retention, if at all applicable, and if it's not,
5 just indicate "not applicable". Just so that we
6 can understand, you know, of the 115, who are
7 continuing employment in the health care field.
8 And I just wanted to understand, with the same
9 priority check-off box, do you do the same for
10 veterans being prioritized as far as the services
11 offered by the Department of Small Business
12 Services through your Business Solutions Center,
13 as well as your Business Express?

14 MR. WEINBERG: I'm not aware of a
15 prioritization that happens through the Business
16 Solutions Centers, so I'd have to follow back up
17 with you on that. I will say that partners like
18 Seedco who operate our Workforce One Centers,
19 career centers, also are heavily involved in our
20 Business Solutions Centers, so we work hard to
21 make sure we're transferring that commitment and
22 that expertise, whether we're serving a job seeker
23 walking in the door, or whether we're serving a
24 small business that's looking for help in either
25 start-up or expanding their operations. But I

1
2 will have to follow back up with you on that.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And when you
4 mentioned Seedco as far as Workforce One Center,
5 it's not just exclusively Seedco managing the
6 Workforce Center that they operate as a vendor,
7 but you also expect the same of the other
8 Workforce vendors, correct?

9 MR. WEINBERG: Correct. So our
10 priority of service, our service to veterans,
11 extends across our nine career centers across the
12 five boroughs. We're very pleased to be part of
13 the announcement this morning that announced a new
14 special initiative, and we look forward to taking
15 the learnings from that initiative, which will
16 start at our upper Manhattan and Bronx Workforce
17 One center, and see how those lessons can be
18 applied across the board.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And so clearly,
20 as Chair of the Small Business Committee, I want
21 to be able to give an opportunity of prioritizing
22 our veterans amongst the Business Solutions and
23 Business Express models, to start up and expand
24 businesses, if they currently operate with their
25 own business, the ... you know, do you have the

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2 statistics on MWBE-registered veterans, or
3 veterans that are MWBE's, and what efforts you're
4 doing as far as veterans in the MWBE category?

5 MR. WEINBERG: We ... I'll have to
6 follow back up with you on the MWBE. As President
7 of the Workforce Investment Board, I was really
8 mostly here to help support the testimony and try
9 to articulate the services that we're providing to
10 those veterans who come back and are looking for
11 work. But certainly working closely with
12 Commissioner Walsh, we will get to the bottom of
13 those answers.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I appreciate
15 it. I want to just clearly state that it's not
16 just about employment opportunities, but also
17 encouraging the opportunities to start up their
18 own businesses. And there's no greater value than
19 being able to have all types of the variety of
20 opportunities in the City of New York that
21 veterans should have access to in the City of New
22 York. I'd like to call upon my colleague, Council
23 Member Chin.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you,
25 co-Chairs. Thank you, Commissioner Holliday.

1
2 It's absolutely great to meet you for the first
3 time. I'm on the Small Business Committee, so
4 I've never really had the pleasure to talk with
5 you yet. I wanted to ask you about the services
6 the Mayor's Office of Veteran's Affairs, do you
7 have any specific programs that target, that help
8 women veterans?

9 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Everything
10 that we're looking ... everything that we're looking
11 at right now, we're targeting veterans, all
12 veterans. We're taking a hard look at the
13 military sexual trauma, again, this is like an
14 evolution from January, we're taking a look at the
15 topics that our folks are going to be needing.
16 And when everybody comes back, as these servicemen
17 are redeploying, service men and women are
18 redeploying, traumatic brain injury, post-
19 traumatic stress disorder or trauma, and military
20 sexual trauma will be, we believe, the three most
21 important issues that we have to deal with. One
22 of the things that we're trying to fixate on at
23 this point is getting counselors to understand
24 military sexual trauma, and having them, providing
25 a network for them to become more converse in how

1
2 they do these things. Now, we're aware of a
3 couple of programs that are out there for female
4 vets, and where we can support them, we will. But
5 as time goes on, we're certainly going to do more,
6 because it's very important.

7 MS. KOCH: If I can just add to
8 that- -

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [Interposing]
10 Can you identify yourself?

11 MS. KOCH: I'm sorry, I'm Joey
12 Koch, I'm Special Counsel to the Mayor.
13 Previously, MOVA did have a program where they
14 provided on-site counseling to female veterans,
15 and we actually found that it was better for that
16 counseling to take place in another facility. And
17 so MOVA is making referrals to various mental
18 health entities, but they're no longer providing
19 the space and organizing that. It just wasn't
20 successful, for any number of reasons. It should
21 also be noted that about two years ago, three
22 years ago, I think maybe in '08, Borden Avenue was
23 ... which is a homeless shelter in Queens, a
24 veterans homeless shelter, it was redesigned to
25 include a women's veterans shelter component to

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2 it. Previously Borden had been men-only, and now
3 it does have services and shelter space for female
4 veterans as well.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, I think
6 it's really important I think for some of the ...
7 because I visited one of the programs at Borough
8 of Manhattan Community College, I really
9 encouraged them to really provide, you know, think
10 about providing some initiatives, where maybe the
11 Council can support, that can provide holistic
12 services for the female veterans who are coming
13 back to study and train for jobs, and to take into
14 consideration of the counseling needs. Sometimes
15 these programs do not provide that, and that is
16 such a critical part of it. So when you're
17 talking about really getting more counselors aware
18 of issues, you know, in combat and things like
19 that, that would be very helpful. The other
20 question I have is for the older veterans. In
21 terms of for ... maybe the question could be
22 addressed to Mr. Weinberg, in terms of, I know
23 there are many veterans in the community, they are
24 general vendors, and a lot of them, that's how
25 they support themselves, make a living. They

1 vend, you know, they are vending on the street.

2 And so I wanted to ask like the Department of

3 Small Business Services, or the Mayor's Office of

4 Veterans Affairs, are you like supporting this

5 group in terms of helping them, either, you know,

6 continue to be able to make a living in what they

7 do? And also to sort of help them move to the

8 next step of increasing their business or creating

9 their own small business? And also creating that

10 as an option, that someone who wants to start a

11 business, that getting a general vendor license or

12 a preference for veterans, so at least they could

13 start taking care of themselves and making ...

14 having a way to earn a living?

15
16 MR. WEINBERG: So I appreciate the

17 question. I'm actually not in a position to speak

18 to the issue of the vendors. The comment you made

19 about many of our veterans being older veterans is

20 one that actually hits home for us in the

21 Workforce One system, in fact we see that the

22 profile of veterans that walk in to our centers is

23 an older job seeker. I think the average, the

24 median age is 46 for those walking in the door

25 with a higher education level, versus those that

1
2 are non-veterans that come into our door. So
3 we've been very attuned to that, and we've been
4 very, I guess, thoughtful about how we can craft
5 the appropriate interventions. But as far as the
6 specific question on vendors and priority there,
7 that's something that I would need to follow back
8 up with the Committee, unless the Commissioner has
9 additional detail.

10 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Ma'am, I'd
11 have to get back to you on something like that.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, I think
13 I would like ... Chair Reyna.

14 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I just want the
16 cooperation of the public, so that we can have a
17 dialogue that's healthy. I know that this is a
18 matter of great importance to this Council, and
19 what Council Member Chin is raising is something
20 that is not new to anyone in the administration,
21 and I would appreciate the follow-up answers to
22 these questions, because I believe this is a great
23 opportunity to be able to work together on what is
24 a vending license issue.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, I just

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2 wanted to ... I mean, my intention was really to
3 look at ... this is an opportunity to help our
4 veterans, and also like just the same thing as for
5 immigrants, to really start their business, a lot
6 of them started that way. And it's a way of
7 making a living, but the Department of Small
8 Business Services and the Veterans Affairs to look
9 at, as a whole, how do we support our veterans, so
10 that they can start that way and maybe continue to
11 grow, and also there are opportunities within the
12 city where we have now created different kinds of
13 markets, where it could be an opportunity for the
14 veterans to be able to sell in those markets. So
15 it is a small business, so I think the Department
16 of Small Business Services really needs to take a
17 good look at this, as a way of helping our
18 veterans. So I think we want to definitely
19 continue the discussion and follow up on this.

20 MR. WEINBERG: Right.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you,
22 Chair.

23 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Very good,
24 ma'am.

25 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: No, I think

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2 that we are going to take the opportunity to allow
3 our Council Member Greenfield to vote.

4 I want to recognize Council Member
5 Koo for a few questions.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you, Mr.
7 Chair. My question is for the Commissioner.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Turn on your
9 mic, please.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: My question to
11 the Commissioner is, do you know how many veterans
12 we have in our city area, ballpark, one million,
13 two million?

14 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: New York
15 City.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Yeah, the five
17 boroughs.

18 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: New York
19 City has around 215,000.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: That's it?
21 215,000 veterans?

22 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: In New York
23 City, New York City about 215.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: So on that,
25 how many homeless? Do you know how many homeless

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veterans?

COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: It depends on who you speak to, the number is, throughout the city I believe it's under 3,000.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: About 3,000 people homeless?

COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: I'll double check on that number, but that's about it.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: And then how many are unemployed, of those veterans?

COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Again, it depends on who you speak to, I saw something recently from Senator Gillibrand, her office said it was 16,000.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: 16?

COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: About 16,000 vets.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Unemployed?

COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: And how many-

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COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY:
[Interposing] Maybe 17.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: How many are

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2 on the food stamps and- -

3 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY:

4 [Interposing] That I don't know, sir.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: The reason I
6 ask all those, because as a country, I think our
7 country treated the veterans very lousy, you know.
8 These men and women fight overseas and come back
9 and they become homeless, and I couldn't believe
10 that. And, or they are unemployed. I mean, our
11 country, our society, owes them their lives and
12 their service, and we didn't treat them right. So
13 this is a good opportunity, I mean, today's a good
14 opportunity to how do we integrate the veterans
15 into the workforce and the small business
16 community. I think in the past we didn't do
17 enough at all, if you compare our country to other
18 countries, I think it would be shameful to have
19 those kinds of statistics, you know, to our
20 veterans.

21 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: I don't
22 necessarily agree with you. I think we do a
23 decent job, but we can, there's more that we can
24 do, and a lot of it is communication. And I think
25 the one thing that we can do is make a sincere

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2 effort to reach out to our veterans, communicate,
3 make certain that they know where to go. And if
4 we have this conversation at some point in time,
5 we've tried to do it, we can't do it, then maybe I
6 do, but that's just a thought, as a veteran I'm
7 saying that.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: So forgive me,
9 I don't know too much about veteran's benefits.
10 Do they get any benefits once they are discharged
11 from the Army or Navy or whatever forces they
12 join?

13 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Well, you
14 have a number of ... you have a number of benefits
15 that are available, educational, the Montgomery
16 Bill of Rights. There are a lot of things that
17 help you with transitional, the transition from
18 military to civilian. Are they enough? Well,
19 they might have been ... they might have been enough
20 at some point in time, but they need to be
21 somewhat augmented, you know, just to get in.
22 We're in- -

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: [Interposing]
24 Do they all know their entitlements and that
25 they're entitled to go back to school for

1 training?

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3 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Sir, I
4 couldn't guarantee you that they know, but it
5 should be communicated to them, that information
6 should be available to them, and hopefully they,
7 you know, accept it, and they do that. I think
8 that's part of their outgoing transition in their
9 TAP programs.

10 MS. KOCH: Right, we, unfortunately
11 we're not the VA, so we can't really speak to
12 those specific questions, as the Commissioner
13 referenced earlier, we do know that only about 20%
14 of returning veterans are currently signing up for
15 VA benefits, and that's certainly something that
16 is troublesome to us, and should be troublesome to
17 you as well. And so we are doing what we can to
18 reach out and help them register for benefits and
19 to learn about the benefits that are available to
20 the city. But 20% are only receiving those
21 benefits now, and that is certainly- -

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: [Interposing]
23 It's a very low figure, yes. So in the future we
24 want to encourage them to sign up for VA benefits.

25 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Right, sir.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Whatever, for
3 financial, education or other benefits they are
4 entitled to. I mean, it's sad for us that they
5 work for the Dole Fund and to clean the streets.
6 I mean, there's nothing wrong in cleaning the
7 streets or in homeless shelters, but we expect
8 these kind of young men and women, they come back
9 and they take some time to learn a skill or go
10 back to school, then they can start their families
11 and have the next generation come in to help our
12 society, you know.

13 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Yes sir.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you,
16 Council Member Koo. I just wanted to share with
17 you some statistics. According to the United
18 States Department of Veterans Affairs, National
19 Center for Veterans Analysis of Statistics, as of
20 September 20th, 2010, New York City's five boroughs
21 are home to approximately 225,370 veterans, of
22 which 204,800 are male, which is 91% and 20,460
23 are female, 9%. Of which, of the five boroughs,
24 Queens is home to the largest number of veterans,
25 an estimated 63,570, 36%, followed by Brooklyn,

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2 54,290, at 24%, followed by Manhattan, 44,000, 20%
3 and the Bronx with 38,400, 17%, and Staten Island
4 at 25,000, 11%. And so I just wanted to share
5 those statistics with you, as well as the rest of
6 the Committee, so we understand the volume of how
7 stagnant [sic] these numbers are, and when we have
8 this many, and only 20% are actually activating
9 benefits, it alarms us as members of this
10 legislature, trying to represent our own
11 constituency, of which are veterans that we may or
12 may not be aware of. And I just want to stress,
13 not to belabor the point, but appreciate, or get
14 you to appreciate, my request in asking for
15 veterans by zip code. And if we can stress to the
16 administration how important it is for us to
17 identify the chronic issue at the most local
18 level, that it makes a difference, because our
19 offices can be the first line of defense for these
20 veterans, if we understand and prioritize the
21 volume of where they are and who they need to come
22 into communication with. Thank you very much. I
23 know that we have Council Member Greenfield, and
24 then followed by Council Member James. Thank you.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank

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2 you Madam Chair and Mr. Chair. And thank you,
3 Commissioner and also the rest of the staff for
4 coming out here today. Commissioner, welcome,
5 excited to see someone of your qualifications
6 become the Commissioner of MOVA. I'm wondering, I
7 just want to follow up on a few issues, I think,
8 what some of the Council members raised,
9 specifically as it relates to outreach. Do you
10 have a list of veterans in New York City, do you
11 know who they are, by name and address, phone
12 number, email, etc.?

13 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Not really.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.

15 Is there a way to get that? Is there a way to ...
16 because I think one of the issues that I hear from
17 veterans all the time, and from places like VA
18 hospitals that we have visited, along with the
19 Chairman and my Committee, the Committee that I'm
20 a member of, to be clear, is that they have a
21 tough time communicating with veterans, and they
22 don't seem to get these lists from the VA. I know
23 obviously it's an easy thing for us to do, of
24 course, you know, just to say, it's not our
25 problem, it's the VA's problem, but I would like

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2 to suggest that, you know, we ... the whole purpose,
3 I think, of MOVA and the Mayor's executive order
4 back in 2008, right, is that we want to go out of
5 our way to help veterans. So my question for you,
6 Commissioner, might there be a way for you to
7 request a list of where exactly ... who exactly the
8 veterans are in New York City, where they live and
9 if we can get phone numbers and emails. And then
10 if we have that, I think we could actually start
11 being more proactive. I mean, I know you guys
12 have a limited budget, right, so I don't know if
13 you could necessarily reach out, but to follow up
14 on ... to follow up on the Chair's suggestion, if I
15 had a list in my district, I would be more than
16 happy to send them letters and phone calls and
17 reach out to them personally, to every single
18 person, I'm sure that many of our colleagues would
19 do that as well, to say, hey, are you aware that
20 there are benefits out there, these are the kinds
21 of things that you are entitled to, right.
22 Because the reality of only one in five getting
23 the benefits they deserve is kind of shocking, you
24 know?

25 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: I think

1
2 that's an excellent idea, and I think it merits
3 some thought, and we'll get back to you on that.
4 I'm not sure that you can identify every veteran
5 that's out there. If you think about it, how many
6 times do some of your constituents get back to the
7 families of constituents that get back to you and
8 say, "Uncle so-and-so just died. By the way, he's
9 a veteran, and we want final military honors at
10 his funeral, can you help us get it?" All right?
11 So even families don't know that they've got
12 veterans in there, but we can try.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Yeah,
14 but the Federal government knows who the veterans
15 are and they know where they are and they know
16 where they live. If the Mayor of the City of New
17 York, who's an influential and popular figure, if
18 he were to reach out and said, hey, you know, to
19 the Secretary, and say, hey, I would like the
20 following information, and here's what I plan to
21 do with the information, is we plan on reaching
22 out and making sure that they receive the benefits
23 that they deserve, I think that it would be tough
24 for them to say know, right? I mean, I could send
25 a letter as a Councilman, I don't think I'm going

1
2 to get a response, but I think that coming from
3 the Mayor, right, if the Mayor says, hey, we have
4 a quarter of a million veterans in our city, and
5 we want to make sure that they get the services
6 that they deserve, and we know who they are and
7 where they are, I think that's doable. I can tell
8 you that we have a lot of information, you know,
9 someone who, I'm an elected official and I run for
10 office. In many cases I can tell you what my
11 constituents eat for breakfast, I mean, that's how
12 much public information we have out there on
13 individuals, and you know, and it's important for
14 us as elected officials to know that our
15 constituents like Wheaties, right? I mean, we
16 utilize that information in terms of our services,
17 but we don't have information on who the veterans
18 are, and if we knew that, I really think that it
19 would go a long way to try to service them. So I
20 don't want to belabor the point, but I really
21 think it's a critical issue in terms of, if we can
22 get that information, I think it would really
23 change the entire outlook of MOVA and the work
24 that the Council does, because we'd actually be
25 able to follow up with veterans, and yeah, of

1 course, some of them are going to move and some of
2 them aren't going to respond, but I think that the
3 abysmal rates that we have in terms of
4 participation right now would definitely go up,
5 because right now we're limited, I guess, to, in
6 terms of the work that you're doing, which is
7 what, some limited advertising or outreach when
8 someone calls 311, right. We're waiting for them
9 to come to us, instead of being proactive and
10 coming to them, and I think it's sort of the least
11 that we can do for folks that served our country.
12 So is that a fair request to consider?

13
14 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: I'll give
15 it my best, sir.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: All
17 right, I appreciate it, Commissioner, and I
18 appreciate it if you would follow up. Another
19 issue that I had was that we had a conversation
20 here with DCAS a few months back, about veterans
21 who are applying for jobs, for city jobs, and one
22 of the things that DCAS told us that you may or may
23 not be aware of, is that they don't actually keep
24 track of how many veterans actually apply, nor do
25 they know how many veterans actually get jobs.

1
2 This information for us, I think, is important,
3 because that's another source of jobs, well-paying
4 jobs that the city has. Obviously, veterans are
5 able in some cases to even use and get some extra
6 credits. And we just have no way of tracking it.
7 And so I actually introduced legislation at the
8 last stated meeting that would do two things.
9 One, it would require DCAS to ask on their
10 application whether or not someone was a veteran,
11 which is not something that they do right now,
12 because that way they can actually track that.
13 And then to disclose in their reports as to how
14 many veterans apply for jobs, and how many
15 veterans actually get jobs. And that's helpful
16 because we could then see if we're really doing
17 the best that we can in terms of recruiting of
18 veterans to come and get city jobs, which are good
19 jobs, and many veterans would be qualified for.
20 So would you as the Commissioner consider
21 supporting that legislation, which I think would
22 go a long way to helping identify how many
23 veterans are applying, and whether we're doing a
24 good enough job in terms of outreach to our
25 veterans in New York City for city jobs?

1
2 MS. KOCH: We're going to have to
3 look into the specifics of the legislation before
4 we can actually respond to whether or not the
5 Commissioner would be supportive.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Right,
7 well I'm happy, Joey, to send you a email.

8 MS. KOCH: Please.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: With
10 the details, but I think it's important
11 legislation, because I think part of my concern is
12 that, you know, we don't really have an effective
13 baseline to know what we're really doing for
14 veterans. And the reason is, we don't really know
15 who they are, we don't know where they live, and
16 when it comes to city-kind of programs, and I
17 would think the best opportunity that the city can
18 offer, which is something that you offer for a few
19 hundred veterans, which is to help them find jobs,
20 right? And so the city, which has hundreds of
21 thousands of jobs, one of the things that I would
22 like to see happen is that we keep better track to
23 know what opportunities there are and inform
24 veterans that, hey, you know, these are city jobs
25 that you could apply, you get an extra credit.

1
2 And so those are really, my suggestions are really
3 all in that vein. And so I'll send you a copy of
4 the legislation, and I encourage you to look at
5 that.

6 MS. KOCH: Yes, please ... yeah,
7 please do, and there is a point preference for
8 veterans on various civil service exams. So
9 please definitely send this legislation and we'll
10 look at it, take it under consideration. But note
11 that DCAS does provide that. And I ... we do keep
12 some records of veterans for various reasons, the
13 extended military benefits package, where the city
14 pays for city employees when they go overseas to
15 fight for our country, the city will pay the
16 discrepancy between the salaries and maintain
17 health insurance. So there are a whole host of
18 benefits for city employees and I always thought
19 that we actually did a very good job of tracking
20 those employees, but perhaps we can do a better of
21 doing it. So please send it my way.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD:

23 Absolutely, Joey, I just want to point out that
24 you may do a good job of tracking those employees,
25 but we're not doing a good job of tracking how

1
2 many veterans are actually applying, and how many
3 of those veterans are actually getting the jobs,
4 right? So if there's only a ... I'm just making up
5 a number, if there's only a thousand veterans
6 applying, and only two are getting jobs, that
7 means we're failing on both counts, in terms of
8 informing the veterans and making sure that they
9 get the job. And then we would have to ask why
10 don't veterans know about the jobs and why aren't
11 they getting the jobs. So in my continued effort
12 to try to help veterans, I think the city ... city
13 jobs is an important place, and the resources and
14 so I will, if you don't mind, I'm going to follow
15 up with you on both of those issues, which is,
16 let's try to get a list, and that way we can know
17 who they are, we can target them, we can go after
18 them, we can bring them into the fold, and let's
19 try to see on the city level how many are actually
20 applying, whether we're doing a good enough job
21 helping them get jobs in the city and take
22 advantage of that credit that the city provides to
23 many that may not even be aware of. So thank you
24 very much.

25 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you,

1 Council Member Greenfield. I just wanted to share
2 with Council Member Greenfield that along both
3 lines, although we haven't legislated, and I don't
4 want to get into the legislation of nuances, but
5 just as important, regardless whether or not
6 there's legislation, is the request for the
7 business solutions and business express services
8 through the Department of Small Business Services
9 of a priority check-off, whether that's online or
10 an actual application hard copy, similar to what
11 it is that you have testified, Mr. Weinberg, of
12 having a check-off on the Workforce One centers.
13 So that we are having this baseline of identifying
14 our veterans, and giving them the appropriate
15 prioritization that we claim we want to give them.
16 And so I want to just share that with you, Council
17 Member Greenfield, so that your effort along with
18 this request as well, are all a myriad of
19 different effects that we can have and see an
20 impact that's going to be greater than what is
21 already being serviced by you, Commissioner, as
22 well as the Department of Small Business Services.
23 And we want to just build upon that capacity.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I
25

1
2 appreciate that, Chair, thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you.

4 Council Member James.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Thank you.

6 Thank you, Madam Chair. This entire hearing has
7 focused primarily on jobs, and as one of the
8 panelists indicated earlier, that the large
9 majority of the veterans who come into your doors
10 are older gentlemen. So my question ... so just
11 following up on Council Member Chin, it would
12 appear to me, and just based upon my experience
13 with some of the veterans in my district, they to
14 a large extent would prefer owning a business or
15 operating a business, as opposed to entering the
16 job market. And so my question is, what is the
17 administration, the City of New York, doing with
18 respect to not only vendor's licenses, but
19 assisting, providing loans, grants, etcetera, to
20 veterans, to open or start their own business?

21 MR. WEINBERG: Just to briefly
22 build off of the earlier comment and thank you for
23 that point, that question, I think as the
24 Committee is aware, there are a network of
25 resources across the city, namely our Business

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2 Solution centers, that provide access to capital,
3 that provide support for entrepreneurs in small
4 businesses in cutting through red tape and hiring
5 staff and becoming licensed contractors for the
6 city. And I think the question that the
7 Councilwoman had posed was, is there an additional
8 effort that could be put towards identifying
9 veterans.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Right.

11 MR. WEINBERG: And doing specific
12 outreach and specific prioritizing for veterans.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Correct.

14 MR. WEINBERG: And that's something
15 that I'm not sure is currently in place, but
16 something that we've committed to going back and
17 taking a look at, and following up with this
18 Committee on.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And just as
20 a follow-up to that question, can the standards
21 that you have implemented, can they be somewhat
22 relaxed for veterans?

23 MR. WEINBERG: I would once again
24 say that we ... it's, the notion of supporting our
25 veterans is one that we take seriously, we look

1
2 for opportunities to provide expedited services
3 and to make sure that we're targeting our
4 resources, so we'll look at all possible options
5 to make sure that we're providing the resources we
6 need to veterans.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: As you know,
8 I represent parts of Brooklyn where we have the
9 Bedford Atlantic Armory, and there's a significant
10 number of veterans who reside at the armory, or I
11 should say, surviving in the armory. And so my
12 question is, is MOVA, do they have an operation at
13 the, or a table or a help desk, or anything at
14 Bedford and Atlantic Armory to identify veterans
15 and to assist them as they enter the door? As
16 they come through the door?

17 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: We do not.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Let me just
19 tell you that I visited the armory quite
20 frequently. You've got a significant number of
21 veterans who survive in Bedford-Atlantic Armory,
22 as someone indicated, there are 54,000 veterans
23 that have been identified, I think the number is
24 larger, in the borough of Brooklyn, and I would
25 argue that there is at least 5,000 veterans in

1
2 Bedford-Atlantic Armory. I challenge you to prove
3 me wrong, and I urge you to contact the Department
4 of Homeless Services and work with them, since I
5 would argue that the Bedford-Atlantic Armory
6 houses the greatest number of veterans in the City
7 of New York than any other armory, or any other
8 housing facility in the city. Let me move on.

9 You ... I was reading the testimony, and what
10 strikes me is that the program ... where did I see
11 it? It jumped out at me, "ready, willing ...", no,
12 that's not it. The Dole Fund's veterans program,
13 and it ends with the following sentence, "It
14 guides the men through the program, providing case
15 managers ...", etc., etc., "as well as serving as
16 advocates for these men". I'm not a man, and I
17 know that women serve in the Army. What programs
18 are available for women?

19 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: I'd
20 explained earlier that that's a residential
21 program just designed for men. They do
22 accommodate women, but not in a residential
23 program.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Are there
25 any residential programs for women?

1
2 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: At the Dole
3 Fund, those are the only two programs that I'm
4 aware of that they have for veterans, but I'll
5 double check.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: What
7 programs exist, if you know off the top of your
8 head, for women?

9 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: For female
10 vets?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes.

12 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Beyond
13 that, I'll get back to you on that, that was about
14 it. Everything else that we're doing is focused
15 on the veterans themselves. There may be some
16 other specific things that are out there that I'm
17 not aware of, but I'll check and I'll get back to
18 you.

19 MS. KOCH: Or, as I noted earlier,
20 Borden Avenue does have a facility specifically
21 for female- -

22 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY:
23 [Interposing] Right.

24 MS. KOCH: ... veterans, and they
25 have services that are unique to the experiences

1
2 that women veterans may have at that place.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: My colleague
4 tells me that program is very limited. And so if
5 we could ... if you could identify, I would like to
6 know what programs, if any, are provided by this
7 administration ... thank you from the audience. I
8 want the administration to know, when you operate
9 and become Commissioner, I'll be glad to hear from
10 you.

11 MS. KOCH: But it should be noted
12 that the VA and, with the exception of some living
13 quarters, the services that are provided by most
14 organizations and at MOVA, certainly, takes part
15 in the partnerships that they make are with
16 entities that serve both female and male veterans.
17 So the gentleman in the audience is correct when
18 he notes that the VA, and I do regret, sorry, not
19 pointing out that those facilities and those
20 services and those entities are available for both
21 sexes and not just for men.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay, moving
23 on. Ready, Willing and Able in the Dole Fund, let
24 me just talk about Ready, Willing and Able. They
25 pay transitional work opportunities, how much do

1
2 they pay? On an hourly basis? Is it minimum
3 wage, or is it living wage?

4 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: It's a
5 minimum wage, I'd have to get back to you on that.
6 They have to pay ... they have to pay some type of
7 fair housing, it's a dormitory ... okay, I'll get
8 back to you on that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Thank you, I
10 just need to know how much the work opportunities,
11 how much they are paid for the work opportunities
12 and whether or not ... if that amount is sufficient
13 for them to sustain a living in the City of New
14 York. And if not, we should revisit that, and I
15 urge everyone to please attend the Living Wage
16 Rally and the hearing on Thursday. And the ... this
17 program, the National Veteran-Owned Business
18 Association, which connects Americans with the
19 country's three million veteran-run businesses, do
20 we work with that association? Do we know
21 anything about that association? It's a "Buy
22 Veteran" campaign. Do we know anything about
23 that? No? Okay.

24 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet down,
25 please.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: What about
3 the entrepreneurial program for veterans? Boot
4 Camp for Veterans, do you know anything about
5 that? It's information that ... anyway, no? Okay.
6 It's ... I just researched it recently, and in
7 preparation and in anticipation of this hearing,
8 and it's unfortunate that the panel did not do the
9 same. Last question, how many veterans, if you
10 know, how many veterans, if you know, have
11 enrolled in CUNY, City University of New York? Do
12 we track that?

13 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: I have the
14 figure, I don't have it now. I can get it for
15 you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you very
18 much, I know Council Member Chair Eugene has a
19 question.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very
21 much, co-Chair Reyna. We know that our veterans
22 gained many skills and expertise during their
23 services, and when they get back home, those
24 skills and expertise can be a good asset, you
25 know, for our employees and for anyone. What MOVA

1
2 is doing to track and to identify those veterans
3 who have skills or expertise, who are ready to go
4 into the workforce, and those who need training to
5 get a job?

6 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Well, what
7 we've done is we've partnered with ... we've
8 partnered with other agencies, but particularly
9 America Works, we're starting to look at that, not
10 starting to, they have been. It's a whole
11 interview process, it's an interview/resume
12 process, they're getting people ready for the
13 workforce and they're matching the skills, and
14 that's how they're doing the employment. There's
15 counseling, there's follow-up, there's a number of
16 other things that are involved in that, and I'm
17 sure Workforce One does the same thing, not I'm
18 sure, I know they do. So there are a number of
19 other initiatives to try to identify those skills
20 and help them with the transition.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: My last
22 question, because I think we have many other
23 speakers, in your testimony you said MOVA works
24 with the Manhattan Educational Opportunities
25 Center, MEOC.

1
2 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Right.

3 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And both
4 Manhattan Community College and somewhere you said
5 that these organizations recently received \$3
6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to
7 prepare all unemployed and under-employed New
8 Yorkers, but what is the role of MOVA? How will
9 MOVA work together with these institutions to
10 insure that the veterans, you know, get the best
11 of that, the most of that?

12 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: MOVA's
13 role, really, is to make referrals and make
14 connectivity with a lot of the agencies, and CUNY
15 is one of those agencies. And CUNY has supported
16 us in a number of issues in terms of allowing us
17 to meet with their veterans when they have these
18 veteran work fairs and BMCC, to make certain that
19 we're able to share information that is available
20 about the Federal benefits, and this is one of
21 them. And at BMCC, we'll be at BMCC later next
22 month as well. I'll talk about that.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you, and
24 I think this is my last question. Does any member
25 of the Committee have questions? Okay, thank you

1
2 very much, Commissioner. Thank you to all the
3 members of the panel, thank you for your
4 testimony.

5 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Commissioner,
7 thank you as well.

8 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Thanks,
9 ma'am.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I just want to
11 thank Phil Weinberg for being here, and Joey Koch.
12 We appreciated your testimony, and we look forward
13 even moreso for your follow-up. Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Yes, ma'am.

15 MR. WEINBERG: Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER HOLLIDAY: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I'd like to
18 call up the next panel, Terri Coaxum, Region II
19 Advocate, Small Business Administration, and Alex
20 Saavedra from Seedco Workforce One, and I would
21 love if, Commissioner, I don't know if you can
22 stay just for a few more minutes to listen to this
23 testimony, Phil as well. I just want to make sure
24 that the Small Business Administration gets the
25 opportunity to just share some of what they're

1
2 doing. Thank you. I completely ... great, thank
3 you.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

5 MR. MARTIN: Yeah, I think it's
6 being passed around.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I appreciate
9 it, thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very
11 much, thank you.

12 MS. COAXUM: Good afternoon, my
13 name is Terri Coaxum, and I am the Region II
14 Advocate for Small Business Administration Office
15 of Advocacy. I am ... I represent New York, New
16 Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
17 I would like to first thank the Committee on Small
18 Business and the Committee on Veterans Chair Reyna
19 and Chair Eugene and all the members of the
20 Council for inviting me to share with you the role
21 of the Office of Advocacy and the resources that
22 we provide for small businesses. I would first
23 like to pause and take the opportunity to commend
24 and salute the veterans for their service and
25 commitment to our country.

1
2 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

3 MS. COAXUM: You're welcome. The
4 Office of Advocacy was created by Congress in
5 1976, it has been an independent voice for small
6 businesses within the Federal government for over
7 30 years. Our two primary roles are to provide
8 research and information about the role of small
9 businesses in the American economy, and to serve
10 as watchdogs of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.
11 Under the RFA, we work with Federal rulemaking
12 agencies in Washington to consider the economic
13 impact of proposed rules on small businesses
14 before the rules are finalized. Although housed
15 within the Small Business Administration, the
16 Office of Advocacy has a mission and activities
17 that are independent of the SBA and its normal
18 chain of command. We have our own statutory
19 charter and our newly-separated [inaudible]. It
20 is the job of our chief counsel, Dr. Winslow
21 Sargent, to transmit directly to policymakers the
22 unfiltered views of small-entity stakeholders.
23 Advocacy's independence means that chief counsel's
24 views do not necessarily reflect the position of
25 the administration or the SBA. In fiscal year

1
2 2010, the Office of Advocacy worked with Federal
3 regulatory agencies to help them design smarter
4 rules which resulted in the foregoing regulatory
5 cost-savings for small entities of nearly \$15
6 billion with a "B", that they otherwise would have
7 had to pay. As one of the Office of Advocacy ten
8 Regional Advocates, we cover the United States and
9 territories. The Office of Advocacy, in order to
10 insure that the voices of individuals and small
11 businesses do not go unheeded, we're Advocacy's
12 eyes and ears, and in your region we're the voice
13 that gets the information back to Washington, D.C.
14 Together we speak out against unfair regulatory
15 burdens that ensue from Federal laws or agency
16 regulations before they become final. For the
17 purpose of this hearing, I would to like to share
18 the following just-released Advocacy-funded study
19 about factors affecting entrepreneurship among
20 veterans. It is directly on-point for the topic
21 of this hearing and highlights the importance of
22 our research, the research of our office.
23 According to the United States Census Bureau
24 American Communities Survey, which has also been
25 noted by Council Member Eugene and Council Member

1
2 Reyna, there were 235,160 veterans in New York
3 City in 2009. The Census Bureau will soon be
4 releasing a new first-time-ever estimate of the
5 number of veterans in New York City who are also
6 business owners, and I'll be pleased to submit
7 that information for the record on this new data
8 when it becomes available in June. The authors in
9 this study investigate whether military service
10 has specifically-significant impact on veterans
11 becoming entrepreneurs. The authors found that
12 military service is highly correlated with the
13 self-employment probability. This confirms the
14 finding that previous Advocacy research showed,
15 significant positive effects from military service
16 on the probability of self-employment, and the new
17 study is able to quantify these marginal effects
18 the study highlights. In the private sector
19 workforce, veterans are at least 45% more likely
20 than those with non-active military service
21 experience to be self-employed. Veterans are more
22 likely to be self-employed than the general
23 population, veterans who choose the military as a
24 career path are about 33% less likely to be self-
25 employed than those who left after one enlistment.

1
2 An exception to the negative correlation of self-
3 employment with the length of service among
4 veterans occurs within the sub-group of veterans
5 who are career military retirees, with a service
6 of 20 years or more. In this group, additional
7 years of service are correlated with a higher
8 probability of self-employment. Career military
9 retirees have higher rates of self-employment than
10 the general population. Older military retirees
11 are more likely to be self-employed, and this is
12 something that Council Member James spoke about,
13 the older military ... the older veterans wanting to
14 be self-employed. Among military retirees,
15 officers are 55.6% more likely to be self-employed
16 than enlisted personnel, and the cohort of
17 veterans who served in World War II, the Korean
18 War and the Vietnam Era were more likely to be
19 self-employed, relative to veterans serving since
20 2001 or the Gulf War veterans, and that's 10.9%
21 versus 3.6%. The age and home ownership show
22 consistent positive and significant effects on
23 self-employment, are highly correlated to
24 stability and maturity, as well as providing a
25 potential supply of risk capital. In general

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2 population, age, marital status, gender,
3 occupation, home ownership, military service and
4 some regional or race variables have a significant
5 impact on self-employment, while education and
6 children do not. Among veterans, career military
7 service, age, male gender and children are
8 positive indicators of self-employment, while
9 employment in service occupations and
10 manufacturing occupations are negative indicators.
11 Again, I would be pleased to supply additional
12 information and data for the record on veteran
13 firms and owners in New York City, which will be
14 released later this month, in June, and Advocacy
15 will make sure that the Chairs and the members
16 will receive this information when released. In
17 conclusion, Advocacy is on the front line of the
18 voice of small businesses. We realize the
19 significance of small businesses on the health and
20 vitality of the local and national economies, and
21 we're here to help. Thank you.

22 MR. SAAVEDRA: Good afternoon, and
23 thank you, Chairwoman Reyna and Chairman Eugene
24 and members of the Committees on Small Business
25 and Veterans for the opportunity to testify today.

1
2 My name is Alex Saavedra, and I am the Vice
3 President for Direct Service Programs at Seedco
4 and also the Center Director for the Bronx
5 Workforce One Career Center, in partnership with
6 SBS. Seedco is a New York City-based national
7 nonprofit organization that advances economic
8 opportunity for people, businesses and communities
9 in need. Founded in 1987, Seedco designs
10 innovative programs, partnerships and services for
11 workers, families and businesses, to foster
12 vibrant community economic development. Seedco's
13 work is focused on workforce development, work and
14 family supports, and service and supports for
15 small businesses. Seedco operates the upper
16 Manhattan Workforce One Career Center and the
17 Bronx Workforce One Career Center, both of which
18 are funded by the Department of Small Business
19 Services. Additionally, Seedco operates three
20 Business Solutions centers, the Lower Manhattan
21 Center, the Upper Manhattan Center and the
22 satellite center in Washington Heights, all of
23 which are also funded by SBS. Further, we
24 currently manage the New York City Human Resources
25 Administration Back to Work contract, which

1 provides access to job-readiness services, skills
2 training and job-placement services to public
3 assistance recipients. Along with the workforce
4 development efforts conducted through the city
5 contracts mentioned above, Seedco manages a
6 network of 22 community-based organizations in New
7 York City, to which we provide centralized
8 management services, including fiscal and contract
9 management, technology solutions, outcomes
10 measurement and quality assurance systems, and
11 technical assistance on program design and
12 quality. We also work with employers, with
13 government agencies and other institutions to
14 improve the quality of jobs and promote the wider
15 availability of work supports. In 2010, Seedco
16 placed more than 9,000 people into jobs and
17 created 1,648 jobs in New York City, and more than
18 31,000 families in the city received benefits
19 through our earned-benefits technology and
20 facilitation. In addition, we invest in
21 communities to spur economic opportunities through
22 our lending subsidiary, Seedco Financial Services,
23 a Community Development Financial Institution.
24 Seedco is a long-standing operator of the
25

1
2 Workforce One career center in Upper Manhattan
3 under contract with SBS for more than seven years,
4 and was recently awarded in January a contract to
5 expand and operate the Workforce One Career Center
6 in the Bronx. As operator of two large Workforce
7 One career centers, Seedco has consistently
8 provided high-quality sourcing, recruitment,
9 career development, job matching, placement and
10 advancement services to New York City residents
11 and currently ranks in the top performance tier of
12 the Workforce One system. Through the two
13 Workforce One career centers, Seedco places an
14 average of 3,000 residents per quarter into jobs
15 with employers throughout the city, and
16 consistently meets all Federal Workforce
17 Investment Act, WIA, retention milestones on a
18 performance-based contract with SBS. As a top
19 performer, Seedco sources job seekers through
20 robust job referral partnerships with a wide range
21 of community-based organizations, community
22 colleges and human service providers, to
23 consistently place an average of 400 community
24 partner referral candidates into our open jobs
25 each quarter. Similarly, the career centers are

1
2 top providers of Workforce One individual training
3 grants to job seekers in need of vocational
4 training, designed to build their skills and work
5 qualifications and enable them to become job-ready
6 or advance into a higher-quality occupation.

7 While the ITG's have been temporarily on hiatus,
8 we do expect to have the ITG's available beginning
9 late summer. The career centers average 400

10 training grants and place more than 60% training
11 completers into jobs each quarter. Moreover,

12 services provided to job seekers are designed to
13 assess their skills, education and work history,
14 and help them maximize their employment

15 marketability. Employer services are designed to
16 screen, match and refer the most qualified

17 candidates for open positions, with the goal of
18 maintaining a minimum three-to-one recruit-to-hire
19 ratio. The high quality of candidates referred to

20 employers has helped seal Seedco's reputation as a
21 recruiter of choice for a large and growing number

22 of New York City employers. In addition, Seedco
23 uses its proprietary technology and case

24 management program-earned benefits to connect

25 workers and their families to a wide range of

1 public and private benefits. There are
2 approximately 22 million veterans of U.S. military
3 branches, of those about one in ten served during
4 the Gulf War era two, meaning, post-9/11, and
5 nearly two thirds are currently under the age of
6 35. The national veterans unemployment rate is
7 about 10%, and the unemployment rate for veterans
8 ages 18 to 24 is approximately 21%. Unemployment
9 among New York State veterans recently home from
10 Iraq and Afghanistan is close to 15%, and in the
11 last year alone, unemployment among veterans
12 statewide increased by more than 20,500
13 individuals. In New York City 17,300 veterans are
14 unemployed, an increase of 4,700 from last year.
15 As increasing numbers of veterans are returning
16 from Iraq and Afghanistan in particular, plus
17 those individuals who we've been seeing in our
18 career centers who come from multiple conflicts in
19 different eras, we recognize that this population
20 requires a tailored approach to insure that career
21 services and supports meet their specific needs.
22 While most veterans are highly-skilled in their
23 field, have specialized training and
24 certifications and are highly-motivated, dedicated

1
2 individuals with extensive leadership experience,
3 many are still struggling with issues that can
4 affect their capacity to obtain and maintain
5 employment. For example, while many veterans have
6 substantial work experience and expertise in areas
7 prioritized by employers, such as information
8 technology, logistic support, and whatnot, they
9 sometimes struggle to convey this experience and
10 expertise on their resumes, resumes, once again
11 that are intended to be in the civilian workforce.
12 In addition, because many young veterans have
13 limited history seeking employment outside of the
14 military, they are unfamiliar with job-seeker
15 processes and etiquettes, making interviews
16 challenging and sometimes demoralizing. In
17 response, Seedco has worked together with the
18 Department of Small Business Services to launch
19 the Veterans Employment Transition, Education,
20 Reintegration and Network Services program, an
21 innovative employment initiative that connects
22 veterans to the civilian job market, and helps
23 them transition effectively back into their
24 communities. Launched just recently in February
25 of this year, the VETERANS program has served

1
2 approximately 150 veterans to date. The program
3 focuses on both professional and personal
4 development through one-on-one career counseling
5 and job matching, as well as understanding and
6 providing assistance in addressing the specific
7 needs of veterans. Specialized services include
8 resume writing, translating certifications and
9 skills learned while in the military into resume-
10 appropriate language, career coaching, job
11 matching and benefits access and coordination.
12 The VETERANS program serves veterans of all wars,
13 their spouses and working-age dependents. The
14 program provides a priority service track for
15 veterans and their spouses at both of the Seedco-
16 operated Workforce One career centers, so that
17 veterans who identify themselves as such are given
18 access to specialized workshops and coaching as
19 quickly as possible. Veterans meet with a team
20 comprised of a career adviser, a career coach, and
21 a fulfillment account manager that provides a
22 combined orientation and registration assessment,
23 conducts intensive individualized assessments to
24 review resumes and military work history in order
25 to identify transferable skills, and to really dig

1 through employment goals, possible education needs
2 and training, and needed work supports, creates,
3 revises resumes to appeal to civilian employers in
4 occupations that best fit each veteran's skill
5 set, designs an individual employment plan,
6 including long-term education and career goals,
7 and advises on how the GI bill and educational
8 benefits could be used to support their plan,
9 refers veterans to the fulfillment account manager
10 for job matching and interview referrals and
11 preparation for those interviews, reaches out to
12 the employers to determine their hiring priorities
13 and to educate them about resources and incentives
14 available when hiring veterans, and then finally
15 follows up with veterans following the interviews
16 and after they obtain employment. These services
17 are designed to insure that veterans get
18 individualized attention to improve their
19 marketability and connect them to employment
20 opportunities and needed work supports as quickly
21 as possible. To insure that these services are
22 sensitive to the unique needs of veterans, Seedco
23 has hired six veterans that serve as career
24 advisers, career coaches and fulfillment account
25

1
2 managers. This specialized team has a capacity to
3 serve more than a thousand veterans annually. Now
4 that it has created this system to streamline and
5 tailor employment services for veterans at the
6 Bronx and Upper Manhattan Workforce One career
7 centers, Seedco is positioned to enhance these
8 efforts. This includes proactively reaching out
9 to many active service units in New York City, to
10 set up referral mechanisms for enlisted service
11 members ready to transition into civilian life.
12 Seedco's goal is to hold employment office hours
13 convenient to each unit. Seedco also recognizes
14 the significant need among its veteran clients for
15 additional work support, counseling and case
16 management, with a focus on the wide range of
17 benefits for which they are eligible, while
18 seeking and maintaining employment. As such,
19 Seedco is seeking additional resources that would
20 enable us to adapt our earned benefits technology
21 and train staff to screen specifically for
22 veteran's benefits and hire counselors with
23 expertise in addressing the veteran's support
24 needs. Now, that pretty much concludes and I
25 would like to refer to, you know, we've been

1
2 looking in to make sure that as an operator
3 jointly with SBS of the Workforce One career
4 center system, the One Stops, and under Federal
5 mandate, under the 2002 Jobs for Veterans Act, we
6 pretty much are really just bringing the services
7 that we have fairly well, perhaps, passively been
8 providing in the past as the One Stops, and really
9 kind of making sure that our program addresses
10 what this act, in terms of serving the employment
11 needs of veterans, are doing, and so I would like
12 to refer, I don't think I need to really, you
13 know, read it, there's quite a bit of information
14 there. But I want to end in saying that Seedco
15 remains committed to helping veterans, their
16 spouses and their dependents, as well as all job
17 seekers in New York City. Thank you so much for
18 your time and I'm happy to answer any questions
19 that you have.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you so
21 much, Alex Saavedra. I wanted to commend both
22 your testimonies. They are, you know, lengthy and
23 very expressive, but nevertheless, in working
24 with, I know Ms. Coaxum, as far as the Small
25 Business Administration in understanding the vital

1
2 role that SBA can play in the life of veterans,
3 and I know that Seedco has identified veterans in
4 their efforts of service in communities, to now
5 with a magnifying lens being able to identify,
6 wow, there's a greater volume of this particular
7 population, let's try to see if this is a target
8 population. And exactly that is what we want to
9 see amongst the administration, not only with job
10 placement and training, but rather the small
11 business startup retention, expansion. And so I
12 ask you just to verify, Mr. Saavedra, the issue of
13 check-off, priority check-off, as far as the
14 Workforce One center, that Seedco is contracted to
15 manage. The check-off is related to a veteran,
16 correct?

17 MR. SAAVEDRA: That is correct.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Is, under the
19 same agency you are contracted to operate Business
20 Solutions, correct?

21 MR. SAAVEDRA: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And do you have
23 the same check-off priority amongst veterans?

24 MR. SAAVEDRA: For our Business
25 Solutions focus, we do not currently, and this is

1
2 a great and excellent point that we're going to
3 look at, and we're going to work closely with our
4 funder, SBS, to insure we prioritize.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Fabulous, and I
6 would appreciate it. And the Business Express is
7 not under your auspices, it would be directly
8 under the jurisdiction of the agency itself, with
9 no contracts.

10 MR. SAAVEDRA: You are correct.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And so, we want
12 to be able to work with our partners, such as
13 Seedco, in order to continue to raise the bar as
14 to how we're connecting with targeted populations,
15 especially amongst our veterans. And what you
16 have done is an organic system that we want to
17 duplicate, and so kudos to your agency as an
18 organization, as a local partner, having come to
19 us and told us and raised the bar on how we have
20 to do more, and you have done more, and how we can
21 build on that capacity. And as far as the Small
22 Business Administration, Terri, if you can just
23 share with us, do you have the ability to work
24 with the U.S. Department of Veterans in getting to
25 us the information that clearly you heard, were

1 witness to, amongst us as members, asking the
2 Mayor's Office of Veteran's Affairs to be able to
3 have zip code information? Clearly, Council
4 Member Greenfield has already requested even
5 further than just zip code. I was very interested
6 in zip code, he went a step further into
7 identifying name, address and phone number of each
8 veteran in the five boroughs under our
9 jurisdiction. Is that something that you can go
10 back to, in working with your leadership team, in
11 order to request that information, for us to
12 identify these veterans and work with them, not
13 just on small business matters, whether that's
14 start-up, lending opportunities, expansion
15 opportunities, or workforce training and
16 placement, but also identifying them, so that they
17 can access their benefits, to have this trigger
18 effect of making sure that they're being serviced
19 from soup to nuts, A to Z, services that right now
20 we're taking for granted as it being out there and
21 it being connected to them? And clearly we see
22 that if only 20% are activating their benefits,
23 then clearly not everyone does know.

25 MS. COAXUM: We do provide research

1
2 about the role of small businesses in the economy,
3 but I can ask our team, because we have economists
4 on staff to do the metrics on small businesses, I
5 can ask if that's something that they can provide
6 for you, or if they're able just to provide the
7 metrics on the veteran small businesses. I can
8 definitely get back to you with that.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Fabulous, thank
10 you very much. Council Member Eugene?

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes, I just
12 want to commend and congratulate Seedco also for
13 being part of this wonderful partnership, this is
14 a good venture, a good initiative, thank you very
15 much.

16 MR. SAAVEDRA: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And I've got
18 only one question, probably two. You mentioned
19 that, in your testimony, Mr. Saavedra, that
20 launched in February, 2011, the VETERANS program
21 has served approximately 150 veterans to date.
22 Could you tell us how many veterans applied, you
23 know, the number of veterans altogether who
24 applied for this service?

25 MR. SAAVEDRA: So, the distinction

1
2 I guess I can make is, since we proactively
3 started seeking veterans coming into the center,
4 that started in February, after we mobilized by
5 hiring staff who are veterans themselves, we began
6 to start taking count of them, so that we could
7 have much better feedback for you and for anybody
8 else who wants to know how we're proactively
9 working with veterans. So that's 150 there. The
10 issue we've been finding as the operator of the
11 career centers is that it's still tends to be
12 passive process. So there might be a check box,
13 but not every person is checking off that they're
14 a veteran, for some reason or another. So we
15 decided to do, as of February, is proactively
16 right from our front desk, as soon as a job seeker
17 walks in, there's a sign that says, "If you're a
18 veteran, please let us know. We have a priority
19 service for you." And that's who we're tracking,
20 and you immediately meet with a staff member
21 without having to get lost in the mix with the
22 other job seekers.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. My last
24 question is, I'm sorry, you understand. My last
25 question is for both of you, Ms. Terri Coaxum

1
2 also. Based on your track record, based on, you
3 know, your observations, what was exactly the
4 biggest challenge for the veterans to find jobs?
5 To, you know, to start a small business? What was
6 the biggest challenge, for both of you? This
7 question is addressed to both of you.

8 MR. SAAVEDRA: Sure, the- -

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [Interposing]
10 I know there are many challenges, many challenges,
11 but if you had to point out one, you know, as
12 number one.

13 MR. SAAVEDRA: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: What is the
15 biggest challenge for veterans to find jobs, or to
16 start the small business.

17 MR. SAAVEDRA: Okay, I can speak on
18 the job-seeker side, the biggest, biggest
19 challenge is that veterans are coming out from a
20 different type of a living environment, if you
21 will. They're coming out of very structured
22 environment, you're basically doing what you have
23 to do. You have your orders in the morning, you
24 have the time you get up and you have the time you
25 go to bed at night, and in between you have a very

1 structured life. When you come out into the
2 civilian world, all that structure is gone, and
3 now it's up to you to provide the structure for
4 yourself, for your families and what not. And the
5 biggest challenge we've been finding with veterans
6 who are looking for work is really a sense of that
7 demoralizing spirit, where I was doing all these
8 great things when I was enlisted, I was fighting a
9 war. And now I don't know how to get my resume
10 together, I don't know how to speak to an
11 employer. When I'm in the military, I'm not
12 rewarded for speaking a lot, I'm not rewarded for
13 promoting myself, because it's all about the team.
14 Now I'm in the civilian context, I have to go to
15 an employer, I have to explain why I'm better than
16 the person next to me. So it's a real cultural
17 shift, if you will, from coming from an enlisted
18 service into now promoting yourself. What we
19 find, even with the six individuals we have on our
20 staff who are veterans, they are the most
21 respectful individuals you ever want to meet, but
22 they will not speak until spoken to. That is in
23 New York City where, I mean, we're a brash city,
24 our employers really pride themselves on how you
25

1
2 communicate, and that we're finding is the biggest
3 challenge. This, and added to that is when we're
4 ... when our career coaches are working with
5 veterans, they have wonderful skills. They may
6 have entered the enlisted services with a high
7 school diploma, maybe they've been in four years,
8 they have amazing qualifications that they learned
9 on the job. But they don't realize that that's an
10 important thing to articulate in a resume. So
11 when people ... another thing that veterans are
12 telling us, when I come out, people just tell me,
13 well, you can be a security guard. And a lot of
14 veterans, that might be a great opportunity for
15 them, but they have so many other varied
16 experiences, but they don't know how to translate
17 those experiences into becoming a valuable
18 employee to an employer, so employers are missing
19 them. And so that's a part in terms of job
20 seeker, and I'll leave it to my colleague to talk
21 about- -

22 MS. COAXUM: [Interposing] Right.

23 I'm going to agree that there is a cultural shift,
24 but I'm relatively new and so still out there in
25 beating the trees, so to speak, getting

1
2 information. But I will say, from a small
3 business standpoint, Office of Advocacy and what
4 in talking to individuals, including veterans, it
5 seems that their biggest challenge, they want to
6 start their own business, and their biggest
7 challenge seems to be the access to capital. So
8 this is not job seeker and this is not Office of
9 Advocacy, this is just what is being told as I'm
10 out there on behalf of the Office of Advocacy
11 Small Business Administration.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. Based
13 on what you said, you know, there is a cultural
14 and emotional shift. You know, is there anything
15 that your organization is putting in place as a
16 type of support, and help them adjust themselves-
17 -

18 MR. SAAVEDRA: [Interposing] Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: ... and adapt
20 themselves?

21 MR. SAAVEDRA: Yes, so our model
22 that has really been evolving in this soft pilot
23 has been, we're doing a lot of our services in a
24 peer-to-peer group format. We're finding that has
25 been the most successful, because we're also

1
2 learning is veterans are not too eager to talk to
3 somebody who they may not trust, but they will
4 trust another member of the military services.
5 And what we are doing when we're coaching, we're
6 preparing, we're talking about resume-building,
7 we're doing it in groups of three veterans. And
8 so they are actually providing each other peer
9 support, but they're also saying, and there are
10 some stories we're getting that are just amazing
11 to us, where one veteran came in and said, you
12 know, "I don't have a place to stay, I just broke
13 up with my girlfriend, I need a place to stay, I'm
14 pretty much homeless. I'm tired of sleeping on my
15 friend's couch." Another vet in the same program
16 said, you know, "My wife and I are renting out our
17 garage apartment." Just within a day, the person
18 was no longer homeless. These are things that are
19 not really tangible, but what we're finding is,
20 there ... the network the veterans themselves are
21 providing under the context of our workforce
22 services is probably just as valuable as all the
23 career development opportunity that we're
24 providing them, or any of the training that we're
25 providing them, because the self-esteem that

1
2 they're helping each other build with each other
3 is just a huge factor that's helping them go out
4 there and look for employment and maintaining it.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very
6 much. That was all my questions, thank you, Mr.
7 Saavedra and Ms. Coaxum. Thank you for your
8 testimony.

9 MS. COAXUM: You're welcome.

10 MR. SAAVEDRA: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And thank you
12 for your great work also, for veterans, thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you,
14 Chair Eugene. I just wanted to highlight, you
15 know, the signage, something so simple and yet so
16 effective. Is this signage something that I would
17 find at other Workforce sites?

18 MR. SAAVEDRA: Yes you will.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Fantastic.

20 MR. SAAVEDRA: You will. And like
21 I said, the way we got into this, is we said, we
22 know we're supposed to be prioritizing veterans,
23 but we haven't really been as proactive as perhaps
24 we could have been. So now the sign means more.
25 Now our greeters are going to ask you if you are

1
2 actually a veteran.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And is this
4 something that can be used as a method to
5 complement the efforts of not only online check-
6 off box, "Are you a veteran", but signage at the
7 Business Solutions centers to be able to
8 highlight, are you a veteran interested in
9 starting up your own business, do you need small
10 business services?

11 MR. SAAVEDRA: Exactly. And I
12 think that's the next step, and it can be a very,
13 very easy step.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Very simple.

15 MR. SAAVEDRA: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And very useful
17 and effective.

18 MR. SAAVEDRA: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I appreciate
20 the time you've given us.

21 MR. SAAVEDRA: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: We have no
23 further questions, as you can see, our members are
24 slowly chipping away. I thank you again for the
25 service and the incredible work that you're doing

1
2 with veterans.

3 MS. COAXUM: Chairs, I just want to
4 add that in the testimony packet I also included a
5 copy of the summary for the veterans study and
6 more information about the Office of Advocacy for
7 your convenience.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you.

9 MR. SAAVEDRA: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Patrick Mulliar,
11 Mullar, Mullar?

12 MR. MARTIN: He left.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: He left? I
14 just want to make note that Patrick Mullar from
15 Patsim Corporation, a veteran-owned business, had
16 joined us and had to leave. Lionelle Hamanaka,
17 Military Families Speak Out is the organization.
18 Thank you. Dan Rossi, Disabled Veterans. Bernard
19 Maurice Wright, Jr., Urban Justice. Armando
20 Crescenzi, Veterans First, which I think we have
21 sufficient members of the panel, and we're just
22 waiting for Bernard Maurice Wright, Jr.
23 [crosstalk] We have other members that will go
24 next, I just wanted to make sure that we called
25 four that fit comfortably, so please be patient.

[crosstalk] You may begin.

MS. HAMANAKA: My name is Lionelle Hamanaka and I'm a member of Military Families Speak Out, a national organization of people, of families related to soldiers who have served since 9/11, and we're a peace organization formed in response to the Iraq War. Last year we voted against- -

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing]
If you could just speak into the mic.

MS. HAMANAKA: Oh, okay.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: So that way we could hear you. It's very soft.

MS. HAMANAKA: Oh, sorry.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: That's okay.

MS. HAMANAKA: My name is Lionelle Hamanaka, I'm a member of Military Families Speak Out, a national organization of families related to soldiers who have served since 9/11. And we're a peace organization. Okay, I basically wrote down from personal experience and a little bit of research with our members of the difficulties ... first of all, I would just like to respond to something that Chairman Eugene asked. I think the

1
2 biggest challenge to starting a small business for
3 veterans is not having any money for capital. But
4 aside from that, these are problems that veterans
5 have found. The number one problem is that when a
6 soldier is deployed, he is cut off from his nexus,
7 social circle, and nowadays, 43% to 80% of all
8 jobs are acquired through networking family,
9 friends and contacts. Two, industry, especially
10 big employers, I'll give an example, Siemens, even
11 though they say that they prefer hiring veterans,
12 they also prefer that the veteran have some
13 experience in industry, that is out after service.
14 I don't know what the reason is, but they don't
15 accept the responsibilities and duties that the
16 soldier performed as equal to that of a civilian
17 employee in a parallel position. So I made a
18 chart of all the duties of one type of worker, in
19 this case a clerk, in the armed forces, and then
20 on the other side listed the duties of the same
21 person in industry. And also, if a person is
22 looking for a job, let's say if there is a large
23 company like AT&T or a hospital or nursing home,
24 most of these companies have their own software,
25 because they have specific needs, and it's been

1
2 developed for that. Now very often in even
3 government websites for government jobs, you will
4 see in the job description preferences listed that
5 the person understand the mode of operation of the
6 government agency, or familiarization with the
7 company's procedures and methods. This is very
8 common, okay. Because they don't want to pay for
9 a learning curve, they want someone to jump in
10 running into the position. Thirdly, veterans come
11 back, and as you said, the gentleman said before,
12 they're in a totally different social position and
13 they have to re-adjust their minds, and so forth.
14 They may get into a fight, or they may have some
15 light post-traumatic stress disorder, or medium or
16 severe. And they might get kicked out and become
17 homeless. Once they become homeless, there's a
18 downward spiral, they're ... they might become
19 involved with drugs or alcohol to self-medicate,
20 and of course, if you are not ... if you do not have
21 any place to live, you don't have an address at
22 which you an employer can contact you. And we
23 have made inroads in this area, but there is still
24 not enough beds or staffing for these homeless
25 shelters, and also there's not enough facilities

1
2 for women. And I want to add that if a woman has
3 been through rape in the military, the double
4 shock, the double trauma, I think that from what
5 I've seen, they need to recuperate in a residence,
6 in a sheltered environment which is not just a
7 dormitory-type situation, where they can get the
8 kind of care that they need to become functioning
9 again. The other thing was that a lot of people
10 who come back from the service don't have a
11 resume, and so the gentleman said they spend time
12 working out these resumes. I did quote somebody
13 who was very ... a writer for a job site on the
14 internet, who ... her name is Diane Hudson, she
15 works for jobhunt.org, and she was able to
16 translate the skills that were acquired by someone
17 who used to work in bomb disposal to ... who became
18 a regional manager in pharmaceutical sales, just
19 be translating his skills. So it is possible to
20 acquire positions that are not just entry-level
21 positions that person would have, you know, gotten
22 straight out of high school, like the ones we were
23 talking about before. Now, the next thing is that
24 the MOS that the Department of Defense gives to a
25 soldier when they enter the service is very often

1
2 the same MOS as when they leave. It does not, in
3 many cases, take into account the changes and the
4 kind of education and experience that the person
5 has received. So this presents an obstacle to
6 getting a job, because they're not getting credit,
7 even by the military, for their acquired skills.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Could you just
9 clarify what MOS stands for?

10 MS. HAMANAKA: It's like the job
11 you do. Like if you're- -

12 MALE VOICE: [Interposing] Military
13 Occupational Specialty.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you,
15 audience.

16 MS. HAMANAKA: Then I made ... I made
17 a chart of over 30 veterans that I knew, that what
18 happened to them. Six were dead, one from
19 suicide, five were completely disabled. Then
20 there were people who were ... mostly from PTSD, and
21 then there was moderate PTSD, where people are
22 students taking advantage of the GI Bill, and of
23 the people who were employed, one is an instructor
24 for the reserves in the Air Force, two are
25 officers, two work for the government, I met one

1
2 in state legislature, and one is working for
3 Christine Quinn. And the others were working in
4 different jobs. And three were female, one is a
5 mother, two were never deployed. A mother of a
6 person who's been deployed four times suggested
7 this, she said, could we have a questionnaire
8 three months before separation of every soldier,
9 do you have a job, do you have a place to stay, do
10 you foresee any challenges to making the
11 transition to civilian life? I know that
12 Commissioner Holliday suggested raising these
13 questions at the moment they're deployed, which
14 would be very good. But I would say that there
15 needs to be a follow-up and a lot of times when
16 people are discharged, in order to avoid having to
17 stay in the service any longer, they'll say that
18 they don't have PTSD when they do. And so I think
19 there should ... we think there should be an
20 automatic mandatory examination for PTSD, because
21 of the high incidence of denial. And then you
22 have, you know, the situation where people come
23 home and commit suicide, and that's extremely
24 shattering for everybody. Or someone who is over-
25 medicated, like that guy who got eight medications

1
2 that was documented in New York Times, and he died
3 because the prescriptions contradicted each other.
4 I think the next thing is that we think that
5 veterans who do not utilize the GI Bill should be
6 identified as a discriminated minority, because of
7 the foregoing conditions. Any time you have a
8 section of the population that has two or three
9 times the amount of strikes against them in terms
10 of utilization of services, or under-employment, I
11 think they should be considered a minority,
12 because that way a violation against their rights
13 can be considered a violation of their civil
14 rights and they can be employers who discriminate
15 against veterans can be prosecuted. And I would
16 say that one shining example in New York City of a
17 victory is the fact that they have ... we have many
18 pedlars, street vendors, who've been able to make
19 a living because they have these preferential
20 licenses for veterans, so we would encourage the
21 number of licenses that are issued to veterans to
22 be continued. And also I've said before, I wish
23 that we had an ongoing committee, because you
24 know, these hearings are great, but unfortunately
25 people have schedules, and it would be nice to

1
2 have an ongoing committee for veterans, people in
3 the community, employers, or job agencies, that
4 help veterans to have some kind of ongoing
5 relationship. We can measure and monitor and be
6 touch and create a nexus that might complement
7 each other. I think that's mostly what I wanted
8 to say.

9 MALE VOICE: Good, great, thank
10 you. Very good.

11 MR. ROSSI: Good afternoon, Council
12 members. My name is Dan Rossi, I'm a Vietnam
13 veteran. I imagine in this room I probably have
14 more experience as a small businessman employing
15 veterans than anyone here. I've been doing it for
16 over 30 years. I'm in the vending business, and I
17 started out as a manufacturer, and taught men how
18 to become sheet metal workers and truck drivers
19 and vendors and all that. And I probably know
20 more about the vending industry than just about
21 anybody. Just to hit on just one small area of
22 the industry, because it's just too confusing. In
23 1993, the City Council generously created an
24 additional 100 permits, on top of the 3,000
25 permits that existed, and they created a priority

1 system. The priority went to the 206 disabled
2 veterans that were kicked out of midtown Manhattan
3 in 1991, and then it went to disabled vets,
4 disabled people, and so on. Since that time,
5 since 1993, through attrition, over 2,000 permits
6 have become available, just normally, just people
7 leave the business. How many veterans, since they
8 have priority to these permits, do you think got
9 them? Only 33 disabled veterans since then, since
10 1993, have been able to get a food vending permit,
11 when they have priority over single person in the
12 city. So, this is all ... you know me, so you know
13 everything I'm saying is rock-bottom God's ...
14 gospel. The last time we spoke, Council Member
15 Eugene, you asked me why do we have so much
16 opposition against the disabled veteran. Now, I
17 assumed you were talking about Christine Quinn and
18 Mayor Bloomberg, and now I'm going to tell you
19 why. In 1993, they created 100 additional
20 permits, but not for veterans. They created them
21 to lease them. The people who were running the
22 program for the veterans were put in charge of the
23 permits, and they went out- -

25 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [Interposing]

1
2 Let me just straighten something, let me just
3 explain something for the record.

4 MR. ROSSI: Go ahead.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I didn't
6 assume anybody, my question was- -

7 MR. ROSSI: [Interposing] I know.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

9 MR. ROSSI: But I meant- -

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [Interposing]
11 Why the veterans, you know, didn't receive the
12 services that they deserved.

13 MR. ROSSI: Well, I'm going to, I'm
14 going to tell you why.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I didn't
16 assume anyone.

17 MR. ROSSI: Well, I, you know- -

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [Interposing]
19 Don't justify by that- -

20 MR. ROSSI: [Interposing] I've met
21 with Commissioner Walsh, I've met with Dykstra
22 when she was in, and Minsk. I've met with
23 Feinblatt when he was the coordinator of criminal
24 justice. I just don't speak to you, I speak to
25 the other side too. Everyone knows the story.

1
2 What they did, the biggest mistake they made was
3 when they were attempting to lease these 100
4 permits, they came to me. And no one knew I was a
5 veteran. I never once went out and said I was a
6 disabled vet, and I blew the whistle on them. But
7 what they did was to make this a profitable thing,
8 they locked those 100 permits in a separate
9 category. So now the veterans, this veteran here,
10 he didn't have priority to a permit of the 3,100
11 permits, he only had priority to 100 permits. But
12 that's not what the law states. The law states
13 that you have priority to any permit that becomes
14 available. So you gave out 2,000 permits, but
15 only 33 went to disabled vets. Now, I'm putting
16 you in a very awkward position, because someone is
17 going to have to do something about this. The
18 veterans don't have money for lawyers, and we
19 can't get locked up for two, three years running
20 around courts and all that. We've been coming to
21 you for now, how many years, Councilman James?
22 Five years. Since the Committee has been founded,
23 we've been saying the same thing, you have to help
24 us. So, again, Councilman Eugene, for about the
25 50th time, either you help us, or don't help us,

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2 but don't come here and tell me how much proud you
3 are that we're such great guys, and then when we
4 walk out the door, you forget about us. We're
5 just asking you to knock on Quinn's door and say,
6 "This is a serious matter". You have to do
7 something. You know, I'm frustrated as it is,
8 I've got kids calling me up to go to work, I've
9 got five veterans, I've only got one push cart.
10 I've got five men making a living off of one push
11 cart. How much do you think we're making? We're
12 making \$300, \$400 a week. But I'm doing what I
13 can do. I don't know what else to say, this place
14 is- -

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [Interposing]
16 Thank you very much. And let me just ... thank you
17 very much, you know, I admire your passion.

18 MR. ROSSI: Don't admire my
19 passion, help me out.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Let me finish,
21 and as a matter of fact, you know, five years ago,
22 I was not even a City Council member yet, I was
23 not five years ago. And I had just become the
24 Chairman of the Committee on Veteran's Affairs not
25 even a year yet. But when I get the opportunity

1
2 to become, it was an opportunity, a great
3 opportunity, and I was proud of that, to become
4 the Chairman. When I looked at this situation, I
5 was upset and man, we had several conversations.
6 And I told you I don't understand how come our
7 veterans- -

8 MR. ROSSI: [Interposing] I just
9 explained it to you.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes, and I
11 told you ... and I told you I didn't understand how,
12 you know, our veterans who put their lives in
13 danger for us didn't receive the best services
14 available. And I said that I pledge and I commit
15 myself to work with my colleagues in the city,
16 state and Federal, to insure that all veterans,
17 you know, receive the best services. But you do
18 not ... you understand that myself alone cannot do
19 it, it is a big battle. And I'm going to repeat
20 again, and I'm committed to work and to do
21 everything in my power to help.

22 MR. ROSSI: But you can't ... I'm a
23 tough guy, but when a guy is eight feet tall, then
24 I need help.

25 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Excuse me, Mr.

Rossi- -

MR. ROSSI: [Interposing] You need the help.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm committed to help, and I'm telling you that I will work hard, and I will do everything in my power, because you deserve it. And I think, you know, this is not a privilege, you see what I mean?

MR. ROSSI: Yeah, you've told me this at least ten times already.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So ... yes, but you understand that- -

MR. ROSSI: [Interposing] Okay, so let's do it. What do you want from us.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: This is- -

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing] Mr. Chair, I'm sorry, I'm going to cut in.

MR. ROSSI: I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You understand that- -

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing] It's not fair to our other members of the panel.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: That's right.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: And so we need

1
2 to move on to Mr. Crescenzi.

3 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: As well as Mr.
5 Wright.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: You've got to
7 understand each other, the effort that we are
8 doing, we City Council members, all members of the
9 Committee on Veteran's Affairs and also the Small
10 Business Committee, we are working now, we are
11 trying to address the issue, we are trying to help
12 you. We want to do it, but it is not going to be
13 easy, you know that. You have been there before,
14 so you have to work together with us.

15 MR. ROSSI: I've been working with
16 you.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And it's only
18 by working together- -

19 MR. ROSSI: [Interposing] But what
20 do you want me to do? I can only- -

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [Interposing]
22 It is only by working together and by trusting
23 each other, that we are going to get what we want
24 for our veterans. But not by fighting each other.
25 All right? We're working, we're trying hard.

MR. ROSSI: We want you to fight.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: We're trying hard, we're trying hard. Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Mr. Crescenzi.

MR. CRESCENZI: My name is Armando Crescenzi, I also work as a vendor, a specialized vending license as a disabled vet. I feel Dan's frustration, he's been at it a lot longer than I have, but it's just outrageous, the way we're being treated out there by the city agencies, Consumer Affairs in particular, Parks Department and Health Department, it's just not right. And I'd just like to mention that I'm grateful to Ms. Hamanaka for providing some valuable evidence. Veterans need these positions, we need these licenses, we need these permits. These are privileges that were granted to us under state law and Federal law. We need this kind of help, we need this kind of work. Not every veteran is accessible to an ordinary job. We suffer with a lot of disabilities, a lot of homelessness, and these licenses or permits, they're vital for us, we desperately need them. And because of our disabilities, we have no effective voice. So we

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2 come here before the Council month after month,
3 trying to be heard, and it's a darn shame. I hear
4 all the numbers, I hear all the statistics, but
5 the thing is, the things that can be done right
6 away to help disabled vets and veterans find
7 gainful employment immediately, and as Dan pointed
8 out, one of the things we can do is start with the
9 Department of Health and find out why disabled
10 vets are not getting food cart permits. We're not
11 getting outer borough permits, we're not getting
12 seasonal permits, we're not getting full-term
13 mobile permits. They have 3,100 permits and like
14 Dan said, it's less than 1% of these food cart
15 permits that are held by disabled vets. I smell a
16 rat, something is going wrong here. And as a
17 matter of fact, I brought something to read,
18 because I knew I was going to get, I was going to
19 get excited, and since today's topic is
20 reintegration of veterans into the workforce and
21 the small business community, I'm suggesting, I'm
22 suggesting, number one, that- -

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing]

24 I'm sorry, Mr. Crescenzi. Could we have everyone
25 put their phones on vibrate? Thank you very much.

1
2 MR. CRESCENZI: I have quite a few
3 suggestions. One of them is that right now at the
4 moment, while there are thousands of disabled vets
5 who are licensed with the Department of Consumer
6 Affairs who would like to work, you know, good
7 spots are drying up, and it's hard to find viable
8 spots. All the good spots are in midtown, and at
9 the moment there is a number restriction on the
10 number of disabled vets who can work in midtown,
11 it's 105, all right. And midtown is from 30th
12 Street to 65th Street, Second Avenue to Ninth
13 Avenue. You can put a lot of people to work if
14 you limit it to one veteran per block face, a one-
15 disabled-veteran-per-block-face, you can
16 automatically put three or four hundred veterans
17 to work, just with the stroke of a pen. So that
18 number restriction, there should be a moratorium
19 on the enforcement of that number restriction of
20 disabled vets working in midtown. That's my first
21 suggestion. My second suggestion is, you need to
22 open up the avenues. At the moment we're only
23 allowed to work on the cross-streets, we're not
24 allowed to work on Second Avenue to Ninth Avenue.
25 If you open up the avenues, you will create

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2 hundreds of more vending opportunities for
3 disabled vets who can operate in those areas. I'd
4 also like to point out that as the Department of
5 Health refuses to issue food cart permits to
6 disabled vets, that there be an immediate
7 investigation by an independent prosecutor, to
8 investigate the malfeasance and impropriety
9 regarding the issuance of licenses by the
10 Department of Health to disabled vets. For some ...
11 I believe it's because we have certain privileges
12 and we have certain priorities to go in more
13 desirable spots, that they are deliberately
14 withholding permits from disabled vets. And
15 also, as Dan pointed out, because we haven't been
16 getting ... they issue food cart permits on a
17 regular basis, they're not giving them out to
18 disabled vets, so I would also propose that any
19 food cart permit that has been issued to a non-
20 disabled vet since 2005, that that permit be
21 rescinded, and that that ... and that such permit be
22 re-issued to a disabled vet who has been on the
23 food cart waiting list. That all food carts, all
24 the food carts, be prohibited from vending in
25 Manhattan in the midtown core unless they're being

1 operated or owned by a disabled vet. Also I would
2 like to propose that in the City of New York all
3 building owners, all real estate management, be
4 prohibited from unlawfully blocking sidewalk space
5 with illegal planters and other illegal sidewalk
6 furniture. The only purpose of those illegal
7 planters is to occupy a spot, to put a veteran out
8 of work, it is outrageous. There is no permission
9 for them to put those planters on the street, they
10 have no authority to put them, it is an illegal
11 sidewalk furniture, and it's putting a disabled
12 vet out of work. Our workplace is being
13 deliberately and illegally occupied by planters
14 and fixtures, with the intent to drive us out of
15 business, which happens to be in direct violation
16 of the American With Disabilities Act, and in some
17 circumstances, it's a violation of the anti-trust
18 act, the Clayton Act and the Sherman Anti-trust
19 Act. All right, I also want to point out, because
20 of all the ticket blitzes and the unfair
21 harassment that we're getting out on the street
22 from Parks Department and from New York City
23 Police Department and Alpha, I would also like to
24 point out that because we are disabled vets, we
25

1
2 are entitled to reasonable accommodations in the
3 workplace. The sidewalk is our workplace, and you
4 have cops come along with a tape measure and they
5 give you a violation because you're not ten feet
6 from the crosswalk, you're nine feet from a
7 crosswalk. A reasonable accommodation should be a
8 reasonable accommodation. We can't always fit
9 into a particular space, or we might be too close
10 to a doorway. Or sometimes you have a bus stop,
11 and we're not allowed to work at a bus stop, that
12 goes on for three or four blocks, or a taxi stand.
13 How about a reasonable accommodation in carving
14 out a spot for a disabled vet if it's a viable
15 location and a bus stop is three blocks long, why
16 shouldn't we be allowed to work there? Or if
17 there's an obstruction to the curb line, why are
18 we getting harassed? Under the ADA we are
19 protected from such type of petty abuse, and it's
20 outrageous the way we're being treated by the
21 city. I feel Dan's frustration. I'd just like to
22 say finally that we want our privileges back, we
23 want our licenses back, we want our newsstands
24 back, we want our permits back. I don't know
25 what's going on, it's like an illegal monopoly out

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2 there. We can't get these permits or these
3 licenses, and I don't know what's going on with
4 Consumer Affairs and the Health Department and the
5 Parks Department. It's outrageous, and we come
6 here month after month after month, and nothing
7 gets done, and we're just at our wit's end. So if
8 you're really interested in helping people, in
9 helping veterans get reintegrated back into the
10 workforce and back into the small business
11 community, help us with these internal obstacles,
12 at Consumer Affairs, at Parks and Health
13 Departments, and with Alpha, it's outrageous.
14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very
16 much, and again, I understand your passion. As a
17 matter of fact, you know, I have this dedication
18 to work together with you and those who are
19 concerned about our veterans, and I guarantee you
20 that I'm going to continue to do whatever is
21 possible, whatever is in my power.

22 MR. CRESCENZI: They're running us
23 around like mutts out there, it's a crime. And to
24 believe that this- -

25 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [Interposing]

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2 I do understand, I do understand your frustration
3 and your position, and again our veterans deserve
4 the best services that we can provide. And I
5 guarantee you, and I say it again, that I will do
6 everything under my power, honestly, to try to
7 resolve ... I cannot say that I'm going to resolve
8 it, if I say that, you'd say that I am lying,
9 because this is a very complicated situation. But
10 I will work hard for you guys. Thank you very
11 much.

12 MR. CRESCENZI: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay.

14 MR. WRIGHT, JR.: Yes, good
15 afternoon.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.
17 You can go, sir.

18 MR. WRIGHT, JR.: Yes, I'm Bernard
19 Maurice Wright, Jr. I do hereby affirm that being
20 a disabled veteran of the armed forces I have come
21 here today to speak out on behalf of veterans who
22 are vendors and merchants. I became a vendor
23 while at the VA hospital at Brooklyn in Fort
24 Hamilton. Another veteran approached me and asked
25 me did I want to work for myself, and I told him

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2 yes, and he told me what to do. I followed his
3 directions to the T and I did it, and now I've
4 been a vendor for the past six years. Here are
5 some points of facts that need immediate attention
6 for all veterans concerned. One, veterans are
7 being exploited and paid a percentage, as opposed
8 to having their own merchandise. In fact, we
9 received a phone call at the street vendor project
10 on this morning from someone seeking to hire
11 veterans because under the caps veterans placed on
12 vendor's license, veterans are the only group who
13 obtain a vendor's license. Veterans' exploitation
14 is therefore the direct result under the caps
15 placed on merchandise and food and vendors
16 throughout the city. Number two, veterans are not
17 given the opportunity to have a small business
18 loan of \$3,000 to start on their own, as opposed
19 to working under someone else. Veterans who are
20 capable and are ready to take on their own
21 responsibility to manage their own business, and
22 to know where to get their supplies and materials,
23 and to begin their own business, should be
24 supported with the help of a small business loan.
25 Number three, veterans are not receiving more

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2 outreach services towards the vendors who are
3 actually on the street. Street vendors project is
4 actually involved in vendor outreach and
5 education, and would welcome collaboration with
6 Veteran's Affairs towards featuring the goal of
7 supporting veteran vendors. Veteran vendor
8 leaders at the street vendor project are prepared
9 to spearhead this outreach and support effort.
10 Number four, veterans also need more government
11 intervention with outpatient drug and alcohol
12 screening for vendors and merchants, funded at
13 both Federal and local level. For example, many
14 veterans face post-traumatic stress disorders and
15 find themselves in homeless shelters throughout
16 the city. Many more government programs are
17 needed to support veterans so that they may pursue
18 self-sufficiency throughout occupations such as
19 street vendings. In conclusion, we ask to be
20 allowed to be self-employed, self-sufficient,
21 self-empowered individuals who are able to take
22 care of their families. We want our lives back
23 and we want to be able to be productive members of
24 society. For many veterans street vending is an
25 important pathway to participating in society and

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2 to do what is honorable.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you very
4 much, Mr. Wright, Jr.

5 MR. WRIGHT, JR.: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I wanted to
7 just commend the testimonies, having come here and
8 waiting to be able to testify, clearly this
9 vending license issue is not something that is old
10 to this Council, it is in a very long and awaited
11 conversation of just what should be a negotiated
12 effort between the Council and the administration,
13 and very difficult to find a resolution, because
14 there is two sides to every coin, correct? We
15 have the vending issue, as far as the push cart
16 licensing, which is very separate and apart from
17 the food vending license, and one can be given
18 without the other. And then you have the issue of
19 our small businesses in commercial establishments,
20 which is also feeling the effect of having to
21 compete with vending outside of ... you know,
22 vending without walls, let's call it. And so we
23 have to make sure that we are providing what is a
24 negotiated effort, and we have to have willing
25 participants from all sides of the table, not just

1
2 one or two. And so I'm not trying to be
3 insensitive to the matter, but letting you know
4 that I acknowledge how complicated the issue is,
5 and it is something that we know in this Council
6 needs to be addressed. And I hope that we can
7 come to terms with the administration, both the
8 Department of Consumer Affairs and the Department
9 of Health, which are just continuously
10 perpetuating a black market. Because clearly I
11 know for a fact that there are people out there
12 that are paying \$30,000 for what is initially a
13 \$200 cost of licensing. And so I am no fool, and
14 I am not not aware. I want to just thank you all
15 for coming here today, and I do want to share with
16 you, a few of your testimonies had referred to
17 lending opportunities, and other services in
18 relationship to small business, and I wanted to
19 just share with you this resource guide that the
20 Council has been proactive in making sure that
21 this was an effort in trying to publish what is a
22 very direct, very concise way of looking for
23 resources such as lending opportunity, business
24 planning, because there's opportunities where
25 there's lending, streams of lending capacity, but

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2 the business does not have a business plan, and
3 therefore are, on the mere fact that there's an
4 absence of a business plan, rejected. And so the
5 denial is something that we're trying to work
6 with, whether it's the general population or just
7 veterans, I want this to be a guide that you can
8 share with fellow veterans in New York City.
9 Thank you very much.

10 MR. WRIGHT, JR.: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: I'd like to
12 call the next panel. Glendon Witt, Veterans
13 Across America [aside] Thank you very much,
14 whenever you'd like. Derek Wilmot, Street Vendor
15 Project, Richard Rivera ... is Glendon Witt here?

16 MR. WITT: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you.
18 Derek Wilmot, is Derek Wilmot here?

19 MALE VOICE: He had to leave.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Okay, thank
21 you, duly noted, I will recognize Derek Wilmot was
22 with us and had to leave and did submit testimony,
23 and it will be read into the record. I'd like to
24 call Richard Rivera, is Richard here?

25 MALE VOICE: Richard? He must have

1
2 left.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Barbara Morris.

4 Thank you, Barbara, for being so patient. And
5 Chris Mustello. Thank you very much, both of you.
6 I'd like everyone who is having a conversation,
7 please take that outside so that we can continue
8 this last panel. Mr. Witt, whenever you're ready,
9 thank you.

10 MR. WITT: Good afternoon, allow me
11 to introduce myself, my name is Glen Witt, and I
12 am a proud veteran, having served 23 years in the
13 United States Navy. As Veterans Across America's
14 Champion Mentoring Program manager, I am
15 privileged to be in the business of enhancing
16 Councilwoman Reyna's, Councilman Eugene's and City
17 Council Speaker Quinn's mission of reintegrating
18 veterans into quality employment and/or small
19 business opportunities. Before I describe the
20 path to Veterans Across America's 65% employment
21 success record for veterans, I should also add
22 that my avocation is that of a history buff, and
23 as such I did my research to find out that on this
24 day, May 10th, 1872, the first woman to run for
25 president, Victoria Woodhull, was nominated for

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2 president by the newly-formed Equal Rights Party
3 at Apollo Hall in New York City. I would trust
4 that one day in the not-too-distant future that
5 other history buffs will make note of May 10th,
6 2011 as the day two other gifted and dedicated
7 women by the names of Quinn and Reyna were
8 similarly propelled into history. On September
9 12th, 1996 Veterans Across America was formed at
10 the personal request of President Clinton when
11 VAA's founder Wes Poriotis reported the findings
12 of a Joint Chiefs of Staff study on the deplorable
13 employment status of veterans who had transitioned
14 from the first Gulf War. The study highlighted
15 the remnants of a post-Vietnam employer
16 deselective bias, in which veterans were being
17 denied access to compete for quality employment.
18 I am glad to report that in this post-9/11 era
19 American behaviors about their military have
20 changed. But the mood swing hasn't always crossed
21 the employment threshold. Young impoverished and
22 financially-destitute veterans and reservists,
23 former enlisted service persons all troop into our
24 offices by the dozens seeking employment, health
25 and business mentors. Some have been unemployed

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2 or deeply under-employed for two years or more.
3 Job boards and technology platforms rarely work
4 for them. One young cryptologist, a Navy
5 cryptologist, has sent 1,100 resumes to all the
6 job boards that he can find and he received two
7 replies and no interviews resulted. While this is
8 an uncommon amount, this is ... 300 to 350 is
9 routine. One unemployed E5, a 22-year-old
10 sergeant who manned a checkpoint in Fallujah,
11 lived in a cargo container for four months without
12 running water or electricity, tore my emotional
13 guts out. How can I have been entrusted to
14 protect the American people from terrorism and now
15 I can't even be entrusted to hold a job? National
16 Guardsmen and reservists who once owned businesses
17 or held jobs, return after multiple deployments to
18 jobs that disappear or self-owned businesses that
19 have imploded. An Army National Guardsman, E3,
20 recently walked eleven miles to our offices to his
21 interview with me one evening. Then when asked
22 why he came in the evening, it was because he
23 needed the time to walk there, to get there, and
24 also when I asked why are you wearing a uniform in
25 the middle of the week, I was joking with him, but

1
2 he replied, "It's the only appropriate clothing I
3 have to come to an office". His employment had
4 been terminated by a manager fearful that the
5 young man would be recalled to active duty.
6 Unlawful? Yes, but it's very, very real. For
7 veterans the unemployment statistics are a lie,
8 the numbers of homeless National Guardsmen from a
9 National Guard armory recently told one of DEA's
10 former Army staff members that they were homeless,
11 but too embarrassed to be part of any homeless or
12 unemployment data. 50% of the unit, or more, are
13 unemployed. There was five of those unit members
14 that were unemployed that were living under a
15 bridge in New York City. The common denominator
16 to all of the above veterans is they lack a
17 network. That's where Veterans Across America's
18 Champion Mentoring comes into play and rescues
19 them by providing a business catalyst in a one-on-
20 one managed relationship with a veteran. We call
21 it a Six Month to Success program. The business
22 catalyst who we call the champion mentor
23 aggressively works his or her network of
24 customers, suppliers, vendors, church members, the
25 alumni associations they belong to, and they

1 transfer this network to the veteran mentee. The
2 one thing that's in common of all the testimony
3 today about jobs and the creation of jobs is the
4 mentors or these network catalyts, that we need
5 someone that can go in before they get to the HR
6 shops, and instead of going to HR and being turned
7 down with all the other tens of thousands of
8 people going there, and being placed in another
9 pile or electronic bit bucket somewhere, they need
10 to be placed in front of someone that can
11 interview them, realize their skills, what they
12 bring to the table, can translate beyond all the
13 programs that are out there to tell you what goes
14 on in a computer and why they can spit out that
15 they should be able to do. We all know the
16 computers don't hire people, people hire people,
17 and if we can get them in front of the right
18 hiring managers, they can go and reverse the
19 process, and instead of asking HR to hire you and
20 to get you in front of someone, that person can in
21 turn go back and tell the HR, "I want that person,
22 they are vetted, they are ready to go, bring them
23 on board now." The champion mentor provides that
24 last 100 yards to finish the job search marathon.
25

1
2 Inspired by the greatest generation, those World
3 War II GI's who returned to be given an
4 opportunity to learn business, these veterans
5 created America's middle class. We are doing the
6 same thing for our present returning GI's,
7 especially those who have combat infantry skills,
8 which rarely translate into the so-called private
9 sector job arena. We were smart enough to
10 innovate this program with unprecedented success,
11 not hardly. It took World War II veterans to tell
12 us on a light note that when they returned, they
13 had PSD degrees, poor, smart and with a deep
14 desire to get rich. With Speaker Quinn,
15 Councilman Reyna, and Councilman Eugene, and the
16 entire City Council's support, I can promise you
17 that Veterans Across America will continue to
18 invent this post-World War II creation engine into
19 the ranks of those who so desperately need it now,
20 our Afghan and Iraq veterans, the newest and
21 greatest generation, with an emphasis on those
22 financially-destitute and impoverished who I
23 believe we have an obligation to help. I would
24 like to request each of the Council members be a
25 champion mentor for one veteran. After all,

1
2 Councilman James Sanders, a former Marine, is a
3 champion mentor for two of our veterans now, and
4 has been very successful, by the way. And I even
5 placed, because he said he wanted the challenge, I
6 gave him two of them. But then again, even though
7 my Navy counterparts say it ain't so, Councilman
8 Sanders says the Marines always did twice the work
9 the rest of us do.

10 MALE VOICE: Hurrah.

11 MR. WITT: And then there are over
12 3.5 million veteran-owned businesses nationwide,
13 which is approximately 18% to 20% of the nation's
14 businesses, according to the U.S. Small Business
15 Administration. They also state that veterans are
16 more apt to start businesses and last longer than
17 non-veterans, understandable when you look at the
18 traits developed in the military, such as
19 leadership skills, working toward a goal,
20 teamwork, never punching a clock, and more
21 responsibility than most will see in a lifetime.
22 There are a number of entrepreneurial training
23 programs, both public and private, that have
24 recognized the needs and desires of many
25 transitioning troops to start and run their own

1
2 businesses. Due to the economic hardship many
3 face upon leaving the service, support must be
4 provided by Federal, state and local agencies and
5 the financial industry to assist in the deployment
6 of veteran-owned businesses. Currently the
7 wonderful organization here in town, the Robin
8 Hood Foundation, is looking into an
9 entrepreneurial training program plus a lending
10 source for impoverished/low-income veterans in New
11 York City and Fordham is offering a special summer
12 program for aspiring veteran entrepreneurs. In
13 the Robin Hood program, if they select you, they
14 bring everything with them. They monitor you to a
15 T, they bring every kind of assistance that you
16 can imagine in a program. We are examples of that
17 at Veterans Across America. Until my counterpart,
18 Tina Belvedere, who is here with us, kept on to
19 Robin Hood to tell them that they support poor
20 people, why don't you support veterans that are
21 destitute, after six phone calls with them, they
22 finally acquiesced and came, brought us to their
23 facilities and in turn came to ours. It's a very
24 painful process and very thorough, but we are the
25 very first veterans advocacy group to ever receive

1
2 a grant from Robin Hood Foundation, and as a
3 result of that and all the paperwork that was
4 submitted to them, Tom Brokaw invited Admiral
5 Mullin to Robin Hood to discuss the needs of
6 veterans advocacy groups and veterans, and that
7 resulted last night in \$47 million being raised
8 with Lady Gaga there. The small business
9 development centers, Seedco, Score, the veterans
10 business outreach centers, the entrepreneurs boot
11 camp for veterans with disabilities, and Ventures
12 for Veterans, are examples of the type of help
13 available, and more support for programs such as
14 these are needed. There are just under one
15 million veterans in the New York area, and I'm
16 trying to get how many veteran-owned businesses
17 there are. We have someone here that had that,
18 I'll reach out to them, and then Councilman
19 Greenfield had a question about, and a lot of
20 questions here today have been, how do they track
21 transitioning, veterans coming here. There's a
22 very easy solution: when I was in the Navy, and
23 people were separating, transitioning out, one of
24 my jobs was to provide the funding for that.
25 Someone has to track where they are going to,

1
2 because when you put stuff on the Mayflower moving
3 van, it leaves Washington D.C., it arrives in New
4 York, someone has to know where that truck
5 stopped. That's, after that they lose all
6 contact. However, another program for that is
7 when the transitioning military signs up with the
8 transitional assistance program, they have a block
9 they check, it's called the I/R, the inactive
10 ready reserve. And the vets have to provide the
11 zip codes and city of origin that they are leaving
12 to come back, that's already being tracked by the
13 government. And also VA will pass the request on
14 to Matt Flavin at ... he's the special assistant to
15 President Obama and liaison for the White House,
16 and also to Ray Jefferson of the Department of
17 Labor, who is Secretary for Veterans Affairs, and
18 we will get that information to them and request
19 that they send it here. And also on another note,
20 the Marine Corps is leading the charge. Once
21 again, don't tell Councilman Sanders I bragged on
22 Marines here, I'll never live it down. The
23 Marines are leading the charge to prepare the
24 Marines for getting out of the service. They have
25 a program that we are going to be probably be the

1
2 lead agency on. Six months prior to getting out
3 of the Marine Corps, if you tell them, I am
4 separating, I am not going to stay in the Marine
5 Corps, instead of harassing people like they used
6 to, running them into the ground, the Marines are
7 actually going to assign a business mentor to them
8 at the six month point prior to getting out, so
9 there will be a seamless transition into the
10 civilian workforce. Hopefully this will result in
11 a high-quality job, and then if this works, it's a
12 pilot program that will be extended to all the
13 military, and they want to do this rather quickly.
14 And then a PSA announcement for veterans across
15 America, on May 24th, VAA in partnership with the
16 New York Times, Higher Disability Solutions,
17 business leadership networks, recruit military and
18 a few others, are going to have a career expo at
19 the New Yorker Hotel in New York City, providing
20 jobs in New York for New Yorkers, and we expect
21 7,00 to 7,500 attendees there, we already have
22 4,000 pre-registered, and the Chairman of the
23 Joint Chiefs of Staff endorsed our program the
24 other day, so we don't really know how many people
25 will show up. And every employer there has

1
2 promised us that they have scrubbed their
3 requisition sheets and they show there will be
4 jobs, and JP Morgan-Chase is on record, they will
5 hire a minimum of 200 that day.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: That's quite
7 impressive information, Mr. Witt, and I just
8 wanted to let you know, I mentored a local
9 resident constituent veteran, that I hired and
10 remained with me, and he thought the Army was
11 tough until he came to work for me, and so I take
12 pride in the fact of what he referred to and made
13 reference to, and so I hope that his transition
14 into, from my office into another sector has been
15 fruitful for him, and I won't mention any names,
16 but I know that he's doing very well, thank you.
17 And I do believe in the mentorship-mentee program
18 and I think that's a valuable resource that you
19 have embarked in, in trying to expand, and the
20 call-out to us as members of the Council to be
21 able to mentor. And so I would gladly continue to
22 participate in a more formal way through your
23 office.

24 MR. WITT: We would be more than
25 glad to help you.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you.

MS. MORRIS: Thank you, my name is Barbara Morris, I'm the widow of John Morris, a 100% service-connected disabled veteran. John was #45 on the 2007 waiting list.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Go ahead.

MS. MORRIS: I was waiting for your attention.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Go ahead.

MS. MORRIS: Thank you. He was #45 on the 2007 disabled veteran list for a mobile food permit, he died, he didn't get it. I came here today, and I had testimony prepared and I think Dan said it all. The veterans, the disabled veterans, they need strong leaders, very strong leaders, and I hear you say that you're committed to helping the veterans and you will do everything that you can on this issue, and I'm disappointed that I haven't heard from you, I sent you much correspondence. I've never got an acknowledgement, and I'm disappointed that you failed to follow up on your promise to meet with us, the last time we did meet. I'm hearing you say that you're going to be doing a lot to help

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2 us, but yet you haven't told us what you've done.
3 What have you done with the materials that we sent
4 you? What have you done at our request to get
5 answers for us? What are you doing to help the
6 veterans who want the mobile food permits? And
7 these permits are going to all these people who
8 are not disabled veterans. We know that there's a
9 problem, and I come here to ask you very directly,
10 sir, if you can't help us, please find someone who
11 can. And if you have answers, if you have
12 anything that you would like to us, why you're not
13 asking us? And if you've been meeting on this
14 issue with Christine Quinn or the Mayor's staff,
15 or whoever, why you don't get back to us with
16 information on their progress? We're very
17 disappointed, the silence is deafening, it's
18 deafening to us. These men are getting so
19 discouraged and so frustrated, they come here
20 hearing after hearing after hearing. When the
21 room ... by the time we get to speak, the room is
22 empty, the veterans are gone, and we really need
23 your strength, we need your help. If you have
24 something to tell us, please do. You have my
25 letters, you have my name, you have my

1
2 correspondence, you have all the evidence that
3 it's scandalous what is being done to the veterans
4 by the Health Department, and we really, really
5 need your strong leadership on this, sir.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very
7 much for your testimony, I will answer later on.
8 The next speaker, please.

9 MR. MUSTELLO: My name is Chris
10 Mustello, I'm on the Committee for the Disabled
11 Veteran Vendors, and I have about 30 disabled vets
12 that come to me and want to know why we can't get
13 a permit. State law grants us the opportunity to
14 have a permit, why do we go out to work as a rent-
15 a-vet and work for somebody else? I've been very
16 successful in the street as a food vendor, and I'm
17 willing to share my knowledge and help other
18 disabled vets, but they come to me I can't help
19 them, with all the knowledge and resources I have.
20 Without a permit, I can't help them. While
21 hundreds of permits are issued every year to non-
22 disabled veterans, they can't put 30 aside?
23 That's all I'm asking ... I'm asking for 30 permits
24 to help these people make a living, a better
25 living. How many people could sell sunglasses in

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2 the street? You've got over a thousand general
3 vendors, you've got 30 food vendors that are
4 disabled veterans. You just can't keep saying,
5 "Go sell sunglasses". There's money to be made in
6 food and I think these guys have to be helped. So
7 that's why I'm here, and I'm ... for the help for
8 them. I'm okay, I have my permit, I have
9 everything I need, but I can't help people I'd
10 like to help, which are my fellow disabled vets.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very
12 much. Thank you to all of you for your testimony,
13 and Ms. Barbara, let me tell you honestly, I'm
14 very touched by your testimony. And don't believe
15 that I didn't do anything. As Mr. Dan said, that
16 this is an issue that has been, you know, in the ...
17 I'm sorry, can I finish? Can I finish? This is
18 an issue that the City Council has been dealing
19 with many, many ... the Chairman before me, this is
20 an issue, very complicated. It doesn't depend
21 only on the City Council, it is about the Health
22 Department, the Business Department, and probably
23 we may have to get the Department of Investigation
24 involved in that. I'm working on that, and I'm
25 telling you that I'm doing everything in my power

1
2 to address that, not only this issue, many issues
3 that the veterans are facing. You may know about
4 the St. Albans Hospital in Queens. Now we are
5 working on that, we went there to see for
6 ourselves what is the situation. We put
7 legislation, as a matter of fact, we just voted on
8 one legislation we got on this issue. We are
9 working hard, we are trying to address everything.
10 But I don't pretend, if I'm telling you, if I'm
11 telling you that yes, I will be [inaudible] on
12 that, I'm lying. This is a tough situation, am I
13 just in this situation, and I'm saying that again,
14 I will do everything in my power to address it,
15 because this is my obligation as the Chairman, and
16 also I think that all of us in this country, we
17 owe to the veterans a great deal of gratitude for
18 what you have done. When I said to Dan that I
19 don't understand why the veterans didn't receive
20 the services that they deserve, I was honest. I
21 cannot understand that. It will take me time,
22 hard work, to understand it, probably I need some
23 mentor and chief, you know, to mentor me and to
24 educate me about the issues, but I'm telling you,
25 I'm working hard. And I will do everything, as a

1
2 matter of fact, what I do need, you need valid
3 leadership, my strong leadership, I agree with
4 you, and I'm trying to do, show my leadership on
5 that, but I need your cooperation also.

6 MS. MORRIS: Well, I'd be very
7 happy to give you my cooperation, sir, I just,
8 unfortunately, you haven't given me the
9 opportunity to give it to you. I have not heard
10 from you, I actually- -

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [Interposing]
12 I think that we've got to- -

13 MS. MORRIS: [Interposing] I also
14 have one simple question, really one simple
15 question. Can you tell us why the Health
16 Department doesn't issue permits from this list?

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: This is- -

18 MS. MORRIS: [Interposing] If
19 you've been meeting with them, and you've been
20 talking to them, why can you not give us an
21 answer? Why is it not done?

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: If I can just-

23 -

24 MS. MORRIS: [Interposing] Excuse
25 me.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Council member
is my name. It's Council Member Reyna.

MS. MORRIS: Yes, I know, okay.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Ms. Morris, I
just want to assure you, and I will repeat myself
for the sake of this hearing, your vending license
issue is not unique to you, nor to anyone who has
mentioned it here today. It is an issue that we
have been dealing with for nine years, pressing
upon the Department of Consumer Affairs, as well
as the Department of Health. It is a matter that
is trying to be addressed with the legislation
that has not been supported by the administration,
that would require for them to increase the cap.
In the meantime there is a black market out there,
those of you who have, who have licenses, are
licensing them forward in a black market, and so
there is a greater issue here that is not being
addressed, as opposed to just saying, "I want a
vending license, a push cart license". And so let
us not continue that matter, and rather progress
this hearing, which was dedicated for small
business and workforce opportunities amongst
veterans, to be a productive one, as opposed to it

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2 being an unproductive one. And so I will ask, in
3 the initiative that this Council has promoted in
4 the fresh fruits and vegetables, how many green
5 cart licensing was designated for veterans? Ms.
6 Morris, that is a specific question, and I would
7 appreciate an answer, if you have one.

8 MS. MORRIS: I haven't.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: If not, I don't
10 want to continue the issue of street vending
11 license in regards to push carts.

12 MS. MORRIS: I'm not speaking about
13 push carts.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you.

15 MS. MORRIS: I'm speaking about
16 mobile food- -

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing]
18 Green carts, that is what I'm asking.

19 MS. MORRIS: The green ... I will
20 answer your question.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you.

22 MS. MORRIS: If you give me an
23 opportunity.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you.

25 MS. MORRIS: The green carts are in

1 areas that the veterans do not even want to go.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Okay.

3 MS. MORRIS: There's no money
4 there, they fail, they cannot make it there.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Okay.

6 MS. MORRIS: They want to ... they
7 just really want to be ... they want to know why
8 they've been on a list since 2005 and 2007, when
9 hundreds and hundreds of others have gotten their
10 mobile permits. And yet they're not ... what
11 they're not issuing them to these people on these
12 lists since 2005 and 2007, we just want to know
13 why. Why will they not move these lists, when
14 they're issuing them to general population?
15

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: No they're not.

17 MS. MORRIS: Well, they are. They
18 are, they are, we have the list- -

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing]
20 I'd like- -

21 MS. MORRIS: [Interposing] ... eleven
22 numbers- -

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing]
24 I'd- -

25 MS. MORRIS: [Interposing] With all

due respect, I- -

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing] I would like there to be an offline conversation with the Chair of the Veterans Committee, so that you can continue this dialogue.

MS. MORRIS: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: At this moment, this is the end of this hearing.

MS. MORRIS: We would appreciate- -

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: [Interposing] You are the last panel.

MS. MORRIS: We appreciate that.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you.

MS. MORRIS: And we're ready to schedule a time with you.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Fabulous.

MS. MORRIS: And Mr. Eugene.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Council Member Eugene.

MS. MORRIS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REYNA: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.


CHAIRPERSON REYNA: This hearing is

1
2 adjourned, I do want to thank everyone who has
3 come to join us. I want to just thank you co-
4 Chair, Council Member Eugene, for the joint
5 hearing on Small Business and Veteran's Affairs.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Let me take
7 the opportunity to thank you also, co-Chair Reyna,
8 for this wonderful event, thank you very much.
9 Meeting adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Signature _____

Date May 23, 2011