

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES

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November 30, 2015
Start: 10:20 a.m.
Recess: 12:48 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: MATHIEU EUGENE
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Annabel Palma
Darlene Mealy
Margaret S. Chin
David G. Greenfield
Andy L. King
Laurie A. Cumbo

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

Deborah Harper, Assistant Commissioner
Vulnerable and Special Needs Youth
Department of Youth and Community Development, DYCD

Randy Scott, Director
Runaway and Homeless Youth Services
Department of Youth and Community Development, DYCD

David Nish, Associate Commissioner
Training and Workforce Innovation
Administration for Children's Services, ACS

Susan Morley, Senior Advisor
Investigations
Administration for Children's Services, ACS

Courtney Camp, Staff Attorney
Legal Aid Society's Juvenile Rights Practice

Lillian Rivera, Director
Advocacy and Capacity Building
Hetrick-Martin Institute's Center for LGBTQ Youth
Advocacy and Capacity Building

Andrea Bowan
United Neighborhood Houses

2 [sound check, pause]

3 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Good morning.

4 [gavel] Good morning. Thank you very much for
5 (laughs)--Usually it doesn't happen like this, but
6 thank you very much. I'm Council Member Mathieu
7 Eugene, and I chair the City Council Youth Services
8 Committee. Today's hearing is on two bills to amend
9 the Administration Code concerning runaway and
10 homeless youth, and sexually exploited children. As
11 we know, runaway and homeless youth in countless like
12 children in this situation on the streets of the good
13 city of New York. There have been various reports
14 and studies, which have focused on trying to
15 determine the number of runaway and homeless youth
16 and the number of sexually exploited children in this
17 city. Advocating researchers are also concerned with
18 providing and supporting access to government
19 services. Of particular importance are very active
20 to identify the needs of these dangers including
21 assessing the need of the LGBTQ runaway and homeless
22 populations that experiences higher rates of service
23 denial, institutional values and discriminatory
24 treatment. I believe that all children must be
25 treated equally, and I will continue to work as hard

2 as I can with my colleagues to ensure that every
3 youth regardless of sex, gender and sexual
4 orientation is able to access city services to give
5 them the opportunity to succeed in the great city of
6 New York.

7 Intro No. 554 was introduced by me to
8 help improve the training of those who interact with
9 runaway, homeless youth and sexually exploited
10 children. This introduction would require the
11 Department of Youth and Community Development in
12 conjunction with the Administration of Children's
13 Services to conduct the annual training for certain
14 city employees and entities under contract with the
15 city whose job position involved regular contact with
16 children. The bill was drafted to include, but not
17 limited to employees of the Department of Park and
18 Recreation Department, the Department of Homeless
19 Services, the New York City Housing Authority, and
20 the Department of Education. The legislation would
21 require an individual to be trained on best practices
22 to help identify runaway youth, homeless youth, and
23 sexually exploited children as well as how to connect
24 them to appropriate services.

2 The second bill Intro No. 993 was
3 introduced by Council Member Levine to amend
4 provisions of the Administration Code to require the
5 annual report required by Local Law 23 of the Year
6 2013 prepared by the Administration of Children
7 Services and the Department of the Youth and
8 Community Development to be submitted no later than
9 March 1st instead of January 1st and to be posted on
10 the website of both agencies. The report documents
11 the number of youth in contact with both agencies who
12 are--both agencies were referred as who shall report
13 or who--the Department of ACS document to be sexually
14 exploited children. The bill was also drafted to
15 address the administration's concern about age
16 aggregation. The committee looks forward to hear--
17 hearing testimony from the administration as well as
18 interested members of the public and advocacy
19 community. Before we begin, I would like to thank
20 the Youth Service Committee staff Chu Detru (sic) Al
21 Constan (sp?), Michael Benjamin, Policy Analyst;
22 Jessie Ackerman our Financial Analyst; Phoebe Rosen
23 our lead attorney; and Anna Crubobit (sic) our
24 intern. I wish also to thank my own staff, David
25 Weiss and Vanessa Ogle for their tireless work to

2 make this hearing possible. Now, before we start I
3 would like to--

4 LEGAL COUNSEL: [off mic] Introduce
5 Council Member Chin.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Before we--let me
7 also not forget what you to do. I know that we have
8 been joined by Council Member Chin. thank you
9 council member. Would you please swear them in?

10 LEGAL COUNSEL: I'm going to go ahead and
11 swear you guys in. Do you affirm to tell the truth,
12 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
13 testimony before this committee, and to respond
14 honestly to the Council Member's questions? Oh,
15 just turn your mics on, please.

16 PANEL MEMBER: I do.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Raise your right
18 hand.

19 LEGAL COUNSEL: Okay, let's do this
20 again. Raise your right hands please.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Raise your right
22 hands, please.

23 LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the
24 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in
25

2 your testimony before this committee, and to respond
3 honestly to Council Member questions?

4 PANEL MEMBERS: I do.

5 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Now, we are going to
7 call the first panel. I think you are already, and
8 before we start, I just want to take the opportunity
9 to thank all of you coming together to testify on the
10 Youth Committee Development and Youth Services and
11 Community Development from ACS and also all of the
12 advocates and also all of you who are here today that
13 demonstrate that we are all concerned about our young
14 people. We all agree that our young people they are
15 the leaders of tomorrow, and we as city we should do
16 the best that we can do to provide them with the
17 services that they need to succeed, and I commend all
18 of you. I've been serving young people and youth and
19 children in the city of New York for all your
20 sacrifices the time. You know that you have been
21 working hard to help them because they deserve the
22 best that the city can provide. It is our motivation
23 to do it, and the only way we're going to prevail and
24 we are going to be able to help them is by working
25 together as we are doing it today gathering and

2 reflecting, and we will see how we can identify
3 better ways to serve them. And today, we are going
4 to go through and all through the services that we
5 are providing to see what works and what doesn't
6 work, and to see what we can do to improve the
7 services that we are providing to them. This is
8 again the work that we are going to be involved in to
9 do a better job. Again, on my own behalf and on
10 behalf of all of the members of the Youth Committee,
11 and also on behalf of all the City Council members,
12 because I know that all of the must be working hard
13 to do a better job. And on behalf of all of them I
14 thank you again. Thank you very much. So the first
15 speaker can start, and before you start let me call
16 the names [background comment] let me call the names
17 of the members of the first panel. Deborah Harper,
18 Assistant Commissioner of DYCD. Thank you very much.
19 Randy--Randy Scott, Director of Runaway and Homeless
20 Youth Services, DYCD. Thank you very much and Sue
21 Morley? Thank you very much from ACS. Thank you.
22 And David Nish (sp?). Thank you very much, Mr. Nish.
23 You may start, please. Before we start, could you
24 please state your name for record.

1 COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES 10

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Deborah
3 Harper. Good morning Chairman Eugene and members of
4 the Youth Services Committee. I am Deborah Harper,
5 Assistant Commissioner of Vulnerable and Special
6 Needs Youth at the Department of Youth and Community
7 Development. I'm joined by Randy Scott, Director--
8 Director of Runaway and Homeless Youth Services.
9 Thank you for the chance to testify today, and I'd
10 also like to thank you again, Chairman Eugene, for
11 coming out to our annual conference a couple of weeks
12 ago. We were very excited to have your presence
13 there,

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: It's a very nice
15 comment. Thank you also. Because you invited me.
16 Thank you so much. That was a wonderful, wonderful
17 event. Thank you.

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Thank you
19 for saying that.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And invite me again
21 next time.

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: I
23 certainly shall. (laughs) We appreciate the City
24 Council's interest in making sure the city can
25 address the needs of runaway and homeless youth, RHY

2 and sexually exploited children. We are committed to
3 helping vulnerable young people obtain housing,
4 counseling, educational and career guidance, health
5 services, and other resources to give their lives--
6 get their live on track. Over the past year we've
7 had some exciting accomplishments in serving runaway
8 and homeless youth. I'd like to highlight a few of
9 them for you. The first 24-hour drop-in center with
10 specialized services for LGBTQ youth opened at the
11 end of last year. Youth in need of a place to spend
12 a few hours to rest, get a bite to eat or speak to a
13 counselor can do so at this drop-in center 24 hours.
14 Last year, DYCD funded 100 more shelter beds for the
15 second year in a row. A total of 200 shelter beds
16 have been added since Mayor de Blasio took office.
17 We've added crisis shelter beds and transitional
18 independent beds, and with every open bed, more
19 vulnerable young people are being served. The first
20 city-funded transitional independent living residence
21 for transgender youth was opened by Ali Forney last
22 month. We are very proud to be funding this
23 residence. DYCD has added \$1.9 million for mental
24 health services. Runaway and homeless youth in DYCD
25 funded programs will be able to receive mental health

2 services ranging from psychiatric evaluations and
3 thera--and therapeutic group sessions to odd (sic)
4 therapy on site. Training on how best to serve
5 runaway and homeless youth and sexually exploited
6 youth is crucial towards helping them. In accordance
7 with State regulations, RHY providers are required to
8 fulfill 40 hours of training for full-time directors
9 and 20 hours for part-time staff. The required
10 training topics include youth development and youth
11 issues; child abuse prevention and reporting; and
12 runaway and homeless youth regulations. In addition
13 to the required topics, provided staff also receive
14 training on other topics that may affect runaway and
15 homeless youth such as HIV awareness and education;
16 suicide prevention; case record documentation; and
17 awareness of synthetic marijuana. Providers have
18 obtained training from groups such as the Center for
19 Anti-Violence Education, Anti-Violence Project,
20 Children's Village and starting in 2016 the Sex
21 Workers Project. With respect to city employees,
22 DYCD's month Interagency Coordinating Council, the
23 ICC Work Group on LGBTQ Youth is a forum for various
24 city agency representatives to meet and discuss
25 issues impacting LGBTQ youth. These meetings have

2 included presentations on homeless and sexually
3 exploited LGBTQ youth. The work group also organizes
4 an annual training on culturally competent LGBTQ
5 youth service delivery that reaches up to 75 staff
6 from city agencies. Through the Safe Harbor Program,
7 DYCD contracts with staff from Girls Educational and
8 Mentoring Services, GEMS, to train ACS personnel at
9 the Children's Center and at ACS detention facilities
10 on the needs of Commercially Sexually Exploited
11 Children, CSEC. To date, 294 ACS staff have been
12 trained by GEMS at the two ACS detention facilities
13 and the Children's Center. Topics include:
14 Identifying and Interviewing Commercially Sexually
15 Exploited Youth; Enhanced Awareness of Commercial--
16 Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth; Pathways and
17 Precursors to Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth;
18 the Impact of Commercial Sexual Exploitation on
19 Youth; Identification, Engagement and Effective
20 Service Delivery for Commercially Sexually Exploited
21 Youth. As a group with experience serving RHY and
22 specializing CSEC, GEMS has also trained provider
23 staff at monthly Runaway and Homeless Youth advisory
24 meetings. Even though DYCD does not provide direct
25 services, DYCD staff and attendance at those meetings

2 receive the benefits of those training. Recognizing
3 the needs of trafficked youth, we were the only--we
4 were one of the first city agencies to provide
5 government support for a CSEC program when we funded
6 GEMS' transitional independent living program several
7 years ago. DYCD staff have also attended trainings
8 and conferences on CSEC conducted by the New York
9 State Office of Children and Family Services, OCFS
10 and ACS, as well as trainings conducted for providers
11 at our own Runaway and Homeless Youth conferences and
12 Health the Hurt conferences. Our limited training
13 resources are directed to those who are most likely
14 to have the opportunity to intervene on behalf of
15 vulnerable youth. While we agree with the Spirit of
16 Introduction 554 to help protect young people through
17 awareness and education, DYCD's focus to fund direct
18 services for youth. Introduction 554 would be
19 outside of our core function as a contracting agency
20 that administers contracts for the City's runaway and
21 homeless youth after school community centers, youth
22 employment and community development programs. Our
23 oversight and administration of these direct service
24 programs is critical to ensuring quality services for
25 hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers each year.

2 Thank you again for a chance to testify to day, and
3 we are happy to answer your questions.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
5 Is there any other speaker? [pause] Can you please
6 start and state your name? [background comment]

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: David Nish.
8 [background comment, pause]

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you, sir. You
10 many start. Please, you can start.

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Good
12 morning Chair Eugene and members of the Committee on
13 Youth Services. I am David Nish, Associate
14 Commissioner of Training and Workforce Innovation at
15 ACS. With me is Susan Morley, Senior Advisor for
16 Investigations, also from ACS. Thank you for the
17 opportunity to discuss Introductions 554 of 2014 and
18 993 of 2015, and to talk about the work that ACS and
19 our partner agencies do to serve the young people and
20 families that these bills seek to assist. About ACS:
21 The Administration for Children's Services protects
22 and promotes the safety and wellbeing of New York
23 City's children, young people, families, and
24 communities by providing child welfare, juvenile
25 justice and early care and education services. ACS

2 child welfare work involves protective, preventive
3 and foster care services. Each year we investigate
4 over 60,000 reports of maltreatment, and we provide
5 preventive services to over 25,000 families so
6 children can remain safely at home. When out-of-home
7 placements are necessary, we oversee approximately
8 11,000 children in foster care. ACS depends over
9 3,000 dedicated frontline staff to make difficult
10 decisions that have profound consequences in the
11 lives of children and families. In Juvenile Justice,
12 ACS oversees a continuum of services and programs for
13 youth at every stage of the process. We and our
14 contracted partners provide these services to youth
15 in secure and non-secure detention facilities, non-
16 secure placement residences, and community-based
17 alternative programs. Our Division of Early Care and
18 Education, ECE, administers one of the largest
19 publicly funded childcare systems in the country,
20 serving approximately 110,000 infants, toddlers, pre-
21 school and school age children. ACS provides
22 services that enhance child development and assists
23 low-income working families, eligible public
24 assistant recipients, and families that are receiving
25 child welfare services. About our work with

2 commercial sexual exploitation of youth: You people
3 in our child welfare and Juvenile Justice systems are
4 particularly vulnerable to commercial sexual
5 exploitation. ACS is committing to--committed to
6 meeting the needs of these young victims commonly
7 referred to as CSEC involved youth.

8 Since the passage of the New York State
9 Safe Harbor for Exploited Youth Act in 2008, ACS has
10 steadily built a child welfare response to sexual
11 exploitation by training our staff and partner
12 agencies, identifying cases of sexual exploitation,
13 and serving young people through a continuum of
14 services. This continuum implemented by ACS, the New
15 York City Department of Youth and Community
16 Development, DYCD, and our contracted providers
17 includes street outreach, counseling, specialized
18 preventive programs, residential placement options,
19 transitional housing, career development services, as
20 well as programs to reach lesbian, gay, bisexual,
21 transgender and questioning youth, LGBTQ youth.

22 To further promote this work, in March
23 2015, ACS hired a dedicated Director of Child
24 Trafficking Prevention and Policy who consults on
25 specific cases while advance--while advancing system

2 wide policies and procedures, and training to better
3 serve this population. Our Director of Child
4 Trafficking Prevention and Policy reports to ACS'
5 Senior Advisor for Investigations, Susan Morley, who
6 is with me today. Ms. Morley previously served 21
7 years at the New York Police Department where much of
8 her work involved investigating sex crimes and child
9 abuse. After rising through the ranks at the NYPD,
10 Ms. Morley was appointed the first Commanding Officer
11 of the Special Victims Division. Identifying special
12 cases of sexual exploitation is a priority for ACS,
13 and we work on several fronts to do so. The
14 Investigative Consultant Unit, a team of over 100
15 retired law enforcement professionals who also report
16 to Ms. Morley, assists Child Protective Services, CPS
17 staff with fact gathering and locating and
18 interviewing at-risk children. CPS workers involve
19 and investigative consultants in any potential CSEC
20 case.

21 In partnership with DYCD, ACS
22 incorporated specialized expert--expertise into our
23 practice by locating two Safe Horizon MSW youth
24 counselors, each experienced in working with sexually
25 exploited youth at ACS' Nicholas Scoppetta Children's

2 Center. These counselors from Safe Horizon meet with
3 suspected victims of sexual exploitation at the
4 Children's Center and provide necessary support and
5 referrals. In addition, GEMS, Girls Educational and
6 Mentoring Services, provide weekly support groups and
7 outreach at the Children's Center and at two Juvenile
8 Justice facilities that serves youth--serves--serves
9 girls. Excuse me. To meet the needs of at-risk and
10 sexually exploited youth in our foster care and
11 Juvenile Justice placements, ACS contracts with the
12 Jewish Childcare Association, JCCA, whose Gateways
13 Program provides intensive trauma-informed services
14 including assessment, therapy and counseling. ACS
15 also contracts with Saint--with Mount Sinai, Saint
16 Luke Roosevelt's New Beginnings Program, which works
17 with at-risk 12 to 17-year-olds and their families
18 with the goal of keeping youth safe at home. Because
19 LGBTQ youth are particularly vulnerable to sexually
20 exploitation, ACS has funded three youth providers
21 that offer LGBTQ specific expertise and services.
22 The Ali Forney Center, The Hedrick Marlin (sic)
23 Institute and the Door.

24 About our coordinated training, ACS has
25 provided over 3,000 frontline child protective staff

2 with guidance, training and support to identify and
3 assist sexually exploited youth. In June 2012, we
4 released a comprehensive policy on how to identify,
5 engage and support victims of sexual exploitation and
6 hosted a multi-disciplinary conference for
7 caseworkers. From November 2012 to January 2013, ACS
8 partnered with Safe Horizon to present nine separate
9 three-hour training sessions on our policy. In
10 December 2013, over 200 ACS and provider agency staff
11 participated in another training to create program
12 champions, which helped them to become knowledgeable
13 resources within their respective practice areas.
14 This year, ACS has brought child trafficking
15 awareness and skills training including presentations
16 and panel participations to almost 2,000 individuals
17 within the Greater New York City area, including ACS
18 staff, foster care, preventive, medical and mental
19 health staff, the New York Police Department, and a
20 variety of contract and community agency staff. ACS
21 has also developed awareness and skills-based
22 trainings provided to 800 ACS staff and external
23 partners. We developed a full day training program
24 featuring the red flags of human trafficking, and all
25 of the affiliated dynamics and components; a

2 presentation from a ACS Investigative Consultative--
3 Consultation Program; an overview of applicable
4 legislation; a presentation on screening, identifying
5 and providing services to traffic--trafficked
6 children, and skills necessary to engage and
7 interview trafficked children. We require al ACS
8 staff, provider agency staff and foster parents who
9 have direct contact with children and families to be
10 trained on the goals and expectations of ACS' LGBTQ
11 policy. ACS provides training to staff during
12 initial orientation and at least once every two years
13 thereafter. This training gives guidance to ACS
14 staff providers, foster parents and volunteers on how
15 to provide safe, respectful, and affirming services
16 for LGBTQ youth.

17 The newly hired employees in the Division
18 of Child Protection and the Division of Youth and
19 Family Justice also participate in the extensive
20 training program, a major component of which is
21 comprehensive CSEC training including critical skills
22 in youth engagement. OCFS in the fall of 2015, the
23 New York State Office of Children and Families in
24 accordance with the Federal Preventing Sex
25 Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014,

2 began to offer web-based training for child welfare
3 workers through the Stars Human Services Learning
4 Center. These state mandated trainings summarized
5 the law and included the discussion of human
6 trafficking and new procedures for screening and
7 responding to this population. Current preventing--
8 Preventive Foster Care and Child Protective staff are
9 required by OC--OCFS to take this training by October
10 2016, and staff hired after that date must take the
11 course within six months of their start date. This
12 training encompasses best practices in identifying
13 and providing services for sexually exploited youth.

14 Introduction 993 of 2014, proposed to
15 change the date from January 1 to March 1 for the
16 submission of the annual report on the number of
17 youth in contact with DYCD or ACS that are determined
18 to be sexually exploited, and would require the
19 report to be posted on each agency's website. ACS
20 does not perceive any challenges in implementing
21 these modifications and supports the legislation.

22 Introduction 554 of 2015, seeks to
23 require DYCD in conjunction with ACS to conduct bi-
24 annual trainings for New York City employees and
25 employees of any entity that contracts with the city

2 who are in contact--regular contact with children on
3 best practices and identifying runaway, homeless and
4 sexually exploited youth, as well as connecting this
5 population to services. ACS commends the City
6 Council for recognizing the complex needs of these
7 young people and for its commitment to serving this
8 population. As we have testified today, ACS is also
9 committed to this work. We have made tremendous
10 strides in redesigning the way we serve these young
11 people, and in the extensive trainings we provide to
12 our staff and our partner providers' staff.

13 While we applaud the spirit of Intro 554,
14 there are aspects of the legislation that cause
15 concern. One area of concern is the breadth of the
16 legislation. Through ACS provides--though ACS
17 provides significant trainings for our staff and
18 provider partners, we do not have the capacity to
19 train all city employees and employees of contracts
20 who job involve regular contact with children. The
21 term 'regular contact with children' is also unclear
22 and should be defined in order to determine the
23 specific universe of employees that would require
24 training under this legislation. The bill requires
25 ACS and DYCD to conduct trainings twice per year for

2 an extremely large cohort of trainees. However, the
3 bill contains no requirement that the intended
4 trainees actually attend the training. It is also
5 unclear whether this legislation contemplates in-
6 person trainings, which neither ACS nor DYCD have the
7 capacity to undertake or whether trainings could be
8 accommodated by some alternate means such as through
9 a web-based system or a train the trainer's system,
10 which would enable City agencies to develop the
11 ability to train their own employees and contractors.
12 We are also concerned with the immediate--immediate
13 effective date of the legislation. We ask that the
14 effective date be extended to contemplate the time
15 necessary to develop and implement appropriate
16 training plans. In closing, thank you for the
17 committee's attention to these issues affecting
18 runaway, homeless and sexually exploited youth, and
19 for your dedication to serving this population. We
20 appreciate the opportunity to discuss our agency's
21 work in this area, and look forward to partnering
22 with the Council to develop legislation that will
23 meet this goal. We are happy to take any questions
24 you may have.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
3 Many--Mr. David, in your testimony you mentioned
4 there's a--a set of concerns about Intro 554, and you
5 say that, of course, the area of concern is that--
6 that ACS provides a difficulty in training. You say
7 that we do not have the capacity to train all city
8 employees, and employees are for contractors whose
9 jobs involve regular contact with children. Could
10 you give us more detail about the resources, the
11 capacity that you mentioned? What is required? What
12 could you redo for you or for ACS or for DYCD to help
13 the city to fulfill the need of this legislation or
14 the requirement of this legislation?

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Okay, there
16 are two concerns that we had.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm sorry.

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Two
19 concerns that we had with the training and the
20 capacity. One of them is that when we--when you
21 training--when you're required to train staff that
22 the agencies themselves are not required to send
23 their staff to trainings. There's a big problem with
24 offering things that people don't access. So it is
25 our feeling that--that some kind of model whereby we

2 could train trainers in each agency to give them
3 capacity to train their own staff would perhaps be an
4 alternative, or that we could--the legislation could
5 speak about web-based training that--that we could
6 then share with other agencies to train their staff.
7 Our training facilities and work is really
8 developing. We're building a new Workforce Institute
9 as part of the Mayor's Reform Plan to expand training
10 greatly for the large numbers of staff that work
11 frontline at ACS and their supervisors as well as all
12 of our partner agencies at foster care and preventive
13 providers, which is a--a very large capacity and
14 requires a lot of--of staff time and effort. So we
15 are concerned that this legislation is written in
16 such a way that it would require us to take on nearly
17 100,000 employees, which is way beyond what we feel
18 we could manage directly.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So it seems that it
20 is more a question of how we're going to do it than
21 the resources? So that means the concern I believe--
22 I may be wrong--it is about are we going to do it to
23 ensure that you have the capacity or the means train
24 those employees. So that means are we going to do

2 it? What is the modality? What is the modus
3 operandi?

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Well, we're
5 in support and agreement with you that this is an
6 important initiative, and the capacity for us to do
7 it is a concern. How we would do it would be a
8 concern, and resources for the other agencies would
9 be a concern because if we provided some kind of
10 train the trainer model or a web-based model, there--
11 there would be costs associated with those agencies,
12 and then providing that training to their staff. So
13 there--I'm in agreement. We are in agreement with
14 you that the issue is how.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yeah, but not if we
16 say that we're from the City Council, this is our
17 position and this is our--it has been always our goal
18 to work together with DYCD and ACS and all the
19 providers to make sure that we do what we're supposed
20 to do for the young people, for the children and we
21 do it in a better way. If I asked you if we as a
22 matter of course we'll do it, work together with you,
23 ACS and New York City, what would be your advice?
24 What do you believe that you can do to help us reach
25 that goal, which is to train all of the employees

2 that are in contact with the young people, you know,
3 homeless young people and also exploited young
4 people, what you would do?

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: I would say
6 in response that we would work together to clarify
7 the legislation so that we can know who we're talking
8 about training so that we can clarify who they--the
9 staff in these agencies that come in contact with
10 youth are. And also, that we--I--I think on these
11 numbers and the numbers that we're talking about more
12 and more, we're talking about a web-based, some kind
13 of a web-based training that we could work together
14 on providing for other agencies. So that they can
15 take that web-based training and provide that to
16 their staff.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. Can you put
18 on paper some recommendations, the language what you
19 would like to see in the bill and send it to us,
20 please?

21 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Absolutely.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Can you do that?

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Definitely.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And after we go over
25 them, we will contact you and we will sit down

2 together and see how we can put it in a better way
3 that could be easier or suitable for you to
4 implement, you know, other requirements of this
5 legislation.

6 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Absolutely.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And talking about
8 training also, in your testimony you mentioned that
9 ACS, DYCD provides trainings to their employees and
10 to the providers. Could you tell us what are the
11 qualifications of the title or the training or the
12 background of the trainers, the people who are
13 training the--the employees? The--what is the--what
14 are the qualifications? Do they have the background?
15 The track report? (sic) What have they been doing to
16 make them qualified to provide those trainings and
17 those advice to the providers and their employees?

18 SUSAN MORLEY: So I can talk about what
19 we've been doing regarding the Safe Harbor and the
20 CSEC trainings. We've been building capacity for a
21 long time with this. We started with--way before
22 even we received Safe Harbor funding, we partnered
23 with Safe Horizons and obviously the expertise in
24 that area, and ECPAT. Since then, OCFS--we have been
25 in partnership with the Office of Children and Family

2 Services, our state oversight as well as the
3 International Organization for Adolescents, and they
4 were our first large scale trainings on Safe Harbor
5 that was--was done with the State money, State Safe
6 Harbor money. And every training also had a panel of
7 providers that have expertise in this area.

8 [background comments]

9 LEGAL COUNSEL: [interposing] I'm--I'm
10 sorry.

11 SUSAN MORLEY: Yes.

12 LEGAL COUNSEL: Could you just identify
13 yourself for the record?

14 SUSAN MORLEY: Oh, I'm Susan Morley. I'm
15 sorry. I'm Senior Advisor for Investigations at ACS.

16 LEGAL COUNSEL: All right, thank you.

17 SUSAN MORLEY: So al--almost every
18 training we do, we have the experts come in and do it
19 with us. So, all the--this past summer we
20 specifically targeted our Educational or Neglect
21 units and our hospital Sex Abuse units first, and we
22 had an expert panel of providers. We also had GEMS
23 do a three-hour skills-based training for us, and our
24 Child Trafficking Director who is here today, Salina
25 is a Master Social Worker as well. So, all our

2 trainings for the most part, the big trainings we
3 have been doing have been in part--in partnerships
4 with the experts that are involved here. I hope that
5 answers your question.

6 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Let me ask you, what
7 is the process that you have to evaluate the success
8 of the children number one, and what do--do you have
9 anything in place also to evaluate the job of those
10 trainers, the people that are training people? Are
11 they doing a good job? Do they have to do exactly
12 what you expect them to do? And the training--and
13 the people that are getting trained also, are they
14 evaluated that, you know, yes they received the
15 message? They have--they received the information on
16 the skill that we want them have?

17 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] I believe
18 with some of the--

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] How
20 do you evaluate both of them?

21 SUSAN MORLEY: Yeah, I believe with some
22 of the trainers we have had like a pre-test and also
23 we hand out evaluations and Salina collects and
24 analyzes all the evaluations that we receive.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And what is the
3 support services that you have for the trainers, for
4 the people who train the people? What type of
5 support services that you have for them?

6 SUSAN MORLEY: What type of--?

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Support services.

8 SUSAN MORLEY: Most support services?

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Just to make them
10 more competent, you know--

11 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Do you want
12 to talk about your trainers?

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --to do a better
14 job?

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: So we have--
16 -at ACS we have the James Satellite Academy is a
17 training center, a training academy where all of--we
18 have staff. We have 45 staff trainers who are all
19 certified in a variety of different areas to provide
20 trainings to employees. We also have a curriculum
21 development team at James Satellite Academy that
22 works on updating curriculum as we get feedback
23 because each training that we offer has a pre and
24 post test where we're able to measure if the--if the
25 training and the trainers are, um, are doing the kind

2 of work that we're--that they're expected to do. We
3 are now building, as I mentioned earlier, a workforce
4 institute where we're looking to build in a level 1,
5 level 2 and level 3 evaluation to all of our
6 trainings. Because really the focus of our work
7 moving forward is going to look at impact on
8 practice. We have a lot of--there's a lot of
9 literature in the field about, you know, providing a
10 training and then, you know, asking participants if
11 it was successful or if it was good. But, we'd like
12 to really measure if that training is successful
13 three months out, six months out to make a difference
14 in--in the clientele that we're providing services
15 to.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
17 We know that this is the era of technology,
18 computers and social media, and it's a benefit to all
19 of us. But it--it makes a difference when you have
20 somebody in front of you teaching you, and when
21 somebody goes through the web-based side, to the web-
22 based system, it makes a big difference. You know,
23 the--each one of those systems has, you know, the
24 value. But how would the best--what the best system

2 address the question from the trainers or from the
3 people who are using the web-based system?

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Well, as
5 you mentioned, technology is taking over our lives it
6 seems. And some of these web-based trainings that
7 we're able to develop are extraordinary in their
8 scope. So these trainings have video. They have
9 interactive examinations. They have interaction--
10 interactive simulation where participants get to
11 practice skills online, and so we're really looking
12 at doing a blended structure for trainings the way
13 that we could have as much, you know, training online
14 as possible. And also in person practice of skills
15 because what we have experienced in our system is
16 that, you know, people are very intensely busy. It's
17 really difficult for people to travel to another
18 borough to participate in a two or three or four-day
19 training. But, we have more likely--we are more
20 likely to have success if we offer part of the
21 training online. And with the--with the newest of
22 technologies, those trainings are actually quite
23 amazing.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: All right.

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: If I can
3 add to what David said, we are definitely doing a
4 blended approach. We have been doing all these in-
5 person trainings, and with the new federal
6 legislation that passed where OCFS, as David
7 mentioned, developed the web-based training,
8 basically, human trafficking 101, and also training
9 on the policy, which is mandated for all our child
10 protection staff, foster care and preventive
11 providers to take. And so I see that in support of--
12 or a reinforcement of everything that we have been
13 doing. And we already have over a thousand of our
14 frontline workers that have taken this new web-based
15 training in addition to the other stuff we have been
16 doing.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
18 We have been joined by Council Member Darlene Mealy,
19 and I think both Council Member Mealy and Chin have
20 questions. I will ask Council Member Chin to ask
21 questions. Would you please, Council Member?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.
23 Good morning. Thank you for being here on such an
24 important issue. From hearing the testimony, I'm
25 interested to see how DYCD and ACS coordinates the

2 training. Because from the testimony by Assistant
3 Commissioner Harper, you were saying more that DYCD
4 deals with more direct services, and so training
5 wouldn't be your expertise? So how do you coordinate
6 with ACS in terms of dealing with this population of
7 runaway and homeless youth and commercially sexual
8 exploited youth. So how do you coordinate your
9 effort together to make sure that services are
10 provided to this population, and they know about the
11 programs that the city offers?

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Well,
13 since the beginning of the Safe Harbor Initiative,
14 which is a collaboration with DYCD and ACS, we've
15 been working, you know, hand in hand throughout the
16 last three years I think it's been about. And our
17 service providers, which are also ACS service
18 providers may receiving the trainings that are
19 offered by ACS as well as DYCD then we provide
20 opportunities for the providers that are not involved
21 with the Safe Harbor Initiative to receive trainings
22 on all of these different topics. The providers
23 themselves can seek out the training from well known
24 and respected experts in the fields that they're
25 receiving the training on. And also, DYCD while

2 we're not a training entity ourselves, we do offer
3 programs throughout the year where our provider
4 agency staff can attend and receive great trainings
5 and workshops on a variety of topics. We have
6 conferences such as the Runaway and Homeless Youth
7 Conference, which is held in November; the Health the
8 Hurt Conference, which is held in June. And we seek
9 out experts to train the conference attendees on a
10 variety of subjects. But in terms of our work in
11 collaboration with ACS, I think that it's--that we've
12 maintained a really terrific work and relationship.
13 We collaborate. We discuss issues that come up with
14 Safe Harbor, and so we, you know, share information
15 all of the time.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Also,
17 in your testimony you talked about, you know, now
18 every year we're able to provide more shelter beds,
19 and other services. So are there any runaway and
20 homeless youth that are on a waiting list for any of
21 the services including mental health services?

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Um, well,
23 DYCD doesn't maintain waiting lists for our shelter
24 services. We do ensure that any young person who
25 needs a bed is able to get a bed throughout the--

2 within the Youth Service--Youth Shelter system or
3 within the DHS Shelter System, but regarding--I don't
4 know where I was going with that.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, mental health
6 services, or any services. You don't keep waiting
7 lists?

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: No.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But do you hear
10 from providers? Are they--are they keeping waiting
11 lists? Are providing services to every kid? I mean
12 every youth that needs it right now?

13 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: I can say
14 that I have not heard from providers in recent months
15 that they have young people on waiting lists. I--I
16 think that, you know, we're working very hard to meet
17 the need of young people who are in need of shelter
18 beds, and with regards to mental health services,
19 this year we did enhance all of our programs with
20 additional funding for mental health services so that
21 young people will be able to receive mental health
22 services more quickly than before because a lot of
23 the programs have opted to have mental health
24 services provided on site. So it will eliminate the
25 need for many young people to travel to mental health

2 services from their shelter site. They'll be
3 receiving psychiatric evaluations, therapeutic
4 counseling groups, and a variety of other types of
5 counseling psychological services that have been
6 shown to work well with the runaway and homeless
7 youth population such as art therapy, meditation
8 services. We're really, you know, we--we worked with
9 the providers to, um, allow them to come up with
10 means that they felt was going to work best with
11 their population. Because they know the young people
12 who come to their programs, you know, much better
13 than we do, and what services around mental health
14 would have the most impact.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: And also, from your
16 testimony, you mentioned there were like three
17 service providers that are providing service to LGBTQ
18 youth throughout the city. And--but studies have
19 found that a lot of the LGBTQ youth are couch
20 surfing. So they're not in the system. So, have you
21 heard from the providers in terms of how--how are
22 they doing or how is the best way to identify them to
23 kind of reach out to let the know that services are
24 available?

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Well, we
3 have a very robust street outreach service, which
4 provides information through several means including
5 palm cards, which lists the services throughout the
6 city. And, our drop-in centers are charged with
7 doing community presentations at places where young
8 people would be receiving the information So, we're
9 very committed to identifying young people in need of
10 the services, and yes the number of LGBTQ youth can
11 be disproportionate to the population in terms of
12 they're represented--represent--representation in the
13 runaway and homeless youth population, and we have
14 providers that are specialized in working with that
15 population, and also identifying and doing outreach
16 to get those young people who might not be receiving
17 services into the programs that we fund throughout
18 the city.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Just one last
20 question, Chair. Just on the budget question. Going
21 forward, what do you see in terms of additional
22 resources that you would like to have in terms of,
23 you know, hopefully the shelter bed increases every
24 year, and we're not going back. But what else in

2 terms of other services that you see going forward
3 that we need to increase on?

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Well, I--
5 I believe DYCD is very responsive to our providers,
6 and just as this year we funded the first or one of
7 the first transgender youth shelters or transitional
8 independent living residences, because there was an
9 identified need that the providers spoke to, we
10 addressed it. And so, I don't want to say anything
11 in particular at this point because I don't know, you
12 know, coming down the road what our providers are
13 going to express as a need. But I'm very pleased and
14 confident that DYCD will seek to address that need
15 when, you know, when it comes to us.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay. All right.
17 I'm looking forward to working with on it.

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: All
19 right.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
22 Council Member Chin. Council Member Mealy.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you, Chair.

24 It's good to hear that we have 200 new beds under
25 this administration for our youth. I have just a few

2 questions. What training and other guidelines have
3 you provided to service providers to assist them in
4 collecting and reporting data that the information
5 they have is accurate?

6 SUSAN MORLEY: Well, I'll talk a little
7 bit of--data collection is definitely a challenge in
8 this area for several reasons. One, no matter how
9 good we get at collecting the data, I truly believe
10 we'll never have the real data. This is sensitive
11 stuff. This not--kids--kids do not want to tell us
12 this, and if they do it's because they build trust
13 with somebody. So data scares me a little bit for
14 all those types of reasons. We have been working
15 very closely with our Safe Harbor providers to get
16 everybody standardized with how we collect data. We
17 had growing pains with the first two reports, and
18 because of the federal legislation that was just
19 passed, the Stat is going to be making changes in the
20 connection system, which is the Child Welfare system.
21 That will help us capture some data that we not--that
22 we have not been able to capture before. If a child
23 was determined to be CSEC, if a child is at high risk
24 or medium risk of CSEC, if law enforcement was
25 notified for the children that we deem to be CSEC,

2 and whether, you know, ACS was involved with the
3 family and not before. Where the child was enforced,
4 I should say. This is data we have not been able to
5 capture. We are also to try to meet the needs of the
6 Council once and our Safe Harbor Report working with
7 our IT to develop a web-based application and using
8 Liquid Office that will be available to our providers
9 and our foster care agencies. And required for ACS
10 staff to use that will enable us to pull even further
11 data so we can really get a true look at the system.
12 The data we have been reporting is not the full
13 system. We are hoping to be in a better place next
14 year with all the things that are about to happen.
15 So that by the end of next year we'll have a more
16 complete picture. So the data we have reported I
17 don't want anybody to think that is the only thing
18 happening in this area. That--that is in my opinion
19 definitely and under-counter. As far as we have
20 brought GEMS in just last month to do a train the
21 trainer for about 68 provider agencies, the ACS
22 staff.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So that's the main
24 thing I speaking in regards to. So if your problem
25 is getting the info--the data from--

2 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Right.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: --not victims
4 really. Well, the other people that you need--

5 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Right.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: --the information
7 from. So, therefore, what I'm asking how do you all
8 share the data? ACS, GEMS, DYDC. So how do you all
9 get accurate information that you could best serve
10 like some essential things--

11 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Right, so
12 this--there's a couple of things. First, to even get
13 data and--and David could probably build on this when
14 I'm done--you have to be able engage the youth to
15 even get any information about its. All right, so
16 some of the trainings that we've been doing all
17 summer why we brought GEMS in to do the three-hour of
18 skill building training as well a the train the
19 trainer training, we were trying to get at that. We
20 have to be better at engaging the children. The
21 other thing is once we do identify, how do we capture
22 that data so that we can look at it, and that we
23 could share.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] And
25 share it with each other.

2 SUSAN MORLEY: And share it, yeah.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: But the--

4 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] And that's
5 what we're building.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So that the
7 constituents will feel that they're doing it. Every
8 time they come in they're doing it over and over
9 again, giving out the same information. If you
10 already have that in your database, you have it, ACS,
11 GEMS and it will make it a much easier process for
12 our young people.

13 SUSAN MORLEY: Right. We're building.
14 We'll get to that.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: That's in next
16 year's--

17 SUSAN MORLEY: With the state I'm
18 praying. I've been working on this for a while
19 trying to get this going, but with the changes that
20 we're going to see in connections as well as the
21 support we're going to get from our IT I think we're
22 going to have much better data, and David can talk
23 about engagement.

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Right.
25 [coughs] What I can add to what Sue was saying is

2 that, you know, the young people that we're talking
3 about have been abused by people they should have
4 been trusting. So they are really hesitant to engage
5 with government, to engage with the police, to engage
6 even with providers. And so a lot of work with--with
7 these young people as well as all vulnerable
8 populations is about engagement. And so what I can
9 say that ACS is doing is it's in big part developing
10 our workforce institute and our first rollout
11 initiative is going to be to train about 1,500
12 frontline staff across--across the care and
13 preventive and ACS on engagement. And we, you know,
14 workers think they know how to engage, and--and many
15 of them do, but there are really more skills that can
16 be developed around--around engagement as well as
17 sort of motivational interviewing, and help young
18 people to realize that we are there to help them.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: That's good to
20 hear, and I have two more questions. What mental
21 health services are provided? Are you all connecting
22 with the First Lady to come into a program and an
23 initiative that she is doing? Have you all tapped
24 into that just as well with our youth?

2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Yes. I can
3 mention that ACS is involved in a very large
4 initiative around a number of evidence-based models
5 that we're using particularly to get to the mental
6 health issues, and really access mental health
7 services. And we are working with the First Lady in-
8 -in--in expanding what we do. Right, we're involved
9 in an evidence-based model called Partnering for
10 Success, which is really a broad training--series of
11 trainings and consultations between mental health
12 providers, CBT Plus providers and child welfare
13 staff. So that child welfare staff are not a
14 separate entity from mental health providers. So that
15 these two entities work together to help get young
16 people who need it into mental health treatment and
17 to track that work. That's a big initiative, and
18 that's a big part of what ACS is engaging starting--
19 it just started.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Okay, that's good.
21 I'm glad to hear that. One of my last questions, are
22 the programs in public schools to educate and warn
23 youth--warn youth of the dangers of being exploited,
24 and how to protect themselves? What is the program,
25 like the curriculum for our young people in school?

2 SUSAN MORLEY: Um, so I know that the
3 Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence, they
4 partner with Day One, and they have been doing a lot
5 of training on healthy relationships.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Do you feel all
7 the schools should a training program?

8 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] I feel--I
9 feel--I feel that we could probably be doing--and we
10 need to look at it to do more in our schools on this
11 specific topic. We have had cases where kids are
12 recruited right in the school--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
14 Right at the school?

15 SUSAN MORLEY: --in Brooklyn by their
16 classmates. So, I have personally went and trained
17 with the Fredrick Douglas Initiative and some high
18 level people in--in the schools, but I think we
19 really need to look at how much--prevention is key
20 here. Once the kids get involved in a life, it
21 becomes very difficult to get them out, and by the
22 time if we're able to, there's a lot of trauma.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Well, how can we
24 prevent that at a school, because they are recruiting
25 at the school.

2 SUSAN MORLEY: Well, we have to--we have
3 to educate kids so they know what it looks like.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: That's what I
5 asked for.

6 SUSAN MORLEY: We have to educate parents
7 so they know what it looks like because and--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] What
9 program?

10 SUSAN MORLEY: See, I have an 11-year-
11 old, right, and--and if you think about it--if you
12 feel like your kid is not touched by this, you really
13 worry about talking to your kid about something like
14 this. Yet, when we don't talk to our kids about
15 this--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
17 Then they can--

18 SUSAN MORLEY: --they're at great risk
19 when they get the older boyfriend trying to charm
20 them, right.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Yeah.

22 SUSAN MORLEY: And rather that's a great
23 risk to our kids.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
25 Right at school, lunch time, 3 o'clock--

2 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Yeah.

3 Walking home, going to Starbucks, gong to McDonald's

4 they're all--that's where they're getting our kids.

5 And, um, and if parents aren't aware of this, they're

6 going to say I don't want my kid to know about that,

7 right? So we have to somehow--and I went out to

8 Brooklyn, and we wanted to educate the community one

9 day, and hardly anybody came. So it's you have to

10 try to get into meetings where there's already people

11 coming for other things, and you put this on the

12 agenda to try to reach people.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] So

14 maybe with the PTA you could start--

15 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Yeah.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: --there.

17 SUSAN MORLEY: Yeah, but I think we need

18 to partnership with other city agencies because we're

19 all seeing these kids. We just have to recognize

20 that we're seeing it.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I think all of our

22 after school programs when the parents are coming to

23 see their children perform that would be a good

24 opportunity just to be an intermission break that you

25 all come in and speak to the whole body just to

2 inform them. Because no matter what is happening to
3 our young people, and we need to tell them no matter
4 what we have to tell them some may agree, but we may
5 save a life.

6 SUSAN MORLEY: I think it has to be
7 worked into the health curriculum, too, and--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] Yes.

9 SUSAN MORLEY: --at a much younger--my
10 son is a senior in high school, public high school,
11 and he's only getting health the last part of the
12 senior year so it has to be worked into health and
13 much younger.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
15 That's a problem. Our young people are not even
16 being taught--I did a film festival, and we did it
17 about when was the first time in school they were
18 taught about sex education. It was when they was in
19 the 11th grade. That's a problem. So we have to
20 start doing something, and I was--I was surprised,
21 and they did a film about it the Jacko Jackson Film
22 Festival. So I'm going to continue pressing because
23 we have to let our young people know--

24 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] I think--

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: --there are
3 predators out there.

4 SUSAN MORLEY: Yeah, I think one good
5 thing we're going to be doing with the Mayor's
6 Children's Cabinet support is bringing a roundtable
7 with the city agencies to hear from each other. So
8 what are you doing in this area? What are you doing?
9 What are you seeing? So we really share and try to
10 help each other fill the gaps and work together
11 because that's the only way we're going stop the
12 pimps is to work together.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you so much.
14 Thank you, Chair, for this important hearing.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
16 Council Member Mealy. Talking about the beds for the
17 homeless youth I was very grateful to the Mayor and
18 to the administration for adding the number of beds
19 to see it is great. Because it is unfortunate to see
20 young people in the great City of New York, they have
21 to go to, you know, to sit for activities for some of
22 times and other hardships to have a place to sleep
23 because they don't have anywhere to sleep. This is a
24 great thing for the Mayor to add the number of beds,
25 and the administration to continue to provide a

2 number of beds. But what is the assurance that we
3 have that the funding will be secure whether, you
4 know, doing baselining of the funding. We are very
5 unsure that the money, the funding will be secure in
6 order to guarantee the number, the addition of those
7 beds?

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: The 100
9 beds that were added this year are baselined.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm sorry?

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: The 100
12 beds that were added this year are baselined.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, but is there
14 any hope to see an increase in the funding, and
15 because--and the reason I'm saying I don't think
16 that--do you believe that we are able to provide the
17 number of beds that the homeless young people need in
18 the City of New York? We still have to do more, and
19 I believe that there are many young people who are
20 still on the street looking for a place to sleep. Is
21 there any hope that you hear from the Administration
22 to increase the funding to make sure we can
23 accommodate more youth, homeless youth?

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Well, as
25 I've stated, in recent months I have not heard from

2 providers about them having the, you know, waiting
3 list of young people who are seeking placements. And
4 I'm at a point right now where I believe we're
5 meeting the--the need, and providing a bed for every
6 young person that is seeking a bed.

7 LEGAL COUNSEL: [off mic] Chair, Council
8 Member King.

9 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: So, again
10 I believe that our agency is being very responsive to
11 the need as it's presented to use.

12 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. Let me
13 mention that we have been joined by Council Member
14 King. He has to leave because he's chairing another
15 public hearing. And talking about, you know, when
16 you collect information, data from the youth it seems
17 like a mistrust. The young people they don't trust
18 the administration. They don't trust people to be
19 the liaison, to give the information that you are
20 looking for. What are you doing to improve or
21 increase the trust of the young people in order for
22 them to give you that information that you are
23 looking for? Is there anything that you are doing to
24 make sure that, you know, the jobs of those providers

2 of those employees seeking to have the information is
3 easier?

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Well, I
5 think that in--with our providers who come from, you
6 know, many different backgrounds they come to do this
7 type of work because they really care about the
8 population. And when they do receive the trainings
9 at their provider agencies, when they come to
10 programs that--that we hold, they also state as we
11 know that this population is distrustful because of
12 their prior experiences. And I think that they
13 realize that, you know, one of the best ways to
14 approach these young people is being patient with
15 them. You know, not trying to force information out
16 of them because that's when you'll probably get the
17 pushback. So our providers I think take great care
18 in selecting staff that understand this, and are
19 willing to be patient with young people, and a lot of
20 times especially with CSEC youth, a young person can
21 be in a program for several months before they admit
22 that they are being sexually exploited. You know,
23 because there's a lot of things that they fear might
24 happen if they speak out about their experience. And
25 the first is fear of retaliation from a pimp because

2 they think that, you know, that person might find out
3 that they give up information about--about them. The
4 other is that they might be arrested because they
5 don't fully understand that what they did was not a
6 crime. So I think that in terms of getting that
7 level of trust and getting that information from the
8 young person requires staff that, you know, have the
9 knowledge about the population and the patience, you
10 know, to go at-- You know, meet the young person
11 where they are, and that's what you hear all of the
12 time from the service providers in our programs. You
13 have to meet the young person where they are, and
14 when you first meet them they might be defiant and
15 closed off, and just work with them, and they will in
16 turn--in time trust and open up and give you the
17 information that you need to help them.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: There's another
19 issue that we should address also because we know
20 that New York is home to so many immigrants, people
21 coming from all over the world, and they come with
22 their card shares, and with the language, and also
23 they're facing bias also because of their cultures,
24 because of their languages. And I know in certain
25 communities it is a taboo to talk about sex education

2 especially Italian communities and other communities
3 also. And--and because of this bias and challenges
4 facing, you know, the--the immigrant people, the
5 other people coming into New York, do you have
6 immigrant staff who are knowledgeable, skilled and
7 who know their communities working with you to make
8 sure that these populations of immigrant youth are
9 also served property?

10 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Well, in
11 our provider agencies, I definitely see a wide range
12 of staff from different backgrounds, cultures. You
13 know, so I see that now in our provider agencies,
14 and--and do you want to speak to ACS?

15 SUSAN MORLEY: Yeah, we--we work with the
16 different providers, but we also have staff that
17 specialize in immigration and we created a child
18 trafficking mailbox. So when staff are struggling
19 with cases, they can email us for support. So our
20 immigration person is forwarded anything that we feel
21 that there's an immigration issue that she can assist
22 with. So, you know, we do--but can we do more?
23 Probably. We still could do more with some of those
24 providers, and that's on one of the to-do lists. But
25 certainly, you know, we--we do have Language Line and

2 when needed, we do get interpreters, but it's--it's
3 definitely more complex like you said where people,
4 you know, they are not used to talking about this.
5 And, you know, their culture frowns upon it, and so
6 it's really how do you engage them, and it becomes
7 really difficult to engage somebody if you're not
8 speaking the same language, right? So we definitely,
9 you know, work with our providers in those
10 circumstances.

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: And, of
12 course, also cultural competence is an important part
13 of every training. So one part that Sue was talking
14 about is about language access, and the other is
15 really to make sure that all of our trainings, which
16 we do, all of our trainings are--have elements of
17 cultural competence in them so that our providers,
18 our--our trainees are--are educated as to different
19 cultures, and now they feel about some of these very
20 vulnerable topics.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Oh, you started the
22 answer of my next question.

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Ah-hah.

24

25

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Law abiding and
3 other, the city of New York should provide services
4 using different languages. I think seven of them.

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH:
6 [interposing] Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Could you tell me
8 because you mentioned to--for us for the community
9 the languages that you use to provide services to the
10 homeless and the sexually exploited youth in the city
11 of New York, the different languages that you use to
12 provide those services, and what is the effort that
13 you are doing to provide services using more
14 languages?

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: Well, I--

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] You
17 mentioned the different languages for homeless youth.

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: I can start
19 by talking broadly about the fact that we've been
20 working with--in the city with developing an internal
21 policy--

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Uh-
23 huh.

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER NISH: --of
25 language access, which has been a very front and

2 center policy that we, you know, for all employees.

3 In terms of the CSEC population, I feel like perhaps-

4 -

5 SUSAN MORLEY: You know, if we--we will
6 get an interpreter if we need to get an interpreter.
7 We work with providers in the different in the
8 different communities if that's who we're dealing
9 with. We're also trying with our hiring practices
10 trying to look for folks that speak different
11 languages to bring more folks on board. I mean, you
12 know, we are a city of many different languages, and
13 Queens in particular. So we--we will get an
14 interpreter if we need to for--for whatever type of
15 case we have.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Yeah, I know that
17 you will try to get interpreters, but there's a
18 difference because the Executive Orders requires that
19 you provide--

20 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Well, we
21 don't have--you know, CSEC providers in general, we
22 don't have enough of. So, you know, if we're aware
23 of a provider that is working with a specific
24 culture, we will certainly tap into the. But it's
25 something still needs building. We still need to

2 build--it's one of the gaps. We need to build more
3 CSEC services.

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Okay, I--
5 there are 192 languages for which we have contracted
6 providers to assist with interpretation. And we have
7 community partnership programs that support us as
8 well so--

9 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So you have full
10 evaluation using two languages?

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Excuse
12 me?

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Is that what you
14 said, two languages?

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: No, 192
16 languages.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay.

18 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: 192
19 languages. We have contractor providers to assist
20 with interpretation in 192 different languages.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. You know, in
22 terms of homelessness and also sexually abused young
23 people, we know that some of them, they get there
24 because of the trauma. They had been facing by the
25 families. This is a result of what they are going

2 through in their families. You know, broken families
3 and single mother and immigrant people who don't
4 understand the system, who don't have the capacity or
5 the possibility or the resources to educate their--
6 their children in this system, which is new to them.
7 And also unfortunately, they don't have any other
8 option. They get there, you know, being homeless,
9 and being abused. So what--what do you in place to
10 provide the support--the necessary support to those
11 families.

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER:

13 [interposing] So we do have--

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --in terms of
15 educating their children, preventing them to get to
16 the homelessness and also being abused. What is--is
17 there any effort that you are doing working together
18 with those families to make sure that they are able
19 to educate their children? They are able to prevent
20 their children from becoming homeless, to leave the
21 house and to be abused?

22 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Well, um-

23 -

24 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] I'll take
25 that ne.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Now before--we have
3 been joined by Council Member David Greenfield. I
4 don't know if he's going to stay, but--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: [off mic] I
6 have another hearing.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. You have been
8 acknowledged. All right, thank you very much,
9 Council Member Greenfield. I'm sorry.

10 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Okay. In
11 our drop-in centers, that would be the primary place
12 where young people who are at risk of being homeless
13 would first enter into one of our funded programs.
14 And at our drop-in centers as with all of our other
15 programs, first and foremost is working with the
16 family, and working towards family reunification if
17 the family has already divided in some way. And so,
18 counselors at the drop-in centers are there to assist
19 the family in working through whatever issues are
20 impacting the family. Because sometimes it might be
21 that you have the 18-year-old who the parent feels
22 isn't doing what they're supposed to be doing, and so
23 you're 18 years old, you're an adult. Get out. And
24 so, a counselor would work with that family and help,
25 you know, that family to understand the needs of that

2 young person, and why they wouldn't be able to fend
3 for themselves if they were thrown out of the house.
4 And how they can possibly work towards keeping the
5 family intact or reunifying them. And that same
6 process happens at our crisis shelters as well. So
7 that's, you know, a big part of our programs, the
8 family reunification.

9 SUSAN MORLEY: So we have our Family
10 Assessment Program, which is located in five
11 different boroughs. So like if the police--mom is
12 reporting my child keeps not going to school, and
13 giving me a hard time, and he goes missing or she
14 goes missing, if they tell the mother, you know,
15 should go to court and get a pinge (sp?) lock. What
16 happens when they get to court is they get diverted
17 our Family Assessment Program instead. And the
18 Family Assessment Program has master level social
19 workers who will conduct and assessment of the
20 parent, the caregiver, the youth. And, they will
21 work with them and refer them to different types of
22 services. We have like four different levels of
23 services. One being--I'll just say general family
24 stabilization. A higher level would be Functional
25 Family Therapy, Multi-Dimensional Family Therapy,

2 Multi-Systemic Therapy and Adaptation, and Level 4,
3 which is Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care. So
4 they assess the family. They assess the youth, and
5 they try to work with that family to prevent exactly
6 what you're talking about to stabilize the family and
7 try to get the youth and the family to be able to
8 stay together. And as it progresses, it may get
9 higher and higher. They see 6,000 to 7,000 families
10 a year. And they also have the abilities--families--
11 to walk into any of our borough field offices, and
12 ask for services voluntarily without having a case
13 opened against them.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. Thank you.
15 Could you please describe to the committee your
16 experiences and challenges in compiling the two
17 reports required by Local Law 23?

18 SUSAN MORLEY: There have been many.
19 When the law was passed, we really had no capacity to
20 collect the data. So some of the money that we
21 received from Safe Harbor the first year that we
22 received Safe Harbor funding, we actually hired
23 Chapin Hall to study the system to make a
24 recommendation to us what would give us the best
25 ability to capture the data, and their recommendation

2 at that time was for the state to change the
3 connection system, which we have been advocating for.
4 And like I testified earlier, the State we're about
5 to do a test pilot for the changes that the State is
6 making in the connections database, which is the
7 Child Welfare database that, you know, ACS and its
8 providers enter information into. So that's why I'm
9 hopeful that we're going to be able to have much
10 better data. We also is--the Safe Harbor data that
11 we were able to collect was once the provider's--the
12 contracts were all resolved where you can actually
13 get the money to the providers to give the services.
14 So, the other thing is nobody really--even the
15 providers had the ability to collect the--all the
16 different data that--by ages and everything else. So
17 we have been working that out over the last couple of
18 years, and we are, like I said, I think we are in a
19 position that the data that begins January 1 and on
20 will be more comprehensive data that we'll be able to
21 capture. So for the following year's report, it will
22 be--I think give us a better snapshot.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: But how do you know
24 that the--

2 SUSAN MORLEY: And the other--the other
3 data like I said earlier is--it relies on a lot of
4 times on intake where you could--who--who--you could
5 just remove the child from their home. They're not
6 really wanting to talk to you much, right? So the
7 new law that passed, the state has given us a
8 directive that we're going to use two types of
9 trafficking indicator tools. And one is a--has eight
10 questions that every child that we come across we'll
11 eventually--we'll gather the information to answer
12 those questions. And then if certain questions are a
13 yes, we do a more comprehensive screening for
14 trafficking. So this is going to enable--that and
15 all the training is going to get everybody really up
16 on the issue, and we're going to be screening. It
17 also requires, which to acknowledge what Deborah--
18 Deborah said earlier, the kid coming in may not trust
19 you but six months later they might develop a
20 relationship and trust somebody. So for kids that
21 are with us long term or in long-term foster care,
22 the provider agencies will be able to every time--I
23 think it's like every six months when they do their
24 tests (sic) they will be screening or any time new
25 information comes, you can do the screening. So when

2 you're--you know, we don't just rely on the youth.
3 If a mom or a foster mom is reporting all these
4 indicators of trafficking, that's why the training is
5 so important. You know, what, the youth suddenly has
6 an older boyfriend. She has an iPhone I didn't buy
7 her. She's disappearing three days at a time. Now
8 it's one week or two weeks at a time. Does she have
9 a phone number she's calling you from? We bring in
10 the retired law enforcement that worked for me, and
11 we do a workup on the phone, and we often find the
12 youth advertised on Back Page, and then we have a
13 relationship with the Police Department Human
14 Trafficking Unit where then we'll reach out to the
15 Human Trafficking Unit that we have a foster child
16 missing that's advertised on Back Page. And this is,
17 if you didn't do that kind of work, you would just
18 have a mother saying my kid is running away. So part
19 of the effort with this work is to change people's
20 hearts and minds on how they view these youth. In
21 the past they were troubled, truant kids. They keep
22 running away. Who cares? Like we've got to change
23 all the different minds on these kids are victims,
24 and when we get everybody there, we're going to wind
25 up identifying more youth, and be able to help more.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I know that you have
3 been doing a lot of effort everything that you can do
4 to provide services to the youth, the homeless youth,
5 and abused children or youth. The youth are at risk.
6 I know that, but you know they look at fiction. (sic)
7 Nobody can claim that we do 100%, you know, we have
8 100% success, but is there any gaps in providing
9 services to the young people, and what is our plan to
10 fill these gaps.

11 SUSAN MORLEY: Well, we do struggle.
12 These are complex cases. You know, AWOL or runaway
13 is definitely a big part of this issues. So you might
14 have services. For example, we have specialized
15 residential foster care beds with JCC, Gateway's
16 program, right, specific for this population. We
17 have 12 beds, but the youth has to be, you know,
18 ready to come out of the life, have a certain IQ, and
19 some of these kids are not at that point yet. Some
20 of the kids are still traumatically bonded to their
21 trafficker. They think they are in love with them.
22 This guy controls them basically. So you can't send
23 kid like that up to Gateways where you have some kids
24 doing well. They're ready to come out of the life.
25 You don't want a kid that's not ready mixed with that

2 population who may recruit them back out into the
3 life. So I think we do have a gap for what do we do
4 with that youth that's not ready dot come out of the
5 life? They may still be involved with the
6 trafficker. They have a substance abuse issue, and
7 that's a case that not only ACS struggles with, and
8 the providers all struggle with. So I almost feel
9 like we need to--the inter-agencies. Not just the
10 two sitting here. We need to devise a place where
11 these youth can go and be safe, and get the health--
12 the mental health they need with the idea we know
13 they're going to run. We know they're going to run,
14 and they also have to change staff's perspective, and
15 we've been working very hard to do that, but when
16 they come back, don't be mad at them and pushing them
17 because they ran, but welcome them back. Let the
18 know you're glad they're safe so that you always want
19 them to come back. So that's the things we struggle
20 with--with this population, and often it's--it's
21 mental health and substance abuse and CSEC, and that
22 mix is really difficult. So we have to work on
23 programs for that kind of kid.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I imagine that the
25 waiting list, also there for the young people who are

2 in need of beds, if we want to talk about numbers,
3 how many young people would you estimate are waiting
4 for beds or on the waiting list, but they cannot find
5 a bed because you don't have enough.

6 SUSAN MORLEY: Well, ACS will always have
7 enough beds. We might not have enough foster
8 families at times for this population. You know
9 recruitment of--we tried with JCCH to develop
10 specialized foster care families specifically trained
11 to work with CSEC youth, and it was very difficult.
12 They were not able to find foster parents. So, you
13 know, ACS we--we--we don't turn kids away. They
14 realize we house them. It's a matter of the
15 specialized bed that we were talking about, those
16 criteria to go to that bed.

17 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Now, let's talk
18 about something else because I know that all the
19 agencies that are doing, you know, the business they
20 can do to provide services to all New Yorkers you
21 know whether on education, and health, and--and the
22 Youth Department. But none one of the challenges
23 that I--I saw in any area in the city of New York is
24 outreach. To make sure that the people in need, they
25 know that the services exist. It's happening

2 everywhere, and--but could you tell us about your
3 outreach system, and make sure that they young people
4 in need that know the services are available to them.
5 You know what are you doing to make sure that not
6 only they know, but they take advantage of the
7 benefit from those services. They come to you. Tell
8 us about your outreach system.

9 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Well, we
10 have our street outreach teams that canvass all five
11 boroughs of New York City between 9:00 and 5:00 in
12 the morning to reach runaway and homeless young
13 people. They provide them with literature. We have
14 Safe Horizons and our agency developed a really nice
15 palm card that has lots of information about our
16 services, as well as information on soup kitchens and
17 things around the city. In addition, our--the drop-
18 in centers that we fund there's seven of them
19 throughout New York City. They are required to do
20 community presentations. So they go out to different
21 community centers, different gatherings in the summer
22 time that the communities have. They go to the
23 schools and do presentations on the services offered
24 at the drop-in centers and crises and till (sic)
25 shelters. And then myself and Randy Scott he--we sit

2 on panels at community events and different other
3 events and talk about the services offered and the
4 programs that DYCD funds. So we do a lot. We can
5 always do more, but we do a lot of community
6 outreach.

7 RANDY SCOTT: Can--can I just add to that
8 that outreach is more, is--is complicated in the same
9 ways that we were talking about engagement because I--
10 -I jut happened to have run the overnight outreach
11 before I was in my current role, and I can say that--
12 that young people--Outreach workers connect with
13 young people on the street, and they don't come into
14 services the first time they connect or the second or
15 the third. They a relationship on the street, and
16 when those young people are trusting, that's when
17 they access services. And often they will access one
18 of the drop-in centers, and it's through the drop-in
19 centers that they'll develop a relationship with a
20 case worker. And it's through that relationship that
21 they'll even be interested in a shelter bed. So
22 that's sort of the--the DYCD continuum.

23 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Well, thank you very
24 much. You know, I had--I had the privilege to serve
25 youth also. I spent a lot of years of my life before

2 I was elected providing services to young people
3 because I used to be a leader, and I created a number
4 of organizations. These are organizations serving
5 young people in the community. I know first hand
6 what the young people are going through, and I also
7 was presented the biggest reward that I can receive.
8 Even now, when I'm walking on the street, and I see a
9 big kind--you know, and the many says, Council--Mr.
10 Matthew, you don't remember us? I say, yeah I
11 should. They say I'm--I'm one of your lost children,
12 and then it happens that--that gentleman or ladies,
13 you know, used to be, you know, children from our
14 organization. They are successful. A lot of people
15 they are in medical schools. They are doctors and
16 they are nurses, and guess what, some of them are
17 working with me as my staff members. See, that's the
18 reason why I strongly believe that we have to invest
19 in them. Because when I worked in that part maybe 20
20 something years before I was elected, I didn't have a
21 clue that I was going to be an elected official. I
22 didn't have a clue that all of those young people
23 would be one day part of my staff. Having said that,
24 I think that we should all try to give access, to
25 give resources--to give our resources to the young

2 people. Whatever we are having, we are--whatever we
3 have to offer them. But in your outreach effort, do
4 you have young people also that are part of your
5 staff, young people who are being part of your
6 outreach team to go to those young people in needs,
7 homeless young people, abused young people? Do you
8 have young people to do that job because peers
9 attract peers. The young people that have no way to
10 communicate to trust each other. They don't trust us
11 adults. They say we're getting--I say no wait. But
12 they have a certain way to communicate between
13 themselves and to attract each other. Do you have
14 young people being part of the team? If you don't, I
15 would strong advise to get young people being part
16 of this process. Could you please answer me?

17 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER HARPER: Well, why
18 don't you speak to that.

19 RAY SCOTT: Hello, my name is Ray Scott,
20 Director of Runaway and Homeless Youth with DYCD.
21 And to answer your question, as you know, DYCD
22 doesn't have direct services. It doesn't provide
23 direct services. However, the contract it cites that
24 we fund--they all have staff who are youth that
25 engage with the youth that come into the facility

2 especially with out street outreach. They hire staff
3 who are familiar with the youth out on the street as
4 well as the drop-in they have youth workers that
5 provide services whether it's, you know, conducting a
6 workshop or just engaging the youth as they enter the
7 site in order to help them become comfortable and
8 trust the staff. So for the staff that I've been
9 able to--the sites that I've been able to visit,
10 which is basically all of them, they have staff
11 members who are youth that have engaged the youth out
12 in the community.

13 SUSAN MORLEY: I totally agree. We have
14 to probably do this even more, but do have our--we
15 hired somebody specifically with that in mind, and we
16 also have our Education unit, and our--trying to be
17 modern. We developed a Twitter account, a new
18 website. We have our office of LGBTQ policy that has
19 a young intern on its staff, and I know that borough
20 offices, you know, work hard to make inroads into the
21 community. And we've been, you know, doing different
22 things like Upper Manhattan field office brought in
23 young people to teach them how to, you know, make
24 ties. We have haircuts. We do things around prom,
25 just trying to get the young people in for more

2 positive things that they traditionally don't view us
3 as. So, we do do a lot of efforts at the local level
4 as well, but I don't have all of that with me.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, you know, as I
6 told you, I used to be in the other side also of
7 providing services to the young people in terms of
8 resources and funding. It has been always an issue
9 for my small organization, and we were successful not
10 because of the funding of the funding that we
11 received--

12 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Yeah.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --but because of the
14 support of the people in the community--

15 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Yeah.

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --who are
17 volunteers, the parents. We were very strong and
18 powerful. We provided services to thousands and
19 thousands of people. Not because of the funding--

20 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Yeah.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: --but the people,
22 the parents, fathers, the mothers, they felt that
23 they were part of what we are doing. They come to
24 provide their time and their services, and some of
25 the youths also a lot of volunteers, people in the

2 community as volunteers to be part of your, you know,
3 your--your team to provide the better services to the
4 young people. Do you involve volunteer also from the
5 community?

6 SUSAN MORLEY: Yeah, I mean some of this
7 stuff we'll probably get back to you on, but I mean
8 we--we do a tremendous--we do stuff around the back
9 to school. We had a, you know, we had internships in
10 the summer, which we give the kids all different
11 lessons on all the different parts of the agency. I
12 just thought of it, and it just escaped me--college
13 assistance, brining the kids to the different high
14 schools 'cause it's a--you know, it's a process to
15 get into high school in New York. [laughs] So
16 giving kids support around that as well as colleges.
17 So, you know, the agency is pretty big and everybody
18 is like doing different things. So I won't pretend
19 to be the expert on every single aspect of this.

20 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And also one thing
21 that I remember if my memory is, you know, is
22 accurate is funding for the organization can come
23 from different sources. You know, we have the
24 government and city funding, but also the foundation
25 and also compilation (sic) hey are good partners, and

2 I know that our government alone cannot provide all
3 the resources that you and the other providers need
4 to serve our young people. Are you work within a
5 foundation also and corporation to try to get
6 additional funding?

7 SUSAN MORLEY: Yes, we--we--we definitely
8 work with different organizations, and exactly that
9 to get things that the kids need. There's--I don't
10 have that information with me today, but we
11 definitely work with different organizations and
12 foundations.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay, great. So, I
14 mentioned before, and you all know that this is not
15 something I am teaching you, and this is not new to
16 anyone, but fiction doesn't exist. We succeed and
17 some of the time we don't, and my father I--I lost
18 him, but my father used to tell me that, My son,
19 there is no such thing as perfection. Every single
20 day you got to work hard to review your strategy.
21 You've go to work hard to implement to improve your
22 strategy, and to see what you have done, if you have
23 done it appropriately, and what else you are to do to
24 do it better. What can you share with us in terms of
25 your success and failure? In terms of providing

2 services to young people? Share with us. Share
3 with the committee your failures, things that you
4 believe that--

5 SUSAN MORLEY: [interposing] Well, we can
6 tell you that--

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Not because--not
8 because--not because you are to fail. I don't want
9 to call that a failure, but difficulties. Let's put
10 it another way, difficulties that you face, you know,
11 as you provide services to young people.

12 SUSAN MORLEY: Yes..

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And also things that
14 you wish that you could--be able to do better.

15 SUSAN MORLEY: Yeah

16 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: And also your
17 success also, of course.

18 SUSAN MORLEY: Yeah. I think--I think our
19 challenge is--part of our challenge is engaging the
20 youth to trust ACS. It's not an agency that you--
21 because of how we get involved often in their lives,
22 it's a challenge. So that's one of the reasons we
23 brought in Safe Horizons to our children and that's
24 the social workers who are the young, and really
25 build rapport with the kids, and they're not viewed

2 the same way as our other staff. And so, the
3 challenge is definitely engaging the youth. I think
4 doing a little bit more with connecting the youth
5 like you said with the services, data collection--I
6 don't like to say failures. I think this is a work--

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Right,
8 I agree.

9 SUSAN MORLEY: --in progress. I don't
10 believe in failures.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] I
12 agree with you. It's challenging.

13 SUSAN MORLEY: Yeah, and this--this
14 population there's no special recipe. Every youth is
15 different, and the one thing that I could say that
16 always needs to be in the recipe is that we don't
17 give up on them no matter how challenging they could
18 be, how verbal they can be. You know, sometimes
19 working with you that, you know, you don't give up on
20 them. So it's a challenge to find, you know, people,
21 foster care parents that are willing to take on a
22 youth like this. That's one of our challenges. Like
23 you said we really tried to do that with one of our
24 best providers, and we weren't able to do that, not

2 that we're not going to keep trying I think look at
3 that, you know.

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you so very
5 much and thank you for your services. Thank you for
6 your testimonies, and let's continue to work together
7 to help those young people because they are also our
8 children, our youth. Thank you very much. Have a
9 wonderful day.

10 SUSAN MORLEY: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Bless you. Thank
12 you. We're going to call the-- [background comment]
13 We are going to call the next panel. Courtney Camp
14 from the Legal Aid Society Juvenile Rights Practices.
15 Thank you very much. Lillian Rivera from the
16 Hetrick-Martin Institute. Thank you and also Andrea
17 Bowan--Bowa from the United Neighborhood Houses.
18 Thank you so very much. [background comments]

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you, also.
20 [pause] Thank you very much. You can start any time-
21 -now, please, but before you start, could you please
22 all state your names. Turn it up under the
23 microphone.

24 COURTNEY CAMP: Courtney Camp, C-A-M-P
25 with the Legal Aid Society.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

3 ANDREA BOWAN: Andrea Bowan with United
4 Neighborhood Houses.

5 LILLIAN RIVERA: Lillian Rivera, Hetrick-
6 Martin Institute.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much
8 and welcome to all of you. Who is going to start?

9 COURTNEY CAMP: I can start.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you.

11 COURTNEY CAMP: Good day. I'm Courtney
12 Camp, a staff attorney with the Legal Aid Society's
13 Juvenile Rights practice.

14 LEGAL COUNSEL: I'm sorry. Ms. Camp,
15 could you just pull the microphone closer to you,
16 please. So that way we can hear you better.

17 COURTNEY CAMP: Yes, is that better? We
18 would like to thank Chair Eugene and all the members
19 for inviting our input on the proposed bi-annual
20 training for certain New York City employers on RHY
21 and sexually exploited children. We applaud the
22 committee for continuing to tackle this important
23 subject and look forward to the valuable
24 contributions that we are sure the Council will make
25 in identifying and serving some of our city's most

2 vulnerable children. I'm with the Legal Aid Society.
3 We're the nation's oldest and largest non-profit
4 legal services providers. We are in all five
5 boroughs. We have 26 offices across the city. We
6 also have--well, in addition to providing both civil,
7 criminal and juvenile rights legal services we also
8 have two law--three Law Reform units and Special
9 Litigation units where we try to implement measures
10 to improve life in the city for our clients. The
11 Legal Aid Society is deeply concerned about the
12 availability of services for New York City's RHY and
13 sexually exploited children. Introduction 554, which
14 mandates the biannual training that we've been
15 discussing today is a valuable step in the right
16 direction for these vulnerable youth. However, it
17 doesn't go far enough. We think that there should be
18 much more robust services for these populations in
19 the city. A bit about the populations. Although
20 each both sexually exploited children and RHY have
21 their own distinct needs and characteristics, the two
22 groups are very closely related. Runaway and
23 homeless youth in particular lack resources. All too
24 often, they lack access to a shelter bed. Even those
25 who are able to access shelter may not have enough

2 time in that shelter bed to enable them to get
3 housing, job placement or educational assistance.
4 Unlike adult shelters, New York City limits the
5 amount of time that RHY can stay in shelter to 30 to
6 60 days. This isn't enough time, and it leaves you
7 vulnerable to track--increasing--it increasing their
8 vulnerability to traffickers because often young
9 people are in and out of the shelter system. At the
10 same time, youth who have been trafficked often feel
11 isolated and stigmatized. And they run from homes or
12 foster care placements where they feel judged or
13 rejected. Covenant House did a study several years
14 ago in which 174 RHY youth between the ages of 18 and
15 23 were interviewed, and 23% of those young people
16 had experiencing--had experienced trafficking or
17 survival sex. Homelessness is one of the most common
18 drivers of youth engagement in survival sex.
19 According to a survey of nearly a thousand homeless
20 youth in New York City, young men were three times
21 more likely than young women to have traded sex for a
22 place to stay, and LGBTQ youth were seven times more
23 likely than heterosexual youth to have done so.
24 Transgender youth in New York City have been found
25 eight times more likely than non-transgender youth to

2 trade sex for a safe place to stay. These numbers
3 while alarming are not surprising to youth advocates.
4 They provide a mere glimpse into the harsh realities
5 faced by RHY and sexually exploited children in the
6 city. Introduction 554 mandates bi-annual training
7 for New York City employees on these important
8 issues. We have a few recommendations for this
9 training. In order to approve its efficacy, we would
10 recommend that the training include LGBTQ culturally
11 competent information given the fact that LGBTQ young
12 people are over-represented in the RHY populations--
13 population. Resources for all sexually exploited
14 children including cisgender boys, transgender youth,
15 and other queer and questioning youth should also be
16 provided. The fact that one out of four runaway and
17 homeless youth in New York City has been a victim of
18 trafficking, is an unacceptable statistic. Training
19 New York City workers to identify and connect these
20 under-served groups to appropriate resources impact
21 is imperative. But as I said before, it's not
22 enough. We believe that the effort can't just end
23 with training. There must be increased resources for
24 this vulnerable population including additional
25 shelter beds and long-term transitional housing.

2 We'd like to thank the committee for their attention
3 to the needs of RHY and sexually exploited children
4 and for giving the Legal Aid Society the opportunity
5 to speak about these important topics today. Thank
6 you.

7 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
8 The next speaker, please.

9 LILLIAN RIVERA: Thank you. Good
10 afternoon. I want to begin by thanking the chair of
11 the committee, the Youth Services Committee for
12 considering this issue. My name is Lilly Rivera. I
13 serve as Director of Advocacy and Capacity Building
14 at the Hetrick-Martin Institute's Center for LGBTQ
15 Youth Advocacy and Capacity Building. The Hetrick-
16 Martin Institute, the nation's oldest and largest
17 LGBTQ youth serving agency provides critical life
18 saving support to one of New York City's most
19 marginalized populations, LGBTQ youth. Each year
20 2,000 LGBTQ youth--young people from all five
21 boroughs walk through our doors in need of food,
22 clothing, mental and emotional support and a safe and
23 supportive environment. We are thrilled about your
24 efforts to ensure that those directly impacting the
25 lives for runaway and homeless youth and commercially

2 sexually exploited children, CSEC are given the
3 skills to be the most impactful. As an organization
4 we have worked with this population since the onset
5 of our existence. We understands the nuanced
6 variables that create the conditions to facilitate
7 these horrible circumstances for children and young
8 people. We also are one of the three city agencies
9 contracted by ACS to provide services to commercially
10 sexually exploited LGBTQ youth, and we have developed
11 training both six-hour day long CSEC LGBT training
12 and a two-hour webinar, which would be a great
13 resource to the city. In thinking about these
14 populations, we know that the conditions of one feed
15 the other. for LGBTQ who are disproportionately
16 impacted by homelessness, they often encounter
17 homelessness due to hostility and rejection of
18 family. A young person who has run away or has been
19 thrown out of their home are often disconnected and
20 find their survival on the streets. LGBTQ youth are
21 often an overlooked population when thinking about
22 commercially sexually exploited children. This is
23 really important and I want to point and highlight
24 this out because we've had conversations earlier this
25 morning, and we're often referring to CSEC young

2 people in the language of being trafficked.
3 Sometimes the system fails LGBTQ youth. So they're
4 not--may not be one person that engages them in
5 survival sex, but in order to survive, they figure
6 out what the system's underground economies are to be
7 able to survive. And that's really important within
8 the CSEC community that we make that distinction, and
9 understand what the specific drivers are with LGBTQ
10 youth. The unfolding and involvement of LGBTQ youth
11 looks very different, and it is our responsibility to
12 know how it happens, and how to create systems of
13 care that will prevent survival sex as an option for
14 any young people--young person. It is essential that
15 all city workers ensure the wellbeing of young people
16 and have this nuanced understanding of the root
17 causes, the drivers that facilitate these conditions
18 and the modalities that are the most effective in
19 engaging young people.

20 I'd like to share a story of a young
21 person that I work with that for many, many year she
22 was--at the time that she disclosed that she had been
23 engaging in commercial sex, she was 18. Before then,
24 she knew not to tell a mandated reporter, right. So
25 she's really intelligent and very resilient. By the

2 time she told me, I figured out through our
3 conversations one, that she had--she didn't know how
4 to read and write. So the system had failed her. She
5 had gone to school until tenth grade, and didn't know
6 how to read and write. She was on the street. Her
7 father was in prison. Mom was ill. She would event-
8 -sometimes go visit mom, and one day she came to me,
9 and told me I told my mom that I'm doing this to
10 survive. And this was a young trans Latina from the
11 Bronx living in poverty. She said--and I said what
12 did your mother say? And she said my mom said to
13 take care of myself, and as we're leaving my office,
14 I--she said, can you give me condoms? And I said
15 yeah, we can find some, and she's like--she looks at
16 me and she says, can you tell me not to do it? And
17 at that moment, I understood what my role was. My
18 role was to reflect to her that there were other
19 options in her life, that she was capable of doing
20 other things. That I believed that there was
21 potential for her to grow, and be whoever she wanted
22 to be. But at that moment in time when her mother
23 responded just take care f yourself, she communicated
24 that that was her option for life. So while we're
25 optimistic about the many ways that Introduction 554

2 will benefit the lives of young people, we urge you
3 to work with those on the front line to ensure that
4 their trainings are inclusive of the population most
5 impacted by these challenges. We commend your
6 efforts in addressing the needs of runaway and
7 homeless youth, and commercially sexually exploited
8 children, and look forward to the development of this
9 essential capacity building.

10 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
11 Next speaker, please.

12 ANDREA BOWAN: Good morning Chair Eugene
13 and members of the Youth Services Committee.
14 [coughs] Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
15 My name is Andrea Bowan and I'm here on behalf of
16 United Neighborhood Houses, New York City's
17 federation of settlement houses and community
18 centers. UNH member agencies work in partnership
19 with government to provide a wide range of services,
20 including Early Childhood Education, after school
21 youth employment opportunities, adult literacy
22 education services for older adults, and importantly
23 for this hearing, services for runaway and homeless
24 youth and sexually exploited children.

2 Before the committee today are two bills,
3 Intros 554 and 993, two pieces of legislation that
4 will have an impact on our city's runaway and
5 homeless youth, or RHY population, as well as those
6 young people who have been sexually exploited. Intro
7 554 mandates that Department of Youth and Community
8 Development and the Administration for Children's
9 Services provide bi-annual trainings to employees of
10 various city agencies in best practices for
11 identifying runaway and homeless youth and sexually
12 exploited children and how to connect these young
13 people to appropriate resources. We support the
14 concept of training for this critical workforce, and
15 encourage the city to designate the staff eligible
16 for the training and design a curriculum that meets
17 the diverse needs of this population; consult with
18 providers of services to these populations when
19 planning the content of the training, and appropriate
20 funding for this training.

21 Intro 993 extends the deadline from
22 January 1st to March 1st for the release of reports
23 that ACS and DYCD produced to the number--on the
24 number of sexually exploited youths each agency is to
25 come into contact over the course of the calendar

2 year. The bill requires that the report be posted
3 online and to make a technical change if there's an
4 error with these aggregated age groups. As regards
5 to Intro 993, we support the proposed legislation and
6 makes sense that DYCD and ACD have extra time to
7 prepare their report, and it is vital that the report
8 be made online. UNH CBOs that provide services to
9 these populations and city agencies all have a common
10 interest in ensuring that these populations are
11 provided the maximum amount of resources to survive
12 and thrive. Thank you for your time, and for holding
13 this hear, and I'm happy to answer any questions that
14 you have.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much
16 to all three of you. Ms. --is it Rivera? Ms.
17 Rivera, the story that you told us was very touching.
18 So it's a young girl who has been doing trafficking I
19 believe, and at a certain time she went to the mother
20 to see what she could do, and the mother basically
21 told herself. (sic) This is the picture of so many
22 young that are going through in the good City of New
23 York. Young people are in these situations because
24 of many reasons, family issues, family, you know,
25 challenges, and many of those young people are also

2 looking for other alternatives. They don't want to
3 do that. They don't want to be there and, you know,
4 your story and the stories that you tell us, you
5 know, explain that. And they are doing that because
6 they don't have other alternatives. They don't have
7 the support--the necessary support for them to come
8 out from there. And I do believe that, you know, the
9 best medicine is the preventive medicine preventing
10 people to get sick. Preventing people to be there.
11 We as a city, as providers also what we all do
12 together to prevent certain young people to get
13 there, and as I said previously, we know that some or
14 many young people they came from families, you know,
15 broken families, families that are in trouble where
16 mothers and fathers they don't have the resources to
17 provide them what they need. There may be also other
18 reasons where the parents cannot educate their
19 children for many reasons. So based on your
20 experience, the question is addressed to all three of
21 you, what is--what we can do to prevent--not all of
22 them--we won't be able to prevent all of them. What
23 can we do to prevent certain of our--those young
24 people to get to this, you know, horrible situation?
25 What do you believe that we as a city, as a city, we

2 as a government, and we as service providers what we
3 can do to prevent this horrible situation, you know,
4 the young people are in?

5 LILLIAN RIVERA: Yeah. So if I were to
6 reference this one particular story that I shared I
7 think there are--like you said, there are lots of
8 things that happened. I think she was very unsafe in
9 school because she was transgender, and I think that
10 she had spent most of her time--if she hadn't spent
11 most of her time worried about what was going to
12 happen to her, and she would--she would have been in
13 a safe environment, and teachers knew how to create a
14 safe environment, then maybe she would have stayed in
15 school and succeeded. So that's one area. I think
16 having her engaged in--in--in the system in ways that
17 both didn't really--couldn't--couldn't see the--the
18 flags. They couldn't see what was happening in this
19 child's life early on. So I think anybody who--who
20 does work with young people understand the nuances
21 that happened for LGBTQ youth is really important,
22 and I think creating sort of later in life for young
23 people creating economic opportunities, right. If
24 you reference--the Urban Institute did a study that
25 was released. Their researcher is Meredith Dank--

2 specifically looking at young people who are LGBTQ
3 identified and in CSEC commercial sexual exploited,
4 all--the majority of the young people who
5 participated in that study wanted other ways to make
6 money and they wanted a safe place to stay. So they
7 didn't have access to housing, and they didn't have
8 access to employment. And I respectfully disagree
9 with our colleagues earlier when they said there is
10 no waiting for housing. In our experience it's
11 really difficult to find a bed for young people. Most
12 of those beds are full, and it's really difficult to
13 find housing. So those are two of the drivers that
14 they had to make money, and they didn't have a safe
15 place. And I really urge you to look up this
16 research. It's recent research. It's done here in
17 New York City that's really important and speaks
18 volumes to what you're thinking about.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Well, some of the
20 people may think that, you know, helping young people
21 get access to jobs and resources may be expensive,
22 but I think differently. I think this is a good
23 investment. When we invest in young people and
24 children we are making a good investment for the
25 city, and for the future of this city. And that's

2 the reason why I think that, you know, as a city and
3 all us in the City Council we are working hard to
4 make sure that all young people get access to jobs
5 and creating summer jobs and year-round jobs. And I
6 think this is a way, one of the ways that we as city
7 we can work together to prevent some such, you know,
8 a horrible situation that our children, our young
9 people are facing. Not only by providing them with
10 jobs, also good education. Everything that we can
11 provide, and for them to improve their self-esteem,
12 and also their personality. Those young people
13 without self-esteem and trust in themselves, they
14 will do everything to compensate for the lack of, you
15 know, the lack of self-esteem. And the reason why I
16 was so--I strong believe that we are all in this
17 together. And I commend all of you. You know, we
18 will present the different organizations for the
19 services, the different services that you are
20 providing to the--to the youth in the city of New
21 York. I know all of you in our society and all of
22 those organizations they are doing the best that they
23 can do, and we have to continue to do, but we've got
24 to do more. This is ready to go. We have to do
25 more. We have to invest more funding, and we have

2 to collaborate and review our process to see what we-
3 -what else we can do to better serve this because
4 this adjunct. This is not acceptable to see so many
5 young people--really it's young people in our city
6 not having a place to live who are forced to traffic
7 themselves to have a place to live. This is hard
8 thing. This is, you know, horrible, and I hope that,
9 you know, our city, our City Council members, and all
10 of us in the City are standing for our government,
11 all of us together will do more to give to those
12 young people what they need to have a better life as
13 children, as youth, and also to be the leaders that
14 we want them to be. Before I ask my next question,
15 let me acknowledge that we have been joined by
16 Council Member Laurie Cumbo, a champion also, you
17 know, fighting for our young people. Council Member
18 Cumbo, do you have any questions.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: [off mic] I do
20 not have any questions.

21 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much
22 for being her, and let's talk about the outreach. We
23 know that, you know, the outreach is a very important
24 component or part of what we are doing in terms of
25 providing services whether to young people, to

2 adults, to--to the patrons. We have to have a good
3 outreach system. Could you tell us--what can you
4 tell us about your outreach system, what you have in
5 place to reach out to young people to make sure that
6 they benefit from the services that you are
7 providing? And what do you believe the organization
8 should do to make sure that they get more young
9 people to come to them, and to benefit and to use the
10 services that are available to the young people?
11 Anyone of you. This is for all three of you.

12 LILLIAN RIVERA: So our outreach team
13 goes throughout the city, and the sort of key goal is
14 to establish relationships, relationships, which
15 translates into trust, and brings in people into the
16 space. They to out everyday. The go out with food,
17 they go out with weather related things that young
18 people may need, hand warmers or rain ponchos.
19 Whatever the need is, and work to ensure that young
20 people see them on a regular basis, that they're
21 consistent, that they're trustworthy and that they
22 think of the young people. They keep the young
23 people in positive regard because young people know
24 when someone is just doing a job or when someone is
25 there to support them wholeheartedly. So I think

2 those are some of the values that we make sure that
3 our staff really invest in when working with young
4 people in order to transition them to services. And
5 we also believe that when we meet young people out in
6 the street, in the community we offer our services.
7 We also offer the services of all of our colleagues
8 because whether it's here or here or wherever it is,
9 we know they're going to be in good hands, and
10 they're going to get what they received. So I think
11 that's also important that we're working in the
12 community around those issues.

13 ANDREA BOWAN: I would note, you know,
14 [coughs] that United Neighborhood House the member
15 agencies that comprise United Neighborhood Houses,
16 you know, are historically rooted in their
17 communities, and provide, you know, a plethora of
18 services that give people multiple entry points into
19 the services that agencies provide. So it's not
20 only, you know, have like the Settlement Houses have
21 been there literally for over 100 years [laughs] in
22 some circumstances, but, you know, they're also
23 providing, you know, our HY services. They're
24 providing services for summer jobs. They're
25 providing services for job training. They're

2 providing services, you know, across the--across the
3 spectrum. So that, you know, people recognize that,
4 you know, these are--they're working with people in
5 the community who can provide the services that they
6 need, and maybe somebody goes in for a job training
7 service and then stays for adult education. Or, goes
8 in for adult education and stays for, you know, some
9 sort of housing service. So, our member agencies,
10 you know, really I think get their power from being
11 rooted in communities from providing multiple entry
12 points. And I think also by--by keeping up with the
13 needs of the population. I mean thinking about, you
14 know, the really amazing LGBTQ outreach provided by
15 agencies like Door, and--and other member agencies I
16 think help us--you know, help the member agencies
17 really reach out to the populations that--that--that
18 need, you know, the RHY and CSEC services.

19 COURTNEY CAMP: If I may the Legal Aid
20 Society is a law firm. So it's not as if we're
21 necessarily out on the street handing out cards, but
22 we've partnered and worked very closely with many of
23 the provider agencies. So the Door or Covenant House
24 Ali Forney. Those--those agencies know when they
25 have a young person who comes in and they need legal

2 assistance. Legal Aid is one of the first names on
3 the list for who to call. We have a homeless rights
4 project that deals specifically with homeless
5 populations and homeless individuals that need legal
6 help. In our Juvenile Rights practice we are in the
7 Family Court. We represent the bulk of children who
8 come through the system. Many of those children are
9 CSEC kids, many of whom have been caught up in
10 juvenile delinquency cases. We are the public
11 defender for those kids. So we provide those direct
12 legal services.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much.
14 So we all know that there are so many people in New
15 York City who are not proficient in English. They
16 speak another language other than English. They--the
17 speak another language. Do you have or staff the
18 system to make sure that those people who don't speak
19 English properly they can also understand, and
20 navigate through the system and get, you know, get
21 advantage, benefits from the services that you are
22 providing to help them overcome the language barrier
23 or cultural barrier that they are facing everyday as
24 immigrants.

2 COURTNEY CAMP: Yes, I'd say our office
3 is--we have language lines. So when people come in
4 if they speak different languages we have a service
5 provider that we go through. We do have--many of our
6 printed materials are in different languages. Most
7 typically the language is Spanish, but if we needed
8 to get translation services even for the printed
9 materials, we could do that through the language line
10 that we use.

11 ANDREA BOWAN: I--I would just say that
12 our member agencies being rooted in--in communities
13 for long developed the competencies to be able to
14 communicate with the populations that they serve. So
15 it's just sort of part of what our agencies do.

16 LILLIAN RIVERA: Yes, we do. We are able
17 to meet the needs of many language folks and hearing
18 impaired as well.

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I know that we all
20 have the desire, the passion and also the dedication
21 to serve--the dedication to provide the services. We
22 want to do it. We think that every single day. But
23 also we have to take a moment to evaluate what we are
24 doing to collect data, to report on what we are
25 doing. What is the greatest challenge that you face

2 in terms of the community and reporting data and
3 collecting data that you know about the youth that
4 you serve especially among the at-risk and sexually
5 exploited young people? What is the biggest
6 challenges.

7 COURTNEY CAMP: Um, disclosure.

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm sorry.

9 LILLIAN RIVERA: Disclosure is the
10 biggest challenge. The information will come to us
11 but it will come to us months after we've established
12 a relationship. So making sure that we have cyclical
13 sort of data collection, data collection that happens
14 on a cyclical basis. So as we building trust, young
15 people feel that we're trustworthy to hold this
16 information for them, and provide them services that
17 are really meeting their needs. Yeah.

18 COURTNEY CAMP: Probably for us
19 particularly for the Juvenile Rights Practice because
20 we are collecting records about children, they are--
21 they are confidential records. So that would be--
22 that's--that's one part of our recordkeeping that I
23 think for disclosure reasons or for public purposes
24 is a tricky issue for us.

2 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: But what are being
3 done to overcome that challenge? Is there anything,
4 an effort to make sure that you overcome that?

5 LILLIAN RIVERA: Yeah, for us it's
6 building systems that are responsive to the--to the
7 needs of young people, and when they do disclose. So
8 we've built--we have a database that you initially
9 put in sort of information that young people give you
10 the first time they meet you. But that record is a
11 live--a living document that gets expanded every time
12 you have more information about young people.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Are there waiting
14 lists times for services that you provided to young
15 people. Are there waiting lists?

16 LILLIAN RIVERA: Waiting lists for our
17 services? No. For our service? No, there are not.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Young people are
19 waiting to be served. You don't have any of that?

20 LILLIAN RIVERA: We do not have waiting
21 lists for the services that we provide--

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] Uh-
23 huh.

24 LILLIAN RIVERA: --but there are waiting
25 lists with partner organizations that provide housing

2 or beds for young people. So for us it's really
3 difficult to get a young person placed immediately in
4 a bed with another provider. But we have had waiting
5 lists in the past around sort of psychiatric
6 evaluations. So for some people to get housing, the
7 psychiatric evaluation is the really important piece,
8 and it's been difficult to find providers to do that.
9 So we actually are in the process of hiring a
10 psychiatrist on staff to make sure that we can
11 expedite that process in order to get young people
12 housed.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. So let me ask
14 you a question about, you know, the outcome of the
15 services that you are providing to the young people,
16 the outcome of the services provided by other
17 agencies. But do you believe that those services met
18 the needs of the young people? Another one, do you
19 think that the--the agencies or your organization, do
20 you think that you have been successful in meeting
21 the need of those young people? If not, what do you
22 believe that you should do more? What are you
23 planning to do to make sure that you meet their
24 needs?

2 LILLIAN RIVERA: Yeah, I--I think in
3 terms of our organization I think we do meet the
4 needs of young people. I think we can continue to
5 explain--expand specifically for CSEC people and
6 runaway and homeless youth, our employment programs.
7 And, that's sort of where we have been moving our
8 work besides--so the first year we got funding from
9 ACS around our CSEC program. It was really about a
10 support group. It was really about crating
11 connections amongst young people who have had this
12 experience, and need the support to sort of process,
13 and maybe building plans around what they want in
14 their lives. And now we're working towards expanding
15 that to create employment possibilities, right. So
16 if we're going to remove this piece of their life
17 that helps them with survival, what are we putting
18 into their lives?

19 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: So as you explained
20 (sic) it makes a person also question, but it seems
21 that you explained that you meet the needs of those
22 young people 100%?

23 LILLIAN RIVERA: Oh, absolutely not.

24 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Oh, okay. So what
25 do you believe that--

2 LILLIAN RIVERA: [interposing] Absolutely
3 not. I think that the need--

4 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: [interposing] What
5 additional things do you--

6 LILLIAN RIVERA: --is overwhelming in
7 this city?

8 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: I'm sorry.

9 LILLIAN RIVERA: I think the need is
10 overwhelming in this city, and I think no matter how
11 great our work is, there's still a lot more to be
12 done.

13 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay.

14 LILLIAN RIVERA: Yeah.

15 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Anybody else? Thank
16 you.

17 ANDREA BOWAN: I--I was just going to say
18 the--the only one of our member agencies that
19 provides our HY services is the Door and, you know, I
20 think part of the genius of that organization is just
21 how comprehensive its services are. I mean, you
22 know, it's--it's got the job training. It's got a
23 school. It has credibility like--it has credibility
24 on the street [laughs] through the different services
25 it provides. Um, and, um, I think that that's--

2 that's part of what makes it an effective
3 organization. Um, I mean as with all of our
4 agencies, um, you know, always more flexible funding
5 streams to be able to, you know, meet the ancillary
6 needs of--of young people as they go through
7 different programs. It's always really, really
8 important.

9 COURTNEY CAMP: We go in as an
10 organization of 1,100 lawyers. So when a young
11 person comes into Legal Aid, there aren't waiting
12 lists for an institutional provider. So we
13 essentially take most of the people who need--who
14 need legal services, and if we're working with a
15 young person and they have an immigration question,
16 ore they get arrested and say that they're over 18 or
17 really even over 16, they can be defended by our
18 criminal defense practice. Or say they're being
19 evicted. We have housing attorneys or they have an
20 education issues, we can make a referral to our
21 educational team. So we have pretty robust legal
22 services and, of course, as a non-profit public
23 interest organization could we use more lawyers?
24 Could we use more social workers on our staff?
25 Absolutely, but we are a very large legal services

2 institution in--in the city, and I think we do
3 provide pretty comprehensive services for the young
4 people that need our help.

5 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Okay. I know that
6 all of you from the different organizations the
7 United Neighborhood House--Houses, and Advocates for
8 LGBTQ youth and also the Legal Aid Society, you are
9 doing a good job, and I cannot thank all of you
10 enough. And I remember the Legal Aid Society have
11 been doing a wonderful job with me because I have the
12 immigrant people coming to my office providing
13 services, you know, right there to the immigrant
14 people. We have been doing especially for also TBS,
15 you know. I don't know if you remember that, and
16 also helping immigrant people, you know, get the
17 legal status in the United States. Thank you to all
18 of you. This is wonderful, but I know that, and as
19 you mentioned, that we--there is much more that we
20 have to do. And part of the challenges I think
21 usually are--is funding, resources. I know that
22 because I've been there, too. You know, providing
23 services through my non-profit organization before I
24 was elected. But in terms of funding, I know that we
25 in the City Council we are doing the best that we can

2 do to provide the resources that you need to server
3 our young people. But could you tell us what
4 additional effort that you are doing to get
5 additional funding from other than the City Council?
6 I mean, you know, from organizations, from
7 corporations, from private sectors? Can you tell us
8 about your effort to secure funding other than the
9 city--from the City Council.

10 LILLIAN RIVERA: Absolutely. Hetrick-
11 Martin is funded by lots of organizations, some of
12 the larger foundations like in the city the Robin
13 Hood Foundation, we're funded by the Ford Foundation,
14 the Elton John Foundation, the Black AIDS Foundation,
15 New York Community Trust. We also work on security
16 monies from the State as well as federal that matches
17 the work that we're doing. So I think this is one
18 source of support through the City Council, but I
19 think being in New York we're really at an advantage
20 in terms of things that people want to invest in,
21 right.

22 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Anybody else?

23 ANDREA BOWAN: Our member, you know,
24 United Neighborhood Houses works, you know, both on
25 the City and State level. So we a very active state

2 advocacy to make sure there's statement in each
3 organizations. But, you know, our member
4 organization and cobbling, bringing together funding
5 streams from countless private donors. So, it's--
6 there's--there's a lot of work done to cultivate
7 private--private donors, and as well as state donors
8 or state funding.

9 COURTNEY CAMP: We do much of the same.
10 The attorneys in charge of our various practices go
11 up to Albany. They advocate on the state level. We
12 also partner with many, many of the big law firms in
13 New York City, and they don't their--their time,
14 their attorneys, and we could not bring many of our
15 big class actions without the support of the pro
16 bono--our pro bono practices and other law firms in
17 the city.

18 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you very much,
19 and let me say that I want to one more time thank all
20 of you and all the great wonderful organizations that
21 are providing services to the young people, to the
22 children, but also to the New Yorkers because I
23 always believe that government alone cannot provide
24 the services of the people for which they need to
25 survive, and to have a productive life. Just imagine

2 what the life would be in New York City if we didn't
3 have those great organizations. Of course, this is
4 not enough. Of course, we cannot fulfill the needs
5 of all those people, but you are doing a good job,
6 and our hope is to see all of us continue to work for
7 all of them, to get more resources, and to have
8 better ways to make sure that we help New Yorkers.
9 To make sure we help the people who are in need. Our
10 city will be a better city when we will be able to
11 provide the necessary resources and services to so
12 many people who are still suffering in the good City
13 of New York. When we talk about, when we think about
14 young people--young people who deserve that we as a
15 city and as a society that we provide them
16 everything. When we think about young people what
17 they're going through, to not have a place to live,
18 to have some food. This is embarrassing for all of
19 us, and being the best city in the world, I think
20 that we should do better, and we can do better. When
21 we see or we think about what the young people are
22 going through, and because of what they are going
23 through. They are abused, and for people who don't
24 have, you know, a sense of what is their
25 responsibility, and I--that's a--that is--I'm not

2 trying--I want to say to you as one of--the Speaker
3 said, those are challenges that we have to overcome,
4 and those represent for us motivation. We've got to
5 be motivated. We've got to be committed to--to
6 providing to young people and to New Yorkers better
7 services, and New York will be or will continue to be
8 or will a better city where all of us are going to
9 live together, and we will be happy to live in in a
10 place where we will be all and happy to raise our
11 children. To all of you thank you so much. God
12 bless you.

13 LILLIAN RIVERA: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON EUGENE: Thank you. Thank
15 you. [background comments] This meeting is
16 adjourned. [gavel]

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1 COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date December 6, 2015